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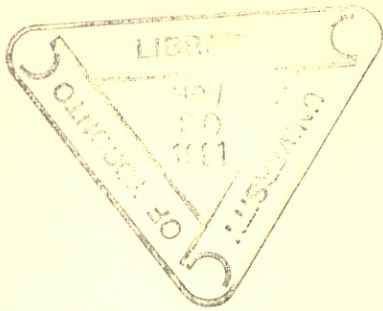
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BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

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JULY 1888.

Vol. CXLIV.

ROBERT ELSMERE AND MODERN OXFORD.

THE last thirty years have witnessed a remarkable change in the character of religious discussion. Its arena, too, is changed. According to our recollection it was the rarest thing for a secular newspaper or magazine to embark in a discussion of that kind. But from the time of 'Essays and Reviews,' or a little earlier, the general public has been gradually invited to join in those well-worn but ever fresh and interesting speculations, which go down to the very roots of the Christian faith. A generation has grown up, familiarised with the discoveries of science and with man's increasing dominion over the powers of nature. As a result, its tendency is to reject the preternatural in whatever form it may present itself. And it demands a scientific definition of the divine, in apparent discontent with its presentation in Semitic revela-

tion and literature. The difficulty created is engrossing, and is not readily solved. For along with it there is a very widespread belief that the Christian religion, looking to its achievements in the past and its visible power in the present, ought not to be surrendered even if that were possible; but it is contended that it should be revised, to the extent of utterly denuding it of all preternatural authority, and that in the form which destructive criticism will eventually concede to it, it has a still higher claim than ever to mould at least the temporal destiny of man.

The book¹ before us is a novel in which the characters are drawn with skill, but not always with complete consistency, and in which the tale generally, and the leading incidents especially, are unfolded with considerable dramatic power.

¹ Robert Elsmere. By Mrs Humphry Ward, author of 'Miss Bretherton.' In Three Vols. London: Smith, Elder, & Co. 1888.

It is not as a work of art that we undertake to criticise it. It is a novel with a purpose, which to our mind is usually a serious if not a fatal defect. The purpose, however, in this case is dominant and ruthless. Mrs Humphry Ward belongs, by birth at least, to a family which has now, to the third generation, aspired to lead the religious thought of the country. Her own effort in that direction follows more or less on the lines of 'Literature and Dogma.' But it is more aggressive and dogmatic. Matthew Arnold's attitude to what he called popular Christianity was tolerant, and he even thought that Broad Churchmen who accepted his views might remain in orders, though they would act wrongly in taking them. Mrs Ward's book is an appeal to all who reject miracle to find in her system "a more excellent way"; and, of course, if in orders, at once to renounce them. The hero of the book, Robert Elsmere, adopts that course. His doing so is the culminating point in the tragedy of two young lives; for his orthodox and Puritan wife is impervious to doubt, and regards her husband's defection with profound horror and dismay—vanquished only by the overmastering impulse of a most genuine and devoted love. Every reader will recognise the dramatic force, power, and pathos of the representation. The object of this review, however, is not to linger over the incidents of the tale, but to criticise the aggressive and dogmatic scheme which wrought the havoc, and to examine the "Christianity of the future," its genesis, its credentials, its inherent vitality and characteristics. The book is worth close consideration, for it is a characteristic offspring of the time, and it has the fascination and power

which, as Carlyle insisted, result—we forget the exact expression—wherever man speaks to man from the very heart of him in relation to a subject which has stirred it to its depths.

As the authoress of this book has chosen the form of novel for the purpose of unfolding her scheme of religion, it is necessary for a reviewer who wishes to express dissatisfaction with that scheme to begin by criticising the *dramatis personæ*. Catherine Elsmere, the heroine of the book, the wife of Robert Elsmere, and the passive victim of the tragedy, is one of the most important. She is intended to represent the Puritan element, refined and softened by the vicissitudes of an existence which has afforded free scope to all the charities of life within and without the domestic circle, and has been completely withdrawn from all controversy, religious or otherwise. She was the daughter of an evangelical minister of the Church of England, who, in his last years, withdrew to his native Westmoreland hills to die, and leave his family—a widow and three daughters—as much as possible withdrawn from the world. He would not let his children know any unbeliever, however apparently worthy and good—from a prejudice, which apparently Mrs Ward shares, that that precaution is the only, or at least the most effective, safeguard of orthodoxy. They were to cherish the faith, to live a secluded life, that they might incur no spiritual danger. To Catherine was assigned the duty of "looking after the others." She was the "Thirty-nine Articles in the flesh," as one of the other characters puts it. At her first acquaintance with Elsmere there is an undercurrent of dissatisfaction with his glorification of Grey,

an Oxford tutor of distinction, of whom we hear much, and with his talking as if right belief were a boon rather than an obligation. She was brought up in the austere school of Christian self-government, which, in her belief, "sentenced joy." When love offered to change and brighten her life, the contest arose in her mind, which is extremely well portrayed, whether this new-born joy ought not to be ruthlessly uprooted and the lover dismissed, because of her mission, imposed by her dying father, to "look after the others," as well as continue her works of charity in the neighbourhood. The persistence and final success of the lover, the invincible reluctance both of her mother and sisters, to be each the "third part of a moral obstacle" in the way of her marriage, and their own emancipation from her restraining care, are well described, and made to harmonise with great kindness of feeling, while full justice is done to Catherine's pained awakening to the consciousness of a somewhat exaggerated sense of virtue and self-sufficiency. Needless to add that the wife of Elsmere adheres to orthodox belief through all the bitter vicissitudes of her husband's faith. But from the first line to the last page Catherine never gives a valid reason for the faith that is in her, is excluded by her husband from all participation in or knowledge of his increasing mental difficulties, and when at last she is informed of the catastrophe of their joint lives, inspires this sentiment in her husband's mind (vol. ii. p. 332), "What was the good of all he was saying? He was speaking a language she did not really understand. What were all those critical and literary considerations to her?" The disdain of the authoress for orthodox belief is nowhere

betrayed so vividly as in this incipient repulsion between husband and wife during the critical period of the disruption of Elsmere's faith. It is redeemed by her subsequent portraiture of the mode in which love surmounts the chasm which had arisen between them, although the chasm is repeatedly described as in Catherine's view destroying the ultimate sanction and legitimacy even of their marriage. Catherine's character is carefully weeded of the too relentless bigotry of her sect. It is shown not merely in her solicitude and sympathy for her heretic husband during his life, but in care for the interests of his work after his death, and also (*mirabile dictu!*) in her tolerance of her husband's Sunday cricket-club.

It is necessary to mention Mr Newcome, who held a vicarage in the immediate neighbourhood of Elsmere's rectory of Murewell. He is the ritualistic counterpart to Catherine; with "husbandhood, fatherhood, and all the sacred education that flows from human joy for ever self-forbidden, and this grim creed for recompense"—viz., that from birth to death sin and Satan are on the track of the human soul like two sleuth-hounds, that he who would combat them must regard tolerance as another name for betrayal, cowardice, and desertion. A gaunt figure, between whom and Catherine there is represented to have been the sympathy at least of charitable work and of devotion to their respective views of the orthodox faith. Both are equally superior to the duty of assigning any intelligible reason therefor, the suggestion of course being that none exists.

Three of the principal characters come from Oxford University—Elsmere, Langham, and Grey:

and it must be allowed that very scant justice is done to the University as the leader of religious thought, or as the *alma mater* of our clerical youth. They are, all three, propounders of or acquiescent in the new faith. Langham was Elsmere's college tutor; and sits for the portrait of a college recluse whose whole manhood has been eaten out of him by the irresponsible habits of a cloistered existence. He was afflicted with deprecatory manners, decision of any sort was hateful to him; "it was as though the man was suffering from paralysis of some moral muscle or other, as if some of the normal springs of action in him had been profoundly and permanently weakened." He was overwhelmed by a sense of the uselessness of utterance, the futility of enthusiasm, the inaccessibility of the ideal, and the practical absurdity of trying to realise any of the mind's inward dreams. He could not be simple, he could not be spontaneous, he was tormented by self-consciousness. He desisted from all useful work and occupation, but as the mind must have some employment, he became a translator, a contributor to dictionaries, a microscopic student of texts, not in the interest of anything beyond, but simply as a kind of mental stone-breaking. "I am," he repined, "the most unfit man in the world for a college tutor. The undergraduates regard me as a shilly-shallying pedant. Every term I live I find the young man a less interesting animal." As for religious beliefs, "one may as well," he grumbled out, "preach a respectable mythology as anything else." Mrs Ward disinters him from his Oxford rooms, and throws him into pleasant social relations with Rose, a sister of Mrs Elsmere, and the most brilliant

production in the book. He drifts into love-making twice. "Go philandering on," he expostulated with himself, "till a child of nineteen shows you her warm impulsive heart; play on her imagination, on her pity, all the while safe in the reflection that by the next day you will be far away." Matters are so arranged that Langham eventually drifts into a proposal of marriage, and is accepted. It is only, however, to heighten his discomfiture; for next day he writes to say "he didn't mean it," and is forthwith, in amused and satisfied contempt, referred back to his all-devouring "habits," the victim of mental and moral paralysis. Some one, it is probable, sat for this portrait: if he recognises it, then, as Carlyle retorted when asked whether a pungent criticism by his wife on a living celebrity should be published, "it will do him no harm to know what a sensible woman thought of him."

The other tutor—"the great tutor," as he is called—is Grey, to whose memory the book is partly dedicated. Elsmere attends his lectures, forms relations of intimacy so far as an undergraduate can, and is by him plunged in an atmosphere, to say the least of it, of critical and literary doubt and difficulty upon the subject of religious belief. It is nowhere represented that any correlative duty, on the part of "the great tutor," arose to see that his pupil, or friend to whom he stood in a responsible relation, should at least sort his ideas on a subject of this momentous importance, in justice to himself and to others, before he accepted ordination. On the contrary, his "reticence" is alluded to (vol. i. p. 126), and his pupil is represented as respecting it, while Langham notes that the intellect and

intellectual opinion had precious little to do with his religion. Yet the lectures ran upon such subjects as the fairy tale of Christianity and the origin of Christian mythology; and it was known that Grey had himself declined orders because it had become "impossible for him to accept miracle." Both tutor and pupil are at this point involved in a grievous failure in the plain path of duty, the pupil especially failing in a due sense of his grave responsibilities. But the authoress seems to have determined that at no point in the development of her tale would she allow herself to be drawn into a statement or discussion of intellectual grounds of orthodox belief. She either disbelieves their existence, or reserves all her space for the enforcement of her own views. Elsmere, accordingly, is represented as having for the time being allowed these lectures to glide off his mind. The difficulty is got rid of by the statement that he drank in all Grey's ideal fervour and spiritual enthusiasm, and carried his religious passion, so stimulated, into the service of the great positive tradition around him. And again he shared in the "glad acquiescence in the received Christian system" which resulted from the astonished recognition that, after all, Mill and Herbert Spencer had not said the last word in all things in heaven and earth.

So Elsmere took the decisive step, accepted ordination and the rectory of Murewell, and married his Puritan wife, the intensity of whose pain at the coming crisis may be read in her own emphatic observation: "If husband and wife are only one in body and estate, not one in soul, why, who that believes in the soul would accept such a bond, endure such a miserable second best?" But she very

soon awakened to the fact that she was not "literary," and that with all their oneness of soul there could not be an identity of interests and pursuits. Near Murewell there lived Mr Wendover, the squire of the neighbourhood, the most powerfully drawn character in the book. He was a man of portentous literary activity. For thirty years he had devoted unbroken solitary labour to get at the conditions, physical and mental, which govern the correspondence between human witness and the fact which it reports; and for that purpose he had exhaustively examined human records in several languages which he had learned for the purpose. Elsmere, who under Grey's advice dabbled in historical investigation, was fascinated, and having all his own convictions in a more or less fluid condition, fell an easy victim. The squire, we are told, found a great piquancy in shaping a mind more intellectually eager and pliant than any he had yet come across among younger men. The result of his thirty years' work was, that by applying to the Christian period the critical method which results from the science of what is credible and rational, he arrived at various conclusions, none of which are new, and of which we may select as the one most vitally momentous to Elsmere, that "the resurrection is partly invented, partly imagined, and partly ideally true, in any case wholly intelligible and natural as a product of the age, when once you have the key of that age." In a celebrated book which he had published, he had constructed the conditions out of which "the legend" arose. The crisis in Elsmere's life swiftly follows; which it cannot be said that he met with any composure. A dry destroying whirlwind of thought,

black agony of doubt, an attempt to sweep away difficulties, are the first symptoms. "In the stillness of the night" (vol. ii. p. 253) "there rose up before him a wholly new mental picture, effacing, pushing out innumerable older images of thought. It was the image of a purely human Christ—a purely human yet always explicable Christianity. It broke his heart. . . . He gazed upon it fascinated, the wailing underneath checked awhile by the strange beauty and order of the emerging spectacle." His creed eventually (p. 291) shapes itself thus (and we now have unfolded to us the new creed which Mrs Ward urges on our acceptance),—belief in the teacher, the martyr, the symbol to us Westerns of all things heavenly and abiding, the image and pledge of the invisible life of the Spirit. But (and here steps in an inconsistency which runs through the book) every human soul in which the voice of God makes itself felt "enjoys *equally* with Jesus of Nazareth the divine sonship." Miracles, of course, are dismissed.

We pass over all the mental distress which is so vividly described. It is intended to exhibit, no doubt, the emotional side of a very emotional man; but we have the less sympathy with it in proportion as we encourage the belief that a clergyman should commence his theological studies before he accepts ordination and considerable station in the Church. We certainly are not prepared to believe that modern Oxford has much to be proud of when she sends forth a distinguished *alumnus* so indifferently equipped that when, as rector, he presents himself in the squire's hall, it resembles nothing so much as a lamb led to the slaughter. Mr

Wendover's obsolete discoveries work such havoc in a few months in his religious belief that everything was a chaos. The foundations were swept away, and everything must be built up afresh. Nor is our adverse opinion in the least modified by Mrs Ward's hero-worship. There was never a moment, she tells us, when Elsmere felt himself utterly forsaken. No; for his endless comfort, she says, there rose on the inward eye the vision of an Oxford lecture-room, of a short sturdy figure, of a great brow over honest eyes, &c., &c.—in fact, the same Mr Grey who had sadly neglected the duties of a tutor, and was morally responsible for the wreck which ensued. "Oh to see Grey in the flesh, and get his advice and approval!" He accordingly goes to Oxford, and finds that Mr Grey agrees that he can no longer remain where he is. Part of what Grey is represented as saying is material to quote, as it shows that the new religion at least recognises a direct and close relationship between man and his Creator. To him, says the tutor, who has once been a Christian of the old sort, the parting with the Christian mythology is the rending asunder of bones and marrow. "It is the education of God. Do not imagine it will put you further from Him. He is in criticism, in science, in doubt, so long as the doubt is a pure and honest doubt. He is in all life, in all thought. The thought of man, as it has shaped itself in institutions, philosophies, in science, in patient critical work, or in the life of charity, is the one continuous revelation of God, . . . who must be sought not in any single event of past history, but in your own soul, in the constant verification of experience, in the life of Christian love."

Then our hero goes back to his wife, from whom hitherto, although possessed of far the stronger and more tenacious mind, he has all along concealed his mental harass. He places before her the wreck of his faith; the result of his no longer being able to accept miracle. He is met by the most pertinent question (vol. ii. p. 333)—“Do you think nothing is true because something may be false?” The answer is—“I can believe no longer in an incarnation and resurrection. Christ is risen in our hearts in the Christian life of charity. God was in Jesus pre-eminently, as He is in all great souls, but not otherwise in kind than He is in you or me.” And there we have the keynote of the new religion—“not otherwise in kind than He is in you or me.”

There can be no second opinion as to the complete and absolute transformation of the Christian religion, as it was originally understood and proclaimed, which this new scheme desires, in good faith and *ad majorem gloriam Dei*, to effect. It banishes the idea of a supernatural manifestation of God in the religion, and, above all, in its founder; it destroys the organic connection between Deity and humanity thereby established; but at the same time the essential end and object of its existence is to re-establish a connection of a very close nature (witness the passage which we have cited from Mr Grey), to adopt all the morality, the spirit, and the religious fervour of the old religion, with this proviso, that the whole must be referred in its origin not to any divine manifestation, but to the development of man's mind or inner consciousness, his memory and his trust, and, of course, limited thereby. Great souls may be inspired; the degree of such inspiration may vary, but in no

case is it otherwise in kind than in you and me. This is precision itself: it announces divine inspiration, it distinguishes its kind and measures its degree. There is a distinct acceptance of the supernatural, a proclamation of a Supreme Being, an announcement that He stands in the closest relations to mankind. The first limb of the Apostles' Creed is arbitrarily accepted, the rest as arbitrarily rejected. Where is the authority for it, and where are its credentials? It is an obvious compromise of a most inequitable kind, considering the magnitude of Elsmere's surrender. The squire's negations commend themselves to his intellect, the Christian religion retains its hold over his heart. Then comes the attempt to compromise. The result is that revelation, founded on authority, is banished to make room for a mental conception founded on criticism; religion is no longer heaven-descended, but humanly developed, and the imagination of the author is, we are told, fascinated by the strange beauty and order of the emergent spectacle. The usual result follows, that he who denies miraculous inspiration sets up as a prophet; the belief that you are superior to all superstition turns out to be a complete superstition in itself. Every knee must bow to Elsmere, the traditional creed and worship of the Church must make way for doctrine the most absurd and ceremonies the most grotesque; and we are further assured (vol. iii. p. 276) that every such witness as Grey, to the power of a new and coming truth, holds a special place in the mind of the votaries of the new scheme.

But to look more closely into the new scheme. It not merely retains but insists on so much of the old

religion, treating it as being demonstrable by the strictly literary and critical method, that we are entitled to a very strict account of the reasons why the two are to part company over the momentous question as to the divine character of the Personage whom both schemes recognise as their founder. It is at this point, which is the crux of the controversy, that the essentially hollow character of this compromise of which we have spoken is exposed. Mrs Ward denies the divinity of Christ, but admits that He was pre-eminently and divinely inspired. And as the whole book shows, her mind is saturated with reverence and worship towards Him personally, such as it is inconceivable should ever be attracted from her by any other character which ever crossed the stage of human events. At this point the controversy almost descends to a mere quibble about words. The new mental conception cannot divorce itself from the revelation; the old habit remains long after the logical requirements of the situation would seem to point to its abandonment. Further, the new sect apparently will not merge in the Unitarians. Then why is this mental conception of a purely human Christ, which in its consequences so fatally excludes divine revelation, and which sits so very insecurely on the mind of its author, necessarily to be adopted? The obvious object is to effect a concordat between agnosticism and Christianity; but the thing is impossible. Christians will never accept Christianity without Christ, or with such an illusory and inadequate representation as is here given of Him. Agnostics, on the other hand, will see no reason for what, on the hypothesis, would be excessive veneration and regard. And the

only reason given for taking the whole life and soul out of the religion is the difficulty about physical miracle. It is said that physical miracle must be rejected, either as *a priori* impossible, which is a very difficult proposition to maintain, or as intellectually incredible on any reasonable view of evidence, which for the sake of argument may be conceded. On this view the miracles of the incarnation and the resurrection are not available as proofs of a divine revelation; they are incidents explicable only on the theory of an antecedent belief in the divine character of the Saviour, and the divine character of the sacred records.

We cannot in the slightest degree recognise that Mr Wendover's success in moulding Elsmere's belief upon those two momentous miracles, affords any reasonable vindication of Elsmere's complete defection from the Christian faith. It is nowhere contended that they are absolutely indispensable links in the chain, either of evidence or causation. The main question is, Has there been supernatural revelation of divine purpose and human destiny? Why is Elsmere to conclude that that purpose can neither be accomplished nor revealed without physical miracle? To go back to Catherine's question, "Does it follow that nothing is true because part is false?" If Elsmere could not accept these miracles on the faith of the divinity of Christ, and of the sacred records, and of the strong contemporaneous and widespread belief in them, he would of course be fully justified in renouncing his orders; but was he compelled also to renounce his belief in divine manifestation in the person of the Founder of his Church? No argument is address-

ed to this question in the book, though it is practically and very shrewdly raised by Catherine. It is assumed throughout, that if physical miracle is abandoned, the whole moral and spiritual miracle must be abandoned too, and its moral and spiritual results referred to human development. The edifice of belief is represented as coming down with a run, having lost its foundation; as if any one or more of the physical miracles constituted that foundation. No reasons are given, but it is assumed that such a result follows, and the assumption involves propositions which ought to have been demonstrated. It should have been shown that miraculous revelation by God to man is scientifically impossible, or intellectually incredible; that the series of events to which that character has been assigned, have been for ages thoroughly misunderstood; that the place of Christ in the history of the world can be reasonably accounted for independently of His divine office. If Mr Wendover, with his thirty years' absorption in these subjects, could not supply the materials which would enable the new brotherhood in Elgood Street to answer them satisfactorily, we must endeavour to consider them without his aid.

Now, to approach these questions from the point of view of Robert Elsmere—that is, one which absolutely excludes all notion of physical miracle as impossible or incredible, and insists upon collecting facts by the science of what is credible, and deriving inferences therefrom by the science of what is reasonable. We then have before the mind's eye a Galilean peasant, an inhabitant of the most despised province of a land possessed by a conquered race, which is contemned by its con-

querors and hated by its neighbours for its intense superstition and gloomy isolation, resulting from a defiant consciousness of possessing a vested interest in theocracy to the exclusion of the rest of the world, for its own material and national advantage. The characteristics of the Jewish world at that time, which produced this stern and unbending temper, were,—an unbounded devotion to the Mosaic law; a belief in its irrevocable and eternal sanctity; implicit submission to rabbinical supremacy, which rested on an exclusive privilege, claimed and conceded, to interpret the law; its fierce tenacity of clinging to supposed national prerogative; its sullen brooding hope of sovereignty over, or at least of independence amongst, the nations of the world. These characteristics rendered the Jews the most intractable and rebellious of the subjects of Rome. Then there was the inextinguishable fanaticism of the Jews of Jerusalem respecting the Temple, the outward and visible sign of their passionate hopes. The extent of that fanaticism, says Dean Milman, can scarcely be understood even after a profound study of their history. In the horrible scenes of the fatal siege by Titus, this indelible passion survived all feelings of nature and humanity. The fall of the Temple was like the bursting of the heart of the nation; and the sacred writers could find no more awe-striking incident of the supreme moment of the Crucifixion than that its veil was rent. The whole tendency of the race at this period, and in the bitterness of its humiliation, was hostile to the rest of mankind. It fostered its deep-rooted conviction of its prerogative by surrendering itself more and more to rabbinical authority,

which enslaved the life to a system of minute ordinances. Then there was the firm belief in the advent of a temporal deliverer who should restore the dominion to Israel, and in expectation of whom, we are told by Dean Stanley, on the authority of Dr Ginsburg, that new prayers were added to the Jewish ritual for the re-establishment of the royal dynasty, and for the restoration of the national jurisdiction. This impracticable temper, this indomitable and stubborn fanaticism, fanned by the vision of a future glory which was deemed the birthright of the race, gradually provoked the implacable vengeance of their foreign conquerors, and committed the Jewish people to a deadly and ruinous struggle with the whole power of the Roman empire. It was, however, while in its full power, confronted by a single Nazarene, without force of arms, of opinion, or even of organised and influential following. Yet from the Sermon on the Mount to the closing scene, without making the slightest reference to miracle of any kind, there is an increasing assertion of a character and an office which blasted the temporal hopes of the race, the proclamation of a religion which superseded its law, the establishment of a kingdom in which its exclusive privileges were abolished. Elsmere has to explain, according to the science of what is reasonable and credible, by what possible process of natural development, mental or moral, it could have occurred to an obscure inhabitant of a northern village of Palestine to conceive such a scheme, to plan its execution, to carry it in three years, by the aid of growing personal authority, to a successful completion. His own and succeeding generations referred it to His divine character

and office; the Elsmeres and Wendovers of to-day reject that explanation, and offer no other. It is a transaction unique in the history of the world. We submit that, if they reject, they should be prepared with an alternative and an adequate explanation; and of this there is no trace.

The historical significance of this growing authority is one thing to be appreciated. Taking the triumphant entry into Jerusalem as the culminating point of the visible establishment of the new kingdom, it is fair to expect that those who deny the supernatural, even in the office of the Founder of their religion, should account for what has happened. The occasion was one of an immense confluence of the Jewish race from all countries lying between Babylonia and Spain; and, according to the calculation of Josephus, the mass of pilgrims and residents in Jerusalem during a Passover did not fall far short of three millions, attracted there by commerce and devotion. The reception which was experienced on the occasion we refer to, is strong historical evidence that far and wide had already spread the belief that a prophet of more than ordinary authority had appeared to demand the allegiance of the assembled nation. We pass over the details. The fact itself has to be accounted for. In the absence of portent and miracle, which would of course arrest attention, we are, in the further absence of other and adequate explanation, driven back upon the transcendent character of the Person and the office. The explanation, if it is to be adequate, must account for such recognition being compelled by one who was neither a conqueror nor an ascetic, nor the representative of any creed or system, nor the leader of any

organisation, but by a solitary Being, who, by individual and unobtrusive teaching, claimed to fulfil a general expectation in a sense the reverse of what was expected. Such explanation must further show how it was that the kingdom then proclaimed, which necessarily, and by the terms of its proclamation, depended upon the living authority of its Founder, was not shattered by the treachery and death which ensued, but that it arose from its apparent destruction in full strength, and spread with rapidity, revived at the moment of its apparent destruction by no visible agency which could be fairly described as in the slightest degree equal to the portentous difficulties in the way. The essential element of the whole subsequent history is, that it carries into effect the proclamation of a living personal authority, and the sanctity of a unique and transcendent office, and fulfils the declaration of its Founder. The world has been leavened, the mustard-tree has grown and overshadowed the globe, but beyond all, the central figure of the dispensation has drawn after Him the expectant gaze and devotion of mankind; while every fresh burst of criticism intended to be destructive, only increases the absorbing interest in a career, many of the incidents of which are involved in more or less of obscurity, but which the conscience, the instinct, and the reasoned reverence of mankind in each successive generation regard as the culminating point in the destinies of the race.

It is worth while to quote, in contrast with Elsmere's inadequate appreciation of his historical Christ and of His place in the history of the world, Lord Beaconsfield's view of the same subject, propounded apparently by way of appeal to the

men of his own race to accept what he called the whole instead of half of their religion.

"Perhaps, too, in this enlightened age, as his mind expands and he takes a comprehensive view of this period of progress, the pupil of Moses may ask himself whether all the princes of the house of David have done so much for the Jews as that Prince who was crucified on Calvary? Had it not been for Him, the Jews would have been comparatively unknown, or known only as a high oriental caste which had lost its country. Has not He made their history the most famous in the world? Has He not hung up their laws in every temple? Has He not vindicated all their wrongs? Has not He avenged the victory of Titus and conquered the Caesars? What successor did they anticipate from their Messiah? The wildest dreams of their rabbis have been far exceeded. Has not Jesus conquered Europe and changed its name into Christendom? All countries that refuse the Cross wither, while the whole of the New World is devoted to the Semitic principle and its most glorious offspring the Jewish faith; and the time will come when the vast communities and countless myriads of America and Australia, looking upon Europe as Europe now looks upon Greece, and wondering how so small a space could have achieved such great deeds, will still find music in the songs of Sion, and still seek solace in the parables of Galilee."

But the achievement, and, on Elsmere's theory, the unaided achievement, of a single human being, to whom not even human perfection is allowed (vol. iii. p. 208), does not stop there. It is not merely the Jewish system which has been overthrown by a

Jewish Messiah. The achievement expands, in accordance with declared intention, into the establishment of a universal religion, and Messiahship is merged in the still loftier character of Redeemer of the world. If Elsmere, with his mind operated upon by Wendover's destructive negations, was unable any longer to accept the physical miracle of the resurrection, it was at least open to him to infer, from the undoubted contemporaneous belief therein, the intensity of the first Christians' belief in the revelation which had been made to them, and to have discerned in subsequent history the widespread and increasing fulfilment of its aims and prophecies, so far at least as they were capable of terrestrial fulfilment.

For Christianity announced the appearance of its Divine Author as the era of a new moral creation. The Divine Power itself was presented to the human imagination as the impersonation of all goodness and of love rather than of power; mankind were taught to believe in their own immortality, not as a speculative tenet, but as the practical solution of all moral difficulties, and the animating principle of their lives. And nothing seems clearer than this, that the new religion was proclaimed upon the authority of the new Teacher, as the direct representative of Almighty Wisdom. As such it was proclaimed, and as such it was received. There was an open assumption of superiority, by virtue of a declared office, over the existing religious hierarchy, the Temple, the law, and its interpreters; an obvious impossibility of the new doctrine coexisting with the spirit of the old religion, and the authority of its official representatives. The morality which it proceeded to announce ran counter

to everything which had been previously received. It was universal morality, adapted for all races and every kind of civilisation. It abolished the notion that divine sanctions were a system of temporal rewards and punishments, and with it the belief in every kind of affliction being the visible curse of God, which destroyed the sentiment of pity and the impulse to charity. Instead of calamity being infamous and the curse of the Almighty, sorrow became sacred—or, as Carlyle puts it, there was revealed a divine depth of sorrow. It proclaimed mankind of all races as one brotherhood under the universal Father, who revealed Himself in the new Teacher, and reserved for a future life the accomplishment of His full purpose in respect to the human race. There cannot be the least doubt that the Author of the new religion did appeal, throughout His career, to the testimony of the sacred writings of the race as prefiguring Him. There can be no doubt that His claims to the Jewish Messiahship underwent a searching examination during His lifetime; that eventually a large portion of His countrymen, in direct violation of all their preconceived ideas upon the subject, accepted Him in that character; and that, very shortly after His death, the character expanded into one more adapted to the universality of the religion. There can be no doubt that to the eye simply of a secular historian, the short career of the Galilean peasant is the very crisis of the destinies of mankind. For from that moment of time human life took an inconceivably wider range than ever before—its interests became more momentous, its passions of fear and hope immeasurably deeper, as the belief in a future

life took possession of the soul. The world and the human race were transformed, and the decisive indication of it is the stupendous dominion erected by the Church, which would have been utterly impossible in any previous ages of the world. No more ruthless tyranny can be imagined in its corruption, no more powerful instrument, when exercised in good faith, has ever existed for stimulating and enforcing the highest ideals of virtue of which mankind is capable. The power of the medieval Church, political and social, is an outward and visible sign of the profound influence which Christianity has exercised, and is capable of exercising, over the inner nature of man.

It may be argued, of course, by the Wendovers of all periods, that transactions of this sublime and tremendous import can be explained by reference to merely human agency. But the philosophy of history which undertakes the task must gird itself to accomplish it; it must not claim the victory before it has begun the attempt. Why is Elsmere to be represented as surrendering every atom of his faith, when only the fringe of it was assailed? Why is he, contrary to all his previous training, and his official duty, to assume, without argument of any kind, that the religion of which he was the sworn defender, did not arise from a divine manifestation, but from the spontaneous and gradual development of the human mind, which is the only alternative? The leading features of this momentous period of history are adverse to that view. The change was too revolutionary, too abrupt, and we may even say too violent. Within the confines of Judaism its proclamation was too vehemently antagonistic to the most cherished con-

victions and prepossessions of the time. Without those confines, and as regards the Roman world and all the races which were classed together in the Jewish mind as heathen, the spread of the new religion was still less a normal development of the human mind. The great moral and spiritual miracle was not exhausted in Palestine, but was performed on a more extended sphere.

For the despised followers of the Galilean peasant, tainted by their connection with the detested Judaism which we have described, dethroned and abolished all local and national deities, and all religious institutions, substituting for them, on the authority of their Master, one Supreme Being, whose spirit was revealed in Himself, and disseminating through all ranks a belief in a future life, where alone the destinies of the race should find their true accomplishment. The leaven by which it was foretold the whole world should be leavened, has ever since fermented in human society. Christianity has accommodated itself to the spirit of successive ages, moulding the dominant races of the earth by its influence, and aiming throughout at a permanent and universal conquest.

"It may exist," says Dean Milman ('*Hist. Christ.*,' vol. i. p. 49), "in a certain form in a nation of savages," and he quotes the Abyssinians as an example, "as well as in a nation of philosophers, yet its specific character will almost entirely depend upon the character of the people who are its votaries. It must be considered, therefore, in constant connection with that character; it will darken with the darkness, and brighten with the light, of each succeeding century; in an ungenial time it will recede so far from its genuine and essen-

tial nature, as scarcely to retain any sign of its divine original; it will advance with the advancement of human nature, and keep up the moral to the utmost height of the intellectual culture of man."

It has encountered in its progress all the elements of human civilisation existing in the world, and enlisted them in its service. Though first promulgated in the Aramaic dialect, it soon became a Greek religion, and spread with rapidity amongst the Greek-speaking communities, whose philosophers speedily exercised upon it the inexhaustible spirit of speculation which had previously wandered at large over the problems which are raised by the mystery of existence. From them dogmatic theology took its rise; for, as Gibbon says, they were more solicitous to explore the nature of Christ than to practise His precepts. In the West the leaven worked in a more energetic community, with the political result that it restored and reorganised an empire as wide as that of Rome, extended over Europe by a universal code and provincial government; with the social result that it wielded a complete authority over family life and the inner nature of the individual. The rise of learning and art, the dissemination of knowledge by printing, the discovery of the antipodes and of the solar system, which completely revolutionised the ideas of man with regard to his position in the universe and on the globe, were powerless to stay its course. It entered upon a new phase in which the ideas and institutions which it had assimilated during its career of secular dominion were thrown on one side by a large portion of its followers.

It is Elsmere who challenged the appeal to history and never

once followed it up. He emphasised his appeal by saying that theism can never be disproved, but a miraculous Christianity can, for it is a question of documents and testimony. "Cæsarem appellasti, ad Cæsarem ibis." The documents and the testimony are constantly being examined. The author of 'Supernatural Religion' made wild work with them not very many years ago. But somehow the effect is soon erased from the intellectual tablet of living opinion. The broad facts of history are too strong. We admit that it is a question of history to be dealt with by the ordinary tests applicable to historical evidence. But intellectual stone-breaking as to the date and authenticity of this or that document, as to the exact details of this or that transaction, diverts attention from a broad issue and restricts it to details. It is history on a large scale, to be appreciated by penetrating beneath the surface of events and the mere letter of records. There is a short career of a three years' ministry, veiled in more or less obscurity, but forming, on the most superficial view of it and by general consent, a momentous epoch in the history of man, followed by eighteen centuries which have vindicated its authority, preceded by fifteen centuries which developed and foretold its consummation. The question raised is substantially this, Was the founder of Christianity a miraculous impersonation of the divine goodness; or was He developed, as it were, in the ordinary progress of the human mind amongst the peasants of Galilee? In other words, Was the personage who then crossed the stage of human events a mere embodiment of the highest notion of human perfection—the "ideal guide and repre-

sentative of humanity," as Mill calls Him; or was He the image and reflection of the Great Spirit, shown to one race of animate beings to point the road to an eternal state of existence, and in Himself to bridge the chasm between the Deity and the human soul? Every one must decide the question for himself, and the historical problem is vast enough to satisfy the activity of any intellect. But to dispose of it as Elsmere did, by saying that miracles are things which do not happen, and therefore the problem is how to find a new religion, and then to assume to find it on his own or Mr Grey's authority, is to take a cursory and inadequate view of the subject, not redeemed by anything which he had to place before the new brotherhood in Elgood Street, and which was limited to an eloquent narration of some of the details of the life of Christ, stimulated by the application of large maps. Grey, too, had nothing to say in reference to the Christian story and history. He took his stand, he said, on conscience and the moral life, and betook himself to philosophy for the chance it offered of knowing something more of God. Wendover is made to remark that the East is full of Messiahs: even a Vespasian works miracles; even a Nero cannot die, but fifty years after his death is still looked for as the inaugurator of a millennium of horror,—a view of the subject which, it is fair to say, was not intended to be exhaustive.

And if eighteen centuries of subsequent history afford cogent evidence of the fact that divine revelation has been made to man, there is also the evidence of an equal space of antecedent history. In the preface to *'Lothair,'* Lord Beaconsfield refers to the assaults

on Christianity and the sacred writings as the Celtic insurrection of last century and the Teutonic rebellion of this against the divine truths intrusted to the Semites. He points out that both have been sustained by the highest intellectual gifts that human nature has ever displayed; but that when the tumult subsides, the divine truths are found to be not less prevalent than before, and simply because they are divine. Without going into the question of race and the jealousies of race (though the remark recurred to one's memory when reading Elsmere's fascination at the beauty and order in which arose the emergent spectacle in his own mind, and his didactic "not otherwise in kind than in you and me"), it may with truth be affirmed that to grasp the idea of divine revelation it is necessary also to recognise the fact of a chosen people, specially selected, nurtured, and educated to become the cradle and nursery of that revelation during its gradual development and final accomplishment.

In dealing, however, with a scheme which desires to preserve Christianity, while it expels its preternatural character and its leading ideas and structure, it is unnecessary to labour this last point, which has been frequently developed. For Mr Matthew Arnold, whose object seems to have been the same with that of Mrs Ward (though he would have been the last man in England, we take it, to join the new sect), has in his *'Literature and Dogma,'* and the books which followed, fully conceded it. Approaching the subject from the same point of view as Robert Elsmere—namely, the desire to get at the truth and reality of the sacred records, so far as they may be deemed to be demonstrably

verifiable by experience—his whole argument was to show that, independently of the preternatural, there was convincing testimony to the truth as well as the immense importance of the revelation committed to Israel, and that the people to whom such revelation (using the word in a non-miraculous sense) was made, fully deserved to be singled out as the Bible singles them out. His conclusion was that the Old Testament was filled with the word and thought of righteousness,—that no people of whom history has cognisance ever grasped with such clearness and tenacity as the Jews the idea that therein is the fulfilment of human life,—that though other nations may have imbibed that idea, Israel alone amongst the nations was *possessed* with it,—that its testimonies filled his whole soul, as the sense of beauty filled that of the Greeks,—that this was the joy of his heart and the guiding principle of his existence. To the Hebrew race, therefore, it is conceded that there belonged the intuitive perception that man is under the dominion of a moral law not of his own creation; that the ideas of moral order so laid hold upon the race and acted with such pressure upon it as to become the master element in its thoughts, the sheet-anchor of its existence. In other words, to that race belonged the intuition of the Eternal Power “which makes for righteousness.” It was the centre and source of those ideas of moral order and conduct with which mankind has affinity, but which pressed on Israel’s spirit with extraordinary power. The idea of a chosen people, therefore, is fully adopted and it is also supplemented by the further theory that the religion new given at the

Christian era was to restore that intuition which Israel had lost, to give a fuller idea of righteousness, to unfold the method of its attainment, to restore to it the sanction of happiness. The vice of the theory is, that the author of it claimed to look back across the centuries and completely remodel the revelation by the light of what he considered reasonable and credible, freely imputing misapprehension to its first recipients, to whose convictions, translated into superhuman energy, he was alone indebted for any knowledge of it.

Inadequate as this theory must be recognised to be, it at all events concedes the idea of a chosen people and the ultimate fulfilment of a gradual revelation, while denying, as we understand it, its miraculous character. It is to be accepted not because of a divine origin, but because the Bible, read aright—that is, with a disposition to accept nothing but what is verifiable by experience—with the misapprehensions of ages controlled by means of a tact coming in a clear and fair mind from a wide literary experience, deals with the whole subject in a way incomparable for effectiveness. The whole book strikes us as disclosing a vague and unsatisfactory literary conception, rather than a practical religion; but, such as it is, we are convinced that it is the real parent of the new brotherhood in Elgood Street. It has been acutely observed that no religious creed was ever yet overthrown by a philosophical theory. The theories about Christianity have been innumerable, but the doctrines of revelation and redemption will outlast them all.

One of the special character-

istics of the history of the chosen people relating to this subject, was the growth of that expectation to which we have already adverted. It became eventually the absorbing dominant characteristic of the race. Further, it was not confined to the Jewish nation, which it notoriously plunged into unrest and stimulated to acts of turbulence. Dean Stanley, in his 'Lectures on the Jewish Church,' collects the authorities for saying that though the Roman statesmen, the Grecian philosophers, and the Jewish rabbis looked for nothing beyond the immediate horizon, yet "the Sibylline mystics at Alexandria, the poets at Rome, the peasants in Syria, were wound up to the expectation of 'some beginning of a new order of the ages,' some hero 'who from Palestine should govern the habitable world,' some Cause 'in which the East should once more wax strong.'"

It is only material to make this further observation, that while the literary spirit of the age is so strongly opposed to the idea of miraculous revelation, accepting, however, all its results, and referring them to the operation of merely human agency, the scientific spirit does not share in that opposition to anything like the same extent. Mill's view on this subject was expressed in his posthumous 'Essays,' and possibly gave little satisfaction to some of his admirers, but at all events has never been refuted. It was carefully argued out, with the result that he considered that in the present state of our knowledge the adaptations in Nature afforded a large balance of probability in favour of creation by intelligence. And with regard to miraculous revelation, and its position on the platform of science, his view was

much more favourable than any which a purely literary and critical spirit seems to allow.

"The alleged revelation," he says, "is not obliged to build up its case from the foundation; it has not to prove the very existence of the Being from whom it professes to come. It claims to be a message from a Being whose existence, whose power, and to a certain extent whose wisdom and goodness are, if not proved, at least indicated, with more or less of probability by the phenomena of Nature." And with regard to Christian revelation in particular, he adds—"It would both have agreed with all that we know of His government to have made provision in the scheme of creation for its arising at the appointed time by natural development; which, let it be added, all the knowledge we now possess concerning the history of the human mind, tends to the conclusion that it actually did."

If Mill could reach these conclusions solely from a scientific survey of phenomena, and from exclusively inductive considerations, those who start as Elsmere, and especially Grey, do, with an implicit belief in the Almighty Father, according to the first limb of the Apostles' Creed, and also in constant revelation and inspiration (using both terms in a non-miraculous sense), ought not to experience such overwhelming difficulty.

But we are told (vol. iii. p. 39) that abstract thought had comparatively little to do with Elsmere's relinquishment of the Church of England. And that is the bewildering part of it. It had nothing to do with his adoption of the Church of England, and little to do with his relinquishment of it. He seems to have yielded to the

fascination of the wholly new mental picture which rose up before him, in the stillness of the night, of a purely human Christ. That appears at once to have intercepted his previous images of thought, which we are told were innumerable. Yet one of those images must have been of a super-human majesty, which announced a divine mission, accomplished then and there the destiny of the Jewish race, and commanded a new religion to arise from amid the wrecks of the older faiths, and was obeyed. The difficulty is to understand why that image was shattered, and by what confusion of ideas the purely human Christ is now, at this distance of time, entitled to such intensity of devotion. At one time we are told that his problem was how to find a religion. He told the Elgood Street congregation that his object was "to reconceive the Christ," and to clear away the error and mistake by which His true story was obscured. Yet at the same time he also tells them that His life was wrought ineffably into the higher civilisation and the nobler social conceptions of Europe. "It is wrought into your being and mine. We are what we are, as Englishmen and as citizens, mainly because a Galilean peasant was born and grew to manhood, and lived and loved and died." The assertion is definite and dogmatic, but its truth is not accounted for. No attempt is made to show that such a result, or that any analogous result, would have accrued if the Christianity which struggled with the darkest ages of Europe, and sought to leaven and animate the human race, onwards in its development, had, instead of being based upon the creed of the Homoousian, presented to the mind

of successive generations the vague and misty ideas recorded in this book.

However, it is not the object of this review to vindicate any physical miracle or any special creed, but to analyse the crude and unsatisfactory mental conception which underlies the new scheme. It may be, perhaps, that the receding tide of belief with respect to physical miracle may compel this or a later generation to remodel their views and to appreciate their faith, when what is called the "envelope of miracle" has been cast aside. If so, however calamitous, it will not be the first time that Christian belief has undergone reformation, or that the religion has altered its mode of approaching the intellect and heart of man. We owe to Dean Milman, the greatest ecclesiastical historian whom the Church of England has yet produced, a clear historical account of the successive modifications of Christianity, by which it accommodated itself to the spirit of successive ages, and especially of the way in which Latin or Papal Christianity flourished and then receded, and finally ceased to be the exclusive or even the paramount view of the Christian religion. It must have been a far greater disruption of thought than is occasioned by disbelief in physical miracle, when the Teutonic races of Europe awoke to the conviction that the form of religion which they had for centuries adopted was materialistic and emotional beyond all limits, and that man could not devolve upon another the oppressive question of his eternal destiny. Protestantism, which made this vast rent in the antecedent beliefs of the Christian religion, and which rejected the materialised notion of Deity, adopted to the fullest extent

the miraculous revelation and the divinity of Christ; but at the same time ushered in a more intellectual and more independent faith, which it may be safely predicted will, as time goes on, know no limits to its speculation. The belief of the accomplished historian to whom we have referred, resulting from his comprehensive survey of fifteen centuries of the progress of the Christian faith, was that it "had adapted itself with wonderful versatility, but with a faithful conservation of its inner vital spirit, to all vicissitudes and phases of man's social, moral, and intellectual being," and that, assuming its perpetuity, it would continue so to adapt itself. To the historian of the future he referred the question: "What distinctness of conception, what precision of language, may be indispensable to true faith? What part of the ancient dogmatic system may be allowed silently to fall into disuse, as at least superfluous, and as beyond the proper range of human thought and language? How far the sacred records may, without real peril to their truth, be subjected to closer investigation? to what wider interpretation, especially of the Semitic portion of them, those records may submit, and wisely submit, in order to harmonise them with the irrefutable conclusions of science? How far the Eastern veil of allegory which hangs over their truth may be torn away to show their unshadowed essence? How far the poetic vehicle through which truth is conveyed may be gently severed from the truth?"

Accordingly we make no complaint of Mrs Ward's book, so far as it is a reverent and devout attempt to simplify belief, reduce dogma, find support for Christian

teaching and faith on the ground of verifiable experience. The safeguard of religious belief in Protestant countries is that it is ultimately founded on the principle of free inquiry. In countries where the Roman Catholic Church has mainly flourished, the alternative appears to be either to surrender completely to an authoritative creed which it is blasphemy to examine, or to draw off into the opposite camp of atheistic antipathy. But Mrs Ward has not been content with efforts to lighten the cargo; her scheme, if accepted, would scuttle the ship. The religion which is left is no religion at all. It is destitute of the essential element of religion, which is, to satisfy the organic demand of man for relation with his Creator. It is destitute, too, of all practical utility, for it prescribes only for the whole and not for the sick; it seeks the righteous and leaves sinners in the lurch. The book is an expression of the homage which agnosticism pays to the Christian faith—a recoil from negation, an attempt at compromise. But it raises a tremendous issue, which has, in our opinion, been most inadequately treated. While we fully recognise that the inexhaustible interest of the Christian faith may welcome any and every attempt to elucidate it which is made in reverence and good faith, still we protest with all emphasis against the central idea which underlies this particular treatment—viz., that the orthodox belief in man's redemption and the agency by which it has been effected stands confessed as an imposture which will not bear the light. There are, as Mr Gladstone says, in his recent review of this book, undoubted difficulties in the way of

belief; but some way out of such difficulties, we believe, may be found short of abject surrender, abjuring the relations between God and man which were established by divine agency, and re-establishing them on the authority of "that great son of modern Oxford," as he is called, Mr Grey. Without those relations all is moral chaos, and man is reduced to the position so graphically described by Carlyle, that of shouting question after question into the cave of human destiny, with a mocking echo for his sole reply. The subject is the vastest which can engage the attention of mankind, and all we can do is to adjure those who may be disposed to yield to the intellectual fascination of insisting upon scientifically verifiable experience as the only road to conviction, to pause long before they exchange the faith

of ages for Elsmere's vague and misty speculations, which are as unsubstantial as they are unintelligible. To abandon the services of the Church of England, with its language and ritual, formed by the piety and hallowed by the reverence of successive generations, for the ghastly performances in Elgood Street, would scarcely be consistent with sanity. This book is unluckily the veritable offspring of the time. It has run through several editions, and is written with a force and power which fully account for its popularity; but on close examination we cannot believe that any human being, whether he is of the type of Wendover or of modern Oxford, can be seriously helped in his religious development by the ineffective reasoning and the bewildering conclusions which are here presented for his consideration.

A STIFF-NECKED GENERATION.

CHAPTER XIV.—HARTLAND'S RESOLUTION.

"But when he learns that you have blest
Another with your heart,
He'll bid aspiring passion rest
And act a brother's part."

—SHERIDAN.

ALMOST any other man who had done what Gilbert had done, would have been in bed the next day, groaning with aches and pains, cold, or rheumatism,—but the hardy soldier's constitution was proof against them all.

Of temperate habits, he understood the use of stimulants on occasion; and on the evening following his adventure in the mill-stream he drank hot brandy-and-water until aware that the fumes were mounting to his head, then sank beneath the blankets; and in the profuse perspiration thus induced, and with all emotions, recollections, and anticipations lulled to rest, he slept long and soundly, and awoke with only a slight headache—the result of the brandy—to tell that he had ever had anything to beware of.

One glorious, all-embracing yawn convinced him of the fact.

"Not even stiff, by Jove!" he exclaimed, joyfully; "well, good luck to Billy Barley! for, if I am not mistaken, this clinches my matter. Her face was enough, my beautiful, brave Rosamund! How she looked at me! How plainly all could read what was passing in her heart! It was rough on a fellow to have to run off at such a moment; but if I had not, who knows in what case I might have been this morning? No, no: discretion was the tip last night for me; but to-day, ay, to-day!"—and he rose on his elbow, and rang the bell with a

peal that told its own story. No sick and sorry invalid was in the apartment whence that summons emanated. "Nevertheless, for once I'll try a lady's remedy, and breakfast in bed," quoth the major, stretching himself again; "these September mornings are chilly, and my pores have been finely opened. I'll wait till the sun has warmed the air a little. Let me see, we shall be into October in a few days; no wonder it's getting to feel autumnal. Bring me up a good trayful," to the servant; "and as quick as you can, like a good fellow, for I am as hungry as a hunter."

His breakfast tasted good, uncommonly good, that morning. Every mouthful had its appropriate seasoning of pleasing reflection, and with every draught from the coffee-cup was inhaled some new and joyful consideration.

Now it was the grasp of Mr Liscard's hand,—now Lady Caroline's reluctant congratulations,—now, and best—far best of all—Rosamund's glowing, expressive silence. Other and graver thoughts were there, but can he be blamed if, as time passed, these last assumed the ascendancy? His own life was at its crisis.

Even the new warmth of Lord Hartland's tone and manner could add something to the cup which was already brimming over, and with that remembrance he felt that he had now really nothing left to wish for.

The coffee-cup had barely been set down empty ere Hartland's card was sent up.

"Lord Hartland!" exclaimed Gilbert. "Sent to inquire, I suppose?"

"Here himself, sir; but I was not to trouble you, when he heard you were not up yet. But I said I would just bring up the card, sir."

"Why, of course. But," said Gilbert, casting a hasty glance round the small and somewhat bare apartment, "I wish I had thought of that. I can't see him here. But I shall never get down in time. Besides, I—my head is still rather muzzy. What in the name of goodness am I to do?"

The servant waited in silence.

"He must come up, I suppose," concluded his master, at last: "here, pull the counterpane straight; and open the window; and carry those breakfast things away; and don't leave the brandy-bottle, you fool," calling after the retreating figure in a rising voice. Then, *sotto voce*: "Of all the mornings in the world to take! Never did such a thing in my life before, as stop in bed for breakfast. And everything so uncomfortable too!" looking disconsolately around, while awaiting the approach of his visitor,—and to do the speaker justice, his chagrin was not ill founded, for a neater or trimmer apartment than his own was not usually to be found. Chagrin and discomfiture, and every vexing sensation fled, however, at Hartland's entrance. The grip of his hand, the gleam of his eye, even the tone of his "Good morning," were signs unmistakable of the new terms on which the two were now to be with each other.

"Awfully kind of you. I am afraid—hasn't he cleared a chair?" said Gilbert, sitting up and look-

ing about. "I say! I am ashamed. The idiot never to see—well, perhaps that's the best place," as his visitor sat down upon the bed. "I don't know when I have been so unfit to be seen,—but the fact is, I just threw down my clothes anywhere last night, and rummaged about to get things to pile on the bed,—and then I would not let my servant in to put me straight, as I wanted to go off to sleep."

"None the worse, are you?" said Hartland, who saw nothing amiss.

"Not a bit; oh no. Only lazy, as you see. 'Pon my word, I am ashamed to be caught like this."

"I did not expect to find you up."

"Did you not? I'm up, and down, and breakfasted, and out of-doors by this time as a rule."

"I daresay; but you don't go about saving drowning boys in mill-dams as a rule."

Gilbert laughed. "Is the little chap all right?"

"His mother has got him in bed likewise. I looked in at their cottage on my way here, thinking you would be glad to know. Oh, he'll do well enough; and it ought to be a lesson to the whole of them—which it won't. However, you have done your part. I say," suddenly, "is it possible for a man of my age to learn to swim?"

"You can't swim?"

"I never learned."

"Of course, any one can learn," said Gilbert, "but very few seem to do so in after-life. Odd, isn't it, that, as a rule, sailors can't swim?"

"How did you learn?"

"At Eton."

Eton had done so much for him, if it had done no more. It had not been able to fulfil its wonted boast; no art, no association, no

discipline could turn Frederick Gilbert into a gentleman, but he had gained some advantages from his stay there.

"Ah, I had not that chance," observed his companion, quietly.

"Where were you?"

"Nowhere."

"Not at any public school?"

"My father could not afford it."

"I forgot. Of course, you were born and bred in India."

"Born, but not bred. I was educated—so far as a boy's education ending at the age of seventeen, can be called by that name—in England."

"Indeed?"

"Yes," said Hartland, looking him in the face. "In England—at an English grammar-school; and at seventeen I left that, entered the service, and sailed for India. I know very little; I have learned next to nothing. They tell me that it is my own fault; it may be—the fact remains. There is not a man of my age who could not put me to shame in a hundred ways." And he got off the bed, and walked to the window. In the bitterness which prompted the confession, there was another emotion which he was fain to hide, an involuntary comparison between himself and the man to whom he was speaking. Without having possessed a single early advantage, cut adrift from a cheerless home while still a stripling, imprisoned within the narrowest range of experience during the best part of his early youth, hampered by want of money and influence, until money and influence were no longer needed as means to an end, Hartland was yet conscious that he in himself was not unworthy of the name he bore; but no one knew, no one would ever have dreamed of that strange longing for an ideal past

which ever and anon rose up within his breast. If he had had Gilbert's chances!—and even as it was! But no; he chid himself for the thought. The other was the superior; why should he detract through envy?

He stood at the window, looking out.

"It is a pretty stretch of country, isn't it?" said Gilbert, thankful to change the subject. "I don't know that I ever saw a prettier bit of country."

"It is pretty."

"And such lots of nice people about. I don't know that I ever was in a better neighbourhood."

Hartland was silent. It was not for him to praise the neighbourhood.

"Of course, it is nothing to you whether people are disposed to be sociable or not," continued the speaker. "You are independent; you can go anywhere you like, choose your own associates, and make your own circle; in short, you are Lord Hartland, and Lord Hartland will find open doors anywhere and everywhere. But for me it is different,"—for it was now his turn for modesty,—"I am tied here, whether I will or no; and, of course, it is a great matter to find houses of the right sort. Jolly and friendly, you know. I hate your prim and starch houses"—he stopped short on the extreme edge of a blunder.

Hartland was still by the window with his back turned; but something, an almost imperceptible movement, betrayed that he had heard and understood.

("If I am ever to get on ahead, now is my time," concluded Gilbert, swiftly; "I must and will have it out now.") "Lord Hartland," said he, aloud, "I wonder if I should be trespassing too severely on your kindness and our

acquaintanceship"—(he would have liked to say friendship, but refrained)—"if I ask you to listen to me for a few minutes, and—and—and—the fact is, that I have no one, not a soul here, whom I can take into confidence, not one at least who can give me a word of advice or encouragement, or—or anything. They are very good fellows, but they don't know the world; at least, ahem! not in the way I mean," plucking nervously at the sheet, and rumpling it between his fingers. "The long and the short of the matter is, I am in for it at last; the old story, you know,—and—and I suppose every man feels the same at some time or other, and this is my time, d'ye see?"—he broke off with so anxious and wistful an attempt at a laugh, that there could be no doubt as to what it conveyed. He was too deeply in earnest for any real security.

Hartland bent his head. He would have liked to nod, and thought he did nod cordially and sympathetically; but, as a matter of fact, the slow and thoughtful downward incline of the neck could not have been connected with the term in the mind of any one.

"May I go on?" proceeded Gilbert, seeing he was not repulsed. "Of course I have no right to trouble you with my affairs——"

"Oh, it is all right. No trouble."

"It is your cousin, Rosamund Liscard, you know."

Yes, Hartland knew. He could not pretend he did not know, and his monosyllabic response betrayed neither surprise nor anything else.

"Yes?"

"I think that I may say she and I understand each other,"

continued the lover, more fluently now that the ice was broken. "We have not known each other long; we have not been altogether slow over it; but I have shown my sentiments pretty openly, and Miss Liscard——"

—"Has shown hers?"

"No, no; hardly that. Of course I did not mean that. No, hang it! I have no right to say that. But without any harm, a girl may—may—I hardly know how to put it, but I assure you that I would not for the world be supposed to hint that—in short, I only mean that, so far, I have certainly not received any discouragement. At least that is my own impression; but perhaps you would be so kind—so very kind—as to tell me what you think? I may be—I hope to heaven I am not—but it is quite possible that I may be altogether mistaken, and deceiving myself."

Could Em and Etta but have heard him!

And yet Gilbert, in his present embarrassment and timidity, was, truth to tell, an infinitely preferable person in the eyes of any one unbiassed, to the confident and consequential only son of the family, so dear to the family heart.

His own people might bow before their idol; but he would hardly have found favour in Lord Hartland's eyes, had it occurred to him to shine, as he was wont to do, when revolving in his own sphere. As it was, there was really nothing at which umbrage could reasonably be taken; and accordingly, "I think you have a very good chance," could be said with all the sincerity and readiness the occasion seemed to demand.

The major's eyes glistened. "You think she likes me?"

"I am sure she likes you."

"But—ah—hem—eh?"

"Oh, no 'buts,'" said Hartland, laughing.

"Your tone seemed to imply, did it not—eh?"

—"What?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. I fancied there was something more coming."

"There may have been," replied Hartland, after a momentary hesitation. "To be frank, there was. But it does not relate, or, at least, not directly so, to my cousin. I had, I believe, a passing thought of some one else——"

("Old Bluegown," assented Gilbert, inwardly. "So had I—many passing thoughts; ugly ones too. I know what you mean very well, young gentleman—a great deal better than I like to know, in fact. And it was on this very point I required your aid and reassurances. I thought I should gather from you how the wind blows in that quarter; and so I have. Deuced cold, evidently. He does not wish to say anything direct, but I can see plainly enough that friend Hartland is signalling me to look out for squalls.")

"Your best chance of success," said Hartland, rousing himself so suddenly that his companion almost started,—“indeed, if I may speak plainly, your only chance is to go straight to Mr Liscard, and ask his permission to address his daughter, showing, at the same time, as no doubt you are able to do, that you can maintain her properly.”

"Exactly my own view"—Gilbert rose on his elbow eagerly; "as you say, I can do the thing properly. Oh yes, my old dad will come down with the sinews of war. He is a rich man, and I am his eldest child and only son. Oh, I am not afraid. He knows what is up, for I have sounded him already; and of course the connection is all

he could desire. Otherwise I should never have presumed——oh, you are not going?"

"I must, I fear. Time flies."

"You think, then, that I may hope?"

"Certainly."

"It is a plunge, you know," observed the lover, anxious to be satisfied, but ready to wish that the answers had been a shade less laconic, "but after all——"

"After all, *you* are not the man to shirk a plunge," rejoined Hartland, with another effort at cordiality. "Your feat of yesterday——"

"Oh, that was nothing."

"Let us hope it was a good omen, and that you will be crowned a second time with success." He paused a moment, then held out his hand. "With all my heart I wish it you, Gilbert." He then left the room.

"Good fellow, capital fellow," murmured Gilbert, looking after him with renewed animation. "I will say that for Hartland, there is no humbug about him. The sort of fellow you need to know, though. Now and then, even to-day when he was so awfully kind and friendly, yet even to-day I could have fancied I detected here and there a touch of the *bluegown* manner, as if he had caught it of that infernal woman,—oh, confound it! I must really take care what I say. I must teach my tongue to crop its adjectives if Lady Caroline is going to be my mamma-in-law. As for Hartland, it will be jolly having such a swell for a cousin; and he and Rosamund are first-rate friends, I can see that. We shall hit it off, all round, we three." Then, who cares for the rest?"

He bounded out of bed, rang the bell, and fell to the operations of his toilet with new life in his

veins. "Now for action; now for victory; now for the fairest prize in Christendom," he cried gaily; "in one word, now for Rosamund. Would that I could fly to her on the wings of love and the morning; but as that cannot be, at any rate I will get through every single thing that has to be done by three o'clock, put all in order, and be off then to strike while the iron's hot,—and if I am not an engaged man by this time to-morrow, I know whose fault it will *not* be."

So cogitating, with the promptitude and despatch which characterised all his actions, he proceeded vigorously, and was soon hearing reports, examining papers, and giving audiences, as though solely and exclusively occupied by the business and routine of military life.

Somewhere about the same hour, another conversation, in effect somewhat similar to that above narrated, and of fully as much importance to our story, was being carried on within a few miles of Longminster.

Rosamund had walked over early to the Abbey—for what reason she herself best knew—and had found her aunt alone.

"Nobody but me, my love," said Lady Julia, briskly. "Hartland will be in presently, for he has been gone some time. He started directly after breakfast to ride over to Longminster; he likes an early ride, you know, and he and I are both early people" (she had been the latest in the world, till Hartland's Indian habits had reformed her), "so he thought he would go and inquire after Major Gilbert this morning."

"Is he gone there?" said Rosamund, sparkling up.

"Yes. You will hear the report, if you wait till he returns, though I daresay your mother

will send also." It was characteristic that she said "your mother," not "your father"; that no one ever thought of any other person than Lady Caroline doing anything at King's Common.

"I don't know. Perhaps. But I think—I daresay he will come to us," said Rosamund, shyly.

"And oh, my dear, what a fuss you will make about him if he does!—and so you ought. The dear little boy also—not but what he is the worst boy in the Sunday-school; but then this will be a lesson to him. And to think of that good, kind, wonderful Major Gilbert risking his far more valuable life—well, perhaps I ought not to say more valuable, only it really *is*, you know. And just think what it would have been if the one had been given for the other! Terrible, quite terrible. Oh, it was a splendid, a daring act! I feel quite proud, quite elated by such a thing having been done at King's Common. It was a mercy all of you were there."

"Not that we did any good."

"I mean that your brave, noble Major Gilbert was. How I wish I had been with you! And yet it would have been too horrible. None of you went to the pool?"

"No. Mamma would not let us."

"But you saw him—you spoke to him afterwards? I could envy you to have had such a hero among you. I, too, must add my word. You say he will come over to-day?"

"I don't know. I think so. Aunt Julia?"

"Well, my love?"

"Did Hartland—did he speak as if—was he—what did he tell you about it all?"

"Oh, my dear, you never heard anything like it. I told him he was really eloquent. Hartland,

who is usually so composed—you know him, Rosamund—Hartland is not an enthusiastic person; now, is he?"

"Certainly not, Aunt Julia."

"Would you have believed he could be carried away?"

"Well, no—I don't know. I almost think I could, if—the occasion warranted it."

"You have never seen him so, I am sure?"

"No."

"You are turning something over in your mind, Rosamund. Ah, well, I daresay you are right. Young people are sharper-sighted than old ones, and I daresay you understand Hartland; but, however, *I* was surprised. It did my heart good to listen."

"He—I suppose he thought it a fine thing to do?"

"He said he had never seen a finer. The coolness, the judgment that Major Gilbert displayed were beyond everything. His calm facing of a horrid death," proceeded Lady Julia, with inefable enjoyment, "was what struck Hartland most: his knowledge that if the boy saw him he would seize and drag him down—my dear, you are changing colour, I ought not to have said it; but now that all is happily over——"

"Oh yes," said Rosamund, with a struggling smile, "all is happily over—in that way. But—but, dear auntie, don't you know that there is still—that Major Gilbert——"

——"Why, dear me! yes, I remember now, to be sure," cried Lady Julia, with a sudden sense of enlightenment,—"I remember of course, my dear child, to what you refer; but surely you are not troubling about that? There was a little scene, because your mamma did not fancy your new acquaintance, and you felt that she had been

rather ungracious; was not that it? Oh, but after this, there need be no fear. The regiment is soon going away; and for the few times she need meet Major Gilbert——"

——"Aunt Julia——"

"Well, love?"

"Why should it be only a few times?"

"There cannot be many more meetings. The summer is over, and the winter gaieties never begin much before Christmas. I understand that Major Gilbert will be gone by that time."

"You think he will go without—a word?"

"A word, my dear?"

"That he—that we—that he and I——?"

"That he and you?" murmured Lady Julia, still in bewilderment; but then suddenly she almost shrieked, as if a thunderbolt had struck her, "That he and you?"

Then Rosamund held up her head.

"Yes, aunt, you know now what I mean. *He—and—I.*"

For a moment there was not another word spoken. The overwhelming revelation, the heaving bosom of the defiant girl—for it was again Rosamund, up in arms, who spoke—were too much for the unfortunate recipient of her confidence, and Lady Julia sank into a chair, her eyes starting from her head.

"He—and—you," she repeated at last, "I—I, why, Rosamund, I am dreaming, I am deaf, —surely I am deaf or dreaming," putting her hand to her brow; "surely, surely, —oh, dear me, dear me!"—a pause; then all at once broke forth the torrent, "I cannot believe it, I cannot believe it! It would be too dreadful. Oh, my dear, dear, dearest niece, you cannot, oh, you must not mean *that*—not *that*, anything but *that*,

my own Rosamund; oh, you shall not be urged or pressed to marry any one; only, my darling, wait; only wait, and do not, do not think of this terrible, foolish idea again."

"Foolish idea!" cried Rosamund, with a flash. Every injudicious syllable was a rivet in her resolution.

"My dear, I did not mean that. No, you are not to be blamed. It is not foolish, it is only natural; you see him with this halo of glory round his head——"

"Nonsense," said Rosamund, angrily. "You talk, aunt, as if I were a child."

"But, my dear, my darling, what else are you? Who are you, to judge for yourself, and to know what is best for you? And though Major Gilbert is brave and noble, still—oh, dear, how to say it? Oh, my child, think of your poor mother and all of us. Could he ever become one of the family?" pleaded the poor lady, with grotesque pathos; "could we ever call him by his name? Could he come and go among ourselves, and take his place——?"

——"Of course he could."

"I am making you angry, my poor dear; and heaven knows that is the last thing I wish to do," wailed poor Lady Julia, clasping her hands in an agony of perplexity and despair; "I have no tact, no sense. To go and take you up seriously, when after all——" with

a happy thought, "after all, I daresay you did not above half mean what you said, Rosamund. I have been precipitate, as usual. Carried away by my own silly fancies, have I not? Say that I have, love—come; tell Aunt Julia she is an old goosey, as she always was, and we will forget it all. Come, dear Rosamund," holding out a trembling hand. "What? . . . Oh, take it, darling, take it! Rosamund . . .? Tears . . .? But, my child, you know nothing, utterly, absolutely nothing of this man; you have only met him at a few summer parties, you have danced once or twice together at a ball; oh, you do not, you cannot care for him, not as you would care for—well, well, you *think* you do. You do not yourself see that this is not—that this is only what we *all* feel for a brave, gallant hero; I am sure your mother and I, and every one of us, we all feel the same—an immense admiration and gratitude, and—and—everything else for Major Gilbert as Billy Barley's deliverer, and an honoured guest, and Hartland's friend, and—anything, yes, anything but *that*. And you, dearest child, you cannot think of him either in any other light? You cannot possibly imagine that you love him?" A pause. Then springing to her feet, "Good heavens! Rosamund, you would not marry the man?"

"But I would," said Rosamund.

CHAPTER XV.—HE WAS THE SYMBOL OF HER TRIUMPH.

Stay—if I am never crost,
Half the pleasure will be lost.
Lovers may of course complain
Of their trouble and their pain;
But if pain and trouble cease,
Love without it would not please."

—ANON.

Right or wrong, wise or foolish, said she would do a thing, that if Lady Caroline's daughter had thought would she do; and thus it

came to pass, that the happy major had the happiness of reporting his happiness home, by that very evening's post.

The letter went in Mr Liscard's own post-bag, and was written at Lady Caroline's own davenport.

She was up-stairs, poor lady, dressing for dinner—that dinner to which Gilbert had at last made good many intentions of stopping, and it was well indeed she was so, as she was thus saved knowing the insult that was being added to her injury.

"May I write here?" inquired the now privileged guest, seating himself easily in the well-known, well-detested chair, and thinking, as he did so, how some day, but not just yet, he would have a laugh with his betrothed over the light in which it had hitherto been regarded by him. "I want just to send my old pater a line," he added; "he is expecting it."

"Is he?" Rosamund was standing by, triumphant and successful. The great ordeal had been gone through, and she had carried the day in the very teeth of bitter opposition and reproach.

Her mother had been made to yield, her father had unexpectedly stood forward on her side, and her lover had shown himself bold and resolute, and had furthermore justified his being so. The few words which she had overheard passing between her parents subsequently had been music to her ear. "The settlement will be exceptionally handsome, and the position perfectly suitable. We should be absolute fools to refuse," had been uttered in her father's tones with an energy to which no one was less accustomed than his wife, and perhaps it was in consequence of this that her reply, "The thing is done. You have given your consent," was mut-

tered in lower and more uncertain accents than was usual on her part. She had then been silent for a long time, and Rosamund had run away rejoicing.

She stood rejoicing now by Gilbert's side.

He was in her eyes the symbol of her victory. For him she had battled and won, and she was proud of her prize. His heroism of the previous day was still investing him with its glory, added to which here he was, such a fine, big, handsome fellow, that it was in itself something to call such a man all her own.

And then he loved her. And Rosamund had never been loved before. It was a new and wonderful experience.

"Why, you see, I'm a dutiful son," explained Gilbert, truthfully enough, "and," he added, with a laugh, "moreover, I am a dependent one. You understand that, eh, Rosamund?"

She had been "Rosamund" for fully two hours now.

"Oh yes." Not that she did, or heard, but it would have been "Oh yes" to anything at the moment.

"I could not have spoken to your father without first consulting mine. I had to show I was not exactly a pauper, you know," said Gilbert, smiling complacently.

("The settlement exceptionally handsome," quoth Rosamund, internally, and was pleased that he had so acquitted herself; but for her own part she would almost have preferred poverty. Romantic eighteen not infrequently does.)

"They will all be immensely pleased," continued the writer, opening the paper-and-envelope case, and proceeding to rummage through its contents.

"Are you looking for anything?" inquired she.

He was, in the hope of turning up a sheet with a coroneted stamp; for not being learned in such lore, he could not help thinking the august Lady Caroline must be entitled to such.

"Is that paper not right?" questioned Rosamund, solicitously. "I am afraid it is rather a small size. Mamma never writes on any but the smallest paper, and no one else uses her davenport. This is her especial davenport, you know. There is every kind of paper on the library table. Would you not rather——?"

But he would not rather at all.

It took his fancy amazingly thus to set his foot, as it were, on the neck of his enemy at the very outset of his career, and he protested that the smallest-sized paper in the world would do for all that was required.

Then she had to send her message, and that in her own hand; and she found it strangely pleasant to have the "little hand"—which, by the way, was not particularly little, and had never been noticed before—kissed and admired, and the writing itself praised—though it was about as bad as a well-educated young lady's very best copy-book handwriting usually is.

Gilbert, like a true gallant, was in love with his fair at all points, and stuck at nothing. Neither black nor golden hair had, he vowed, any attractions for him; nothing but brown—warm, red, waving brown (passing his hand over the brown in question)—could ever command his homage. Tall women he detested; likewise short, broad, stumpy ones. Rosamund's height was perfection. Likewise were her eyes, nose, and mouth perfection; likewise were her beautiful voice and ringing laugh; likewise, moreover, was her dancing, and her running, and

her riding—to listen to him was like drinking one long, deep, perfumed, intoxicating draught.

At last she got away, scarce knowing what ground she stood upon; how she felt; where, or what she was.

In her hand were the flowers he had bidden her wear; her ear rang with his sweet flatteries; and her cheek was flushed with his kisses.

What a day it had been! She was trembling all over with excitement; thoughts, recollections, hopes and wishes whirling tumultuously through her brain; gleeful anticipations, making all the future dance before her vision; while even the present was far, far beyond anything the past had ever been.

What was now to her the dullness, the grimness, the oppression of that endless routine, which had seemed as if it must go on for ever and ever in that house? What were the rules, and restrictions, and debates, and cogitations over every trifle, and difficulties over the making of every new acquaintance, and prohibitions in which Lady Caroline delighted?

She was about to flee them all. The yearnings of her soul were to be satisfied at last. Emancipation was at hand.

What though she must now speed like lightning through a toilet delayed to the last minute? Anything, put on anyhow, would look well on such a night. Little Esther, the handmaiden, understood very distinctly the hurry and the frolic of such a dressing, and participated heart and soul.

All the household were Gilbert's adherents. If they thought at all of Lord Hartland, the other eligible bachelor, it was to conjecture that he was not yet ripe for matrimony, but that he would, in all probability, one day bring home a

titled dame, who would reinstate his fortunes, and enable him to fill Lady Julia's place when Lady Julia should be no longer there.

That day, all devoutly hoped, would be long in coming.

For good Julia was greatly beloved, and her summer treats and winter festivals, her gifts, her charities, her indulgence, and her easy rule, were appreciated scarcely less at King's Common than at the Abbey itself.

So my lord was not to wed just yet. That being settled, Major Gilbert was a fine suitor for Miss Rosamund; and his being in her lady-mother's black books rather added to his popularity than diminished it. He had precisely the sort of jovial authoritative air which most tells with inferiors; he was liberal with his money; and he gave himself no airs. Added to which, it was a treat to see him riding at the head of his men through the streets of Longminster; and a comely corporal, spanking over now and again, in full uniform, with a note or a message, and an important notion of the officer who had despatched it—all went into the same scale.

It stood to reason that the rescue of Billy Barley placed the already well-disposed hearts of all at Gilbert's feet.

"Do be quick, Esther. There's the five-minutes gong."

"If you jump about like that, miss, I can't find the fastenings."

"Skip one or two. No one will be the wiser."

"I shall have done in a minute, miss."

"How nicely this frock fits, Esther!"

"I thought you had complained of the shoulder-straps, Miss Rosamund. I had been going to see about altering them to-morrow."

"Never mind troubling about

them now. I must have been mistaken. They look very well to-night."

"Do they not cut you, miss?"

"Cut me? No. Or if they do, I don't feel it. Oh, they are all right—quite nice, quite comfortable." ("And they will not be needed long," thought the fair wearer, with a bounding heart. "Soon, soon I shall leave them, and all besides, behind me. Oh, what a new, new life it will be! How delightful, how free, how glorious! He says I shall go everywhere with him,—travel from place to place, see fresh sights, and places, and people, at every turn. We shall never be in the same spot two years running. Perhaps we shall be ordered abroad. At any rate, he is to take me abroad; and when he gets leave, we are to go wandering off shooting and fishing in all kinds of wild places. How different it will be to going about—even if I ever *had* gone about—with papa and mamma! Then, we should have had engaged carriages, and private rooms, and all the rest of it. I should never have so much as got down to a *table d'hôte*, not I. How Frederick would laugh if he knew the sort of way we do things! I know there has been an idea floating about lately of a trip next summer. A trip? Oh, I can guess the sort of trip it would have been! Thank you, mamma; I'll leave it for Catherine now, if you please. But Frederick and I together, what fun we will have! He likes fun as well as I do. Even now the change has begun, for I am to be taken to the flower-show after all, and he scouted the very idea of our places being filled up at the luncheon. He said that all his fellows would want to see me, and be introduced. What fun! How grand I shall

feel! Some of the officers are married already; but I, as the major's wife, will take precedence of them all, for the colonel is not here. The idea of mamma and Aunt Julia not seeing all this in their absurd infatuation about Hartland! I hope their eyes are opened at last. Why, Hartland went over on purpose to give his support to Frederick—at least I am sure he did. Frederick said he was so very kind about it. Frederick said——”)

“Miss Rosamund, you will never be finished if you don't stand still a moment.”

“Oh yes, yes, yes. Yes, Esther, I shall,—I will,—I am finished. There's a good Esther. What? Have I not washed my hands yet? Oh, this nice hot water,” plunging in the round dimpled arms, “oh—how—nice! The second gong! Dear me! Dear me! Coming—coming—coming. My little gold locket, Esther. Oh, not that stupid old thing. The tiny one with the ruby, and the thin gold band for the neck. There, that's it,” bending her neck to have the clasp fastened. “There now, I'm off.” And light as a swallow she skimmed down the broad oaken staircase, just as Major Gilbert appeared in the hall from another set of chambers.

He caught her in his arms—and Lady Caroline saw it.

They did not know she was there, and no one ever knew why she had been there, but there she was. Slowly making her way across the ante-room, whose door stood always open—a way she had never been known to take before, since it was a distinct round from her own dressing-room—Lady Caroline had been arrested by sounds from without, and turning round to seek the cause, she was an involuntary beholder of a spec-

tacle which made every vein tingle.

There was Rosamund, her beautiful, brilliant young daughter, her wild, half-blown rosebud, the one human being who had stirred a spark of natural feeling in her cold and selfish nature, for whom in her heart she had prognosticated a gorgeous destiny, and mapped out what that destiny should be—and there, holding her in his embrace, was the man who had frustrated her hopes and set her will at defiance!

Poor Gilbert! Little did he know the agony he was inflicting. His affectionate, exulting, monopolising attitude ought perhaps to have been kept for another and a more secluded spot; but still, he might have been forgiven, or at least Lady Caroline might have turned away her eyes. She did neither. With deliberate tread she advanced to the doorway, and like the knell of doom sounded her leaden accents, “Rosamund, I want you.”

Gilbert's arms fell by his side; Rosamund almost spurted from his embrace; and both flushed with vexation.

“Pray remember,” said Lady Caroline, loud enough for each offender to hear, “that there are others in this house beside yourselves. Do not let this occur again!” and the chill measured tones seemed to clank like a prison chain round the bright free moment gone before.

“Could mamma ever have been young? Could she ever have loved?” muttered the now humbled and indignant girl, following her parent with sullen, shamefaced steps, and not even reassured by the presence of her fellow-criminal; “how unkind, how cruel of her to-night of all nights, to speak to me like that! And I had really been

feeling sorry for her ; I had meant to win her round ; I had thought the worst was past. Oh, if mamma is going to be like that, how it will spoil everything for the present. I wonder how she can—I do wonder how she *can!*”

She looked at her mother. What a worn, fretted, wrinkled face was that ! A spasm seemed to cross the brow and contract the corners of the mouth as she took the arm which Gilbert could not choose but offer, subsequently. Not a single word did she address to him. She could not. It was as if the power of controlling or disguising her feelings were gone. All were against her—her husband, her daughter, her guest, the very servants who stood behind her chair,—and they had overborne her by their weight ; but such was still her power, that they were awed and uneasy in her presence. The greatness of her affliction subdued their joy. The gloom upon her brow was harder to withstand than any open frown.

In vain did the combined forces struggle for serenity, for cheerfulness, and ease. The dancing light in Rosamund's eyes died out completely ere the terrible meal was over ; and long, long before the last dish had gone its round, her lover had given up attempting conciliation.

Of the three, the one who faced her ladyship from his seat at the bottom of the table was the least concerned. Mr Liscard had asserted himself for once like a wise man, and from that wisdom-point he did not mean to budge—but, having done so much, he had no notion of bestirring himself further. The young people might smooth their own path, for him. They had his sanction for treading it together, but his sanction and his support were two very differ-

ent things ; and he did not, if the truth were told, find that he cared very particularly whether his support were needed or not. It had suited his notions of selfish ease to permit his daughter to choose her own lot, and as the lot chosen would effectually take her off his hands, it was next to nothing to him whether the way to it were set with thorns or roses. If Lady Caroline made herself unbearable, it was but hastening the wedding-day, and he could endure that ; his principal reflection being, as we have seen, that for a man with twelve children, the having one of them creditably, comfortably, and completely disposed of was too good a thing to be despised.

Even the mother's rage and disappointment were more respectable than the father's callous indifference.

“ I suppose we must not slip off anywhere by ourselves, must we ? ” whispered Gilbert, when at length the wearisome repast was over, and the party had reassembled as lugubrious as before in the drawing-room. He really felt as if he must escape the tainted atmosphere, poor fellow ; it choked him, strangled him, unnerved and bewildered him. He had not expected it. With some pardonable self-complacency he had anticipated a little surprise, and a considerable relenting on Lady Caroline's part, once he had made his offer with its appropriate accompaniments ; and that, instead of this, he should be met with not only increased acerbity of countenance, but with the addition of a silence so profound, so hopeless, and so impenetrable, that all seemed to quail before it, was discomfiting beyond measure.

He would not, however, suffer himself to be quite snuffed out. If he durst not speak to his love,

nor touch her, nor hardly look at her before her jailer, he would make a shift to evade the jailer's watchfulness. "What do you say? Can we run off? To the library, or somewhere?" he suggested, accordingly.

The pair were by the piano, to which Rosamund had betaken herself, under the pretext of arranging some music, on the opening of the dining-room door, and the approach of her father and lover. It was, she well knew, the farthest spot to which she might go, away from that motionless figure on the large, solemn sofa at the other end.

"Is not this far enough?" and she glanced round, with a smile.

"By Jove! no. I should just say not. I have so much to say to you."

"Have you?"

"May I come over early to-morrow?"

"Oh yes—to luncheon."

"Not till luncheon?"

"Mamma does not care for visitors before then, you know."

"But I don't come to see 'mamma,'" protested Gilbert, laughing; "I should never think of intruding upon 'mamma' at all," he added, maliciously. "You could meet me outside, couldn't you?"

"Perhaps I could—at least I think so—if—if," said Rosamund, with another hurried glance round—for after all, she was but a simple girl, and all unversed in the pretty ways of our modern belles—"if mamma does not mind; but I think she would perhaps rather you came to the house." She could stand up and defy her mother to her face, but she would never deceive her, she would not put out her foot by a single step on a slippery way.

Gilbert, looking at her, saw this, and in his heart approved. ("Jolly good little creature," he thought.

"No underhand tricks about her. She did not even see that I meant to propose she should hold her tongue, so I'll hold my own now.")

"Well, ask mamma; and say I am coming to take you for a walk, or something," he suggested, good-humouredly. "She cannot object to that, surely?"

"Oh no. But, Major Gilbert—"

—"Major Gilbert! I say!"

"What is it?" quoth Miss Innocent, saucily.

"'Major Gilbert' indeed! And didn't I make you say the other three times running, before I would let you off this afternoon?"

"Oh, but give me time, just a few days' time," with a glad little laugh; "this has come about so quickly; and I hardly know—I *don't* know how I feel at all to-night."

"Why, that is just what I want to teach you," cried Gilbert, who was not inclined to begin the lesson under surveillance; "but how on earth am I ever to do it if we are to be always like this, in the middle of everybody? I wish you could see some of the houses I go to; they have regular mischief rooms—which the girls and boys go off to, when they want to get out of the way, you know. Have their own little games, you know. I used to be rather a hand at that sort of thing myself,—but it was all by way of joke,—I only did it because others did. I never really cared for any girl until—"

—"Oh, take care!" Rosamund involuntarily stepped back a pace, with reddening brow. In his earnestness he had overlooked the men-servants, who, with the tea and coffee trays, were at his elbow, and she felt at the moment that, much as he might have to teach her, she had also something

to teach him. He must learn to have more regard for appearances.

She now proposed music, hastily. "I will ask mamma if she would not like a song," she suggested, crossing the room; but Gilbert was nearly sure that the request, which was presently brought back, had never emanated from Lady Caroline. Her reception of the timid overture, her averted head, and the stubborn immobility of her form, were all rightly interpreted by him; it was possible that she had spoken—he did not think she had done as much—but she might; if so, however, he could have sworn that nothing but a withering permission to do as she chose had been accorded the petitioner.

"Treats my little girl as if she were the dirt of the earth," muttered the incensed lover to himself. "And to-night, too, when one would think a mother with any feeling at all—but she hasn't a particle. People say she is proud of Rosamund, but I'll be hanged if I see the force of such pride! She has astonished even me, has that woman, though I did think I knew her by this time. Who would have believed that she could mean to keep up her vile animosity even now? Well, if it comes to a tug of war, she'll get the worst of it; so look out, old lady. I must knuckle under for the present, but by-and-by, Lady Caroline, by-and-by——" and he sat down to the piano.

"Can I have a little more light?"

Rosamund turned to the nearest attendant. "Another pair of candles, William, please."

"That pair on the mantelpiece, that will do," amended Gilbert, accustomed to order things as he would; "here, bring those, will you?"

"I think mamma likes to have a pair there," said Rosamund, gently. "William will bring some more in a minute." Unconsciously he had been on the eve of violating one of the greater proprieties of the place,—he had desired to disarrange the furniture without so much as a reference to its liege lady.

But the sea-song was heard at last, nevertheless; and one person present, at all events, enjoyed hearing it, and hearing it for the first time. Mr Liscard had an ear for, and a love of music, and he now felt that he had never been better nor less troublesomely entertained. The deadly dulness of his usual home-evenings made the present welcome contrast felt the more. He was not required to say anything, nor to do anything; he could spread himself out in his low chair, con his scientific journals by the light of the shaded lamp at his elbow; and the melodious strains of the distant singer, so far from disturbing his comfort, acted as an agreeable sedative.

He was really sorry when at length they ceased, and Gilbert rose to go.

It struck him that a son-in-law who could thus provide his own entertainment would be rather an acquisition to the party than otherwise; and as he roused himself to wish a cordial "good night," it was with no disapproval that he beheld the tall figure turn its broad back on him and Lady Caroline alike, as both Rosamund's hands were held fast in those of her lover.

Rosamund's papa charitably put out his lamp. That gave him something to do, and he had a weakness for economising light—the only economy he ever practised. He now busied himself getting his fingers under the shade, turning round the button, and peering over

the funnel to see if all were right ; and even when the manœuvre was over, he did not immediately obtrude himself upon the young couple. It made him almost angry to see his wife, drawn up to her full height, loom portentously forth from her seclusion ere anything more could pass ; and he had never in his life been so near snubbing her ladyship in public, as when

she bade him ring the bell the next moment.

The bell was to be rung, for Major Gilbert to be shown out ; and the tone in which Lady Caroline desired that such should be done, might have fittingly conveyed a command for his never being shown in again.

He never was shown in again—to her.

CHAPTER XVI.—“YOU CAN’T MEAN THAT?”

“Chances strange,
Disastrous accidents, and change
Come to us all ;
Even in the most exalted state,
Relentless sweeps the stroke of fate ;
The strongest fall.”

—LONGFELLOW.

“Fine old place, but a shade sepulchral,” quoth Major Gilbert to himself, as he stood on the doorstep at King’s Common the following morning, awaiting a response to his summons. “Rows of closed windows ain’t lively. I suppose there are windows open somewhere about the house, but it is a pity they don’t show in front. Lord ! how can people get on without fresh air, and on a day like this, too ?”—for a soft and balmy south wind was gently fanning the tree-tops ; and the closed windows, which had, moreover, their blinds drawn uncompromisingly down, certainly did seem to have an unreasonable ill-will against it. “What a time they are in answering !” cried he next, with a lover’s impatience. But the next moment the door was noiselessly opened.

“Any one at home ?”

He had made up his mind that he would not ask for Lady Caroline. If Lady Caroline chose to see him, and to be civil to him, well and good ; he would make an effort to be civil in return, and preserve, in so far as he could, a

decent appearance of having nothing to resent and forgive—but he was not going to be the one to make the advance. Whether she were in or out on this morning should not matter to him an iota.

During the previous evening he had realised that if he ever meant to hold his own with his future mother-in-law—and this he most distinctly did mean—he must not lose a moment. He must get his hand in at once, brace himself persistently to disregard frowns and slights, and treat her ladyship with an easy, unconscious indifference which he was shrewd enough to perceive would be more galling than any amount of retaliation.

He would not be rude, but neither would he be vulnerable. He would present an impervious front, and baffle every attack by appearing not to perceive it. He would not let anything about the *blue gown* obtain the mastery over him. Accordingly his “Any one at home ?” tripped readily out, and seemed to stand in need of no reply, for the speaker was on the mat within, wiping the mud from

his boots—being a man of cleanly habits—the next minute; and it was not until he had put down his hat and stick, and pulled out his pocket-handkerchief, and stood ready to be preceded across the hall, that he perceived something unusual about the man who had let him in.

It was a young under-footman who had done so, and who now stood the picture of awkward, nervous hesitation, most evidently at a loss how to proceed in a moment of difficulty.

“Hey! What’s the matter?” demanded the visitor, stopping short in surprise, while half-a-dozen conjectures—all unpleasant ones—flashed into his brain at once.

Was there going to be any trouble ahead? Was yesterday’s work capable of being undone to-day? Had mischief been brewing in the night? Rosamund, what of her? Her evident timidity and awe of her mother recurred, like lightning, to his memory. Had, then, that unappeasable woman reobtained her wonted rule, and already stolen a march upon him, sent away his betrothed, locked her up, cancelled all promises, and ordered the doors to be shut upon himself? Had she—could she—have dared to do this?

That something was strangely amiss was but too evident, and the thing to discover was—what?

“We have had a terrible misfortin in the night, sir.”

Gilbert drew a long breath of relief. What was a terrible misfortune to him? That would certainly not have been the fashion in which his dismissal would have been made known, and on that point all his present uneasiness and anxiety centred.

“Oh, indeed!” he said, with infinite comfort. “What is it,

eh? But never mind; show me in, and I’ll soon hear.”

“I—I—I really don’t know, sir; her ladyship, sir——”

“Confound it! let’s have an end of this,” cried Gilbert, with excusable impatience; “say what you have got to say, and have done with it. I can’t stop here all day while you hum and haw. Show me in to Lady Caroline,” he added, in a sort of desperation, and turned towards the inner hall.

But this was too much. “Stop, sir, stop!” and William stepped back a pace; the next moment out came the thunderbolt, “Her ladyship is dead, sir. O Lord!” cried the poor young fellow, raising his two hands and letting them fall again, to enforce the full import of his words.

“Good God!” exclaimed Gilbert, glued to where he stood. “Her ladyship is—*what?*”

“Yes, indeed, sir.”

“Do you mean—but, no, you can’t mean *that?* You don’t mean Lady Caroline is—good heavens!” wiping his brow. “Eh?—what?—eh? Speak out, and speak plain, for God’s sake, so that I can understand. Did you say that Lady Caroline is——?” but he could not articulate the word himself.

“Found dead in her bed this morning, sir. ’Tis an awful thing, sir,” and the speaker looked indeed white and scared, for the news was scarce cold. “They thought at first it was a fit, and the maids and Mrs Ossory was an hour in the room trying what they could do to bring her ladyship round, but it was no use. And now the doctors have just gone, and they say she must have been dead at the first. Dr Makin brought another gentleman with him to make sure. You must have met them in the drive, sir.

They ain't been gone many minutes."

"No. I came the other way. But how—what—good heavens! I can't think. I never heard anything more awful. Found dead in her bed, and she seemed as well as any of us only last night! Was any reason given? Is she supposed to have been ill? Have they any idea how it was?"

"I heard Mrs Ossory say as how her ladyship is supposed to have been ailing a long time, sir; and Mrs Ossory thinks she often noticed that her ladyship was not herself at all of late. Mrs Ossory thinks that perhaps it was the fright on Wednesday——"

"Wednesday? What—about the boy in the stream, do you mean? Oh, but Lady Caroline was as right as possible long after that; though certainly, to be sure—hum—ah—she did seem uncommonly silent and out of spirits last night. She certainly did that."

"Yes, sir. So Mrs Ossory says, sir."

"Bless me—I never was so shocked in my life!" continued Gilbert, pulling his long moustache; and, for once in his life, completely at fault in respect of his next move. Should he depart or remain? He looked at John, and John looked at him, irresolution upon either face, but the result was that they moved solemnly across the hall together.

"Lady Julia and Lord Hartland is here, sir," whispered the man, as he opened the drawing-room door; but it did not appear that he meant they were in the room, for it was empty, as a single glance showed.

Gilbert gazed mutely round.

He was inexpressibly bewildered and appalled, but it would be impossible to deny that he experienced also another sensation, and

one equally novel to him at the moment—he breathed freely. For once in his life he heard the handle turn in the door, and stepped forward upon the soft carpet within without a qualm; for once he advanced from behind the large screen which guarded the entrance without trepidation; and for the first time he looked straight up and down, and round and round the spacious gloomy apartment.

That it partook still of Lady Caroline at every pore was surely natural, yet it struck him as curious. He had almost expected to see an instantaneous upheaval and revulsion; but there was the davenport, the chair, the piano to whose refuge he had on the previous evening betaken himself, the pillar by which she had bidden him her stony "good night"—that "good night" to which there would never now be a "good morrow."

Every window was darkened, and the place was sunk in gloom. It occurred to him as a strange first thought, that he now knew why the outer aspect of the mansion had struck him as funereal.

"It is the most awful thing," he murmured, and stood upright in the middle of the floor, not caring to take a seat. "Upon my word, I scarcely know how to believe it is true. To think that only last night she was sitting over there, hiding her face behind her fan, poor thing; and who knows what she was seeking to hide besides? For she was one of those women who would endure anything rather than pity; and if she was in pain—why, I have been a brute to be so hard upon her. I wonder if she was in pain! I feel ashamed to think of it all, if she was. But who was ever to know this was going to happen? Who would have guessed that the poor creature would be

dead and gone before another day came? Well, I'm glad we parted in peace. I am uncommonly glad we had had no row of any sort; and no one now need ever know that she was not over fond of me. I must try and forget it myself; and, by Jove! I will."

Then he paused, and took up the strain again.

"There's her davenport now—queer and strange it looks already. It was beastly of me to write that letter at it last night—I would not touch it with a pair of tongs to-day. What can have been the matter with her? She did not look the subject for heart complaint. No doubt it was the heart, though; and that made her more snappish than she need have been. Certainly she would never have been sweet. But nothing is so bad for the temper as anything wrong with the heart. . . . So Hartland's here. He got on better with her than anybody did. . . . Lady Julia will feel it. She's the right sort, is Julia. Lord, what a difference between those two! . . . It won't make much odds to the husband. Cicero's and Kant's stomachs will go on all the same. . . . Our marriage will have to wait a bit, I suppose. That won't be such a nuisance, as if—as it would have been. We shall be able to do pretty much as we please now, we two. . . . What an alteration this will make about the whole place! No one will know it soon. Well, it is ill speaking harm of the dead, else I must say"—and he drew a long broad-chested breath—"I know how I feel, though I wouldn't put it into words for the world."

His reverie had barely been brought to this appropriate close ere the door opened and Lord Hartland entered.

The two shook hands in silence.

Then Gilbert burst forth impetuously. "I never had such a shock in my life."

His companion nodded, and the two sat down.

"When did you hear?" asked the major, next.

"Directly after breakfast. They had been trying to revive her for some time then."

"When do you suppose it took place?"

"Makin—that's our doctor—thinks, just before rising. The maids say she was still warm when they took her in hand, and they used all sorts of restoratives at once."

"With no effect?"

"Oh no; she had been dead before they began."

"Was her husband not on the spot? Was he no good?"

"Not at all. He was in his dressing-room—you know he is an early riser—and he thinks now he heard her call, but supposed at the time she was speaking to her maid. She had certainly striven to rise, for she was lying half across the bed."

"Has—have you seen Rosamund?" said Gilbert, next. "You know it was all settled between us yesterday, don't you? I was here till late last night."

"I heard it was all right," replied Lord Hartland, putting out his hand quietly. "This is rather rough on you; but you will help to comfort them all, Rosamund especially. She is with her aunt now."

"Shall—do you think I ought to go away?" inquired Gilbert, who had been asking the same question of himself for the last five minutes, without being able to answer it to his satisfaction. "Of course I am not a relation—I mean one of the

family yet, and I should not like to intrude if——”

“Oh no,” said Hartland, with a faint smile, “it could not be called intruding. You have a right to stay, and I should say my cousin would be disappointed if you left. She will see you presently.”

“What is being done?”

“The usual things,” and Hartland took up a paper-knife and played with it absently. After which, the two sat a long time in silence, gazing for relief into the fire.

“It is an awful thing,” at last observed Gilbert. It would be wrong to say that he enjoyed the awfulness, but certainly he had never supposed he could feel so easy, so comfortably solemn and subdued, as he now did in taking free possession of the large arm-chair—Mr Liscard’s own evening chair—and preparing to bear his part in whatever woful contingencies should arise. What a blessed thing it was that he had actually spoken, and had had his affair settled! Had he delayed a single day, it might have been weeks before he could with decency have come forward; added to which, he could have had none of the melancholy distinction which he now foresaw, in wearing mourning for, and attending the obsequies of, the great lady. He would even have lost the honour of that morning’s admission, and the sharing of Hartland’s silent watch.

At present there was nothing more for either to do but to watch and wait. An unearthly hush pervaded the mansion; only now and again a door being closed with ostentatious deliberation betrayed the presence of other inmates; the servants were in their own wing; the children in their equally remote quarters; and all the other

members of the family were gathered in the upper chambers.

All, wheresoever assembled, trod noiselessly, and spoke below their breaths. The reaction had not yet begun; and even the very little ones in the nursery were content with the novelty of being supplied with unusual toys and sweetmeats, and suffered themselves to be suppressed.

“I suppose the arrangements will devolve on you?” said Gilbert, presently.

“I will give any help I can.”

“The boys are too young to be much good.”

“And the two eldest are at school.”

“There is no one, then?”

“I fancy Mr Liscard will be able to express his own wishes; and though I have not seen him yet, he knows I am here, and can send for me when he chooses.”

“The funeral can’t well take place before the middle of the week.”

“No.”

Then another silence.

“I am glad I came over early,” said Gilbert, nursing his knee reflectively. “This happened to be an easy day, and I was tempted.”

“What o’clock is it now?”

“Not twelve yet. I meant to have had a walk or drive or something, and was here by half-past eleven. But now,”—and he dolefully shook his head.

At length Rosamund came down.

She had been weeping, poor child, and at sight of the two figures who rose respectfully to receive her, tears flowed afresh. Until a few hours ago she had never known death, and had had indeed but little to do with the realities of life. So terrible, so frightful a jar upon the even tenor of her days was not to be at once

comprehended, and was scarcely to be looked upon but with horror and amazement. Her mother dead—gone for ever—snatched away without a parting word or sign! The thing seemed too monstrous for belief; and almost as one in a dream, she had clung and wept, soothed by Lady Julia's expansive, wholesome, and very real sympathetic tribulation. It had been an effort to leave her, even to come down and meet her lover—and yet it had been something to have a lover to come to.

She had heard that Hartland was with Gilbert, and had well known how quickly the former would depart on her approach; and indeed he had instantly begun to consider how best to do so, when there was a tap at the door, which made all turn their heads. A tap at the door—at that door—at a door that never was, and never was meant to be tapped upon!

What could it portend?

Only a housemaid entering with a message.

"Jane!" exclaimed her young lady, the moisture frozen on her eyelids,—"*Jane!* what is the meaning of this?"

Jane saw her mistake. In the general disarrangement of everything, it had been agreeable to discharge an errand which was not in her ordinary round of duties, and she had felt secure of its passing unnoticed. She now looked foolish enough. "Mr Badeley is out, miss, and William and John wasn't in the servants' hall nor pantry, and——"

"And you could not fetch them?" said Rosamund, in a tone that made the girl shrink. "How dare you? Go this instant, and never let such a thing occur again. The idea of her presuming!" she continued passionately, as the intruder vanished. "Just because

—just because—she would as soon have thought of flying as doing such a thing yesterday. And now!"—and her tears burst forth afresh. It had been the first signal of the change.

"I had better go and see what she came about, however," said Hartland, making use of the notion. "One of us is wanted, I imagine." And he left the room.

All that day he was very little to be seen, and yet his presence was felt everywhere.

Insensibly one and all came to lean on him for directions and suggestions, for Major Gilbert was still too much of a stranger to bear the part he would otherwise have done, and it was due to Lord Hartland that the principal benefit which could have been conferred on the mourning house came to it in the shape of Lady Julia, who took up her abode there—not altogether to please herself—for the first week.

"Rosamund ought to have you with her," said Hartland.

"You mean because of her engagement?"

"Yes."

"I did hope—I did hope—oh, my dear Hartland, is it really, absolutely, irremediably settled? Is there no way out of it? Must it be? The dear child was always so impulsive, so impetuous; and it all happened so rapidly that I had a kind of feeling as if this great loss might——;" and she looked wistfully into his face. Somehow or other she had fancied that her sister dead, might have been able to effect what living she had failed to do. "She was so set against it, poor, poor dear," she murmured.

He was silent; he could not now say, as at another time he might and would have said, "unreasonably and foolishly set against it;"

but neither would he acquiesce, nor hold out hopes which were most unlikely to be fulfilled.

"I am sure if the dear child wishes me to be here, I will stay," sighed Lady Julia, seeing this, "but it will be a painful, painful thing to do. If indeed you would come also?"

But that he could not do.

"My brother-in-law will not be always in his own rooms, will he?" was her next timorous inquiry.

"Your presence will draw him from them sooner than anything else."

"And—and—of course I will remain if you wish me to do so; but I must have my Hannah—or no, old Charlotte would be better—and some clothes—and oh, dear, there will be the mourning to be seen to. And all those poor children's mourning also."

"You see you are really needed here, Aunt Julia."

"Well, my dear, well; I don't say I am not," resignedly.

"Rosamund is too young to see to everything."

"Much, much too young."

"And she has her own prospects to think of too."

Lady Julia groaned. Then out it all came again. "I cannot like this Major Gilbert. I care not what he has, or can offer. He is not worthy of her. He can never become *one of us*. While you——"

"While I?" said Hartland, with a smile, as she stopped short. "You think I should have done better for my cousin?" he continued, after a moment.

"A hundred thousand times better. And had he not come across her path just now, and had she not, as it were, been driven to him by—oh, I know, I see how it was. But for that, she could, she would, she must have loved you!"

Was it fancy, or did she see a

strange expression pass over his face as she spoke?

He did not answer her. He did not speak again for some time.

At length he roused himself abruptly, as was his wont after concluding a matter in his own mind. "Look here, aunt: it is not for me to dictate to you, but I will tell you plainly what my own feelings are about Major Gilbert. It is nothing to me, and ought to be nothing, that, as a companion, he is not strictly to my taste. He does not suit me; but what of that? It appears he suits Rosamund; and it is surely better that she should marry a man made of good sterling stuff, even although he be not pre-eminently a gentleman, than a fool with any amount of polish on the surface?"

"But all men are not either boors or fools?" plaintively murmured she.

But she was not to get out her say.

"It is useless to expect that such a girl as Rosamund will not choose for herself," pursued Hartland, looking steadily in front of him. "Major Gilbert is quite the sort of hero to take her fancy."

"Hero? Oh, I had forgotten!" and Lady Julia's eyelids dropped again. "Dear, dear! what an age ago that seems! Certainly we ought not to forget that good deed."

"It has come down to being a 'good deed,' has it?"

"But, then, I never dreamed of this to follow."

"Would that have altered your opinion?"

"My opinion is, that he ought never to have allowed himself to think of entering our family," averred the high-born spinster, with sudden asperity. "I must say that I do like people to know their places; and I must say, too, Hartland, that, knowing all you

know, I think it was hardly kind," and her poor voice quavered with the unwonted accusation, "hardly quite fair, or kind of you, to be on his side."

"My dear aunt, he never asked me to be on his side; as a matter of fact, I was not—perhaps I am not particularly on his side now,—but it is nothing to him whether I am or no. He fell in love with my cousin, without saying 'By your leave' to any one; and it was only when it was patent to all that she—she cared for him in return, that it seemed to me they were both being hardly dealt with."

"But you certainly spoke of him with admiration the other day?"

"So did you;" and he half smiled.

"But you went on after you knew of this; after Rosamund had sent over the news, last night."

"Which at once checkmated your enthusiasm. But you see,

ma'am, somehow it did not act so spontaneously on mine. I admire Gilbert as much as I ever did; I admire his pluck and nerve, his self-reliance and self-devotion. I think he did a thing that day which only a fellow who was in many respects—and substantial respects—a fine fellow, could have done. And I honour Rosamund," he added slowly, "for having the courage to see this, and value at his true worth, a downright, straightforward soldier, who will do his best to make her happy. She is above minding his small, trifling deficiencies. She sets us all an example. I, for one, am resolved to profit by it. In the light in which she sees her future husband, I too will look upon him, and," he added emphatically, "I will look upon him in no other."

"Well, I shall never like him; but I will suffer him," conceded the unfortunate Lady Julia, with the air of a martyr.

CHAPTER XVII.—THE REACTION BEGINS.

"But some so like to thorns or nettles live,
That none for them can, when they perish, grieve."
—WALLER.

No one ever hinted that Lady Caroline's untimely end had any connection with her daughter's engagement, although news of the two events got abroad at the same time. It was not to be supposed that her austere nature could have been seriously disturbed by ordinary emotions; and that emotions extraordinary had been induced was of course a secret confined to the initiated few. But even the home circle at King's Common, and the two who were almost a part of it at the Abbey—even these, who had been witnesses of her discomfiture, and had marked its rise and progress, were unaware

of the depths to which the iron had entered the proud woman's soul.

They were now ready to feel sure that she had been failing for some time past, and one could adduce one little instance, one another, which had not been noticed at the time, but which, in the new light thrown upon everything, started to memory, and gave support to the welcome supposition. Lady Julia was happily positive that her poor dear suffering sister had been misjudged throughout her life by reason of the infirmities caused by this secret malady; while Rosamund was

equally fortunate in her divination that her mother's attitude towards Major Gilbert had been the outcome of this same internal martyrdom. It had chafed her spirit and blinded her vision, causing her to look upon everything and everybody with jaundiced eyes. Poor mamma! And Lady Caroline was forgiven and compassionated, and reverently made allowance for on all hands.

Gilbert alone in his heart knew better. As soon as the first softening influences of the shock had passed away, and he could dispassionately look the catastrophe in the face, the instinctive conviction gained upon him that deep-seated mortification, a sense of defeat, trouble, and wrath which could find no outlet, had hastened her ladyship's demise. The force and weight and hopelessness of the evil had been more than that proud and stubborn spirit could bear; and debarred from every source of consolation, and consumed with a bitterness of disappointment of which the world must perceive nothing, the moment had been too favourable for an insidious malady not to seize upon for an attack, beneath which she had sunk unresistingly.

Thus, while Lady Julia, Hartland, Rosamund, and all who were charitably disposed towards the dead, attributed her mental and spiritual shortcomings to a physical cause, Gilbert changed the order of precedence; and Gilbert was in the right. It was—it had been—as he thought.

"To think that she should actually have gone and died out of spite! Upon my word," quoth he to himself, as he sat with lugubrious visage in a mourning-coach—"upon my word, we are well quit of her." And such being his rumination, it is not to be wondered at that he was not quite so happy

in his demeanour nor observations as he might have been that day. Up till then he had got on very well; but the funeral over, his spirits rose, and do what he would, he continually forgot not to be cheerful, nor to move about with too brisk a step.

Now, to the youthful Rosamund, with all the redundancy of vigorous life glowing in her veins, this first great check which it had ever met, was, from the very fact of its being the first, gigantic in the magnitude of its proportions.

We grow on easier terms with sorrow as we advance in years.

But to the very young, the presence of a first death is in itself a fearful and appalling thing; and when, through the advent of the grim destroyer, the ruling spirit of the place is laid low, and the irrevocable deed makes itself felt in all that is said and done, and in every circumstance, however slight, of daily life, there is apt to be an exaggeration of the manifestation of woe, a feeling as if it were hardly right to move, to stir, to occupy the dreary hours in any way, to open a book unless it be a devout one, or broach a topic unless it have reference to the passing scene.

Accordingly, the poor child, and indeed all the poor children, did their best to act up to the prescribed formula. Catherine, who was by nature prone to display, flourished her black-edged handkerchief, drew down the corners of her mouth, and settled with herself that speech of every kind was unbecoming. Dolly, who was of another mould, easily affected to what her brothers, brother-like, denominated "blubbering," having "blubbered" at every point of the proceedings, more especially at meal-times—being incited thereto by an extra performance of her sister's handkerchief—was now

able, from sheer weakness, to rain tears at nothing. The little ones naturally followed the lead thus given; were more unhappy in their enforced holiday than they had ever been in lesson hours; hated the dark house and the drawn-down blinds, and construed a general sense of misery and discomfort into grief for a mother whom otherwise they would hardly have missed.

In sorrow far more real herself, their tender-hearted aunt would fain have sought to cheer and comfort, but unfortunately she had taken a severe cold almost immediately after her installation at King's Common, lost her voice, and been finally obliged to keep to bed. Never was a good soul more ashamed of herself; and although far from being the useless burden, by which term she reproached herself, it is certain that the reed on which Hartland had meant his young cousin to lean, was for the nonce a broken one. There was now no one to do anything for anybody.

"I never saw more unfortunate small fry," thought Gilbert, to himself. "It is too bad that no one does a thing to sprighten them up; and though they have been bullied and trodden down all their lives by a woman who ought never to have been a mother at all, they are taught now to look as if it would be a sin ever to smile again because she is gone."

"Let's have the children down," said he, to Rosamund, suddenly.

"Down!" exclaimed she, in surprise. "Where?"

"Here, in the drawing-room. I daresay they are feeling bad, and it was hard on them to be hustled out of sight the moment we came home from the funeral. Let's all sit round the fire and tell stories, and chirp the poor things up a bit."

If he had only put the suggestion differently! She tried to think it was kind and thoughtful; but as it now stood, it seemed almost a profanation of the day.

"He never liked poor mamma," she said to herself. "But still Frederick should hardly have talked of 'the funeral' in that tone to me. I daresay he did not mean it. I am sure he did not know how it sounded; but—I wish he had not."

"Well, shall I go and fetch them?" inquired he, innocently.

Rosamund hesitated. "It is not their time for being in the drawing-room. I think perhaps Miss Penrose would be surprised by their being sent for now."

"Surprised! You don't mean to say they are doing lessons? By Jove!"

"Certainly not," said Rosamund quickly, while a gleam of displeasure shot from her eye. "How could you suppose it?"

"I did not suppose it; I thought it hardly credible; but I must say I have seen so much that has astonished me about your mother's ways with the children——"

——"Frederick!"

He hastened to apologise. "It is my ignorance, of course, Rosamund. Why, how is it likely I should know? I have never been in the way of youngsters. I daresay I should have spoilt them awfully if I had."

"I am sure you would," rejoined she, only half appeased. "And of course you cannot understand. Children have to be subject to rules and hours. It was the same with me when I was under Miss Penrose; no one ever said I was hardly dealt with."

"The old story of the foxes and their tails," quoth he, jocularly. "As Miss Rosamund Liscard had her tail cut short, so must Miss Catherine and Miss Dolly, and all

the rest of the misses. But come, I don't altogether see it. Why should the poor things not have better times now——?"

"Oh, *don't*," exclaimed Rosamund, as if he had stung her.

It was but a little thing; but he was always saying, always doing such like little things. The night before he had hurt her thus.

The fire had been hot at his back, as the three sat at dinner—he, she, and his future father-in-law. By the side of the fender there stood a little screen, one of Lady Caroline's own peculiar little comforts, which had invariably been drawn out between her ladyship's chair and the fireplace. It had now been left folded reverently. No one had dreamed of using it, until Gilbert, all unwittingly, had risen, spread the leaf as he had often seen it spread upon the hearth-rug, and resumed his seat.

She had said nothing, could say nothing; but had experienced a glow of shame, an undefined sensation, which was, alas! to prove but the faint forerunner of many such.

No one had ever expected from the bold soldier refined perceptions or quick sensibilities; if Rosamund had been asked, she would probably have answered that whether he possessed them or not was a matter of indifference to her—but in the present circumstances he was certainly unlucky, since no one could have known less how to adapt himself to them.

He now proceeded to blunder on.

"I meant no harm, I am sure," he protested; "but you must own yourself, my dear girl, that it has been a dull day for the poor things; and of course they cannot settle to anything this afternoon; and bless me! it's only three o'clock: what ever will they do with themselves till tea-time? It

is raining hard, so they can't go out and run about."

"I should think not—to-day."

"Well, I only vex you, so I will say no more," rejoined Gilbert, good-humouredly. "You must forgive me, Rosamund, there's a dear little thing," and he put his arm round her with something of a deprecating embrace; "I am sure I am downright sorry ever to have mentioned the subject, for I would not do anything to annoy you for the world."

Then all at once the clouds dispersed, the brow cleared, and she would herself fetch the brothers and sisters, and tell them how kind and how good he had been to think of them thus in their adversity.

No, she would not be put off going. She had been stupid, and cross, and unkind, and he could only show that he forgave her for being so, by now letting her be herself the messenger to the little doleful party in the schoolroom. They would, they must be unhappy, of course; and poor Miss Penrose was doubtless having a trying time keeping the peace between one and another; it would be a real charity to relieve the overweighted governess of her burden for a time; and away she flew, cheered in spite of herself by her own restored faith and affection, and thinking, poor child, how sweet it was to have to own herself wrong, and her master and lover right.

Of course there was astonishment and rejoicing in the dull, dreary room when so welcome and so unusual a summons was announced.

Catherine and Dolly, who were each severally in disgrace on the same count, were pardoned on the spot; and all were swiftly dismissed in search of soap, and water, and brushes, preparatory

to so important an event as entering the drawing-room at that hour.

"Frederick has sent for you, and says he will tell you a story," had been the delightful message, at which even Catherine had brightened up; and Dolly, every tear dried as if by magic, had jumped to her feet in ecstasy,—so that even the whispered admonition not to be noisy and not to laugh too loud, which the full-grown sister thought it incumbent on her to add, scarcely sufficed to overcloud their outburst of sunshine.

After they had gone, Rosamund lingered a moment. She was fain to have still more gratitude and appreciation on Gilbert's behalf. It seemed to her that her churlish response to his most innocent and well-intentioned overture had been so uncalled-for and ungracious that she could do no less than make her present approval of it and of him known as widely as might be.

"Major Gilbert is so fond of children," she began, "that he could not bear to think of the poor little things feeling lonely and wretched; and of course, Miss Penrose, they cannot be expected to understand all they have lost, so that there can be no harm in their being—being comforted a little, can there? Of course, Major Gilbert will keep them *quite* quiet." (Gilbert had had no notion of doing so, although he might possibly be depended upon to "hush-hush" at intervals, if the giggles threatened to penetrate too far.) "It must be so very miserable for them," pleaded Rosamund, who, in truth, needed only to plead with herself.

She alone, in her heart of hearts, cared to be honestly mourning for the dead. For the rest, the decorous outward demonstrations of woe sufficed, now that

the first shock had gone by; and Miss Penrose, who had conformed with the utmost rigour to these in public, had been conscious of slipping 'Vanity Fair' under the fold of her dress, and hastily withdrawing her feet from the fender, so as not to look too comfortable, when Rosamund's voice had been heard in the doorway. From her no demurs need certainly have been feared.

"Indeed, I quite agree with you, and think it only too kind and considerate of Major Gilbert," quoth she now, promptly. "I hope the children will not be troublesome. He must send them back directly he is tired of them. They have been a little trying to-day——"

"So Major Gilbert thought—I mean, he thought that very likely they might be, and that you would be glad to have them taken off your hands——"

"Oh, indeed! And he thought of me too? Really *too* kind" ("and like a perfect gentleman," thought the little governess in her heart). "Pray thank Major Gilbert on my behalf, and with my compliments, Rosamund," desirous of rising to the occasion.

"It is such a sad day for us all," murmured Rosamund.

"Yes, indeed," murmured Miss Penrose, in unison. She could not help feeling as if she had been somehow pulled up, and the faint light faded out of her face—for she perceived that it would not do to be brisk, even in praise of Gilbert, just yet.

"The poor children," sighed the elder sister.

"Poor little things," echoed the governess.

Bang went a door without, followed by a suppressed peal of laughter, scuffling of feet, and an evident scrimmage.

"What a noise they are mak-

ing!" cried Rosamund, with a frown; and she was hastily proceeding to quell it, when the entrance of the little band, all soaped and shining, and glad with expectation, brought about a kindlier intent. No, she would not be sharp with them, nor expect too much of them, that day. Their little rejoicing countenances should speak for Gilbert, and applaud him. They should tell himself, moreover, that he was well with her, approved of by her, and sustained by her in all he did at this time; and even now—even now, alas!—a vague intangible something whispered that this assurance was needed.

"Come along." And Rosamund smiled upon the group. "Come along, and don't make a noise in the passage. Remember the servants. They would be shocked to hear you speak, you know——"

"Oh, *we* won't speak, we don't want to speak. He's to speak," cried one little voice.

"He's going to tell us a story. You said he was going to tell us a story," added another.

"About lions, I hope?" in a boy's determined accents.

"And tigers, and camels, and elephanks," in that of another and a smaller male.

"Elephanks!" tittered all the elder ones.

Rosamund was glad to get them off: she was dangerously near tittering herself.

Even Miss Penrose was with difficulty subduing a cheerful countenance; and for the sake of decorum it was well that the scene had not been of more than a minute's duration, ere the door had closed, and she was left to the unaccustomed luxury of solitude.

It had been, as we know, Lady Caroline's code, that, lessons or not, Miss Penrose should be on

duty at all times and seasons—should be felt, should be in the background, should be there. There was to be no escape for her, no freedom for her subjects; no relaxation for the one, no chance of self-discipline for the others. And the consequences? Rosamund was the first consequence—and with her only we have to do.

But no one knew better the folly and short-sightedness of the former scheme of life at King's Common than the worthy preceptress herself; and any augury of a change was hailed by her with a most appreciative readiness. In excellent humour, therefore, she now hastened to her own apartment, there to pour forth the full, feverish, and underlined account of the two great events of the week, to those of her particular friends for whom she had not had time hitherto.

It is not often given to any one to have two such pieces of intelligence as an unexpected engagement and a sudden death to relate at one and the same time, and perhaps the chilly little woman appreciated her luck all the more that news of any kind was hard to get in that secluded domain; at any rate she felt now quite revived and animated by her pleasant task, and we may be sure that the gallant officer, to whose kindness and consideration she owed the opportunity for discharging it, did not suffer at her hands. He had another claim, moreover, on her notice.

His rescue in the mill-dam, preceding, as it did, his offer only by twenty-four hours, had a right to be included in her programme. Never in her life had so much and varied material been provided for her epithets in so brief a period.

SYLT AND ITS ASSOCIATIONS.

LEGENDS FROM THE EARLY HOME OF THE ENGLISH.

WHEN Prussia annexed Schleswig-Holstein, she did not fail to include in the seizure the fringe of islands which stretch along the coast. No islands have more interest for the English-speaking race. The history of Friesland is a confused one; but the great fact which makes its lonely sandy lands more attractive than "the glows and glories of the broad belt of the world" is that it was the cradle of the English race. Green, in his 'History of the English People,' remarks how it is with the landing of Hengist and his war-band at Ebbsfleet, on the shore of the Isle of Thanet, that English history begins. "No spot in Britain can be so sacred to Englishmen as that which first felt the tread of English feet." As I stood, the other day, on the sandy shore of the rift in the dune which local tradition in Sylt points to as the ancient harbour of the Frisians, from which Hengist sailed to the conquest of Britain, I felt that this spot was scarcely less sacred. Trace of harbour there is now none—the storms of fourteen hundred years have greatly altered the sea-line of that coast; but however much the land may have altered, from the coarse grass-grown hillocks of the Riisgap or Riesenloch one still commands the same sea-view which met the eyes of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers, when they embarked to protect the Britons against their enemies, by conquering Britain as a preliminary. The town of Wennigstedt, which formerly stood near the harbour, is now under water (the new village of the same name, with its inn

kept by the Widow Gamp, lies half a mile inland), and shipping there is none for miles around. The North Sea lies glittering in the sun, empty of sail or boat, and the dunes around are scarcely less dazzling, and equally devoid of life; but perhaps, on account of its very isolation and loneliness, Hengist's departure-port is scarcely the less suggestive of curious thoughts. Had that fleet encountered a great gale, as many another North Sea fleet has done, what might have been the history of Britain? A fair wind gave the Britons new masters, just as an unfavourable one saved Britain from the Armada.

Sylt is the largest of the North Friesland islands. Its peculiar shape on the map must strike the eye. It is like a headless F. In extreme length it is some twenty-three miles; its average width, except at the branch of the headless F, is less than one mile. Surrounded by great sandhills or cliffs, red or white, which replace the dunes at intervals, the interior of the country is like the elongated crater of a volcano smoothed over. From the interior, which is flat and hillless, one sees no sea—only the inner rim of the sandhills, or the top of the cliffs. Ascend the dune at any point, and an apparently boundless expanse of sea meets the eye. Sylt is reached by steamer from Hoyer on the mainland, or, better, from Wyk, the capital of the neighbouring island of Föhr. It has a population of about three thousand, industrious, well-behaved, even wealthy. But the people are greatly scattered, and I know no

place where one can walk so far and meet so few people as Sylt. Westerland is the only place of "fashion"; and as one drives along the sandy road from Munkmarsch, the landing-place, to Westerland, in the grey of a northern twilight, through a plain empty but for great hillocks, Thing-hills, and burial-mounds, one wonders what impelled German fashion to seek out Westerland. It is a gay little place in its way, with a couple of bands, a theatre, a kursaal, and bathing rules as stringent as the Decalogue. But this artificiality is only "its fun." It is a very small place after all, and when the visitors are not bathing they do not promenade in fine clothes, but scoop out great holes in the sand, and therein sit father and mother and all the *kinde*r, and get so sun-browned that all their neighbours in Berlin or in Hamburg will call Heaven a thousand times to wonder over it, when they pack up their trunks and take ship home again. It is very easy to get out of sight of these loiterers: five minutes' walk in any direction will land you in a wilderness of soft turf and sweet thyme, and it is entirely your own fault if you see another human creature in half-a-dozen hours; it is quite certain you will not meet an Englishman.

To live with the past instead of the present is more easy in Sylt than elsewhere. The whole island is an archaeological museum, and every object has its legend. Folk-lore flourishes in this lonely spot to an extent as exhilarating as it is surprising to the folk-lorist, who has always to say at home, "in former times," or "within the last century." In Sylt the giants have scarcely passed away; the elves have scarcely vanished; you may see still the graves of sea-kings, and listen to the songs of

love-sick mermen. It is a land of enchantment and wonder, of superstition and of history, of imagination and of adventure. The story of the giants' ship is itself sufficient to equip a folk-lorist with material for a twenty-page essay. Once upon a time there was a great ship in which the giants sailed the North Sea; some say it was the vessel in which the first Frisians (who were naturally giants) reached Sylt. It was so big that when the captain (whose name was Uald—the chroniclers are always definite in such matters; his ship was the Mannigfuald) gave his orders, he had to gallop about the deck on a swift horse. The cook had a boat in which to pick up the meat out of the soup-tureen. The sailors were youths when they went up the rigging, but old and grey-haired when they came down again. Once this ship got into the English Channel; but, as was to be expected, the strait was too narrow, and the ship stuck. Uald was a man of ingenuity. He ordered the sides of the Mannigfuald to be washed over with white soap: the plan was successful; the vessel slid through, but the soap adhered to the rocks, and that is why the cliffs of Dover are white to this day! The island of Bornholm is merely part of the ballast which was once thrown overboard. There is a splendour of imagination about this tale which throws all ordinary fairy-tales into the shade.

The story of Ekke Nekkepen is of a different kind.

At Hörnum, at the south point of Sylt, lived a sea-monster or merman who stole away a maiden named Inge of Rantum, and refused to let her go unless she discovered his name. One day the secret was told by Ekke himself,

for he sang this song; and although he sang it under a sandhill, Inge heard it:—

“To-day shall I brew,
To-morrow shall I bake;
The next day is my wedding.
I am Ekke Nekkepen,
My bride is Inge of Rantum,
And that knows no one but I myself.”

Quickly Inge claimed her freedom. “Thou art Ekke Nekkepen,” she cried, “and I remain Inge of Rantum!” Without another word, Ekke vanished and troubled her no more. Evil spirits always keep their word, but by night and day since then he has striven to destroy the land. Inge’s home is now beneath the waters. The Rantum that appears on the Sylt map of to-day is a new Rantum; but a good spirit, a white lady, watches over the lost land. Another story of Ekke’s wooing is told. Disappointed of Inge’s love, the merman after a time went on a visit to Finn, the king of the dwarfs. These were an odd, small, tricky people whom the Frisians found in Sylt when they took possession. They lived underground, wore red caps, and lived on berries and mussels, fish and birds, and wild eggs. They had stone axes and knives, and made pots of clay. They sang and danced by moonlight on the mounds of the plain which was their homes, worked little, were deceitful, and loved to steal children and pretty women: the children they exchanged for their own, the women they kept. Those who lived in the bushes, and later in the Frislanders’ own houses like our own brownies, were called “Pucks,” and a sandy dell near Braderup is still known as the Pukthal. These tiny folk, says Hansen, the old schoolmaster of Keitum, who so lovingly collected the legends of his

beloved island, and of whose curious notes I make use here, could turn themselves into mice or toads if they pleased. They had a language of their own, which lingers yet in proverbs and children’s games. The story of King Finn’s subjects is evidently one of those valuable legends which illuminate dark pages of history. It clearly bears testimony to the same small race having inhabited Friesland in times which we trace in the caves of the Neolithic age, and of which the Esquimaux are the only survivors.

To King Finn, then, came Ekke Nekkepen with his tale of jilted love. But on his way Ekke found a cave in the Red Cliff, and began to court a charming young brownie. But she was very haughty, and sang—

“One is mine whom I choose;
Akel Dakel Dummeldei:
Wolves and dogs stay above.
Thou old tadpole,
Ekke, shalt be
Bundis’s cat.”

A merman, however much in love, could not quite stand being called a tadpole, so he shrugged his shoulders and bade his fair friend

“Pick, pack, weg!”

One can do Ekke and his poetical friends no justice in translation, for their rhymes are eminently pertinent and concise. King Finn received the disconsolate wooer kindly, and told him how he won *his* bride from Braderup. One day the king had heard two maidens talking, as they walked, of their hard fate in having to work the livelong day. “If we had only as good a time as the underground folk!” said the one to the other. “*They* are always jolly: they dance and sing every

evening, and only work when they please!" One morning, soon after, this girl went by alone. Finn met her, and asked her if she meant what she had said? "Yes, all," she answered. "Then, stay and be my wife," said the Elf-king; "thou shalt have everything good which we have." And then had followed the great wedding, with its presents of a bowl of berries, of a thimbleful of milk or a cupful of honey, a mouse-skin, a net, a broom, a hair-comb, a wooden spoon, a whetstone, a kerchief or a bed-cover, a crooked nail or a door-key, or something of kindred rarity, from all the guests. At the wedding-feast King Finn had sat on his throne, the great stone chair, wearing his jewelled crown, shaped like a sea-urchin, on his head, and a cloak of mouse-skin over his shoulders: by his side was the queen in a robe the finest and most transparent ever seen, upon her head a crown of heath-flowers and diamonds, and a ring on each finger. The guests feasted on herring milt and roe, and smelts, salted eggs, *iltisbraten* (? polecat) and oysters, wild berries of all kinds, and plentiful draughts of mead. Of all these glories Finn told Ekke, till the merman's heart swelled up with new hope. Surely if the maidens of Braderup preferred marriage with Finn to work, then he also might make sure of a bride from Braderup. So it happened that one morning, as he sat on a hillock near Braderup, his face, says the folk-tale, "to the first peep of dawn in the east, the moon still shining in the west," he saw a comely youth go to bathe in the bay beneath. Now Ekke also felt desirous of a dip, and he hastened to the shore; but when he reached the water, lo! the pretty stranger bolted! Nor was there wonder, for he was no boy, but Dorret

Bundis, a maiden who had with her two brothers crossed from the mainland the previous winter over the ice. (This is a very superfluous detail, for in the time of the cave-men Sylt can scarcely have been an island. The mind of the artist required, however, to explain the presence of a stranger, and the story was invested with artistic merit by this touch of modern life.) Afraid of the elves and their practice of stealing maids, Dorret had passed as a boy. Ekke quickly caught her. She begged to be allowed to go, but Ekke had had too many slips in the matrimonial market to permit such a thing, until she promised to wed him in a year and a day. The merman could not contain his joy, and, as usual, he burst into song. So he sat in his cave or perched himself on a rock in the moonlight and sang,—

“Ekke must brew,
And Ekke must bake,
For Ekke is going to marry;
Dorret Bundis is my bride,
I am Ekke Nekkepen,
And nobody knows it!”

Everybody *did* know it, however, very soon, for if a merman will proclaim his loves to the winds he cannot fail to attract an audience. So all the Braderup people learned that Dorret Bundis was a girl, and that she had promised to wed Ekke. Dorret was very angry at the disclosure, and her conduct at this point compels a respectful admirer to hesitate about describing it. Among other playful tricks she threw dead calves and dogs into the merman's cave, turning that peaceful bachelor home into a very unsavoury abode, and wound up with a dead cat, which she playfully invited him to take as an appropriate spouse, thus fulfilling the prophecy

about Bundis's cat mentioned above. Poor Ekke could not stand this kind of treatment, so he went to his friend King Finn and told him his troubles. He got little sympathy.

"The devil take you!" said the Elf-king, "you are too stupid to come among underground folks. When you had the girl, why didn't you keep her? At least you might have kept your stupid tongue quiet. Your *sing-song* has roused the whole neighbourhood, and done us much mischief. Get off to your Hörnum, or the sea, and don't bother the heath or the hills."

Ekke had come to be condoled with, not scolded; his angry passions rose. He said he was every bit as clever as Finn, and begged to inform him he intended to rule on land just as much as on the sea. With that, and to show that a merman is not to be trifled with, he plumped down in Finn's own stone chair.

"If you are stronger than Ekke, come and pull me out," he cried. "If you don't, I stay here and shall be king over you all."

This was ungrateful conduct. When you have done your best to help a troublesome neighbour to get a wife, and he fails entirely through his own fault, it is hard if in he comes and sets himself on your own throne. Finn now lost *his* temper. He ran at the merman and gave him a sharp blow on the head. Ekke said "Ah!" but did not move.

"Wait a bit," cried Finn, "till I fetch my axe."

Ekke did not like this, but he blustered out, "Ekke has a thick head and a strong back; so long as I sit on this throne is Ekke king over the whole heath and all the hills on it, and all the elves; who sits on the king's seat is the king."

Finn listened to this exasperating doctrine of regal rights for a moment; then he ran off to fetch his axe, which he kept buried. Soon he was back, but he had a new idea as well as his axe.

"There is a ship just come to shore," he remarked, casually, to his wife, who had a week-old child in her arms.

"Where?" exclaimed Ekke, who had an insatiable curiosity.

"Just down here," replied Finn; "it came in through the Riisgap." This is the historical Frisian harbour of later days whence Hengist and Horsa sailed. "The ship," continued the artful Finn, "has some monkeys on board that go through a little play. My wife and I will go down this evening and see the fun, and you can look after the baby.

"I'm going too!" cried Ekke, and jumped up from the stone chair.

"By the way, my axe is ready now," said Finn, laughing. He laughed too soon. Ekke remembered he was standing, and sat down hastily, but with an uneasy mind; for where was the joke in staying all alone on this hillock with Finn's infant, while Finn and his queen amused themselves at the monkey-show? When the two had been gone some little time he could stand it no longer, so he took the precious chair on his back and stumbled along in the direction in which he thought Finn had gone. When he had gone on for about half an hour he was "as tired as a maggot," the Frisian tale says: he puffed and blew, and was wet through with sweat. Carrying stone thrones about is not a usual work for mermen. He could not stir a step farther, so he sat down on the throne, and sat there the whole night, always hoping that Finn

would come by, and that they would together go to see the monkeys. He looked down to the beach in the twilight, but could see neither ship nor apes. Early in the morning, while he still sat in his seat and was finding the time hang very heavily on his hands, he saw a great troop of the underground folk coming over the so-called Kettle-dune from the shore, dragging a monstrous shape with them. It was as thick as a barrel in the middle, with a head like a man's and a tail like a fish; it howled and wept, and resisted those who pulled it along.

"Holloa!" cried Ekke, "my old sea-wife, Ran! Don't bring her here! I'll have nothing to do with her! Put her in the water!" But still the procession drew nearer. "I am your king," he shouted; "Ekke sits on the throne, and you must obey him!" But no one heeded. When Ekke saw he was not to be obeyed, he leapt from the throne, took one terrible jump over the cliff to the shore, and swam off as fast as a merman can, to the south. His old wife followed at his heels. Ekke came no more to Finn's land, but Finn's throne lies still as Ekke left it upset beside the Affenthal and the Riisgap.

Sylt legends are all of grey sand-hills, of empty heaths, of witches or of sea-wonders. So does the aspect of a country affect its thought. There are scarcely any trees in Sylt, no streams and no hills. The air is so clear, and the view so unimpeded, that distant objects seem comparatively near. But the houses are few, and the population small; at the best of times there is not much to be seen of human beings, and the entire aspect of the place in its loneliness gives its great stretches of level land an air of mystery. One would scarcely be surprised to see

elves dancing on that dark hillock, and there would be nothing astonishing in discovering a merman lying on the long low shore. Part of the charm of Heligoland is its life. All the people live in the sun, and, so to speak, "on the spot"; they form continually picturesque groups, and one has sometimes to rub his eyes and wonder if the scene on the little pier, with its gay fishermen, the white houses, the red towering cliffs, the glittering sea, is not the prelude to a drama. Presently the heroine will come on the boards, the groups break up, and the real drama will commence. But the heroine does not come. The actors are always at the opening scene. There is nothing of this operatic picturesqueness in Sylt; but the land makes up for its lack of everyday life by the vivacity of its legends. One of the most curious of these tells of the war between the giants and dwarfs.

It all arose through Ekke's unfortunate adventures. The giants or Frisians were roused to anger at the thought of the danger their wives and daughters were in of being captured by such as Ekke; and, as the nearest available enemy, they wreaked their spite on King Finn and his people. So a meeting was called of all the underground folk to consider what should be done. They met by night, Finn and Elferin, Eske and Labbe, Hatje and Pilatje; both the house-fairies and the dell men were there. They chattered and talked so that you would have thought it was the ducks at Keitum market; and inside the hills, where all the wives were, it was like Teuschen's oven where seven hundred mice were in childbed. At last Finn commanded silence. "Listen, listen!" cried all. Then Finn told of what evil repute Ekke had brought them

into with his stupidity, with a few variations which make his conduct still blacker than I have described it. In consequence of his bad fame, the giants would give the underground folk now nothing but dead dogs and cats, chased them when they were seen, and made life a burden to any respectable elf. Then the loss of the stone throne was a calamity.

"In fact," said Finn, "now I am a king no longer! What are we to do?" Like a skilled orator, Finn stopped there; equally the people waited to hear what was to come after.

"We must fight," continued the king, answering his own question. "We must sharpen our knives and our teeth, dig up our axes and hammers, and fight!"

"Fight!" cried every one; and so it was arranged that on the morrow they should all meet on the Stapelhügel, and all went homewards to prepare for the coming struggle. Now it happened that Dorret Bundis, who seems to have had a particular knack of turning up in dramatic pauses, had lately been very uneasy in her mind: she felt there was something in the air; and very early in the morning, when all the underground folk were still asleep, she crept through the mist to the hillock in which Finn dwelt. She lay down and put her ear to the threshold and listened. All she heard was Finn's wife singing to her child. But the song was enough to make the blood run cold of even a prehistoric amateur detective. These were the pretty words the queen sang to her baby:—

"Heia hei!

Baby's mine.

To-morrow comes his father Finn,

Bringing us a man's head in,

Heia hei, heia hei!"

Dorret thought, "It is high time

that the Sylt warriors were waking." So she ran lightly to the Peace-hill, near Braderup, and kindled the Braderup beacon-fire. This was an old sign that war was approaching; and before dawn the fiery cross was lit in Tinnum, in Eidum, in Keitum, and every hamlet in Sylt. By mid-day all the giants had gathered from east, and south, and west. These Frisians were no mean giants, although their trifling five or six yards of flesh and blood are little compared with Cornish giants. Strangely clad were they all, and bearing wonderful weapons. Some—prudent giants—wore woollen clothes as thick as felt, some coats of sailcloth; but the most wore only a sheep's skin or a seal's skin, and many had only a cow's or a horse's hide over their shoulders.

Time was plentiful to the old Keitum schoolmaster, and space of no account; but we cannot here follow him in his detailed account of all the warriors, what they wore, who were their attendants, and what they ate. As regards their diet, Hansen says: "The Sylt giants were unhears-of-gluttons;" and so they were. In all the varied crew there was much display—for King Ring, the sea-giant, had on his golden helmet, shaped like a ship, and King Bröns and his son came on their golden waggon, with Piar as their coachman. King Bröns's crest was a golden eagle. The Bull of Morsum wore a cow's hide, with golden horns,—and so on. The catalogue is entertaining enough, but a little of it goes a long way. At last the gathering of the clans took place at the Thing-hill on Tinnum moor, where the Thing councils were held in spring and autumn; and all came armed with iron swords, and axes, and bows. As we hear before that the underground folk

had only stone arrows and axes, the story receives additional historical importance from this detail—for in studying the story of this ancient people we have almost undoubtedly an opportunity, curious to find, of acquiring evidence of what must have in fact taken place all over northern Europe, when the Aryans poured out their Asiatic thousands of tall skilled warriors against the small Iberians. Of course, the story is a confused one, much modernised, but containing, beyond question, traditions of vast antiquity. To return to the Thing-hill. When all the giants were assembled, King Bröns stood forth on the highest mound, and cried, "Hail to all!"

"To thee also!" returned the giants.

"Are any strangers amongst ye?" then asked Bröno.

"Here are Jess and Jasper from Braderup," answered Bramm, the king's secretary.

"Wi sin och Siljringer!" cried Jasper—a dialectic version of "we too are Sylters," which cannot be rendered in English.

"That sounds rather like Danish," said Bramm. (This is obviously a very late addition to the story, referring as it does to the Frisian contests with the Danes in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.) "We must see about this," continued the secretary, and he straightway put to Jess and Jasper the Sylt shibboleth,—to repeat a Syltish sentence. Jess gets through his task pretty well, Jasper still better, and are questioned no more. Jess and Jasper have interest for us otherwise, because they were the brothers of Dorret Bundis, the bride of Ekke, and tradition alleges that Jasper's wife distinguished herself also among her sex by giving birth to triplets.

"What have the underground folk stolen from thee?" asked the king.

"Ekke tormented my sister Dorret," said Jess, "till she frightened him off with a dead cat."

"Wilt thou, then, forsake the elves and abide with us," returned the king, "pursuing the elves to the death?"

"Yea!" swore the brothers.

"That is good," said the king, who then proceeded to hear other complaints against King Finn and his people,—how they stole the beer of one of the faithful, strove to carry away the wife of another, changed the baby of a third, milked the cows of a fourth, and misled the blind Erk Nickels of Keitum.

"These are complaints enough," said the king,—“we must punish them,” and so the army prepared to advance. But first spoke the holy Frödde, “We must make our sacrifice before we go to battle.” “We have done so this morning,” it was answered. Then Frödde said—“Hast thou also prayed, ‘O Weda, save us! O Wedke, receive our sacrifice?’” “Yes; that was duly said on the Wind-hill, on Weda’s hill, and on the Holy Place.” “Then we are ready!” “Weda” is the Teutonic Wodan, from the Frisian propensity, as Grimm has remarked, to drop a final *n*, and to modify *o* even when not followed by an *i*. We need not follow the course of the battle. Of course the giants ultimately triumphed. What is valuable in the story is the tradition of the fight; all else is embroidery of the many generations of story-tellers who have passed on the tale from sire to grandson, and although much of this later matter is full of interest, its relation and discussion would lead us too far.

All the Sylt kings perished in the fight, and their traditionary

graves are the great mounds in the neighbourhood of the Red Cliff, and of Kampen, which itself, by a doubtful etymology, is said to mean the site of battle. There is some confusion as to King Finn's dwelling. As doctors differ, we may be allowed to claim that it was the Dengoog, close to Wenningstedt, if only because we descended into that remarkable dwelling. Externally merely a swelling green mound, like so many others in Sylt, entrance is gained by a trap-door in the roof, and descending a steep ladder, one finds himself in a subterranean chamber some seventeen by ten feet in size, the walls of which are twelve huge blocks of Swedish granite; the height of the roof varies from five feet to six feet. The original entrance appears to have been a long narrow passage, seventeen feet long and about two feet wide and high. This mound was examined by a Hamburg professor in 1868, who found remains of a fireplace, bones of a small man, some clay urns, and stone weapons. Later, a Kiel professor is said to have carried off all he found therein to Kiel museum, and so far we have not been able to trace the published accounts of his investigations. Hansen says not this, but the neighbouring Reisehoog, was the residence of Finn; but in a matter of this kind even the wisest may err, and we prefer to believe that we have stood where Ekke told his love-woes to the king, and have seen the heath where the queen sang the weird baby-song which Dorret Bundis heard as she lay crouching above.

Sylt is very nearly the paradise of an archaeologist. Lift your eyes where you will on all that fragrant plain, remains of long-vanished races meet them in those most permanent of all historical monuments, mounds and barrows. Each

has its tale. Take for example the tale of the Bridal Hill. It tells how Taam Earik of Eidem had a daughter whose name, according to a system long known in northern Scotland, is derived from her father's, Uas Taamen. He was rich, but had made his money by evil means,—wrecking and so forth. His daughter was charming, but light of heart, and would have none of her suitors. In her frivolity she joined herself to the witches, and when Taam Earik asked what she did on her frequent absences, she said she was learning the birds' language, which odd answer seems to have satisfied the affectionate wrecker. One Walpurgisnacht she went with the witches to the meeting of the hellish crew, and there was the devil so charmed with her that he took her for a bride, making her swear that if she wed a mortal she would be turned to stone. After this adventure the heart of Uas Taamen seems not unnaturally to have failed her, until one happy night she dreamt the devil was dead.

“Jü dränt; de Duiwel hi wiar duad,
 Jü wiar nü frii fan al hōör Nuad.
 Jü waath sa bliith, dat's hoog ap
 sproong
 En üs en Lörke Triller soong.”

This does not require much translation. Her joy at her supposed freedom was so great, says the ballad, that in her blitheness she sang like a lark. Repenting of her ways, she accepted a suitor from Keitum, called Buh Tretten. The marriage-day was fixed; the invited guests, however, knew too much of the bride's character, and would not come, so the wedding procession consisted solely of Taam Earik and the happy pair. As they went on their way to Keitum they were met by an old woman, who cried—

“Un Eidemböör ! Un Keidemböör !
 Juu Brid, jü es en Hex !
 De Fuarman swaaret höör
 ’Uüs Brid en Hex ?
 Da wilth ik wenske,
 Dat wü jir dialsook altemaal
 En wether apkam its grä Stiin !”

“Man of Eidum, man of Keitum,
 Thy bride is a witch !
 The father swore,—
 Our bride a witch ?
 Then may we all
 Be turned into grey stone !”

And so it happened, and two little hills mark the termination of that tragic Frisian love-tale.

Hansen, the schoolmaster of Keitum, who collected these and many another legend, was born at the right time, and occupied the right place. His widow still lives at his cottage in Keitum, where he accumulated a museum of great interest. It is practically unknown to archaeologists. Filled with an interest in his native land which dwarfed all other interests, he let no opportunity slip of acquiring information as to the former inhabitants of Sylt. As a boy, he tells how he sat at the feet of the old gossips and heard their tales of the bygone days. His were the opportunities for which every member of the Folk-Lore Society yearns. He and the ancient Inken Nessen, and Mei Siemken, and the still more ancient Mei Aanken, would sit on Saturday afternoons, in a little lonely house at the foot of one of the great Rantum dunes, and while Hansen's father, who was schoolmaster at Westerland, was examining the Rantum boys in their catechism, little Hansen led on the not unwilling seniors to tell of the old days. When his father's work was over, he would look in with his shining lantern in his hand, and bidding the others remember that it was nearly ten o'clock, and time for bed,

would take little Christian by the hand and go with him homewards over the lonely heath to Westerland. When the boy became a man, his profession gave him opportunities and leisure enough to seek the history which lay in the countless mounds and hillocks. His house is full of the treasures of such excavations, and not only of these, for he gathered also around him old Frisian carvings and cabinets, drawings and weapons, sufficient of themselves to make a Sylt curiosity-shop. What he gathered he retained, and when his curios outgrew his space, he built an addition to his cottage. He read everything relating to Friesland on which he could lay hands, and produced, besides the collection of legends to which reference is made above, a useful ‘Chronik des Friesischen Uthlande,’ which reached a second edition. He made a very careful plan of the island, giving every dune and legend-haunted mound; and so correct was his topography, said Frau Hansen to the writer, that when the Prussians annexed Sylt, they adopted the Keitum schoolmaster's work as the official map. It would be interesting to know if this compliment to his accuracy reconciled Hansen to the transference of his allegiance from Copenhagen to Berlin. As a schoolmaster, Hansen does not seem to have spared the skins of the young Sylters. His bundle of canes stands in a corner of the *omnium gatherum*, and the good widow expressed her opinion that since their disuse in the present Keitum school, learning was not nearly so easily got into the heads of the boys. Anyhow, the application of the rod did not tend to alienate the pupils' affection from their master, for from far-distant corners of the earth came presents of curious things to

him ;—from the islands of the Eastern Archipelago, from America, from China and Japan, wherever these Sylt lads wandered, they sent to Keitum such foreign weapons and *bric-a-brac* as they knew would interest the dominie. There is something strangely pathetic in the miscellaneous nature of Hansen's treasures, for they tell of many a wanderer's thoughts of the bare, sandy island in this remote Frisian sea, when the stinging canes were forgotten, and only the master's fond collection of all that was rare and curious remembered. "And now I am alone," said the old woman, looking tenderly around the little museum, "and everything reminds me of him."

Not far from Hansen's house—which is far from easily found—is Keitum church. Tradition says that its site was once upon a time sacred to Freira, as were neighbouring eminences to Weda (Odin) and Thor. The church is dedicated to St Severin. At the building of the spire certain wise women prophesied that the bell would be fatal to the handsomest and most wanton youth, and the tower to the prettiest and vainest maiden. In 1739 the bell fell and killed a lad, and so the first part of the prophecy was fulfilled ; but the Sylt girls still go to the parish church, and the most disdainful of her sex has not yet come. Perhaps the dread of consequences keeps all Sylt girls modest. Simple and quiet enough is their dress nowadays, far indeed from the magnificence of the old days, when a Sylt bride was so gorgeously attired, to judge from old drawings, and one of Hansen's papers in the Berlin '*Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*,' that only the Queen of Hearts in a pack of playing-cards gives any idea of her magnificence. The old Sunday dress of the finest white

linen was worn within the memory of Mrs Hansen ; but now it, as well as the more radiant costumes of older days, has quite passed out of use. It is otherwise in the neighbouring island of Führt, where the beauty of the women, and the splendour of their Sunday dress, are still matter of common Frisian talk. In Heligoland, too, the national dress, with its broad bands of yellow and red, is not quite a thing of the past. These little matters indicate truly enough the curious differences in the North Friesland islands, which lie comparatively so near each other, and are yet so different in scenery, habits, and even in language.

In the old days five hundred years ago there are said to have been many churches in Sylt. In 1436 there were only six, with ten clergymen. In 1800 there were four parishes, but in the following year the storms which have so grievously assailed the island practically destroyed the parish of Rantum, and now there are three parishes—Morsum, Keitum, and Westerland—the latter a comparatively new parish, dating from the destruction in 1436 of Eidum, whence the wooer of Taam Earik's daughter came. The Westerland church has the old altar of the Eidum church, and tradition tells that originally that altar belonged to the yet older church of List, a lonely spot at the north point of Sylt, now separated at high tide from the rest of the island, inhabited but by a single family, and which, in no short time, will probably pass altogether under water. The people of List spoke Danish, while the rest of the inhabitants of Sylt spoke Frisian ; now in all the churches and schools German is used. The little church of what remains of Rantum is a kind of chapel-of-ease to Westerland.

The history of Sylt, like that of all Friesland, is too complicated to be fairly treated in a summary. Like the Dark Ages, which were not so very dark after all, Sylt, which might reasonably be supposed to have little separate history from Denmark, has, in fact, a distinct historical interest. Lying out of the way of all ordinary commerce, its annals might be expected to be short and simple. It is in the character of the people that one finds the key to the extraordinary turbulence of Friesland. Denmark in the middle ages was as little a united nationality as Austria is now. We all know the irreverent diplomatist's joke, that "Heaven and earth might pass away, but the Schleswig-Holstein question never." But even when we arrive at the fact that Sylt, like Föhr and Heligoland, were part of these troublesome duchies, we are only at the beginning. Schleswig and Holstein had complications enough to excuse Europe for never properly mastering the question of their position as fiefs of the Danish crown; but all the North Friesland islands had little questions of their own, which to their inhabitants had far more importance naturally than the remoter, if bigger, problems of the statesmen of Copenhagen. Sylt, as the largest of the islands, has perhaps the longest records of disturbance and turmoil. Sometimes the islands were forgotten; sometimes Denmark found them a source of revenue; at all times they were uncanny. In the end, no one consulted the Sylters. Prussia solved the Schleswig-Holstein question by a wholesale annexation, and only Heligoland (which is undeniably the most important island strategically of all the islands) escaped passing under the entirely alien rule of German troops; and Heligoland

only escaped, as everybody knows, because the descendants of those Sylters who sailed with Hengist and Horsa came back and re-claimed the Holy Island in 1807—half a century before Prussia was in a position to interfere. There is no real sympathy between Heligoland and Sylters. The islands lie too far apart, and the differences in dialect are considerable. A Sylt song runs thus:—

“ Frii es de Feskgang,
 Frii es de Jaght,
 Frii es de Strönthgang,
 Frii es de Naght,
 Frii es de See, de wilde See,
 En de Hörnemmer Rhee !”

—and so on. I showed this song in print to a Heligolander, one of the most intelligent of an intelligent race, and asked him the meaning of certain words in later verses. “That is not our language,” was his answer; “there are words there I do not understand.” The Heligoland is entirely satisfied with their position as a colony of Britain,—for one reason, because, as a race of sailors, they have a curious contempt for all soldiers, and the Germans are soldiers; for another, because they are ruled with a light and judicious hand. The Sylters are become Germans, and, whether they wish it or not, they will remain so. As years go on, the difference between the peoples will become still more marked. In Heligoland the British tar is the representative of the governing power—in Sylt it is the Prussian soldier; and it is a credit in a small way to our decried diplomacy, that our selection of the type of the rulers is the more congenial one. Be things as they may, however, Prussia made no bad bargain when she took what she could; for if Sylt is no fertile land, it has an honest, industrious, and brave seafaring people.

MARY STUART IN SCOTLAND.

NO. IV.

THE CONSPIRACIES OF THE NOBLES.—II. DARNLEY.

THE favourite castle of Mary Stuart occupies a commanding position on the road to Dalkeith. Facing Arthur's Seat, flanked by the Pentlands, it crowns the low ridge that lies between the two. Though close to the capital—so close that the chimes of St Giles's bells are clearly heard of a summer night—the castle is in the open country, and the breeze that blows round its turrets is fresh and keen. From the battlements the outlook is wide,—the great Lothian plain, with glimpses of shining sea and shadowy moorland, stretching away to the horizon. It was here that the political movement against Darnley first took shape. The substantial accuracy of the narrative of the events that occurred at Craigmillar during the last days of November or the first days of December 1566—prepared by Huntly and Argyll—has not been seriously impeached.

Argyll was in bed, when early in the morning of a December day Moray and Lethington entered his room. They came to ascertain whether he would assist them in procuring the pardon of Morton from the Queen. Morton had been banished because he had aided Moray and his friends to return to Scotland, and they felt that they would be ungrateful if they left him to suffer for the good offices he had rendered them. Argyll having intimated that he was willing to assist, on the understanding that Mary would not be offended, Maitland suggested that the best means to secure her

acquiescence was to find some means by which she could be divorced from Darnley, who had behaved so badly to her in so many ways. Argyll did not see how this could be effected, but Lethington assured him that a separation could be arranged. Huntly was sent for, and, his consent having been secured, they went together to the room occupied by Bothwell, with whom the matter was again discussed. Then the five—Moray, Maitland, Argyll, Huntly, and Bothwell—had an audience of the Queen. Lethington spoke for the rest. They could not disguise from her or from themselves, he said, that the King's conduct had become intolerable. His evil example was hurtful to the whole realm; and he might at any moment do her and them an evil turn, for which it would be difficult to find a remedy. Would she agree to a divorce? Mary listened in silence; at last she replied that if a lawful divorce, which would not prejudice her son's rights, could be obtained, she might possibly be induced to comply with their advice. But it was possible, she added, that Darnley would reform; he might have another chance; and she herself in the meantime could visit her friends in France. Then Lethington, speaking for the others, said: "Madame, we that are here, the principal of your Grace's nobility and Council, will find the means that your Majesty shall be quit of him without prejudice of your son; and although my Lord of Moray

be little less scrupulous for a Protestant than your Grace is for a Papist, I am assured that he will look through his fingers thereto, and will behold our doings, saying nothing against the same." The Queen answered,—“I will that ye do nathing whereby any spot may be laid to my honour or conscience, and therefore I pray you rather let the matter be in the state it is, abiding till God in His goodness provide a remedy. Thinking to do me service,” she added, “the end may not be conformable to your desires,—on the contrary, it may turn to my hurt and displeasure.” “Madame,” said Lethington, “let us guide the matter among us, and your Grace shall see nothing but what is good and lawful and approved by Parliament.”

Moray did not venture to allege that he was not present at the Craigmillar Conference. On the contrary, he expressly admitted that he was there. He had given Elizabeth, he afterwards explained, his own version of what took place at the interview, and (he continued) whoever affirmed that he was privy to any unlawful or dishonourable purpose, or that he attached his signature to any Band subscribed at Craigmillar, spoke wickedly and untruly. It will be observed that Moray’s reply is in no respect inconsistent with the “Protestation,”—it does not traverse any one of the specific averments made by Argyll and Huntly. It need only be added that if the Conference at Craigmillar is evidence against Mary (to the effect that she consented to the murder of Darnley), it is precisely to the same effect evidence against Moray. The objects of the Conference were either lawful and honourable, or unlawful and dishonourable. If they were lawful and honourable, neither Mary nor Moray is com-

promised by what took place; if they were unlawful and dishonourable, they incriminate the one exactly in the same sense that they incriminate the other.

The Craigmillar Conference took place during the first week of December 1566; in the early morning of 10th February 1567, the Kirk o’ Field, where Darnley slept, was blown into the air. It is hardly to be denied that the two events—separated by barely two months—stand to each other in the relation of cause and effect. But with the Craigmillar Conference the direct evidence against the Queen closes; the proof that connects her with the murder is henceforth circumstantial (or inferential) only; and it may be said with some confidence that the clumsy catastrophe that ensued was directed neither by the keen brain of Maitland, nor by the deft hand of Mary. The doom which the Peers had virtually pronounced was carried out; but Bothwell’s vulgar violence and headstrong passion converted what might have been regarded as a quasi-judicial execution into a midnight outrage.

It is unnecessary to linger over the incidents of a tragedy that has become one of the commonplaces of history. A few of the salient facts, however, brought together into orderly sequence, may prove serviceable to the reader.

Darnley, on quitting Stirling, after the baptism of the infant prince, was seized with what appears to have been smallpox. Some writers have assumed that poison had been administered to him by Mary; others have asserted, with greater probability, that his constitution had been impaired by his excesses, and that the poison was in his blood. He lay at Glasgow in a nerveless,

shattered condition for some time. Moved, it may be, by his entreaties (for it seems probable that he had asked her to come to him), the Queen went to Glasgow, and in the course of a few days they returned to Edinburgh together. The young prince was at Holyrood; and as the disease from which Darnley was suffering was understood to be infectious, he was taken (though Mary herself was anxious that he should go to Craigmillar) to the Kirk o' Field, a house which had belonged to one of the monastic orders, and which, Knox asserts, had been lately bought by "Master James Balfour." Melville says that it was a place of good air,—more bracing for an invalid than Holyrood. Some rooms were prepared for the King, and a bedroom was fitted up for the Queen, which she occasionally occupied during the ten days that intervened. On the evening of Sunday, the 9th of February, a large quantity of powder was conveyed into the house by Bothwell's retainers. It has been said that it was deposited in the Queen's sleeping-room; but as the house was torn up from the foundations—"dung in dross to the very ground stone"—it appears more probable that the greater part of it, at least, had been placed in one of the cellars. "The train of gunpowder inflammit the hail timber of the house, and trublit the walls thereof, in sic sort that great stanes of the length of ten foot, and of the breadth of four foot, were found blawin frae that house a far way." As eminently characteristic of the parsimonious spirit of this penurious Queen—"economical even in the prodigality of her vices"—it has been asserted by Buchanan that on the previous evening the good bed on which she had slept

was by her direction taken away, and an inferior one put in its place. After supper she went to visit the King, and returned about eleven o'clock to the palace, where a masked ball was being held. After Darnley's death it became the cue of those who had been hitherto his most bitter enemies to speak well of him. He had repented, they said, of his early irregularities, and had sought refuge in the consolations of religion. There is a letter by Drury, written about the end of April, in which it is stated that on the night of his murder, Darnley, before he went to sleep, repeated some verses of the fifty-fifth psalm. The sense of approaching doom may have been hanging over the victim; his illness may have steadied and sobered him; but the excessive felicity, the suspicious appropriateness, of the selection is apt to provoke incredulity. About two or three o'clock next morning the Kirk o' Field was blown into the darkness. "Upon the tenth day of Februar, at twa hours before none in the morning, there come certain traitors to the said Provost's house, wherein was our sovereign's husband Henrie, and ane servant of his, callit William Taylour, lying in their nakit beds; and there privily with wrang keys opnit the doors, and come in upon the said prince, and there without mercy wyrriet [strangled] him and his servant in their beds; and thereafter took him and his servant furth of the house and cast him nakit in ane yard beyond the thief raw, and syne come to the house again and blew the house in the air, so that there remainit not ane stane upon aneuther undestroyit." This narrative is taken from the 'Diurnal of Occurrents'; Robert Birrel has another version;—"The house was

raised up from the ground with powder; the King's chamberman, named John Taylor, was found with him lying in a yard dead under a tree; and the King, if he had not been cruelly verriet with his ain garters, after he fell out of the air, he had lived." The wretches who were engaged in the business appear to have lost their heads, and the precise manner in which Darnley met his death is not certainly known. The streets were deserted; the citizens were in bed; even in the palace the masque was over, and the lights were out. Only in the lodging of the Archbishop of St Andrews a lamp had been burning all night—so those in the higher parts of the town declared—until, on the explosion, it was suddenly extinguished. The Archbishop lived close to the Kirk o' Field, and Buchanan suggests that he was watching—well knowing what was on hand.

At what particular moment Bothwell was induced to raise his eyes to the Queen it is not now easy to ascertain. Buchanan alleges that they had long been on terms of criminal familiarity; and that Mary's partiality for the lusty Borderer was notorious. The evidence, however, is all the other way,—until after Darnley's death there is not a scrap of writing showing that such an impression prevailed. The legend was of later growth, and with much else may be traced to the industrious animosity of the man who had been her pensioner, and who at the close of the year which according to his view had been spent in the shameless gratification of unlawful passion—"They seemed to fear nothing more than that their wickedness should be unknown"—had celebrated her virtues in choice Latin. The air, however, was thick with

rumours of treachery, and once, or more than once, Mary had been warned that the Earl intended to carry her off. She treated the warnings with characteristic impatience, refusing to believe that a faithful servant of the Crown could so readily forget his duty to his mistress. There can be little doubt that even before the meeting of the Parliament in April, the great Border chief had been in communication with several of the leading nobility on the subject of the Queen's marriage. A few of the honestest of their number appear to have been startled by the man's presumption; but the rest either openly approved or silently acquiesced. Such a plot was of course very welcome to the faction which traded on the dishonour of the Queen. The least clear-headed among them could not fail to perceive that were Mary forced into a union with Bothwell, her authority would be at an end.

Bothwell was tried for the murder on the 12th of April, and on the evening of the 19th the memorable supper at Ainslie's tavern took place. The supper appears to have been attended by all the influential members of the Parliament, which on that day closed its sittings. After supper, Bothwell laid before the assembled Peers a paper which he asked them to sign. The Peers, with the exception of Lord Eglinton, who "slipped away," complied with the request; and men like Argyll, Huntly, Cassilis, Morton, Boyd, Seton, Semple, and Herries attached their names to a "band," by which they engaged to the utmost of their power to promote a marriage between Bothwell and the Queen. It is difficult to fathom the motives which could have induced so many powerful nobles to approve a marriage which in their hearts they

detested; but Mr Froude is certainly not far wrong when he suggests that several at least appended their signatures in deliberate treachery to tempt the Queen to ruin.

Two days afterwards Mary went to Stirling. On her return she was seized by Bothwell, and carried off—with or without her consent—to Dunbar. When they reached the castle, the true object of the “ravishment” was disclosed. Her tears and reproaches—this is her own story, which may be held to be attested by Maitland—were thrown away upon her captor,—who, after she had treated his audacious proposition with indignation, produced the “band” which the nobility had signed. She was kept for a week a close prisoner. During all that time no hand was raised to set her free. At length, after actual violence had been used, she consented to become his wife.

It was on the 15th of May that the marriage was celebrated. “And that same day this pamphlet was attached upon the palace port,—*Mense malas Maio nubere vulgus ait.*” The nobles who had lured Hepburn on were already mustering their vassals, and on the 7th June the Queen and her husband were forced to quit the palace and make for Borthwick. But they were surrounded before they had had time to rest, and it was with the utmost difficulty that, eluding the pursuers, they managed to reach Dunbar. On the 15th June the forces of the Queen and of the Confederate Lords faced each other all day at Carberry Hill. There was no fighting, however; an agreement having been concluded by which Bothwell was discreetly permitted to take himself away to Dunbar—(thence to Orkney, Shetland, and the Nor-

wegian seas),—Mary returning to Edinburgh with the men who, as they professed, had risen to release her from her ravisher, but who treated her—now that she was in their hands—with studied rudeness and insults which had been carefully rehearsed. They made it plain to her from the first that their anxiety for her welfare had been feigned; and two days later they sent her to the prison on the inch of Lochleven which had been prepared for her reception by Moray when the Darnley marriage was in prospect.

Divested of all extraneous matter these are the uncontradicted facts; how are these facts to be construed, in what sense are they to be read? Ever since the tragic story took place, there have been two factions who have found no difficulties in the way of a definitive judgment. On the one hand, it has been maintained (and is still maintained by the ecclesiastics who are about to canonise her at Rome) that Mary was innocent as a child, immaculate as a saint; on the other, that she had sinned as perhaps no other woman had sinned, and that the mistress of Bothwell was the murderer of Darnley.

It rather appears to me that no decisive conclusion is now possible, and that anything like dogmatism is to be avoided. My own impression is that either explanation is too simple and complete to be accepted as an entirely adequate solution of an extremely obscure and intricate problem. I would be inclined to say that there is a grain of truth in each: the whole truth in neither. While it must be freely acknowledged that Mary was rash and indiscreet to the verge of criminality, it may yet admit of reasonable doubt whether the graver charges preferred against

her by the ruling party in Scotland have been, or are capable of being, substantiated.

The interpretation which consistently reconciles all, or most of, the facts known to us, is that which rational criticism will prefer to accept. Such reconciliation will help to recommend to those who have no antipathies or predilections to gratify, that interpretation of Mary's actions at this time which I have elsewhere ventured to propose. Those who agree with me will hold that Mary was not entirely unaware of the measures which were being taken by the nobility to secure in one way or other the removal of Darnley; that if she did not expressly sanction the enterprise, she failed, firmly and promptly, to forbid its execution; that though she hesitated to the last between pity and aversion, yet that what amounted to, or what may at least be characterised as, passive acquiescence, was sufficient to compromise her; that the equivocal position in which she found herself placed, either by accident or by design, sufficiently explains whatever in her subsequent conduct is wanting in firmness and dignity; that as the plot proceeded, Bothwell came to the front, and that to his daring and reckless hand the execution of the informal sentence of the peers was ultimately intrusted; that he induced the nobles who had been his accomplices to promote his suit to the Queen, and that for various reasons, good, bad, and indifferent, "the best part of the realm did approve it, either by flattery or by their silence;" that in accepting Bothwell, Mary could not be accounted a free agent,—her health was impaired, her spirit was broken, she had been imprudent, and her indiscretions could be used against her with fatal effect, while (Leth-

ington excepted) she had no friend beside her on whose disinterested counsel she could rely; that she struggled against the indirect compulsion of circumstances, and the direct pressure that was brought to bear upon her, as best she could, declining to consent to a ruinous union until actual force had been used; and that thereafter, there being no other "outgait," she submitted with a heavy heart and grievous misgivings to the inevitable.

That this was the view taken by the nobles themselves, when they rose to deliver her from Bothwell, and that the plea of guilty love and guilty knowledge was an *after-thought* which was not put forward until the fanatical party, which had been persistently and obstinately disloyal, had got the upper hand, and had determined, in the name of the infant prince, to seize the government and dethrone the Queen, cannot well be denied. Indeed the strongest argument in favour of the view that Mary's conduct in relation to Bothwell is susceptible of an innocent construction is furnished by the admissions of the Lords themselves. Their earliest contention was that Mary had been coerced into the marriage by Bothwell, and that they had risen to free her from her ravisher. This position was abandoned, and then they maintained that facts *notorious to all the world* were sufficient to convict her of having conspired with her paramour. Later on, however, it became clear to them that the indictment would break down if it was not otherwise established. It was then, and not till then—not indeed till Elizabeth had assured them that the proof of guilty complicity was ridiculously inadequate—that certain letters which they said were written by Mary were

reluctantly produced. If these letters were genuine—love-letters addressed by Mary Stuart to James Hepburn—there can be no reasonable doubt of her guilt. They prove that she was “bewitched” by Bothwell, and that under the spell of an unaccountable infatuation she encouraged her lover to murder her husband. But if they were *not* genuine—what then? Their genuineness will be discussed elsewhere; at present all that I need say is, that if it can be shown that they were manufactured, and manufactured by the Lords themselves, the fraud is absolutely fatal. It is not merely that the letters cease to be evidence against Mary; they become evidence of the most damning kind against those who used them. Mary may have been in love with Bothwell or she may not. Upon the facts presented by the historian the judgment remains in suspense. We cannot positively affirm that she was or that she was not. But if those who accuse her proceed to produce as proof of their case love-letters which it is plain that Mary did not write, then the inevitable conclusion is that Mary was *not* in love with Bothwell. Had she been in love with Bothwell, or (which is the same thing for my present purpose) had there been any proof that she was in love with Bothwell, the services of the forger would not have been required. The person who pleads but fails to prove an *alibi* is pretty certain to be convicted. Had he remained passive, had he stood simply on the defensive, he might have escaped. But when he avers that he was at a place where it is proved that he was not, the jury will not unreasonably conclude that he was at the place where he avers that he was not. Whenever the Cas-

ket Letters are discredited, we are logically compelled not only to reject the Casket Letters themselves, but to place that construction upon the admitted facts which is consistent with the innocence of the Queen.

Nor can it be disputed that many of the allegations against Mary which were at one time urged, with what appeared overwhelming force, have been deprived by more recent investigation and keener criticism of not a little of their weight. That the criminal relations between Mary and Bothwell were notorious for months before the murder (the fact being that there is no suggestion in any contemporary document of improper or unusual intimacy, and that, on the contrary, the prudence and wisdom of her conduct up to the day of the murder are warmly commended by those who were nearest to her at the time); that immediately on her recovery from her confinement she went to Alloa with a crew of “pirates,” of whom Bothwell was the captain (the fact being that she was accompanied by her brother and the chief nobles of her Court); that whenever she heard of Bothwell’s wound she flew to Hermitage Castle like a distracted mistress (the fact being that she did not visit Hermitage, again in the company of her brother, until she had held the assizes at Jedburgh, and until Bothwell was out of danger—ten or twelve days after she had first heard of the accident); that whenever Darnley was murdered, casting aside all decent restraint, she went to Seton to amuse herself at the butts with her lover (the fact being that she went to Seton by the advice of her physician for change of air,—leaving Bothwell and Huntly in Edinburgh to keep the Prince till her return); that

she was eager for the marriage, and hurried it on with unseemly haste (the fact being that on the very day of the ceremony she was found weeping bitterly and praying only for death):—these and similar calumnies have been conclusively and finally silenced. The future historian of this period must eliminate from his narrative the gross and grotesque adventures, which appear to have been invented, or at least *adapted*, by Buchanan, whose virulent animosities were utterly unscrupulous, and whose clumsy invective was as bitter as it was pedantic. The extravagant perversion of fact, which makes the philippic against Mary a monument of bad faith, is mildly censured by Mr Burton, who is constrained to admit that “in the Detection a number of incredible charges are heaped up.” “The great scholar and poet,” we are told, “may have known politics on a large scale, but he was not versed in the intricacies of the human heart.” The apology is somewhat lame. Buchanan must have been aware that he was calumniating the Queen; and the explanation that the tirade followed “the grand forms of ancient classical denunciation,” is hardly an excuse for wilful lying.

Much of the reasoning, many of the arguments, moreover, to which we have been used, cease to affect the mind, whenever it is freely admitted that Mary could not have been ignorant that the peers of Scotland were leagued against her husband. If Mary was not the accomplice of Bothwell—it has been asked, for instance—why did she fail to prosecute and punish the murderers? It may be admitted that no resolute effort was made to secure their punishment; but the reason is obvious. The Privy Council was the Scottish

executive; and every Lord of the Council was more or less compromised. Even had Mary been anxious to bring the assassins to justice, it would have been madness, as matters stood, to make the attempt. The trial of Bothwell was forced upon a reluctant Council by the importunities of Lennox, and the acquittal was a matter of form. Still, in all this, there is no evidence of that criminal complicity with a *lover* which is the sting of the accusation against the Queen.

I return to Maitland.

During the six months that followed the Craigmillar conference, Lethington's position may be defined without difficulty. He had come to the conclusion that Darnley must be removed,—the “young fool and presumptuous tyrant” had made himself impossible, had united all parties against him, had alienated the Queen and disgusted the nobles. But we may feel perfectly certain that Maitland at least was far from eager to put Bothwell in Darnley's place. Had he had any suspicions indeed that Bothwell aspired to the Crown, had he had any suspicions that Bothwell was favoured by Mary, he would probably have concluded that Darnley, as the lesser evil, might be allowed to remain. Peace had been patched up between the Secretary and Bothwell; but the truce was hollow. The hostility of the fanatical reformers had not abated; Mary had hitherto parried with success the weapons that had been directed against her by Knox and Cecil, by Morton and Moray; but if she could be *compromised*, if, for instance, she could be forced into an unworthy and dishonouring marriage, the object for which they had so pertinaciously plotted might be attained. Knox, could

he have had his way, would have put Mary to death without scruple; the laymen were less sanguinary; but—now that a prince was born—they might at least compel her to abdicate. James VI., like James IV., could be used as a “buckler” by the disaffected nobles and the fanatical “professors.” They could play the son against the mother, as they had already played the husband against the wife. The young prince, indeed, was in one view a surer card than Darnley. There was no risk that an infant in arms would turn against them as Darnley had turned. Maitland, as we shall see, lent himself to neither faction. He detested Bothwell; he distrusted Knox; whereas he was devoted to Mary; and to Mary he steadily adhered.

Whenever Maitland's peace, in the autumn of 1566, was made with Mary, the relations of the Queens again became cordial, or at least assumed a show of cordiality. On 4th October he wrote to Cecil, urging him to use all such good offices as he was wont to use for the joining of the realms in perfect amity; and this letter was followed next day by one from Mary herself, in which she assured Cecil that until the affair of Rokeby the spy she had always had a good opinion of him as a faithful Minister; and that, as he had now recovered his old place in her goodwill, she would be glad to see him at the baptism of the prince, her son. Maitland went with her to Jedburgh in October, from whence he wrote more than once to Cecil and Beaton, describing the symptoms of her dangerous illness. A curious letter, dated from Home Castle in the Merse, has been preserved, in which he tells the English Secretary that his own experience of backbiters makes him

marvel less at the misconstruction of Cecil's doings. From Home the Court moved to Whittinghame, and from there to Craigmillar,—where, as we have seen, the famous conference of the nobles took place. Mary, attended by Maitland, left Craigmillar for Holyrood on 5th December,—remaining in the capital till the 10th; and then, “though not quite recovered,” proceeded to Stirling for the baptism of the prince. Camden alleged that Darnley was not present at the baptism, as the English ambassador had received instructions from Elizabeth not to recognise him in any way—an assertion which Robertson and later writers have attempted to controvert. It is to be observed, however, that in Nau's recently published narrative the same reason for Darnley's absence is assigned: “The King was not present at the baptism, for he refused to associate with the English unless they would acknowledge his title of King, and to do this they had been forbidden by the Queen of England, their mistress.”

The baptism was hardly over before Maitland's influence was exerted to obtain Morton's pardon (which Mary granted with her usual generous facility); and early in 1567 this powerful and dangerous noble was again in Scotland. It was at this time also that Maitland's persistent wooing was crowned with success; in January—in the Chapel-Royal at Stirling—he was married to Mary Fleming. The Queen had threatened to interrupt his honeymoon by sending him on a mission to England; but he excused himself on the plea that it was unreasonable to divorce him from the young wife to whom he had been so recently united. Some time during

January, either before or after his marriage, he went with Bothwell to Whittinghame, where Morton was residing with his near relative, Archibald Douglas. Hitherto Bothwell and Morton had been the leaders of hostile factions, and it was probably thought desirable that Bothwell should be accompanied by one of Morton's friends. But, Maitland does not appear to have been present during the interview at which, as Morton afterwards admitted in his confession, the murder of Darnley was discussed. Archibald Douglas was "in the yarde"; but no one else. "In the yarde of Whittinghame, after long communing, the Earl of Bothwell proposed to me the purpose of the King's murther, requiring what would be my part thereunto, seeing it was the Queen's mind that the King should be tane away; because, as he said, she blamed the King mair of Davie's slaughter than me. My answer to the Earl Bothwell at that time was this; that I would not in ony ways meddle with that matter, and that for this cause,—'Because I am but newlie come out of a new trouble, whereof as yet I am not redd; being forbidden to come near the Court by seven miles; and therefore I cannot enter myself in sic a new trouble again.' After this answer, Mr Archibald Douglas entered in conference with me, persuading me to agree with the Earl Bothwell. Last of all, the Earl Bothwell yet being in Whittinghame, earnestly proposed the same matter to me again, persuading me thereunto, because the Queen would have it to be done. Unto this my answer was: I desired the Earl Bothwell to bring the Queen's handwrite to me for a warrant, and then I should give him an answer; otherwise I wud not meddle therewith. The quhilk warrant he

never reported unto me." Maitland's name, it will be observed, is not introduced; and I am not acquainted with any other evidence that directly connects him with the murder. He knew, no doubt, as Mary knew, that Darnley's removal had been resolved on by the peers; but it would rather appear that he had not been apprised of the singular plan of campaign devised by Bothwell. The three rode back to Edinburgh—Lethington, Bothwell, and Archibald Douglas; and soon after reaching Holyrood—if Douglas can be believed—he was directed by Lethington to return to Whittinghame, and inform Morton that the Queen would receive no speech of the matter appointed unto him,— "which answer, as God shall be my judge, was no other than these words: 'Schaw to the Earl Morton that the Queen will hear no speech of that matter appointed unto him.'" "And when I cravit"—he continues—"that the answer might be made more sensible [explicit], Secretary Ledington said that the Earl would sufficiently understand it."

The murder was quickly followed by the farce of Bothwell's trial, by the meeting of Mary's last Parliament, by the supper at Ainslie's Tavern. Bothwell was playing for high stakes; he could not afford to wait; the least delay would have been fatal to the enterprise on which he had ventured. The capital was feverish and excited; the sense of the coming calamity was in the air. Omens were not wanting; the higher powers, it was remarked afterwards, watched the development of the plot with interest. "During the journey a raven continually accompanied them from Glasgow to Edinburgh, where it frequently remained perched on the late

King's lodging, and sometimes on the Castle. But on the day before his death, it croaked for a very long time upon the house." "The Castle of Edinburgh was rendered to Cockburn of Skirling by the Queen's command. The same day there raise ane vehement tempest of winde, which blew a very great ship out of the rade of Leith, and sic like blew the tail from the cock which stands on the top of the steeple away from it; so the old prophecy came true,—

"When Skirling shall be capitaine,
The cock shall want his tail."

One man only of those about the Queen did not lose his head. No portent was needed to assure Maitland that unless Mary could escape from the trap that had been set for her, disaster was imminent. He steadily opposed the Bothwell marriage. "The best part of the realm did approve it either by flattery or by their silence;" but Maitland, with hardly an ally, ventured to speak his mind freely. Almost every man of political repute in Scotland signed the bond which recommended Bothwell, as a fit husband, to the Queen; but Maitland's name was not attached. The Earl resented the Secretary's pertinacious opposition; and as it was well known that he was not the man to stick at trifles, it was more than once rumoured that Maitland's life had been threatened. He was in Mary's train when, on "St Mark's even," she was taken by Bothwell at the Almond Bridge. Whether Mary was privy to the "ravishment" will never be known with certainty; Melville, who was also with her, writing in his old age, declared that Captain Blackadder, who had taken him, alleged that it was done with the Queen's own consent. This avowal (which is not

quite consistent, it may be observed, with Bothwell's "boast," in the sentence immediately preceding, that he would marry the Queen, "who would or who would not: *yea, whether she would herself or not*")—this avowal has been accepted somewhat hastily as conclusive proof against Mary; the truth being that as evidence it is positively worthless; for it may be safely assumed that Bothwell would in any event have assured his followers that the Queen's consent had been obtained, and that neither resistance nor punishment need be apprehended.

Maitland was carried with Mary to Dunbar, where Bothwell's will was law; and there can be no doubt that for some time thereafter he was in constant peril. Had it not been for Mary's intervention, indeed, it is more than probable that he would have been put to death by his reckless jailer before he had been an hour in the Castle. The rumour that had reached Edinburgh thus appears to have had some ground in fact. "Upon the same day it was alleged that it was devised that William Maitland, younger of Lethington, Secretaire to our Sovereign Lady, being in her companie, suld have been slain." When they reached Dunbar both Bothwell and Huntly turned upon Maitland. The Queen threw herself between them. She told Huntly that if a hair of Lethington's head did perish, she would cause him to forfeit lands and goods and lose his life. One virtue, if one only, Mary had,—nothing, apparently, could shake her steadfast loyalty to her friends.

Drury's letter, from which these particulars are gleaned, shows that Maitland had taken measures, if his life was again in imminent

peril, to escape from the Court. It proves, moreover, that the scheme of using the son against the mother had taken shape at an earlier period than is commonly supposed, and that the motives of the Archbishop of St Andrews in favouring the marriage had been already surmised. Drury was an inveterate gossip, and the political scandal in his letters is often quite unreliable; but on this occasion his information with regard to the position of parties in Scotland a week before the marriage appears to have been obtained from persons who could speak with authority.

“It may please your Honour to be advertised that my last advertisement concerning the determination of the Lords at Stirling to crown the Prince is true, and also that they mean to deal with the Queen to put away the soldiers, and be better accompanied of her nobility. Otherwise unless she write unto them, or they see writings confirmed with her hand, they will not credit them, but believe that she has been forced, and will defend the Prince and maintain the nobility and liberties of their country. This morning a gentleman of very good credit desired to speak with me secretly in the bounds, which I answered, and met with him. He showed me among the rest a letter sent from the dearest friend that the Lord of Lethington hath, requiring him to advertise me of his great desire to speak with your Honour (by letters till you may do otherwise) concerning those matters that doth concern the service of the Queen’s Majesty. He also sends me word that the Queen for certain will marry the Earl Bothwell; whom he says he knows to be a great enemy unto the Queen’s Majesty and to her country. Also he advertises me

that he minded this night past to escape from the danger he is in and presently to repair to the Lords at Stirling. He meant once to have come to Fast Castle, but altered. He means to escape by this means. He will come out to shoot with the others, for so far he has liberty, having a guard with him, and between the marks, riding upon a good nag will haste himself to a place appointed where both a fresh horse and company tarry for him. He should have been slain the first night of the Queen’s last coming to Dunbar. Huntly should have been at the execution, to whom the Queen said if a hair of his head did perish, she would cause him to forfeit his lands and goods and lose his life. The cause why of late he was supposed to be Bothwell’s was for certain letters he wrote to the Earl of Athol and others—to which he was compelled; but, by a trusty messenger, he did advise to which of his writings they should not give credit. It is expected she will presently send for the nobility to come to the marriage, and that she means to levy both horsemen and footmen, which if she doth the Lords mean also to gather. It is judged the Bishop of St Andrews encourages the Queen and Bothwell in this manner to proceed, not for any goodwill to either of them, but for both their destructions, the rather to bring his friends to their purpose. The Lord of Ledington hath earnestly requested me to convey his message unto your Lordship (affirming that therein I shall do the Queen good service), and that your Honour would let her Highness know he had that to say that would conserve the benefit of both the realms. It is thought by others that after he hath been with the

Lords he may have cause to repair to your Court."

Even when it became clear to Maitland that, after what had occurred, the marriage could not be prevented, and that the part he had taken against it had converted Bothwell into a bitter enemy, he remained at the Queen's side. He did his best to smooth the thorny path on which, willingly or unwillingly, she had entered. Mary's instructions to her ambassadors, in which she explains the enormous difficulties by which she had been beset, are understood to have been drawn by Maitland. The key in which they are pitched is studiously moderate. The Queen had been badly treated by her powerful subject; but she was now content to accept the choice of her nobles, and to make the best of a bad business. Bothwell's earlier history having been passed in review, surprise is expressed that a noble who had proved himself so uniformly loyal should have ventured to intrigue against her. Before, however, he had even "afar off" begun to discover his intentions to herself, he had obtained from the assembled Estates their consent to the marriage; and thereafter, finding that the Queen would not listen to his suit, he had forcibly carried her to Dunbar. There, after having again rejected him, she was shown the bond signed by the nobles upon whose counsel and fidelity she had before depended. "Many things we revolved with ourself, but never could find ane outgait." Having at length extorted an unwilling consent, the Earl resolving "either to tine all in an hour, or to bring to pass that thing he had taken in hand," insisted on an immediate marriage. "So ceased he never, till by persuasions and im-

portunate suit, accompanied not the less by force, he has finally driven us to end the work begun at sic time and in sic forme as he thocht might best serve his turn, wherein we cannot dissemble that he has used us otherways than we have deservit at his hand. But now," she concludes, "since it is past, and cannot be brought back again, we will mak the best of it."

Maitland was one of the last of Mary's friends to leave the Court; but the savage violence of Bothwell ultimately exhausted his patience. Athol was already in arms, and he stole away to Athol. "Not long after," Melville says, "the Earl of Bothwell thought to have slain him in the Queen's chamber, had not her Majesty come betwixt and saved him; but he fled *next day*, and tarried with the Earl of Athol." Melville's memory sometimes played him false; but there is other evidence to the same effect. "Upon the 5th June," according to the contemporary chronicle, "the Secretaire, suspectand his life, left our souveraine lady and the Court, and departit to the Callendar." A few days later he wrote to Cecil:—

"SIR,—The reverence and affection I have ever borne to the Queen my mistress hath been the occasion to stay me so long in company with the Earl of Bothwell at the Court,—as my life hath every day been in danger since he began to aspire to any grandeur, besides the hazard of my reputation in the sight of men of honour, who did think it in me no small spot that, by my countenance and remaining in company with him, I should appear to favour such a man as he is esteemed to be. At length, finding the best part of the nobility

resolved to look narrowly to his doings, and being by them required, I would not refuse to join me to them in so just and reasonable a cause, the ground whereof the bearer and Mr Melville can report unto you at length. I pray you that by your means we may find the Queen's Majesty's favourable allowance of our proceedings, and in case of need that we may be comforted by her support to further the execution of justice against such as shall be found guilty of an abominable murder, perpetrated on the person of one who had the honour to be of her Majesty's blood. If in the beginning it would please her Majesty to aid these noblemen with some small sums of money to the levying of a number of harquebusiers, it would in my opinion make a short and sudden end of the enterprise, whereunto I pray you put your helping hand. I will not trouble you with many words for lack of leisure, by reason of the bearer's sudden despatch. And so I take my leave of you. From Edinburgh, the 21st of June 1567. —Your Honour's at commandment,
 "W. MAITLAND."

It has been alleged by his enemies that Maitland, deserting Mary as he had deserted her mother, went over to the faction which had risen against her. It is a serious accusation, and requires to be seriously examined.

It was undoubtedly the general opinion at the time that the Queen had been, and was being, roughly handled by Bothwell. "I plainly refused to proclaim them," Craig said, in his defence to the Assembly, "because I had not her hand write; and also because of the constant bruit (rumour) that the lord had both ravished her and kepted her in captivity." "When

I returned to Edinburgh," Melville says, "I dealt with Sir James Balfour not to part with the Castle, whereby he might be an instrument to save the Prince and the Queen, who was disdainfully handled, and with such reproachful language, that in presence of Arthur Erskine I heard her ask for a knife to stab herself; or else —said she—I shall drown myself." "Many of those who were with her," he adds, "were of opinion that she had intelligence with the Lords, especially such as were informed of the many indignities put upon her by the Earl of Bothwell since their marriage. He was so beastly and suspicious that he suffered her not to pass one day in patience, without making her shed abundance of tears." It was consequently believed by many that "her Majesty would fain have been quit of him, but thought shame to be the doer thereof directly herself." "I perceived," Le Croc wrote, on the evening of her marriage-day, "a strange formality between her and her husband, which she begged me to excuse, saying that if I saw her sad, it was because she did not wish to be happy, as she said she never could be, wishing only for death. Yesterday, being all alone in a closet with the Earl Bothwell, she called aloud for them to give her a knife to kill herself with. Those who were in the room adjoining the closet heard her." It was alleged at the time that Bothwell cared so little for the Queen that even after the divorce Lady Jean Gordon continued to reside with him as his wife; and in the Holyrood "interior" under the Bothwell *régime*, which Sir James Melville has preserved for us, the rude force and insolent masterfulness of the truculent Borderer are portrayed with

consummate, if unconscious, art. "I found my lord Duke of Orkney sitting at his supper, who welcomed me, saying, I had been a great stranger, desiring me to sit down and sup with him. I said, I had already supped; then he called for a cup of wine and drank to me, saying, 'You had need grow fatter, for,' says he, 'the zeal of the commonwealth hath eaten you up, and made you lean.' I answered that every little member should serve for some use, but the care of the commonwealth appertained most to him, and the rest of the nobility, who should be as fathers of the same. 'I knew well,' says he, 'he would find a pin for every bore.' Then he fell in discoursing with the gentlewomen, speaking such filthy language, that they and I left him, and went up to the Queen." The Lords themselves declared that both before and after her marriage Mary was virtually deprived of her liberty; Bothwell, they asserted, "kept her environed with a perpetual guard of two hundred harquebussiers, as well day and night, wherever she went," admitting few or none to her speech; "for his suspicious heart, brought in fear by the testimony of an evil conscience, would not suffer her subjects to have access to her Majesty, as they were wont to do." Had they not risen, what, they inquired, would have been the end? Bothwell would have made away with Mary as he had made away with Darnley, and the other wife that he maintained "at home in his house" would have been put in her place.

It is unnecessary to adduce further evidence; it is clear that from the day Mary was taken to Dunbar she was shamefully "mishandled," and that her misery was great. Bothwell's head had been

turned by his success, and all the evil elements in his brutal nature had come to the top. It must be difficult, one would suppose, for those who have carefully followed the narrative of Mary's sufferings at this time, to hold that she was a willing victim. When it is pointed out, however, that even on the day of her marriage she was weeping sorely and longing only for death, we are reminded that she was "overmastered by an imperious infatuation,"—a sweeping and somewhat singular apology.

These were the scenes which were being enacted at Holyrood when Maitland stole away from the Court to join the nobles who were arming their vassals. The two parties—Conservative and Radical, Catholic and Calvinist—had by this time coalesced. The faction which had been persistently disloyal were first in the field; but they had latterly been joined by many of the nobles who were personally attached to the Queen. There can be little doubt that the irreconcilables had been sedulously preparing for the crisis which they had helped to accelerate (how far, by flattering his ambition, they had tempted Bothwell to aspire, how far, by forcing her into an anomalous and untenable position, they had tempted Mary to comply, cannot perhaps be precisely known; but that there had been a world of double-dealing is clearly proved); and that they hoped to turn it to their own advantage. But the ostensible object of the rising was to deliver the Queen from Bothwell; and unless this plea had been put forward, no alliance with the loyalists would have been practicable. When the pretence succeeded, and when men like Athol and Argyll and Maitland were found in their ranks, it became all the more necessary to disguise in the mean-

time their real design. I entertain no doubt that a Government, of which, either as King or Regent, Moray should be head, had been long in contemplation; and Moray was thought to have purposely left the country before the marriage, in order that his partisans might have a freer hand in dealing with his sister. But this was a dead secret as yet; Morton and Lindsay and Glencairn and Grange were in arms, not to subvert the Government, but to release the Queen; and it was on this understanding that they were joined by Maitland.

It is important (not for Maitland's consistency only) that on this point there should be no misunderstanding; and, as it happens, the evidence is conclusive. Robert Melville, writing to Cecil in the beginning of May—a week before the marriage—informed him that the Lords were ready to take the field. “Since the Earl Bothwell did carry the Queen's Majesty violently to Dunbar, where she is judged to be detained without her own liberty, and against her will, divers noblemen—yea, the most part of the whole subjects of the realm—are very discontent therewith, and apparently will not bear it. The truth is, when she was first carried to Dunbar by him, the Earl of Huntly and my Lord of Ledington were taken as prisoners, and my brother James, with divers other domestic servants; and her Majesty commanded some of her company to pass to Edinburgh and charge the town to be in armour for her rescue. Quhilk they incontinent obeyit, and past without their ports upon foot, but could not help; quhilk shame done by a subject to our Sovereign offends the whole realm.” (Melville, it will be observed, confirms the statement in the ‘Diurnal,’ that the news of the ravishing of her

Majesty having been brought to the Provost of Edinburgh, “incontinent the common bell rang, and the inhabitants thereof ran to armour and wappynnis, the portes was steekit, the artillery of the castle shot.”) “And it appears both Papist and Protestant joins together with an earnest affection for the weill of their country. The said Lords are gone to their counties to assemble their friends together with sic expedition as they may.” The Proclamation issued by the Privy Council on 6th June (on the preamble that the Queen's Majesty's most noble person is and has been for a long space detained in captivity and thralldom), goes on to declare that the nobility have assembled to deliver her from bondage and captivity. Again, in the Proclamation of 12th June, it is stated that James, Earl Bothwell, having, on the 24th April, put violent hands on our Sovereign Lady's most noble person, and having since then detained her in captivity, the Lords have risen to deliver her from her prison. In the Minutes of June 16, June 21, June 26, July 7, July 9, and August 11, the same plea is repeated,—the Peers had pursued and were pursuing Bothwell for having laid violent hands upon the Queen. It will be observed that most of these minutes are of later date than Carberry; so that even after Mary had been sent to Lochleven, the nobles (in whose counsels by this time Morton had acquired a commanding influence) did not venture to imply that she was Bothwell's accomplice. The pretence on which she was sent to Lochleven (viz., that she had refused to abandon Bothwell) will be afterwards examined; what I am at present concerned to show is, that the nobles, when Maitland joined them, were in arms, not against

Mary, but against Bothwell, her jailer.

It is difficult indeed to read the proclamations of the Lords with patience. They were written by the men who had plotted against the Queen. They were written by the men who were the accomplices of Bothwell. The declaration that they had risen to release Mary was ridiculous pretence; the declaration that they had risen to revenge Darnley was odious hypocrisy. I speak, of course, of the faction which Morton led. There were men in the ranks of the Confederate Lords from an early period who were the true friends of Mary Stuart; later on these were joined by Maitland. But in so far as the Moray-Morton faction had a hand in its production, the defence of their policy which is contained in the public records is grotesquely insincere and transparently false.

Maitland at least was for the Queen. It was Bothwell who drove him from the Court; it was to rid the Queen of Bothwell that he joined the Lords. He had been with her throughout the whole dismal business; he had witnessed her humiliations; he had listened to her complaints; yet this acute and observant diplomatist, who had enjoyed the closest intimacy with his mistress, had obviously failed to discover any indications of that overpowering passion which, as was afterwards alleged, had driven her into Bothwell's arms. "Maitland, in proportion as he favoured the Queen's interest, hated Bothwell as a perfidious villain, from whom his own life was in danger." "Sir William Maitland had joined himself before to the Lords for hatred of Bothwell. Now being rid of him he writeth to the Queen offering his service; sheweth how it might stand her

in good stead by the apologue of the mouse delivering the lion taken in the nets." The testimony of Melville, Herries, Nau, and other contemporary writers, is to the same effect; Maitland was not a traitor; though he left the Court he did not desert the Queen. "He only sought to rescue her from Bothwell." Throckmorton, to whose interesting letters I must refer at greater length immediately, was sent by Elizabeth to Scotland to remonstrate with the Lords, and at Fast Castle he was met by Maitland. Maitland was for Mary, Throckmorton emphatically declared, but he added despondently,—“God knows he is fortified with very slender company in this opinion.”

In one respect Throckmorton was mistaken. The Lords, indeed, would have had him believe that Mary was hated by the people, who were eager for her execution. So far as the Knoxian fanatics and the rabble of the capital were concerned, this was possibly true enough. Throckmorton mentions that the Ecclesiastical Convention was again in session; and it was from the lips of these austere zealots that the sentence of death proceeded. Knox himself, it need not be doubted, would, with the zest of a Hebrew prophet, have hewed the idolatress in pieces before the Lord. But the Knoxian fanatics and the rabble of the capital were not the people of Scotland. This is the mistake that so many modern historians have made,—they have confounded the nation at large with an active and organised minority. To do them justice, Knox and his allies did not deny that they were the minority; on the contrary, they gloried in their numerical inferiority. The Lord was on their side; it mattered not who

was against them. Knox never wearied of repeating that the most part of men were addicted to idolatry. Edinburgh was the stronghold of the precise Protestants; but when it was proposed to take a plebiscite of the citizens as to what form of religion should be provisionally established, "the hail brethren of the Congregation within this town" vehemently objected. They could not consent, they said, that "God's truth should be subject to voting of man;" "for it is na new thing but mair nor notour that fra the beginning of the wide warld to this day, and even now' in all countries and touns, the maist part of men has ever been against God and His house." In a pastoral letter, written by Knox after Mary had escaped from Lochleven, he expressed his deep regret that they had not put her to death when she was in their hands. The danger would not have been great, he added, "for although in number the wicked might have exceeded the faithful," yet "the little flock" would have been as victorious as in former contests. So that it is a mistake to assume that in July 1567 the nation was hostile to Mary. The mass of the people had been taken unawares; they believed the Lords when they declared that they were fighting for the Queen; and before the fraud was discovered the mischief was done. The Confederates at Carberry, to use a familiar phrase, won by a fluke. It is universally admitted that had the Queen remained at Dunbar, "could she have had patience to stay at Dunbar for three or four days without any stir," the Lords would have dispersed. "The people did not join as was expected;" the leaders were divided; some were adversaries, some

were neutrals; "so that they were even thinking to dissolve, and leave off their enterprise to another time, and had absolutely done so." That is Knox's admission; Buchanan's is even more unqualified. "Wherefore the ardour of the people having subsided, perceiving no likelihood of their rising being successful, and almost reduced to extremity, they already deliberated about dispersing without accomplishing their design." But a fatal imprudence brought Mary to Carberry Hill. Yet in spite of calumny and calamity, the sympathy of the people could not be restrained. The tide, if it had ever run against her, suddenly turned. The Lords could not count even upon the Edinburgh rabble; for the democracy of the capital was as fickle as it was fierce. The narrative of the events that immediately followed Carberry, as given in the 'Historie of King James the Sext,' is extremely instructive. "She being credulous rendered herself willingly to the Lords; who irreverently brought her into Edinburgh about seven hours at even, and keepit her straightly within the Provost's lodging in the chief street; and on the morn fixit a white banner in her sight, wherein was painted the effigy of King Henry her husband, lying deed at the root of a green growing tree, and the picture of the young Prince sitting on his knees with his hands and countenance toward heaven, with this inscription, *Judge and revenge my cause, O Lord!* This sight greivit her greatumlie, and therefore she burst forth exceeding tears, with exclamation against these Lords wha held her in captivitie, crying to the people for Christ's cause to relieve her from the hands of these tyrants. The people of the

town convenient to her in great number, and perceiving her so afflicted in mind had pitie and compassion of her estait. The Lords perceiving that, came unto her with dissimulat countenance, with reverence and fair speeches, and said that their intention was noways to thrall her, and therefore immediately would reponer her with freedom to her ain palace of Halyruidhouse, to do as she list; whereby she was so pacified as the people willingly departed; And on the next evening, to colour their pretences, conveyed her to the palace, and then assembled themselves in counsel to advise what should be thought best to be done; And it was decernit, that immediately she should be transported to the fortalice of Lochleven, and there to be detenit in captivitie during her life, and constraunt to transfer the authority of her Crown from her person to the young Prince her son; to the end that they might rule as they listed, without any controul of lawful authority; whilk continued for many years." The author of this narrative, it may be objected, is a partial witness; but he is corroborated by writers who were the bitterest critics of the Queen. "Hatred," Buchanan admits, "was turned into compassion;" Calderwood confesses that "the hatred of the people was now by process of time turned into pitie;" and Spottiswoode is even more emphatic;—"The common people also, who a little before seemed most incensed, pitying the Queen's estate, did heavily lament the calamity wherein she was fallen."

The intensity of the public feeling accounts for the midnight ride to Lochleven. It had become apparent to Morton and his more astute and unscrupulous allies that

if the revolution was to succeed, a vigorous policy must be instantly initiated. The Queen must be silenced; the Queen must be secluded. But how were they to justify the forcible detention of the sovereign on whose behalf, as they alleged, they were in arms? There were honest men among them. No one had expressed his detestation of the murder and of the marriage more freely than Grange; but Grange was a soldier of unblemished repute,—an obstinate, intractable, high-minded, chivalrous gentleman. Grange would not lend himself to a fraud: and since Mary had trusted herself to his honour, he had come to believe that she was more sinned against than sinning. Grange was assured—so it was said—that Mary was still devoted to Bothwell; that she had refused to leave him; that a loving letter, which she had addressed to him, had been intercepted. Even her apologists need not hesitate to admit that the Queen was at this moment in a position of grave embarrassment. Every path she could follow was beset with peril. Whether she was *enciente* has been doubted; she believed that she was, and her belief was probably well founded. She might by this time have concluded that nothing was left for her but (in her own words) "to make the best of it." And it is easy to understand, when she found that his accomplices had turned upon him like a pack of famished wolves, how the woman who had never loved Bothwell in his prosperous days, may have stood loyally by him in his adversity. These were the traitors who had truly murdered Darnley, and yet they dared to flaunt a banner in the face of heaven which called for vengeance on his murderers,— "Judge and avenge my cause, O

Lord!" What perfidy, she might well ask, could compare with this? Judas betrayed his Lord with a kiss; but he did not add to his guilt by professing that another had done it: he went and hanged himself. Although a high-spirited woman like Mary Stuart may possibly have been influenced by such feelings as I have indicated, their existence is purely conjectural. Mary may have declined to separate herself from Bothwell, or she may not; we cannot tell: no one was allowed to see her, no one was allowed to speak with her,—not even the envoy of Elizabeth, not even the Ambassador of France; we only know *what the Lords said that she said*. The value of hearsay evidence, tainted as this was, will be considered hereafter; but I may say here that the motive that tempted them to lie, if they did lie, is obvious enough. An apology was needed for their sudden change of front; and the pretence that Mary clung with unreasoning obstinacy to her lover, was probably as good as any other that could be invented at the moment. The specific allegation that on the night of her capture she addressed a few lines of ardent devotion to Bothwell is now generally discredited,—even Hume and the younger Tytler (both hostile to Mary) admitted that the writing, if any such there was, must have been fabricated. Mary Stuart, whatever else she might be, was not a fool; and it would have been monstrous folly to expect that a letter so fatally compromising would escape the vigilance of her keepers. We may be tolerably sure, moreover, that if the letter had been intercepted, it would have been produced. Melville informs us that "it was alleged" that a letter to Bothwell, written the night she was taken,

was used to silence Kirkaldy's scruples. "Grange was yet so angry that, had it not been for the letter, he had instantly left them." But in the answer of the Lords of Scotland to the remonstrances of Elizabeth,—prepared not later than July 11th, only three weeks after Carberry,—there is no allusion to the intercepted letter; and as their defence proceeded on the plea that Mary still clung to Bothwell, it may be confidently assumed that had such an invaluable and indeed conclusive piece of evidence been in their possession, it would then and there have been produced. Thus there is no direct evidence to show that Mary parted from Bothwell reluctantly, and there is plenty of the best evidence to show that after they were parted she never manifested the least desire to rejoin him. The delirium—the infatuation of the most polished and brilliant woman of her age for an ill-favoured and illiterate lover of forty—was obviously as transient as it was unaccountable.

Meantime—during these anxious days—Maitland did what he could. He was fighting for Mary's life. The gloomy fanatics who had been summoned to the Convention thirsted for her blood. It was a plain duty, they declared, to put her to death. The Lord had delivered her into their hands. There can be no doubt that for some days her peril was great; her own friends, finding how they had been misled by the revolutionary faction, were one by one stealing away from the capital; Morton and Knox remained—Morton, Knox, and their allies; and Morton was as unscrupulous as Knox was "austere." We do not know all that occurred after Carberry; the letters of Drury were written from Berwick, and most of his correspondents in Scotland were

ignorant or intemperate partisans ; but, from Throckmorton's confidential correspondence with the English Court after his arrival at the Scottish capital, it may be fairly concluded, I think, that to Maitland—who had been on various occasions of essential service to Morton—Mary at this time owed her life.

Of Mary Stuart, however, as an independent princess, there was now an end. The conspiracies of the disaffected nobles, which had been more than once defeated by her resolute spirit, were at length completely successful, and there were grim rejoicings in the Puritan camp. If Mary was the accomplice of Bothwell, she deserved all that she got ; if she was the innocent victim of an unscrupulous policy, which in the name of pure religion traded on sedition and did not shrink from crime, the sympathy that she has received has not been exaggerated. Maitland's fixed idea had hitherto been that the union of the kingdoms was a political necessity, and that only through Mary Stuart could Union be secured. I do not think that he ever seriously wavered in his loyalty to his mistress ; but it is interesting to note that—even when the cloud was blackest—he would listen to no terms of composition which did not involve the

acknowledgment by Elizabeth, in one form or other, of the Scottish title. Throckmorton reported that some talk had passed between him and the Secretary with reference to the custody of the Prince. He had found from Lethington, he said, that the principal point that would induce the Lords to deliver their prince into England would be the recognition of his title to the succession of the Crown of England, in default of issue of Elizabeth's body. "I do well perceive that these men will never be brought to deliver their Prince into England except upon this condition ;" "for," saith Lethington, "that taking place, the Prince shall be as dear to the people of England as to the people of Scotland ; and the one will be as careful of his preservation as the other. Otherwise," he saith, "all things considered, it will be reported that the Scotsmen have put their Prince to be kept in safety, as those which commit the sheep to be kept by the wolves."

I have brought the narrative of Mary Stuart's life in Scotland down to the period of her fall : the events that followed her abdication, her escape from Loch Leven, and her flight across the Border, must be treated of elsewhere.

JOHN SKELTON.

INDIAN INSECTS.

WITH all our knowledge of India, there are very many people who fail to realise the vastness of the change in all outward conditions of life which awaits him who chooses the East to be the theatre of his active life.

Few can count up in imagination the sum of the influences which contribute to that tired look we note in the eyes of the old Indian, and which account for his calm keen enjoyment of simple existence when he finally comes home.

The vision of the pagoda-tree has indeed faded away, and the leanness of the debased rupee is brought practically home to too many a struggling English family; yet there are still many who picture India as, for the most part, a land of many delights, where to the luxuries of the nabob have been added, in these latter days, the excitements and comforts of modern civilisation. And there are more both in East and West who, whether unduly attracted by an imaginary India or unduly repelled by the reality, overlook or undervalue the wealth of strange new things which lie close to the hand of every visitor to the East, and invite and reward his most careful study. I propose here to try for a moment to lift the veil from a phase of the everyday life of the European in India, so familiar to all who live in the East, that, like many another phase of what is now part of our national life, it is seldom the subject of notice.

People who have never travelled beyond Europe are altogether unprepared for the prominent part which is played by insects in

tropical countries. It is one of the characteristic contrasts between East and West which the new-comer is left to find out for himself, as the comparative absence of insect-life is one of the blessings which the home-stayer cannot appreciate, not knowing his own freedom. In the sweet closed rooms of our cool Western homes the presence of an insect is a fact to be noted. A wasp or two in the height of summer, or a stray spider if the housemaid is careless, make up nearly the sum of such intruders. Even in our gardens, beyond worms and slugs, and in summer the aphid and a few harmless short-lived things, there is nothing that demands attention from anybody but the gardener. But under the burning Eastern sun insect-life is a thousand times more profuse—no passing phase of short summer months, but a perennial stream of life—while for the closed doors of Europe, we have houses riddled with doors and windows which, for the most part, stand open night and day.

Under such conditions it may be imagined that the insect world ceases to be a matter of indifference to man. All places are as much open to insects as to himself: they are ubiquitous, and of infinite variety; the warm sun fills them with life and energy; wide open houses invite them; and from the time he enters the tropics he cannot escape or ignore their presence.

India is indeed a world in itself, and its insect tribes, more numerous and more diverse than its climates and its races of men, are no less unevenly distributed. There are retreats almost free

from insect plagues; but these are mostly limited to cool mountain-ranges, accessible only at intervals, or to a favoured few. I have myself lived where at certain seasons the dinner-table became a pandemonium of insects, flying in to the light—crickets and grasshoppers, beetles and earwigs, black restless things with pincers in their heads, and flights of aromatic bugs; and I have travelled where the plague was so great that, as soon as the sun went down, you were driven perforce to retire for the night to the shelter of your mosquito-curtains.

As well might one count the grains of sand as the unnumbered hosts of Indian insects. The roughest classification and a few stray samples must suffice to shadow faintly the wonders and the penalties of their ever-present society.

There are the insects that permanently share your house—ants and flies, spiders and mosquitoes, beetles and cockroaches. One there is, the white ant, which besieges your house and all that is in it like an ever-watchful enemy: there are those that pay you flying visits when your bright lamps call them in, and those that in the garden keep you on guard not less for yourself than for your plants. The active life by which you are thus surrounded is a source always of annoyance, sometimes of torment, yet often enough of wonder and admiration. It has even endowed the Anglo-Indian with a new sense. What is that strange caution which makes his eye unconsciously search the corners of the room he enters for the first time? or makes him hesitate as he takes the verandah chair in the dusk of the evening? What causes him to grasp his bath-sponge so warily? or to tap his

unworn shoes on the floor before putting them on? Is it not that every sheltered corner and every cool recess suggests irresistibly the presence of some unwelcome guest?

There comes a time, however, when you have accepted India for better for worse; when, so far as possible, you wear your burdens "like a hat aside," and when you find new interest in observing the nature and the ways even of your insect fellow-creatures. Especially is this the case if you take pleasure in a flower-garden, the source of one of the purest and most satisfactory of Indian pastimes. There you cannot fail to be attracted every day by new revelations of the insect world, of which the variety seems almost as inexhaustible as the combinations of music.

Once in twenty years a vision of some winged thing of exquisite form and colour and grace will flash on your sight—some unknown species never seen before or since—as if alighted from another planet. Is it possible that there are whole families of such creatures? Where and how do they live? Or is it a chance offshoot of better known tribes, a "sport," like some beautiful hybrid plant developed unawares by an amateur gardener? I remember a shrub in my garden, which used at intervals to burst suddenly into a profusion of sweet-scented flowers. Jealously I kept away from this shrub any visitor with a taste for entomology or butterfly-hunting, and alone I used to enjoy the contemplation of the gay crowd of happy creatures that flocked to feed on the honey. As you approached the tree the air was filled with the hum of a myriad insects, and the faint cream-coloured flowers were seen to be alive with winged things of every shape and

colour, brilliant as the hues of humming-birds. Velvet butterflies, with their bars and targets of purple and yellow and blue; beetles and ladybirds of burnished steel or gold; flies of emerald or topaz; graceful indescribable things with branching horns, or with wings fashioned like medieval shields; gorgeous dragon-flies and big bees drowning the voices of their fellows with their deep trumpet-buzz. This was a periodical sight of which I never tired; a sight not to be equalled in the fairest gardens of Europe.

It is in the garden, too, that one learns something of the wonderful ways in which nature arms and protects her tender children against the natural enemies who surround them,—frogs and birds, lizards and men. The slim green grasshopper that loves your rarest palms, how closely he lies under the leaf, the same colour as his body, where he would be undiscovered but for the tell-tale traces of his destructive work where the leaves are cut and hacked as if by a child with scissors. The stick-insect, hardly distinguishable from the dry lichen-covered twig along which he is stretched; the leaf-insect, shaped and veined and coloured like the leaves through which he wanders; huge, soft, defenceless caterpillars, with mimic horns and painted eyes to terrify their enemies with a show of force—how marvellously are all these protected by Nature! careful, it would seem, not only of the type, but even of the single life.

But of these endless tribes some must have more than a passing notice, for they are our familiar comrades, whether we will or no, throughout our Indian sojourn.

The first to welcome the European, the last to bid him farewell, is the mosquito, that miniature

gnat, with the innocent air and delicately pencilled feelers, who is for ever literally thirsting for his blood. Few and far between are the places altogether free from the great trier of temper and endurance, whose airy grace contrasts ironically with his low cunning and his sleepless persecution.

There are rare instances of people who, from some unknown cause, are proof against the mosquito. I have known a fresh young girl arrive from England, doomed by all precedent to be cruelly tormented by mosquitoes, yet whom no mosquito has ever bitten. Armed by some secret charm—and she has many—she has enjoyed through years of Indian life a perfect freedom from one of the greatest of its minor trials. But there is not one in a thousand who is thus secure, or who is not a constant prey to the tormentor.

It seems strange that creatures of which the vast majority live in grassy jungles, where animal life is rare, and where their only food would seem to be vegetable matter, should so eagerly feed upon the blood of animals; but certain it is that this is a luxury they pursue with unresting vigour, and for which they knowingly and even gallantly risk their lives.

If you have patience to watch the mosquito, you will soon see something of his courage and perseverance, of his intelligence and his cunning. He knows well the range of your eye, and in daylight will never settle within that range. Alighting on the arm of your chair, he will run under shelter of your arm and attack the fleshy part of your thumb, where of all places his bite is most irritating; then rising and hovering in the air when your attention seems occupied, he will take care that even

his gentle tread does not disturb you, and lighting on the ring on your finger, or the cuff of your shirt-sleeve, will thence put down his sharp proboscis into your skin and feast unobserved. At night he feels free to wander fearlessly where he will; if the air is still, his incessant "ping" at your ear is only less harassing than a dropping fire of bullets; and nowhere does he find richer or more tempting pasture than under the dark shade of the dinner-table, where he ranges undisturbed over the tender silk-stockinged feet of ladies and dandies.

But the evil need not be exaggerated. In most places, excepting uncleared jungles, the terrors of the mosquito are really trifling and are soon ignored. Mosquito-curtains at night and the punkah by day are protection enough, and a few years' residence renders you, as a rule, far less vulnerable than at first. Then the big lumps raised by the mosquito on your fresh young hands give place to tiny spots which cause no irritation.

There are places, however, such as Maubin on the Irawaddy, where the mosquito renders animal life almost intolerable. There the house of every European is like a meat-safe, with doors and windows of fine perforated zinc; ponies and even buffaloes are protected by gauze netting round their stalls; and dogs are literally bitten to death by mosquitoes.

More interesting, if hardly less harassing to mankind, are the countless armies of the ant, whose regiments are met daily route-marching through your garden; whose flying columns traverse every room of your house; whose siege-trains undermine your walls; and whose scouts are ever on the alert for plunder. Red and black,

and white and brown, every corps has its special equipment, and its own field of duty. Resembling the Chinese more than any human race, they are always at work; and to the ignorant, every unit of each tribe is alike. The common object of labour is the search of food for the tribe, and to the majority no food seems to come amiss. They will even boldly attack living animals, especially, with cruel persistence, such as are wounded or helpless. Many a time have I rescued some poor half-dead worm or insect from one or two vicious ants who, with savage bites, were trying to stop his struggles for life, while they hurried him on towards the hostile camp.

In a well-ordered Indian house little is usually seen of ants; but no house is free from the intrusion of a hundred tribes, and in none are they ever far away. A crumb of bread dropped on the floor, or an insect killed, will not lie many minutes before it is approached by first one and then another ant, hailing like vultures from the far horizon, till it is surrounded by an eager crowd, who carry it off in triumph, no man knows whither. For this reason, it is impossible in most Indian houses to leave fruit or food of any kind on a table for any length of time, unless the legs of the table stand in saucers of water.

One of the greatest ant-pests is a small red ant common in Bengal, a vicious little thing which bites from pure mischief, and if not carefully guarded against, will pervade a house or ship in millions, and is then difficult to expel. One or two of these on your underclothes, or in your bed, will drive you to distraction till caught and killed; and in Calcutta I have known a canary done to death by them, because left a short time

without the protection of a can of water to isolate the cage.

It would be tedious to enumerate the varieties of ant with which in India one becomes quickly familiar, and all of which are alike too active and too inquisitive to be anything but a constant annoyance; but some separate notice is due to that strangest of his species, the white ant. An ant of ants, he is in many ways wholly unlike the common herd. Of all his kind the most destructive, there seems to attach to him something of the dignity of a superior caste. He does not belong to the restless, novelty-seeking races, which skir-mish far and wide in small companies. He never runs across your hand or your writing-paper, or climbs aimlessly up your legs. Moving only in masses, he does not lightly invade any place, nor does he lightly leave the place he has invaded. Soberly and of set purpose he sits down before some rich treasure-house, whether of soft wood or paper, of cloth or leather, perceived from afar by that marvellously keen sense which seems common to every tribe of the species.

Unable to bear the light of day, he carries his approaches under covered trenches of mud, thrown up as he advances. These he is at no pains to conceal, so that his presence is at once betrayed and his dearest plans may be easily frustrated. But woe to the book-shelf, the wardrobe, or even the house-timbers to which he once gains access unobserved! His followers are legion; their weapons are sharp; and their energy is inexhaustible. In a single night the contents of shelf or box will be reduced to powder, and when the lid is lifted and the unwonted light betrays the scared and swarming thousands of the enemy,

the work of destruction is done. "Destroyed by white ants," is an accepted explanation of the loss of official papers in India; and a defaulting cashier has been known to offer the same account even of missing bags of rupees.

There is one familiar scene for which the white ant is responsible, which is so characteristic of India that it cannot be passed over, and which carries us back for a moment to the source and origin of the white-ant horde. Deep down in the earth secure, like a toad in a flint, in a stony nest surrounded by a labyrinth of tunnelled passages, lies a huge misshapen insect, swollen to portentous size.

Hardly to be recognised for an ant, this monstrous creature is the queen-mother of a million children.

From this buried city go forth the legions of the white ant, and hence it is that, at one stage of his Buddha-like transmigrations, he takes flight to the upper air on new-found wings.

On some still evening the signal is given, and, specially equipped for the flight, the swarm issues from the earth in a living stream, dense almost as the smoke of a furnace, leaving for ever the dark galleries of their native home to soar for a few brief moments in infinite space. The soft unwieldy bodies are furnished with fairy wings, which bear them in happy innocence to their new inheritance. What fate awaits them, if the flight is near the homes of men, will be seen forthwith.

When the evening lamps are lighted, and the insects begin to stray in to the light, it is not without dismay that the first heralds of the swarm are seen. By twos and threes they flock in and flutter round lamp and candle. More helpless than other insects, they fall an easy sacrifice, as their wings,

given only for one short flight, drop from them at a touch.

Thicker and faster follow the flying torrents; the lamps are obscured by the dense twinkling crowds, ever increasing in multitude, till tables and floor are strewn with the bodies of the dead and living.

Basins of water, set out to receive them, are soon filled with the struggling swarms; lizards on the walls are gorged with the abundant feast; and in the garden, where the *mallee* has lighted a fire, and thousands fly to swift destruction in the flames, frogs and toads are seen seated in the lurid light filling their bodies to bursting with the helpless prey.

But when all the sins of the ants have been noted, the ways of these wonderful creatures must always be a source of interest. As you drink your tea in the early morning your eye will be attracted by something moving on the verandah floor. A moth's wing has apparently stood upright, and is travelling along in an erratic course, as if alive. Looking closely, you will see that the wing is being borne along by a tiny ant, so small as to be invisible at a few paces.

The little insect is staggering under a crushing weight, and making herculean efforts to drag his prize to some far-off destination. And there is more to wonder at than the gallant physical effort. The power of the ant lies, doubtless, not only in his intelligence or in his energy, but also in his wonderful self-abnegation and instinct for acting in community.

It must be supposed that a moth's wing is good to eat, but is there any animal but an ant who, wandering alone and finding a delicious morsel in his path, would think and act as he does? Would

not dog or cat or bird—unless in search of food for an infant family—think himself fortunate as he ate up the good thing thrown in his way? Even among men, lords of creation, how many would be proof against a similar temptation? But the ant seems to have no thought of self: his only thought is, "What a feast for the tribe!" or if he has any selfish feeling at all, it is, "What *kudos* I shall get when I bring this in!" Hungry as he is after a long ramble, he does not dream of tasting his prize; but hoisting it from the ground—a thing five times his own size—he nearly breaks his back urging it along in the direction of the camp, perhaps half a mile away.

Has any one ever seen such a prize landed at its final destination? I never have. Whether the scene is enacted in house or garden, or on the highroad, the booty is always being hurried away elsewhere. Even when it is the huge carcass of a beetle or wasp, carried by fifty ants, preceded and followed by a regiment of comrades, the goal always seems far away. Never within human sight do the captors sit down and make merry with the game they have bagged: always they are *en route* to some unknown retreat where it can be shared with others. Perhaps Sir John Lubbock can read their thoughts, and explain this unexampled self-denial. At some time and in some place, we must believe that the fruit of their endless labours is enjoyed; but that dark festival, when at last the banquet is spread, and the rich spoil shared in common, when the ant-laugh rings through the vaulted cavern, and the toiler of the morning is rewarded by the praises of his chief, is for ever shrouded in mystery.

From ants to flies is a natural transition as the eyes are lifted from the ground, and of flies it may be said that in all their varieties they are at least as omnipresent in India as elsewhere in the world. The house-fly and the blue-bottle are here beforehand, to renew with greater vigour and in larger reinforcements the easier campaigns you have fought with them in Europe. The house-fly in his thousands is at some seasons, and in some provinces, so serious a plague that he richly merits here a few words of anathema. The irritation which he causes is due less to any acts of aggression, or even to his unknown wanderings, than to his stupidity. With less conscience even than a cat, and armed only with a facility of movement by which he can double more quickly than a hare, it is not from pluck, or patience, or intelligence, but from sheer blundering stupidity, that he returns to your face or hand or food, as often as he is driven away. "Curious" and "thirsty" he may be, but he is never really "busy." With no strange ways to wonder at, he is not even an object of curiosity; with no sting to provoke anger, it seems almost murder to kill so harmless a thing; yet are there few heavier burdens added to the exhaustion of an Indian climate than the presence of this everlasting "bore." Other flies, however, there are, which are far more deadly enemies of man and brute. The sand-fly, whom closest curtains cannot shut out; the eye-fly, which dances ever a tiny speck before your eyes; the gad-fly, which drives your horse to distraction, and yourself into a fever, as you ride in the sultry heat,—these are the scourge of certain regions in India, but are happily not universal.

But there is harmless beauty,

too, among Indian flies. None of all the insects can rival the inexplicable beauty of the firefly—the innocent brown thing with shelly wings covering a body which glows and throbs with bright flashes of soft phosphoric light.

It is only by accident that the firefly ever wanders into the house, but he is a familiar friend in every garden, where on still nights he will transform every shrub into a living Christmas-tree.

There is a common little fly of graceful shape, whose green and gold attract the eye in the sunshine like a diamond. There are brown wasp-like flies which build curious nests of mud in the corners of your room; brilliant talc-winged dragon-flies, and slim flies of steely blue which bore in wood. One of these lately bored his nest in my writing-table, just above my knees. When the punkah was not moving he could go in and out as he pleased; but when the punkah was pulled, the wind made it difficult for him to approach his nest, and it was a pretty sight to watch the beautiful blue thing tacking and struggling, like a cutter sailing up into the wind, till he made good his footing at a distance, and crept round to the nest.

The terrors of the Indian hornet are well enough known, and it is not long since the newspapers told of men stung to death by hornets in the jungles of the Central Provinces.

Wasps, too, are common throughout India; but the Indian wasp is a disappointing creature, without any of the *beauté du diable* of the wasp of our childhood, of which he seems to be but a dreamy image. Instead of the compact active creature we know so well, of brilliant yellow and black, the Indian wasp is long and thin of body, of a uniform pale-brownish

yellow. Of lazy habit, his legs trail feebly after him as he flies; and though in reality no less venomous than other wasps, it is rather as a crawling intruder than as an armed enemy that he is pursued and killed. This is the wasp proper. But there is a tiny species of wasp, of very different habit, of which the Indian gardener soon learns to beware. Seldom noticed alone, and often not discovered till too late, this lively little creature loves to build beehive-like combs in your favourite garden shrubs,—crotons, poinsettias, or broad-leaved allamandas. Brushing past such a shrub in your walk, or trimming a luxuriant branch, you will quickly be made aware that you have trespassed on the preserves of an armed and revengeful tribe. Dashing out fearlessly in a body from the cover, and making straight for your face and neck and hands, they will sting you fiercely wherever the flesh is exposed, and will follow up the pursuit till you escape beyond their reach. The pain of the sting is sudden and severe, but not lasting, and in a few minutes the irritation passes away, but it is severe enough to teach you to be on the watch henceforth for a new ambush in the garden.

If you see a broad leaf slightly curved out of its natural position, your suspicions will be at once aroused. Coming nearer, you will see perhaps one or two stragglers of the tribe on the surface of the leaf or hovering near, and you will give that shrub a wide berth. But no night-watch is kept, and if you come stealthily at night you may snip off the branch with your shears and make good your retreat before the enemy has time to discover his assailant. In the morning the combs will be empty.

Need it be said that the spider

too is here? Less gregarious and far less troublesome than ants or flies, spiders are no less various in shape, size, colour, and habit. Besides the airy species seen in the garden, with hair-like legs out of all proportion to their tiny bodies, and the glittering metallic spiders, whose monster webs stretch from tree to tree, there are two varieties with which one soon becomes well acquainted. One is a large brown spider with a body the size of a sixpence, and legs in proportion, usually seen only in the proper place for spiders, the corners of the ceiling. The instinctive dislike with which this creature is regarded is not without justification. If he runs over your skin he will cause a very painful inflammation, and his course will be marked by a red scar which lasts for many days. A commoner kind is a little harmless grey spider with black velvety marks. Of more active habit than most of his fellows, he is seldom seen brooding in a web waiting for unwary victims. His movements, too, are unlike those of other spiders. His legs are short and hardly seen; he hops as much as he runs; and altogether he seems to pass a more cheery and less exclusively blood-thirsty life than others of his kindred. I have more than once observed a spider of this kind haunt a looking-glass for many days together, and hop and run on the glass as if enjoying the reflection.

It is time now to notice—a few of the insects which are more peculiarly characteristic of India—creatures which, unknown in Europe, are our daily companions in the far East. No man will be long in India before he makes the acquaintance of the fish-insect. This is one of those retiring but insidious foes which lie in wait for those who place any value on their household gods, and who relax for a day

their vigilant care of such treasures. Books and papers are his feeding-ground: undusted shelves and drawers; all quiet undisturbed places in which paper and paste are to be found. Under the paper lining of your handkerchief-drawer, under the velvet padding of your dressing-case, behind the plush frame that holds the picture of the beloved, lie the favoured haunts of the fish-insect. If you open a book which has lain long on the shelf, or a bundle of papers which has been tied up in a drawer, there is a rapid movement and a faint flash, as a small grey thing, sometimes an inch long, and with a silvery sheen which adds to the delusion, wriggles swiftly out of sight. The fish-insect is not venomous, and the harm which he does is not often serious; but he adds to the roll of the besiegers who conspire to give to an Indian house the shabby, uncared-for look which is so foreign to an English home, and so dispiriting to the new-comer — one of the many creatures whose ways you may watch with interest, but against whom you have to be ever on your guard.

A thousand times more fiendish are the form and the ways of the insect which next crouches for its portrait, a native of India too conspicuous to escape notice, yet to whom justice cannot be done, and who can never expiate the crime of his existence. "I should like to make your flesh creep" is the involuntary thought of one who essays to describe the Indian cockroach. Who that has been in India does not know the flat, shining, ill-savoured, coffee-coloured thing, seen only in dimly lighted places,—the eyes starting out of the head; the long ever-moving feelers; the swift uncertain movements; the sudden uncontrolled flight, when he dashes

perhaps into your face, and for a brief and horrible moment his clammy legs cling to your skin? What a life he must lead! Ever in cowardly terror of his life, his perpetual instinct is to hide himself. From some dark corner he glares at you with guilty eye. As he darts from place to place he knows you will kill him if you can, and he knows he deserves to be killed. Even in the houses of the highest in the land the cockroach is not unknown. Boots, gloves, and books bear witness to his ravages, and a pungent smell betrays his presence in your wardrobe. But the paradise of the cockroach is a ship. It is in the depths of the ship's hold, where he may hide among the cargo undisturbed and feed on all rank things, that he is in his glory. Happily he seems unable to live except in tropical heat, so that in the great passenger-steamers constantly returning to Europe, he is seldom seen. The home of his heart is the hold of the ship whose course is limited to tropical seas. There, among bales of rice and kegs of oil, where darkness reigns and the air is hot and foul, and where human foot rarely intrudes, he roams at will from post to post. Thence the more venturesome spirits ascend to the upper decks and haunt saloon and cabins, and especially pantries and store-rooms, where corners and crevices shelter them, and there are endless chances of "loot." Hence comes the chief ingredient of that sickly atmosphere which strikes the sense on descending from the outer air, and often makes a voyage in such a vessel a penance indeed.

In the daytime the cockroach lies hid, but no sooner are the lamps lighted than he wakes to his nightly career of ghastly play and plunder. On the first day of

the voyage you will kill one or two and hope you are rid of them; but it was an idle feat—the place of the slain is quickly taken by others, and the reserve is inexhaustible. Your cabin becomes untenable, and you resign it to the cockroach; or, if you must sleep there, you hurry off your clothes in a fever of haste and dash into the shelter of your curtains, where you hope for peace, and, if proper care is taken, may find it. If you sleep without curtains, tradition has it that the cockroach will feed on your nails and eyebrows.

But besides the arch-fiend I have attempted to describe there are other varieties of the cockroach, differing from him and from each other in shape and colour, and only less insufferable because less aggressive. From the presence of these no Indian house can be guaranteed. Such are the small fat species, brown or striped, with ribbed back, found among the papers in your writing-table drawer; and the still smaller swift-running cockroach to be met with in all similar retreats. I need not prolong the agony. Suffice it to say that, of whatever form or size or colour, the cockroach, whose acquaintance is forced on every man who treads the soil of India, is of all created insects the most repulsive, but unfortunately one of the most prolific.

Let us drown the memory of the accursed thing in contemplating some of the more curious and clean-living tenants of trees and grass. Grasshoppers and their kindred are found in India in abundance, from him whose penetrating pea-whistle deafens you as you pass under the trees on a sultry evening to the wonderful "praying mantis," than which none is better worth study among

all the winged marvels which nightly dash into the Indian drawing-room.

From two to three inches long, the slender green body of the mantis is surmounted by a giraffe-like neck, ending in a small hammer-head with big protruding eyes. With his bent fore-legs and hooked claws, held up as if in prayer, he is the most ungainly of living things, his movements reminding one of those of the kangaroo. He is a creature to be approached with respect as well as with wonder, for he is ready with his teeth, and his bite is painful; and there is something revolting in the slow cold-blooded relish with which he devours the flies and smaller insects which cross his path. But his quaint intelligent ways are so well worth watching that I have known a mantis caught and tied up by a thread and kept for days for the purpose.

Another nightly wonder is the stag-beetle. As you doze over your five-weeks'-old newspaper in the open verandah after dinner, you are aroused by a boom, as of distant thunder overhead. Louder and nearer comes the sound, like the magnified buzz of a hive of bees; and again and again the din is broken by resounding thumps against the ceiling, till suddenly a heavy body like a chestnut falls plump on the floor. All is silent, but with a candle you will soon find the author of all this disturbance walking unconcerned on the floor. He is a huge black horny beetle, as broad as he is long, and almost as deep-chested. His shining body is protected by a shell almost like that of a tortoise, and his head guarded by a projecting shield. So powerful is he that it is a common experiment to place heavy weights on his back and see him walk away with them like an

elephant with a child. Presently, tiring of the dull sameness of the floor, he will raise himself with an effort, and spreading gauzy wings from under his tortoise hide, will mount again with din and fuss, and soaring in awkward ill-balanced flight through the room, hurl himself blindly against walls and ceiling, till either he is once more brought low by the concussion, or blundering through the open window, wanders out again into the night.

To speak of the centipede is to transgress the limits of the insect kingdom; yet he seems to ask for a word of mention among the ants and beetles with whom he is so closely associated in the Indian house and garden. His is a fear-inspiring name, yet the commonest Indian centipede is a type of innocence. A dull-reddish caterpillar, of such uniform girth that the head is hardly distinguishable, the number of his legs must be nearer a thousand than a hundred. In no fear of molestation, he wanders in the verandah and among the flower-pots—too slow to escape detection if he wished it, but with no guilty fears to drive him to concealment. One resource only he has if disturbed in his peaceful wanderings—when touched he at once rolls himself up into a tight round coil, and lies still on his side. "Do what you like with me," he seems to say; and as he does no harm, and with his hard shelly back is not an inviting morsel even to birds, he is generally left alone, to uncoil himself and resume his stroll as soon as the coast is clear.

It is not to this innocent babe that the name of centipede owes its ill repute, but to a far more venomous namesake, with whom he has nothing in common but the multitude of legs. Like all

noxious creatures, the armed centipede seems to be conscious of his own guilt. His hand is against every man, and every man's hand against him. Unlike his distant kinsman, he is seldom found wandering in the open, but lurks fearfully in dark quiet corners. As you re-pot some favourite plant, he will be found among the broken bricks at the bottom of the flower-pot; and hastily are plant and pot dropped from your hand at sight of a rapidly moving brown thing, two inches long, serrated like a sword-fish. He expects and receives no quarter; but his flight is swift and sinuous, and he will often escape to try your nerves again, if not to wound you, on a future day.

But my subject is inexhaustible, and I have but touched its outer edge. Time and space would fail were I to notice a tithe even of the families of creeping and flying things which in India share the home of man and attend him in his going out and coming in—things beautiful and hideous; familiar things and things that baffle description. A volume would not suffice to tell of the tribes of moths, from the giant Atlas to the silvery gem bordered with vermilion; of locust-flights that give new reality to the stories of the Pentateuch; of crickets which seem to have strayed from the English hearth or the crevices of kitchen walls; of big bouncing things, half cricket half grasshopper; of insects of which no man can distinguish head from tail; and of ten thousand creatures, unnamed, unclassified, to whom it seems indifferent whether they run, or hop, or walk, or fly, and who, to the embarrassment of mankind, seem ever undecided which to do.

P. HORDERN.

IMPRESSIONS OF AUSTRALIA;

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE FISH RIVER CAVES.

A FIRST visit to one of our great and purely English-speaking colonies is, for the intelligent and howsoever widely travelled Briton, a memorable and unique sensation. Politically, indeed, the importance of our colonies, and the duty of knowing all about them, has become a truism. How, to a world-wide and maritime empire, the possession, or rather the incorporation of great, fertile, healthy regions, the home of rapidly growing communities of our own kith and kin, could ever have been otherwise considered, seems now difficult to understand. But although this is now admitted with almost gushing unanimity, it may be well to not entirely forget the comparative modernness of the sentiment, at all events in its extended form. Statesmen we have always had—and they have belonged, as a rule, though by no means exclusively so, to the party with which ‘Maga’ has always been identified—who grasped the imperial idea, but they were not always in office; on the contrary, there were long intervals of indifference, polite or contemptuous, *doctrinaire* or stolid, according to the idiosyncrasies of the actual Minister. When, therefore, lately, a distinguished young nobleman, whose leanings on the subject might naturally have been those we associate with the names, say, of Lord Derby or Lord Granville—when, in short, Lord Rosebery went forth and discovered Australia, his political friends must have seen in the exploit something of the fertility of resource and happy audacity of

a Columbus. We are far from grudging them their discovery, if made somewhat late, or questioning the sincerity of their conversion, though it was a trifle sudden. Only let there be no backsliding; we are all now of one mind on the main question; let us have at least one subject which may be treated on its merits, and free from the curse of party spirit.

Of the hearty loyalty of the Australians to the imperial connection there can be no doubt. It is quiet or enthusiastic according to circumstances. If it springs partly from sentiment, it reposes also on conviction. We often hear Australia spoken of as a “young” community, with youthful susceptibilities, which must be managed accordingly. If the community is young, it is at all events composed of very emphatically “grown-up” people. No doubt it is impulsive, easily swayed by sentiment or carried away by an idea. But surely this may be equally said of the democracy at home, which, being composed of elements much less intelligent than the average mass in Australia, is much more likely to be—and, as a fact, often is—a slave to false sentiment, and led away by very Brummagem ideals. A good instance of this is seen in the comparative depth of the feeling excited, in England and out there, by the death of Gordon. The reverence felt for Gordon in Australia, and which was indeed a proximate cause of the Soudan Contingent, is an abiding conviction, with a correspondingly deep distrust of the Minister to whom they attribute his deser-

tion. In England the feeling was strong, but it could not be called lasting, or it must have hurled from power the Government which was so deeply responsible, and whose chief is still our popular idol, even if some of the gilding is off.

Young Australia, then, believes in the empire, and in herself as a part of it, and her sons have all the elasticity which our race might be expected to show transplanted into a fine climate, with an open-air life, plenty of animal food, of elbow-room, of new opportunities, of rapid rewards for energy. Like youth, but indeed like most people, they look for a return in kind for sympathy and loyal affection freely bestowed. On this head they are sensitive, and a recurrence on the part of certain governing and other classes at home to the old condition of indifference before referred to, would be felt to be intolerable. It may be hoped that this danger is on the wane, for the indifference was largely bred of ignorance, and increasing knowledge will bring an increase of sympathy. They attach due importance, too, to responsible expressions of opinion from the mother country—for are not our great men theirs also? *Apropos* of which, it is pleasant to reflect that the two most justly popular men now in Australia are her Majesty's principal representatives there.

Although, however, such are the prevailing sentiments on the imperial connection, it must not be supposed—and it might be supposed from recent works on the subject—that the community is perpetually swayed by these emotions, or indeed that, beyond the political and other active minds in the capitals, much thought is given to the subject at all. The distance from England after all is

great, and distance seems to impose some mysterious physical limit on the intensity of our feelings. Then, besides the now many important local questions, they have the daily material concerns of life to attend to, which are sufficiently prosperous to disincline them for change or for speculations about the future.

One of the great arguments you hear from the Separatists, who are by no means non-existent, is the danger of being entangled in European complications in which Australia has no direct interest, and, conversely, the inadequate importance which we attach to Pacific questions, and our consequent unsatisfactory treatment of them. As to the last, there is one simple answer. Admitting—and it may fairly be admitted—that in such questions as, *e.g.*, the New Hebrides, we should have taken a stronger line, and done something more,—could they, standing alone, have done as much? Then, as regards the risks from a European war, although it would be a great mistake to underrate these—and certain strategic points ought to be made safe without any further delay—still an attack *in force* on Australia is a more improbable contingency perhaps than is supposed. The distance from whence any large attacking force could be brought is great, and provided always that our China and Australian squadrons are kept up to the mark, even the Russian fleet would run the gauntlet through them with difficulty. A substantial increase, however, of the Volunteer force, whose numbers at present in all Australia hardly reach 25,000, would seem highly desirable in view of the possible landing of an enemy; and meanwhile considerable additional security will be given by the new

arrangement with the Admiralty, by which we are to station a force¹ to be kept permanently in Australian waters, the burthen of which, accepted in a statesmanlike and liberal spirit by the Australian Governments, is to be defrayed by the colonies.

Although, then, as nations and communities reckon, we may fairly speak of Australia as "young," we are nevertheless forcibly reminded of the march of time by the circumstance that the colony of New South Wales has recently celebrated, with becoming pomp, the first centenary of its existence. And indeed, if its capital, the metropolitan city of Sydney, has no definite marks of antiquity, there is, nevertheless, in the irregularity and narrowness of some of its principal streets, a certain charm, as of a city that has grown, and not been built to order, contrasting pleasantly, at all events for our prejudiced European eyes, with the rectangular magnificence of Melbourne.

Nothing strikes a new arrival in Australia from Europe more than the general spirit of enterprise and high level of wellbeing, and, I may add, of intelligence. The signs of it are everywhere. To take a very small one first: the daily papers cost twopence, and everybody buys one. (*N.B.*—The purchase is quoted as proof primarily of prosperity rather than of intelligence; but the principal papers, such as the 'Argus' and the 'Age' of Melbourne, and the 'Sydney Morning Herald,' will stand comparison with any in the world.) The crowd, too, of silent and absorbed readers,

chiefly artisans, who fill the Melbourne and Sydney libraries, engaged on more solid-looking literature, is a striking sight. There are not the signs of high pressure said to pervade all classes of society in America. Wages are high, but hours are short, and work is not constant. Picnics are greatly in vogue. Families and households, trades and institutions, all picnic periodically; and where the picnic takes so prominent a place, life cannot be very dull or hard. Of course the climate lends itself to this form of recreation, and no further proof is needed of the blessing of a fine climate—for what could you substitute for a picnic? It is pleasant to see, week after week, the crowded, but not overcrowded, steamers carrying their thousands of well-to-do, contented people in all directions about the endless beautiful reaches of Sydney harbour; and the same may be said of the land-parties at Melbourne and elsewhere. Even on great holidays, the order and sobriety are remarkable. I saw one day a couple of men with a companion who, though hardly drunk, had taken too much, waiting at a landing-stage to embark, and refused admission by the skipper. The same good order is observable at the great races, and at the football matches, where the general enthusiasm and the interest taken in the details of the game (which is beautifully played) by the spectators, both male and female, show its national character. The natives² are fond of pointing out this to a friend from home, and it is a legitimate cause for pride.

¹ Five fast cruisers and two torpedo-boats.

² This is one of the very few words used in other than the usual English sense. "Is Smith married?" "Yes, he married a native." You compose your features to a look of concern at the *mésalliance*, and then discover that a "native" only

Happily, the many Australians who were present in London last summer during the Jubilee time, will admit that we in the old country can also behave well on great occasions. Of course there is another side to the picture. There is a "rough" element in the large towns—they call them "larrikins"—who at night sometimes make the paths through the parks and the smaller enclosures, which are so pleasant a feature in these towns, somewhat dangerous. They are mostly mere youths, but very precocious and very vile ruffians, with whom there is only one way of dealing. They do hang them occasionally; but, admitting the difficulties of the problem, the absence of any systematic plan of dealing with this class, and the terror they inspire, especially in Sydney, seem to argue a want of resource if not of courage somewhere. Poverty and squalor, too, are not absent; for, besides the spiritless residuum—the hopeless failures whom nothing can help, and which every great city in the world has to show—there is of course an Irish mob, who will not go up the country and will not work. These last seem pretty numerous, and muster strong on occasions. At a recent lying-in-state of a Roman Catholic archbishop at Melbourne, even residents who knew the place were disagreeably surprised at their numbers, and squalid, savage appearance. Speaking generally, however, the mass is sufficiently diluted with ordinary humanity to prevent the generation of those inflammable Irish gases which are a standing difficulty elsewhere.

Their relation to their Church is a close one. In the religious shop-windows you see, side by side with the cheap paraphernalia of Romish devotion, the portraits of various "martyrs" to the great cause of disorder. Where, however, the Irish are in moderate numbers, and can be kept from excitement and from drink, and are disposed to work—large deductions, but still measurable—they are not disliked; and many of them who have gone up the country, and made use of their natural abilities, have done very well indeed. Many of them are small country innkeepers, pleasant hosts and excellent fellows, with a characteristic "down" upon tramps and beggars.

As exceptions to the general forward movement, you see, in the country, occasional stagnant-looking districts, with bad, unprogressive farming; and some small hamlets were pointed out to me—I did not visit them—on the Hawkesbury river, drifted, as it were, into back eddies in the stream of progress, concerning which strange and miserable stories are told; but at least they are veritable exceptions which mark the rule. Hard times occur in Australia as elsewhere; but we may take it as a sign of widely diffused prosperity that there is, on the whole, but little jealousy of the large fortunes, and consequently little disposition to listen to agitators. These gentry, in fact, as well as their audiences, are usually recent arrivals, emigrants of the wrong sort, against whom the feeling on the part of the genuine colonial is naturally bitter.

means a born Australian; and you explain in vain that, for you, the term "native" only suggests a nigger—speaking in the wide and not strictly ethnological sense—or, at best, an oyster.

In this same Hawkesbury district, by the way, I came upon another sight which is not only exceptional in Australia, but I should think probably unique,—a venerable and veritable ruin. Beautifully situated on a steep knoll, which, with its surrounding slopes, is more than half enclosed by a wide bend of the fine river, stands an old roofless church of stone. It is not large, but by no means without architectural pretensions; and whether left unrestored from a sense of pride or æsthetic pleasure in so rare a possession, or for some more commonplace motive, I cannot say. I asked where the people of the district now worshipped, and was told in the “Protestant Hall”; but where the Protestant Hall was situated, I could not exactly find out. There are a good many Gallios in those parts.

Lord Beaconsfield once denounced the present age as one which has mistaken comfort for civilisation. Assuming this “comfort” to mean a smug profusion of conventional luxuries, the typical Australian *ménage* is in no immediate danger in this direction. As regards the country inns, indeed (of course they are all “hotels”), an inelegant simplicity is the general characteristic. The national dish of eggs and bacon, washed down by tea, is much too prominent; and you resent this because there is no necessary poverty of resource to excuse it, only want of organisation, and indifference. But there is always plenty, and it is always cheap; and, thanks to the abused and much-enduring Chinaman, plenty of vegetables. Your bedroom is a plank enclosure, usually some 6 to 8 feet square, but it contains all you absolutely require, including—or besides—a brush and comb,

and sometimes a tooth-brush;—sometimes both tooth-brush and tooth-brush dish are absent, which is, perhaps, an advance on the previous arrangement! And finally, a hard day’s work or travel makes everybody uncritical. In the bedrooms of private houses you also always find the brush and comb, showing how universal is the pleasant and hospitable custom of detaining the chance visitor to dine and sleep. There is usually a greater simplicity in external things than with us—a disregard of what we, with our luxurious habits, have come to consider necessary comforts, and the absence of which we are apt to call by harsh names. I am very far indeed from making this a reproach. Englishmen have long ceased practically to believe that a man’s true life consisteth *not* in the abundance of the things which he possesseth; and to find that the old text is true after all, and perhaps carry away a lesson or two on the advantages or charms of simplicity, is very good for us. On the other hand, men who have roughed it there for years often feel that they have a right to make up for lost time; accordingly there is no lack, especially in and around the capitals, of elegant and well-appointed establishments, with the added charm of a genial and graceful hospitality, which would seduce the virtue of the most hardened stoic. And even in remote country districts you find houses where the owner’s laudable ambition has been to reproduce the essential features of an English country-house. I recall especially my far too flying visit to one of these. My host, a finished gentleman in every sense, had, though a born colonial, been educated at Oxford, whither his son had followed

in due course. Passing by his station I called, on a casual introduction, and being badly pressed for time, expressed my intention of going on the same night—a terrible solecism and offence in that truly hospitable country. My only possible alternative had been to leave for a train next morning at four, which I had not proposed, fearing to give trouble; but having propounded and decided on this, my worthy host not only more than half forgave the shabbiness of my conduct, but having done the honours of his place during the entire day, was up before dawn to offer the *deoch an doruis* and speed me on my way. His house, like that of a brother's in the neighbourhood, was, *mutatis mutandis*, a moderate English country-house; and the various signs of refinement and culture in both were pleasant and striking, at such a distance from what we are pleased to call the centre of civilisation. In such homes the best features of our country life are often reproduced; the ladies, especially when there is a township in the neighbourhood, teaching in the Sunday-schools, the men attending the shire councils, and enjoying as a rule, when personally worthy of it, the deference "due to their position."¹ But it must be admitted that, for people without resources in themselves, the life is apt to be dull. If the farming is confined to sheep, there are months when there is comparatively little for a man to do; in a general way there is

little sport, and in the remoter places little society; there are practically no poor to look after—the aged are provided for by "benevolent" institutions. It is not wonderful, then, that the squatter very often, when he has made his pile, leaves an agent to look after his place, and retires upon the fleshpots of Melbourne or Sydney. And lower down in the scale the deadly dullness of the country also acts badly; for the labouring man, after a few months' work, deprived often even of the resource and society of the public-house, can stand it no longer, and going off to the nearest large town, gets rid of six months' savings in a week. The gradual introduction of amusements of sorts would in fact, by making country life more agreeable, do much to attract the congested population from the towns, which already contain far too large a proportion of the whole numbers, and to develop the country.

To men who have known the excitement of gold-digging, any ordinary life no doubt seems dull. We are apt to think of this as only a masculine experience; but while stopping at a little shanty in Victoria, mine host's daughter, a red-headed Irish girl, poured out her heart to me on the subject. They had lived for a time at the famous W—— diggings, and she had found all life very slow after that. Her present farmer neighbours were great boors compared with the free-handed diggers; then the delightful vicissitudes,—the

¹ The land laws have sometimes pressed severely on this class of men, and where their land has been held on lease from Government, the practice of "free selection," enabling selectors to pick out choice bits of the run, has sometimes been so worked, when the squatter could not afford to buy out the selector, as to drive him off the land altogether. The land taxation also, as matters now stand, appears heavy; but although sometimes, no doubt, dictated by a narrow prejudice against a "landed aristocracy," it can hardly, as yet, taking into consideration the price originally paid for the freehold, be called excessive.

desperate depression when they had drawn a blank, the corresponding excitement over a find of gold, and the glorious times that followed, gave a zest to life which made it worth living! But it must not be supposed that the smaller towns are quite devoid of resources; to the passing traveller, stranded in such places, the Mechanics' Institute, with its well-stored reading-room and library, is often a most welcome refuge.

One might instance, by the way, as another drawback to the charms of country life, the frequent long seasons of drought, when the grass—*i.e.*, the entire landscape within sight—is utterly burnt up, and bare and colourless, and each little blade as it appears is devoured by the grasshoppers. In the gardens, where also every green thing is consumed except the tomatoes, you put them up and crush them at every step along the paths. My first experience of them was when, travelling by train one very hot day, we nevertheless suddenly encountered what appeared to be a snow-storm! Their big congener, the cicada, reveals himself rather to the ear than to the eye; and even in a quick railway train, where a thunderstorm is hardly audible, you hear his ringing noise as you pass along.

Apropos of insects, in Melbourne, happily, mosquitoes are few; in Sydney, especially in the gardens of the suburbs, they are naturally more numerous, and it is asserted that the railway transports them now to places where they were formerly unknown. I see nothing improbable in the supposition. A mosquito pair might certainly take their places unchallenged in an empty carriage, and alight to find a congenial home in many a pleasant well-watered country station. In the mountains the flies are a

terrible infliction. In the entire Blue Mountain region their numbers and pertinacity are such that the mind reverts even to the sugar-mills of Fiji as pleasant reminiscences. Every one wears a square of net over his hat, hanging down all round; or a piece of string simply is tied round the hat, with a dozen small bits of cork depending from it at intervals, and these bobbing about, and looking, I suppose, like bigger flies, scare away the enemy. The flies, however, unlike mosquitoes, at all events leave you at sundown. But they are very early risers. At Mount Macedon, the pleasant viceregal summer retreat from Melbourne, and associated with memories of a gracious and charming hospitality, one was always rudely aroused at daybreak by the so-called marsh-flies—a monster combining the evil qualities of a horse-fly and a blue-bottle—carcering and thundering about your room till breakfast. Their bark is the worst, but they also bite; so that in church, as I remember, the condition of perpetual watchfulness and apprehension interfered somewhat with one's devotions.

The untravelled Englishman, with the popular notions in his head as to the "roughness" of colonials, may be surprised to learn that, on an average, colonial manners are at all events as good as our own. I say "on an average," because the conditions are somewhat different. It must be remembered that although, in the capitals, society is crystallising into classes and sets, much as among ourselves, this is by no means as yet the case up the country. I do not of course mean to imply that the ordinary British feeling of difference of class or position has been effaced, or even very much weakened—for truer and more

human practice on this head you must go beyond the European to the nobler democracy of Islam; but in Australia the sparseness of population, the scant accommodation on the roads, the need and consequent habit of putting your own hand to anything, and the constant calls for mutual help and intercourse, throw all sorts and conditions into far closer and more frequent contact than in an older country. Accordingly, not only would anything like exclusiveness or assumption of superiority be resented, but there is a good deal of independence of manner, arising naturally from these conditions of life, and from the self-confidence of a young and flourishing community. If you are thrown (as you naturally are) much among the *people*, your interlocutor will often begin by impressing on you the well-known fact that one man is as good as another, not to say better; but if you at once acquiesce—especially in the latter part of his proposition—he soon relapses into the better manners of an aristocratic community. Discussing the subject one day with a very candid acquaintance, a small inn-keeper, he admitted not only that this self-asserting disposition was general, but that he shared it himself; nevertheless, he considered it a moral failing—and in fact felt this so strongly in his own case that he had gone into the volunteers, so that he might occasionally undergo the wholesome discipline of obeying orders!

The great general prosperity also conduces to independence in this way. You do not, as at home, find at every corner some obsequious, because impecunious, loafer, ready for a “trifle” to relieve you of any trouble. And you may often have to “hump your own swag,” for the able-bodied fellows

who are standing about are probably too well off to care to earn your shilling; and they think, besides, that you may as well do your own work for yourself—a proposition difficult perhaps to gainsay! And in the affairs of life generally a man is expected to keep a bright look-out, and take care of number one; and failure so to do certainly excites more contempt than pity.

It seems almost an impertinence to speak of the manners of the upper class, which are simply the manners of British gentleness all the world over, though even this is noteworthy when you remember how much larger than elsewhere is the proportion of those who have risen within a short period to that position. Your difficulty indeed always is to remember that you are not actually in the old country. In external nature, no doubt, you have reminders enough. In the cleared districts man's handiwork gives usually a certain raw and unfinished look to the scene; the fields, for instance, with the tree-stumps still remaining, the trees themselves, perhaps, dragged to the edge of the field, and woven with their branches into the stout “cockatoo” fence; then there is the ever-present gum-tree, and the almost equally ever-present glorious, but un-English, sunshine and clear sky. But socially, as far as there is a difference, it lies in a certain freshness, and directness, and absence of conventionality, definite enough, but more easily felt than described, marking the relations of man to man. It affects you morally, much as the release from starched shirts and stiff braces—and *con rispetto*, I should imagine, for the fair sex, from tight lacing—affects the spirits. A witty old French marquis, with all the perfect manners of the

faubourg, who had travelled in America over thirty years ago, once described to me his high appreciation of American society. I said, "Surely you must have found much that was uncongenial to you?" "But consider the difference," he answered. "Among ourselves, if two strangers meet casually, half an hour is taken up by trying to find out who the other's grandfather was, and whether it would be desirable to know him the next time we met; in America, the two men begin at once to talk and thresh out some practical subject: think of the national gain, in information and intelligence, from the half-hours so employed!" If my friend had travelled in Australia, he would have found this practical advantage and a corresponding pleasure, added to the essential refinements of English society.

It must be admitted that in mixed assemblies, not to say sometimes in first-class railway carriages, the vile habit of spitting—symbol or profession, as it is supposed, of faith in the Democratic Idea—is unpleasantly frequent. You watch, consequently, the countenance of a doubtful neighbour, and when the facial muscles begin to contract, you draw your feet well under your chair. However, it is a free and manly practice, and let us hope that the woman of the period, who has borrowed so much from us, will draw the line at this. I am told the spitting in Australia is nothing to what it is in America. If this is so, I do not think I should like to go to America.

The genesis and spread of the Australian accent would be an interesting subject for investigation. Mr Froude—and it is one of the most curious minor errors in his book—says there is none, and hav-

ing made the erroneous assertion, proceeds characteristically to philosophise on it. The accent offends the educated ear, for it is almost identical with the Cockney accent, only with an exacerbation of the nasal twang, but no confusion of the aspirates. You cannot express the twang in writing, but they say gripes for grapes, dye for day, and so on. There is a popular song with the refrain, "Tommy's come home to-day," which sounds very unfeeling when they sing jovially, "Tommy's come home to die!" The curious thing is that you seldom hear it, even among born colonials, in persons past (say) fifty; but most of the younger generation, and children even of the most *comme il faut* people, so nice and attractive, *non Angli sed angeli*, till they open their mouths, have it, to the distress of their parents, who cannot account for it. Of course it is in the air now, but did it come originally with a ship-load of Cockney emigrants, or how, and when?

The precocity of the rising generation is remarkable. No doubt there is always a tendency to this in a new country where hands are few, and the services of all are needed as soon as possible; but physiologically, too, they become men and women at a startlingly early age. I have been amused when stopping at an open door to ask my way or other information. A couple of children of the mature age of three years might be playing on the doorstep, but if I ventured to ignore their presence and direct my inquiry over their heads to an adult member of the family behind them, they have taken up the subject with perfect *aplomb*, and a look and manner implying a slight but definite surprise at my want of *savoir faire*.

The subject is perhaps too wide for the passing traveller, but you can hardly avoid the impression that parental discipline is lax. You hear various explanations. Parents are too busy; or they themselves have had a hard time and would like their children to enjoy themselves; or finally, the children won't obey. The school system, which is generally though not universally popular, is "free, secular, and compulsory." Many regret the absence of the religious element; but, they say, the children had to be taught, and we could not wait till the Churches had agreed as to the form in which religious instruction should be given. All attempts at such agreement have hitherto broken down. The Roman Catholics especially object to the system, and when they can afford it sometimes establish schools of their own, and anathematise the parents who send their children to the national schools; but their people do not much sympathise with this objection, and, in fact, many of the teachers in the anathematised schools are Roman Catholics. We may well sympathise with the apprehensions felt by them and other thinking Australians on the subject; and looking nearer home, and reflecting on the number and character of the present generation of London "roughs," and on the fact that they must have all or nearly all passed through the refining ordeal of the board schools, we must admit that as yet this much-vaunted system of ours *non emollivit mores*.

On the question of drink, the general testimony is that though there is still too much of it, the practice of indiscriminate drinking is far less common than formerly. The sons of the older generation, which acquired the habit during a

life of greater roughness and privation, do not keep it up. It is no longer *de rigueur* to accept the offered "refreshment,"—at all events, in pretty rough society I found one never gave serious offence by declining it. And yet the taking offence is not so absolutely irrational as it may seem, for the offer is simply meant as one of courtesy and good-fellowship, to refuse which appears abstractedly discourteous. A very happy recent innovation allows you, when asked, "What will you take?" to say, "I will take a cigar," which of course you can throw away unperceived—if it is a bad one—after the first few whiffs. Driving across country one day with a very intelligent companion who had delivered himself of much good sense on the subject, we came to a roadside public, when he, recognising five of his friends standing about, handed me the reins, got down and went inside with them, rejoining me in a couple of minutes. As we drove off he said, "Well, that cost me half-a-crown." He had felt bound, according to custom, to "shout" for them all. I said, "But why do you give in to the practice?" He replied, "It is not for the drink that we care, but for the expression of friendly feeling. If any one would invent a less stupid way of expressing this, we should all be much obliged to him." This reminds one of the dialogue in 'Punch': "My dear fellow, I am very sorry for you, but why did you propose to her?" "Aw, well, you see, I had danced with her three times, and could think of nothing else to say." Certainly it seems hardly worth while to destroy the coats of your stomach out of mere civility. A pigeon-match was going on in the little township we had passed, and some fifty men were present,

each of whom would spend something like £1 in this way during the day. The publicans thus drive a great trade, and will naturally do what they can to maintain and promote the practice. In fact, where business transactions are concerned, they can practically make it imperative. My companion above-mentioned was a manufacturer of lemonade, &c., and he explained that when he came to the neighbouring town on business he had no choice but to patronise the principal inn, where in the course of an hour he would drop some £3 in this unsatisfactory way. All this must mend in time.

The question necessarily forces itself on you, What will be the effect on our race, say thirty or fifty years hence, of this new climate and new surroundings? Some people tell you they already notice a decline of energy. That there will be a change, in so far as climate has to do with national character, is inevitable, for certainly our climate and the Australian are widely diverse. We probably owe much to our climate. Its uncertainty stimulates ingenuity and resource—witness the Scotch farmer and gardener; its severity hardens our frames and disposes to activity; its gloom, the Frenchman says, tends to suicide, or, as we might retort, encourages certain reflective qualities in which he is deficient. One would fain hope that the energies thus developed have become inherent in the race. Besides, there are varieties of climate in Australia. If the maritime belt from Sydney northwards is enervating, the dry atmosphere of the southern colonies is distinctly invigorating, as are also, it is said, even the torrid plains of the interior. We must therefore look to intercourse

with these bracing regions, and with the stream of immigration from home, to counteract enervating tendencies. But any fine climate, as against a bad one, tends directly not only to ease but to amusement; and if the rising generation have the energy of their fathers, a point on which many doubt, it is, by all accounts, chiefly in this latter direction that they expend it. The sons of the men who have created their position and fortunes too often decline to follow in their fathers' footsteps. A more curious fact, and difficult to explain, is the small demand for commissions in the army which the home authorities have placed at the disposal of these young colonials. To an outsider it seems also a matter for regret that some of them do not go into serious training for public and parliamentary life. It is often made a reproach to the constituencies that they seldom elect men of culture and independence. But do they always have the chance?

I have often been asked, both by themselves and by others, whether the Australians "blow." They have probably no special need to use the prayer, "Lord gie us a gude conceit o' ourselves." It would be rather a misfortune, in their position, if they had; but if a young and vigorous community, rapidly expanding, and daily developing fresh outlets for its enterprise and wealth—if such a community did not blow a little it would be more or less than human; and there has been hitherto another exciting cause for so doing—viz., the sense that their importance was not duly appreciated at home. Now, if there is a recognised excuse for blowing your own trumpet, it is that no one will blow it for you. Admitting, then, that

there is a good deal to blow about, I think they blow very little. They have been much chaffed for blowing about Sydney harbour, which, no doubt, is irrational, though during the few weeks I spent there I was sufficiently under the spell of its beauty to have excused them. A little boy of eight, indeed, said to me one day, "Do you not think our harbour is a *great credit* to us?" I could only answer, "Certainly, my dear boy, if you made it." I never heard an Australian blow, as Americans do, about the size of their country. Perhaps they hardly realise that as yet, or they still think of Australia rather as a geographical expression than as a political entity. We only—thanks to our average atlas, which would lead one to suppose it is about one-half the size of France, instead of fifteen times as large—begin to realise its size after making a twenty hours' railway journey from Melbourne to Sydney, and then seeing how small the distance looks on the map; or after travelling, also by rail, for many hours straight into the interior, and yet seeming by the map to have hardly left the coast. It is interesting to reflect how far this province of Greater Britain, while geographically only a fragment of the long-sought Terra Australis, nevertheless transcends in real importance the dreams of the early explorers! So much, then, for blowing; but you see the general self-confidence of the people come out amusingly in the new and rising townships. Driving across the country you come suddenly, perhaps, on a couple of wooden shanties, and notice another away down a rough track at right angles to the one you are on; then, dotted about, you observe three or four more nondescript

edifices, which on inquiry turn out to be a school, a store, a bank, a post-office, a church or two, and an inn. Then you perceive that the land around, it may be rolling plain or half-cleared bush, is intersected by broad tracks, roughly fenced off, and bordered sometimes with newly planted trees, indicating the future streets or boulevards, to which the buildings aforesaid conform. Magnificent streets, and distances; but the whole land is theirs and the fulness thereof, so they carve it out royally, and believe absolutely in the rapid growth and great future of their town, and half persuade you to make your fortune by buying a lot or two. Confidence is infectious; but without putting much strain on the imagination, you can often in these cases see solid ground for it, however rough the beginnings. Wherever there is water enough, and a fair soil (of which the character of the bush gives indication), and railway and market are not too remote, there can be no doubt of the future; and if the land is not too heavily timbered, the progress will be all the more rapid.

One such district especially struck me, but of course it is only one among many,—a tract of pretty undulating country among the Blue Mountains of New South Wales. A considerable portion of it was available for agriculture; it is watered by permanent streams, and besides a considerable rainfall, enjoys that safest source of water-supply, a yearly snowfall, which, however, does not lie. The elevation may average 2500 ft., and in that latitude (33°-34°) the sun must always have considerable power; so that while all the usual English crops would flourish—and the few patches already existing of wheat, oats, and potatoes placed that be-

yond doubt—many other crops would equally succeed which we cannot raise at home. In many parts the timber was thinly scattered, with grass growing beneath, giving a park-like character; and one had only to multiply in imagination the few isolated cottages into hamlets, and extend in the same way the patches under culture, and the fencing, to call up the picture of a pretty and thriving English or Lowland Scottish landscape. This district had already been surveyed for a railway.

A singularly silent boy—he was little more than a child—drove me through some twenty miles of this country. He only once volunteered a remark, when his indignation was suddenly roused by the sight of a woman working in a field! I mentally patted him on the back, recollecting the feeling with which in Germany I first saw a woman harnessed in a plough with a donkey, and concluded from his indignation that the phenomenon which excited it must be rare. In a district like this any man may make a good start who is ready to dig, and generally use his hands, and who will keep from drink; for he can get a bit of land at almost nominal price, and clear it at odd times while working for a neighbour. If he has in addition a small capital, of course the progress towards independence is quicker; and the same applies to the many other agricultural openings—as, *e.g.*, the potato-farms in West and South Victoria, and the orange, apple, and other fruit orchards there and elsewhere. It is not a question of making “fortunes,” but something far better than this; it is the “expansion of England,” solid agricultural England; not, I need hardly say, by the residuum or the professional “unemployed”—these we shall

always have with us,—but by the legitimate and yearly surplus of honest labour. The labourers are here, the land is waiting for them there. Can the two not be brought together?

These agricultural emigrants would, at all events, not have to face the grudging welcome given to ordinary artisan emigrants by the trades-unions, in their selfish and short-sighted opposition to emigration. On this question of emigration I found a consensus of opinion to this extent, that an able-bodied and steady man, willing to put his hand to whatever work offered itself, could not fail to get on. The wages even of the casual migratory labourer are 6s. to 7s. a-day, often with board and lodging added. More than once on the road, meeting these fellows tramping along, my driver or companion has recognised them as “new chums” by the cut of their pack, and added that they could not be good for much, or they would have half-a-crown in their pockets to pay for a coach-fare. The steady skilled artisan will also get on. So he will, no doubt, at home; but the prospect for his family is much better in the colonies. Wages in the colony are higher, and the cost of living, if a trifle higher than at home, is not so in proportion to the wages. It must, indeed, be remembered that though wages may be high, work is not necessarily constant, wages being kept up at an artificial level by the action of the trades-unions, to the detriment and stagnation of various industries. Still, even what in the colonies are called low wages are about equal to the average British wages with board and lodging thrown in. It must also be remembered that even when there is “no demand” for labour, this

by no means implies that there is *no opening* for work for the steady able-bodied man. For married couples also there is a pretty steady demand on the stations, and for female servants everywhere. In fact, the disproportion of the sexes sufficiently shows that the most legitimate of all openings for young women is always present. It struck me as a drawback to the Victorian system of promoting manufactures by protection that numbers of young people, attracted by the not very desirable freedom of factory life, remain in Melbourne, instead of going up country to possess the earth and subdue it.

Perhaps the most prominent and characteristic feature of Australian landscape—that which perpetually reminds the British traveller that he is in Australia and nowhere else—is the gum-tree. In no other country in the world probably does a single tree (there are many varieties, but all singularly alike in general appearance) monopolise, and, so to speak, constitute the landscape over such vast distances. You may travel for hundreds of miles through bush or forest containing almost nothing else, and even the most appreciative lover of Nature, with eyes open to her infinite variety, must confess that it sometimes becomes monotonous—the trees over a given area showing little or no variety in size, form, or colour, or mode of growth and decay. But it is not always quite so bad as this. Besides that the different varieties of eucalyptus give some little variety, there is often an undergrowth of mimosa or “wattle,” of *Buddleya*, *Banksias*, and other shrubs, and of bracken, and in more favoured localities a sprinkling of the allied tea-tree (*melaleuca*, almost as beautiful as

our hawthorns) and other myrtaceae, of sassafras, and of light-wood (a handsome phylloclineous acacia), and in the damper valleys of tree-ferns. Still, these are bright exceptions. The colouring, too, is monotonous, varying shades chiefly of an olive-green, enlivened only by the pretty tender reds of the young shoots, and by the somewhat ghastly white of the self-peeled trunks. Accordingly, the general effect of large masses of this forest is decidedly sombre, though somewhat relieved by strong sunlight. The patches of willow which you see occasionally planted by a water-course or “creek”—a tree which at home, beside our other foliage, has by no means a brilliant colour—strikes you there as a vivid green. If you would describe what a gum-tree is like, it is a most puzzling Protean apparition. Looking up from below at a thickly wooded hillside, you might take them for pines. A group of young ones, with their light stems, will remind you somehow of birches; or again, when older and more gnarled, they are curiously like olives. Large solitary specimens of the red gum (*E. rostrata*), dotting the plains beyond Ballarat, look like ancestral oaks, and give quite a park-like and respectable character to the scenery. But take them all in all, they resemble nothing so much as the conventional “tree” of the old masters, or of a schoolgirl’s drawing—*i.e.*, no tree in particular.

Walking through a fruit-orchard in the above-named district, I was distressed to see the ground strewn with the beautiful wings and bodies of red and green parrots. My distress was illogical, for I should no doubt have looked unmoved on the corpses of sparrows or other sober-plumaged maraud-

ers. Still the parrots' case is a hard one. They used formerly to live on the sugared blossoms of the white gum, which grew plentifully in this district; but that tree has, like many eucalypti, the untidy habit of shedding its bark, which imparts a bitter taste to the grass and makes it unpalatable to the sheep. The white gums have therefore been extirpated; but the parrots, seeing the peach-trees growing up in their place, may naturally have thought that the change was ordered expressly for their advantage. The black-fellows, who supposed that the sheep had by some process of natural selection replaced the kangaroo, and accordingly transferred their attention to mutton, were not less rudely undeceived.

The gum-forest has at all events one charm. The leaves are all set and hang edgeways; they thus afford comparatively little shade, but you are compensated by the camphor-like aroma, delicious and exhilarating, which the sun distils from them.

Australian landscape, then, over great areas of the country, is monotonous, and no redeeming picturesque element has as yet been added by man's handiwork. Nor is this wonderful; in those counties of England where the village architecture is really beautiful, the style has been handed down for generations. In other places time and damp simply, without any skill on man's part, have mellowed the commonest brick walls and wooden palings and stone roofs into delightful contrast or harmony with their surroundings. One could hardly expect that in Australia, and I did not see anything likely to develop it. There is, however, an Australian type of cottage, founded on the old shanty, with its great pyramidal

brick chimney, built outside I imagine for safety, rising from the ground at one end;—slightly ornate modifications of this, their far-projecting eaves covering a verandah, and sloping less steeply than the roof, with little railed flower-beds in front, are sometimes pretty. But the village here, as at home, tells its own history. Here it speaks of rapid growth and rough hasty work, and individuality and energy—much that is interesting and admirable. But as for the picturesque—well, the Australians are people of resource, and when they want it, I suppose they will import it, or raise it somehow,—*Quien sabe?*

There is, at all events, one class of scenery which can be studied in Australia in great variety—viz., the tremendous precipices and rock-masses which you see on many parts of the coast, and in the mountains of New South Wales—each having a peculiar character of its own. On the coast, near Sydney, the Pacific thunders incessantly against perpendicular cliffs of sandstone. At their feet lie huge rectangular blocks, looking as if they had been quarried. These have been detached at different heights from the face of the cliff, where some of the strata project beyond the rest,—the top one especially always overhangs—thus forming the wildest profiles. All the cliffs here weather in the same way; the upper part, getting harder by exposure, remains, while the other parts are eaten out and fall. And where the soil of the country is composed of the same sand you notice the same effect in miniature, produced by the rain, on the roadsides or in railway cuttings. There are also wonderful rock effects in the Blue Mountains. These are not a mountain-chain, but rather an

elevated tract many miles in width, separating the coast region from the plains of the interior, and the name is so far misleading that you seldom see any mountain, being yourself at the top. Here at an elevation of 3500 or 4000 feet are some of the favourite summer resorts from the—at that season—relaxing air of Sydney. In several of the valleys there is arable land, and coal having been discovered at many spots, active little townships, agricultural and mining, are springing up. But the striking and peculiar feature in the landscape consists in certain great areas which look as if they had suddenly subsided—as perhaps they have—from the surrounding table-land. They are remarkably similar in appearance, and due, no doubt, to the same causes. Walking at random through the unvarying eucalyptus forest you will come upon a deep narrow gully—or crevice, one might say, for they are sometimes so narrow that you could almost leap across—with perhaps a diminutive stream far away at the bottom, while from and near its sides rise huge fantastic piles of rock, carved into their strange forms, I conclude, mainly by the aforesaid stream in its more vigorous days. Sometimes the rocks are capped by a hard ferruginous “pan” an inch or two thick, and the softer stone has weathered away beneath it.

Occasionally, instead of these wild rocky gorges, you come upon a pleasant little, soft, green dell; but of gorge or dell the end is the same. Following it down, you come suddenly on the edge of a cliff over which the stream disappears, while before you, but some hundreds of feet below, there lies displayed a great tract of undulating and sometimes hilly country, densely wooded, along which you

can detect the course of your stream meandering with the orthodox zigzag, the whole tract being enclosed by a perpendicular rampart of rock—the rock, in short, on which you are standing—from the base of which a talus slopes away into the valley. Sometimes tremendous buttresses and pinnacles of rock stand out from the boundary walls; in one of the grandest of these spots, “Govat’s Leap,” the wall of rock at the upper end is sheer and smooth, and sweeps round—a sort of embayment from the main valley—in a regular curve, like a segment of the interior of a gigantic round tower. The great depression thus enclosed is covered with a dense growth of timber, and looking down through the intensely clear air, you see far beneath you the top of each individual gum-tree of a forest of many millions; the apparently absolute uniformity in shape, size, and colour of each one of these millions of trees affects the mind strangely, suggesting the calculation, how many of these gum-trees go to the square mile—and so on for the rest of Australia! It was monotonous, of course, not to say a little depressing, for there was not a bird, not a sound to break the silence, or a breath of wind to stir the trees; but the vastness of the scale redeemed the monotony.

One is not surprised at the awe with which these vast inhospitable solitudes impressed the early settlers. The region was long accepted as impassable, and the construction of a road through it was only undertaken by convicts on the promise, if they succeeded, of a free pardon. It is not exactly, even now, a pleasant country for strolling; a cloudless blazing sky overhead, and a blinding glare from the lumpy yellow sandstone,

destructive to eyes and boots, over which you stumble along, harassed by myriads of flies. But the flowering shrubs, and pretty if unfamiliar wild flowers, are very attractive.

The most wonderful sight, however, as a natural phenomenon, which this region, or probably all Australia, has to show, is the famous series of limestone caves known as the Fish River, or now better as the Jenolan Caves, the latter euphonious name having originated, it is said, in the name "J. E. Nolan" having been found inscribed in one of them. These caves are only some twenty miles in a straight line from Mount Victoria, the largest of the summer resorts in the region just described. Nevertheless, such is the character of the country, that I found the most eligible route thence was by train for three hours, and then a further drive along a good road of thirty-six miles. On the train I passed over the far-famed "Zigzag," which I fear did not impress my uninstructed mind as much as it ought to have done. It seemed to me, in fact, the obvious, if not the only way of taking a railway down a steep hillside. When, however, an engineer friend pointed out the spot where, by one blast, using $3\frac{1}{2}$ tons of powder, they dislodged (he assured me) 45,000 tons of rock, I felt the subject was too vast for me. There is another zigzag on this line, where the Blue Mountains rise abruptly from the plains of the coast region. It is, I believe, less of an engineering work, but it impressed me more; and the views looking back, as you clambered up the ascent, over the wide extent of settled country, are very fine. Yet one more zigzag I saw, this time not on a railway, —and though much slighter in

character, very striking in its way. From the general high level of the country down to the valley where the caves are, there is a fall of 1800 feet in a mile. Down this descent the road zigzags, taking $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles to do it; and it is a beautiful bit of road-engineering, new and charming vistas opening at every turn as you go bowling down, or toil slowly up the ascent. The valley, with steep hills rising on all sides, is very pretty, and suggests Alpine reminiscences, for the vegetation is more varied than usual, and with somewhat of an old-world look — superficial of course, but enough, with the goats and tinkling cow-bells, to recall Swiss milkmaids, and William Tell, and civilisation generally. At the bottom of the little village, and occupying nearly all its level space, is the inn, or "accommodation house," primitive and rough, but substantially comfortable; and the manager must be a man of resource, for the nearest butcher and baker are eighteen miles off, and occasionally there is an unexpected rush of visitors. We were threatened with starvation once or twice, but it never actually came off. Besides, immediately facing the inn, a grand arch of rock 100 feet high, the entrance to a natural tunnel which runs right through the mountain, takes off one's thoughts, for the moment, from such sordid considerations.

The whole immediate region is a mass of coralline limestone with shells, which shows an upheaval from the sea of some 3000 feet; and the deep valleys and hills have been carved out of this by mere rain and running water, partly wearing away the rock, partly, by its carbonic acid, dissolving it. The latter process, we may suppose, was the chief agent in hollowing out the caves. The

entire mountain opposite for an unknown distance is honeycombed with these, in series at different levels, some of them hundreds of feet above the others; and these higher ones must have been formed when the valleys still stood at a corresponding level, otherwise the water which formed them could not have got away; then, as the valleys were carved out deeper and deeper, the rain-water, percolating through the ever-extending surface of hillside, formed the lower series of caves within. There is now, besides, internal communication in many places between the different cavern levels. Some of the caves are open to the outer air and light, and I am not sure that as regards general effect these are not the grander. Approaching the great archway first mentioned, you find that the tiny burn which runs towards it from the inn, instead of going on through the arch, suddenly disappears underground, as if ashamed of the contrast between its own insignificance and the gigantic tunnel. Passing through under this great vault, and clambering over a mass of fallen rocks and luxuriant brushwood, you find a splendid stream issuing from under the opposite hillside, and rattling away down another beautiful valley, its charms heightened by an abundance of the finest water-cress I ever saw, the seed only introduced a couple of years ago. At right angles to the cave I had just passed through was another and far grander passage, which tunnels through another mountain-ridge, and is known as the Devil's Coach-house. This is nearly 300 feet in height, its floor strewn with gigantic blocks, some of them water-worn; others, the size of small houses, had been detached from the roof, partly, no doubt, loosened by water, but as-

sisted, I should fancy, by earthquakes, of which, indeed, I saw a curious seeming proof in another cave; a great stalactitic pillar was cracked through the centre, both upper and lower parts remaining intact, but a lateral movement either of the floor or of the roof had set them several inches sideways apart. Looking up now from the valley, you see on the mountain-side, hundreds of feet above these cave-entrances, a natural and very beautiful arch of rock. As you ascend to this, the view from behind it, first of the arch itself—of singularly symmetrical and graceful form—and then, set in this beautiful frame, the landscape of hill and valley beyond, makes a most charming picture. Within the mountain the magnificence of the sights passes all description. The enormous extent—you may wander for hours in a single cave—is itself impressive; so, too, is the tremendous scale, the passage ever and anon opening above or below into great halls or abysses, hundreds of feet in height, which even the magnesium-light can hardly penetrate: then again, the wealth of beauty, and variety in form and colour of the alabaster-like material or brilliant crystals, hanging from or encrusted on roof and walls, and varying in size from gigantic columns and masses to the most delicate fretwork. The popular notion of a stalactite is a single rod or shaft growing gradually from above, and forming, when united with the stalagmite deposit on the floor, a simple column. But in fact, the composition of a stalactite is something like that of a bone; and the water, charged with carbonate of lime, pressing downwards within it, will sometimes find its way out through a weak point in the side, and, leaving its deposit as it goes,

will branch out and upwards, and, twisting about at any and every angle, form the most exquisite tangles and mazes. To these the Cockney ingenuity of visitors has given silly or unmeaning names; and the chief anxiety of most of the party seemed not so much to enjoy as carefully to identify all the "bridal veils," and "Grecian bends," and "confectioner's shops," and "Lot's wives," and the rest. This trial, however, you must expect when in company with the British tourist in any part of the world. Perhaps, after all, it is only a perverted expression on his part of the Nelsonian sentiment—a conscientious if misplaced desire to "do his duty." The inevitable funny man was, of course, always present—his jokes exciting the usual irritating chorus of approval. It was a relief then to hear one appreciative criticism, serious and hearty, from an elderly gentleman who, I think, was in the tallow trade; for, gazing at a great wavy mass of stalactitic deposit, he exclaimed: "Well, that *is* beautiful drippings! Why, it's like real sperm!" After all, things must have names, and some that have been given here are not inappropriate, as the "Crystal Cities"—a very curious effect, for you cannot see how or whence the crystallisations have come and arranged themselves, over a level floor, in close miniature likeness of a collection of buildings, streets, towers, and ramparts. Another well named, and perhaps the most striking of all, is "The Battle-field," really a crystallised vision of battle; you see the confused mass of men-at-arms and horses, spears and banners, struggling slowly down an incline, and over the edge; and then fixed there for ever, like the figures of the wicked in Michael Angelo's "Last

Judgment." Another most exquisite effect the namer, awe-struck, one hopes, by its indescribable beauty, has well named "The Mystery." It is a great mass of crystallisation, several feet in extent; a tangled maze of branches and lace-like filaments and sparkling gems in every direction, not only beautiful as to forms, but of the loveliest colours mingled with the purest white. The variety of colouring everywhere is remarkable; sometimes you see a single brown or red pillar among a forest of white.

Occasionally, opening from the main passage, you perceive an aperture into which, by lying flat on the ground (which, by the way, is often wet or muddy), you can just squeeze your body. Traveling for some few yards in this posture, you will see, the guide assures you, something very beautiful; and if you go you are generally rewarded, notwithstanding the mud; but the profusion of beautiful objects is so great that, even if they do not pall, you can only digest or remember a fraction of them. In several places the lime-laden water has oozed out simultaneously, so to speak, along some crevice in the roof several yards in length, the result being a great sheet of stalactite many yards square, of perhaps a quarter of an inch in thickness, and with wavy shawl-like folds, corresponding to the original line of the fissure, and shining out semi-transparent and in varied colours when a light is held behind it. Many of the stalactites give out a fine tone when struck; and a place where a number of these with graduated tones are grouped together is named the "Music Hall."

In the lower caves are streams, their courses still unknown, and pools of beautifully limpid water.

One of these, which looked about two feet deep, was actually twenty. From above one pool, which was difficult of access, over slippery rock, where a false step meant anyhow a very cold ducking, a crowd of stalactites hung down, almost touching the surface, and the reflection in the perfectly still water looked as if the stalagmites had come up from below and almost completed the columns.

A great deal has been done by the authorities to make these wonders accessible to the public. To say nothing of the road which brings you here, they have, in the caves, cut staircases, railed off the more dangerous places, erected long wire-ladders, fenced in many of the more delicate and beautiful objects. No one is allowed to go into a cave without the guide, who has a supply of magnesium wire for which the party pays, every one besides carrying a candle. The smoke from both has already begun to soil the delicate white surfaces; and when I was there, the accomplished head of the Telegraph Department, Mr Cracknell, was engaged in introducing electric light. One was glad to feel that the work was in the hands of a man of good taste and judgment, for the experiment, from a picturesque point of view, is not free from danger. The guide is something of a character, and poses as a humourist. He was a small farmer in the neighbourhood, but having begun to explore some of the caves, was fascinated by the pursuit, and gave himself up to it, being at last appointed by Government as keeper. He is not allowed to take fees, and there is no charge for admission,—a bad arrangement, according to our home ideas, for a small regular charge could hardly be objected to, and

would defray the cost of additional guides, who, as the number of visitors increases rapidly, are much wanted. New caves, too, are being gradually discovered, entailing increased supervision.

A great advantage of this sort of sight-seeing is that you are more or less independent of weather. After a steep pull of some hundreds of feet to one of the upper entrances, the sudden release from the blazing sun and swarms of flies was very agreeable, though the change from the sun at 130° to the cave at 53° is great. Wet weather, however, is felt markedly in the caves, the water standing everywhere or dripping from previously dry roof and walls. The rate of stalactitic growth is said to be very slow here, not exceeding, in places which might be taken as an average, a quarter of an inch in twenty years; but I cannot vouch for this calculation. For a couple of days I was storm-stayed, for the heavy rains tried the zigzag road severely. Being new it had not settled, and became impassable for heavy vehicles; but the literary resources of "Cave House," if not extensive, were select, consisting of—besides a fine collection of photographs—three works, Lord Beaconsfield's 'Endymion,' Thackeray's 'Philip,' and Macaulay's 'History'!

The roads of this neighbourhood, so far as I have seen, are at all events not "corduroy." A few miles' drive on a corduroy road is an experience to be remembered. It is formed simply of logs laid transversely, and covered usually with rough stones, gravel, or rubbish. This soon wears down, the wood too wears or decays, and the intervals between the logs, never very close, increase. The effect, when going at a fair pace, is a

number of definite and severe concussions—say half-a-dozen to a dozen—for each revolution of the wheel. You marvel at the contrivances of nature which carry you through with every joint and vertebra intact, and it was some little satisfaction to me to observe that the driver usually liked it even less than I did. To be sure, he had the possible dislocation of his coach-springs as well as of the personal machine to think of. It is, however, a handy and effective road where timber is unlimited and labour dear, and lasts well. One I made acquaintance with, which is sixteen or eighteen years old, and I fear likely to last some time longer, runs through a remarkable district to the north of Melbourne, which the Government, with wise foresight, has appropriated for the sake of the water-supply, with the collateral purpose of a timber reserve. Although within 25 or 30 miles of Melbourne, the rainfall of this district is far greater than around the capital. It is watered by some very pretty streams, looking as if intended by nature for trout streams, which indeed they will some day be, for trout have been successfully introduced, though the people say they are shy and very hard to catch, which for the present is perhaps just as well. Meanwhile the great natural interest of the district lies in the damp valleys, which contain the giant eucalypti (chiefly *E. amygdalina*), the tallest trees in the world, said to be, some of them, 400 feet high. Splendid sticks they are certainly, running up some 200 feet without a branch, and the largest I saw 50 feet in girth. The wonder is, whence they derive the materials for such a mass of solid timber, for they grow very close together, and the

intervening space is covered with smaller trees and undergrowth, including most beautiful tree-ferns. I think the height strikes you most forcibly when you try to sketch, and find how small a proportion of the whole tree you can get into the picture. But the effect in some of the larger valleys, notably on the road from Marysville towards the Yarra, where the great steep hillsides which form either slope of the valley are clothed with these magnificent trees, rising up, one series beyond another, for hundreds of feet—in fact, as far as the eye can reach—is very grand. The district will no doubt become a very general summer resort for the people of Melbourne, and its amenities will be developed, to that end, by the Administration. This recognition of the duty on the part of Government, in these new and rising countries, to provide in various ways for the comfort and welfare of the people—in short, to make the world a pleasanter place to live in than, for the great majority, it has hitherto been—is a pleasant feature to dwell on, and a hopeful; and, comparatively speaking, how easy the task! All our experience and mistakes to guide them, and infinitely larger resources than now remain to us to work with. Unlimited land! One feels a little envious, remembering the difficulty, at home, of providing a few acres of pleasure-ground or breathing-space, even for a great town; while the notion of national parks on a large scale, such as these young countries are establishing, is in our case too wild even for a dream. The thought of these vast areas of unoccupied but available land can hardly fail to recall the mistake made by our statesmen of the day in not retaining some sort of right

in these lands for the Crown—*i.e.*, for the people of the mother country. This, as I venture to call it, obvious right was abandoned of course definitively when self-government was granted to each colony, and it might even astonish some of the present generation of colonials to hear that their natural right to these lands had ever been called in question. But the naturalness of it appears less tenable, not to say a little absurd, when we consider the question in relation to Western Australia, where it is even now pending. Here you have a territory of over a million square miles (*i.e.*, some twelve times the size of Great Britain), and a population of some 40,000. These have petitioned for self-government; is it even rational that this vast territory should become the appanage of a handful of people, who live, besides, chiefly in the towns? For if they obtain self-government, as in the other parts of Australasia, they acquire *ipso facto* the right (which, being a Crown colony, they do not now possess) of deciding, for instance, on what terms emigration to that territory shall take place. The disproportion between their number and the territory in question is so enormous that one can hardly realise it. I am not pleading for any objectionable powers; there would anyhow be no chance in these days of such being exercised. As regards the present settlers, they and theirs must indirectly and in the long-run be advantaged by the presence of every additional emigrant family that we might establish among them; but it is quite possible that a different view might be taken by the artisan class, who, as a rule in the colonies, are opposed to immigration, and yet with whom, if self-government were

introduced, the decision of such questions would mainly rest. Meanwhile the question of organised emigration, with Government assistance, is again coming to the front, accentuated by the reflections which recent events in the Highlands necessarily arouse. At any moment, then, some plan may be devised and started for planting out, under all due precautions, some section of our surplus population; and here, in a healthy climate, are fertile lands which at present belong to us to deal with as we see fit. There is here, of course, no question of making money out of our rights; but, possessing the lands, we could hold them as security for the repayment, as far as might be thought desirable, by the emigrants, of the expenses incurred in sending them out and establishing them. Surely, then, it would be only common prudence not to throw away a right and a discretionary power, which we should necessarily exercise, not for the benefit of one side alone, but of all concerned. It is urgently to be desired that when the question again comes forward no measure should be adopted which does not keep these ends in view.

COURTS TROTTER.

P.S.—Since the foregoing pages were in type, the action of the Colonial Legislatures, with the view of prohibiting Chinese immigration, has brought to a crisis a perplexing question which, in the interests of the empire, will require very delicate handling; for, as matters now stand in Asia, the maintenance and strengthening of our present friendly relations with China is obviously in the highest degree desirable. It will probably be argued that the exclusion of the Chinese from our territories is an infraction

of the treaty of 1842, confirmed at Tientsin, which opened the territories of each country to the subjects of the other. But it has not been pointed out that the semi-prohibitive poll-tax which has for years been imposed on Chinese entering Australia amounts to a constructive breach of that treaty; at all events, it would have been so considered if such a tax had been imposed on British subjects entering China. The Chinese Government does not, however, seem to have, at any time, protested seriously against its imposition. Emigration is, no doubt, a great gain to the individual Chinaman, but it is possible that his Government may not seriously object to our exclusion of him, though they may naturally demand a *quid pro quo*. The returning Chinaman is apt to bring home with him some inconveniently un-Chinese views; his emigration, too, may be, *pro tanto*, a financial loss to his own provincial Government, and it is even possible that the central Government might prefer to see the migratory stream flowing towards the thinly peopled districts in the west of China.

Doubtless the outcry against the prohibition comes, in some degree, from the agencies and shipping companies interested in the emigration trade. On the other hand, we must sympathise with the apprehensions of those Australians who fear an irruption of Chinese in overwhelming numbers. The contingency, however improbable, is certainly not beyond the bounds of possibility. Still, it is pretty safe to say that nine-tenths of the agitation, of the outcry against "Chinese immorality" and the imminent degradation of the "Anglo-Saxon" type by a

yellow Mongolian tinge and obliquity of vision, physical and moral, proceeds simply from the working man's dread of competition in the labour market. Given the conditions of Australia—a vast territory, much of it tropical and unsuited to white labour, and occupied by a sparse white population—it seems unfortunate that no arrangement should be possible by which our race might profit by the presence of a singularly industrious, intelligent people, who would be content for the most part to remain outside the political system, and to continue hewers of wood and drawers of water. One can imagine a scheme under which all the rougher and coarser work might be done by an inferior race, the white man constituting an aristocracy of labour. It is undoubtedly an economical loss to the whole community that such an industry, for instance, as the Queensland sugar-planters, for which cheap and efficient coloured labour is a necessity of existence, should be crushed out of existence by the deprivation of such labour. But, in fact, under these conditions many other industries must languish in the tropical parts of the country, and its general development be indefinitely delayed.

Meanwhile the Conference which has been sitting at Sydney, in accordance with what seems the strong prevailing colonial sentiment, has just recommended the total exclusion of the labouring class of Chinese, making exemptions in favour of temporary residents, merchants, travellers, and the like; and it is hoped that some agreement may be arrived at, on this basis, between the Foreign Office and the Government at Peking.

C. T.

AN ELIE RUBY.

It was cowslip-time on the Elie links. Every howe and hillock was yellow with them, and their delicate odour was wafted by the breeze down to the sandy shore of the sea.

In a hollow where, during the storms of spring, the south wind driving the sand up among the bent, and the north wind blowing it back again, had between them piled a long wavy drift, Nellie Davidson sat with her lap full, tying a cowslip-ball. She had made them every year since she was a baby, and this year there were more flowers and finer ones than she ever remembered. So she had gathered handfuls; and now she sat putting them firmly together; then she tied them, and tossed her ball high in the air by way of finish. Down it fell on the dry bent; she picked it up and buried her face in its balmy, delicious roundness. All the sweet florets clustered together, and each curved, creamy petal was dotted with dainty touches of red. "Those be rubies, fairy favours," she repeated to herself, recalling what the old minister had said once long ago when he met her picking them. The words were so pretty, they always came back to her mind when the links were gay with her favourite flower.

As she thought of them to-day, they suggested something else. Elie was famous locally for its rubies (or, to be correct, garnets), and she meant to spend the afternoon looking for them among the grey gravel on the beach. The best place was further on among the rocks below the Lady's Tower. She gathered up her remaining cowslips and stuck them into the

breast of her gown, and throwing her ball up and catching it again as she went along, she took a short path across the links.

It was a perfect day in early summer—the sky blue, with little feathery white clouds here and there, unmoved by winds. Away and away up overhead the larks sang out of sight, and the wide sea to the southward was pale-turquoise-coloured. On its still expanse one or two fishing-boats, with ruddy brown sails, were waiting for the wind to bring them in. As Nellie paused a minute to watch them, she could hear distinctly the rattling sound of the heavy oars moving in the rowlocks of the nearest, quite a mile away, as the crew, weary of waiting, were fain to row to the harbour. They were bound for Elie—or "the Alie," as true Fife folk call it.

As she pursued her leisurely way eastward, looking towards the little fisher-town of St Monans—with its cottages gathered as if for protection round its ancient church, whose square-towered pointed belfry is a landmark far and near—looking along the links, she saw, crossing them beyond the Lady's Tower, which she had almost reached, a tall familiar figure, with the picturesque outline peculiar to fishermen. It was Walter Lindsay, and he was coming this way.

Walter and Nellie were "long acquaint," as they would have said; and the neighbours would have told you, moreover, that they were keeping company. But here, as is usually the case, rumour outran fact—although, had the neighbours seen the look of pleasure in Nellie's big blue eyes, or read her secret thoughts, they would have

plumed themselves on their prophetic powers.

Nellie's mother was a widow—and one of those meek quiet women for whom widowhood seems to extinguish all active interest in life. Her only brother, much younger than she was, had been taken in hand by an uncle in Colinsburgh, who owned a boat at the Elie, and with him and his sons Jolinnie spent all his time. So Nellie was left pretty much to the freedom of her own will. She had excelled in needlework at school, and had since been “at the sewing,” as elementary dress-making is called in Scotland. She kept her own dress neat and dainty, and had an intuitive sense of what was becoming. She looked very bonnie now standing in the sunshine, which lit up her pretty brown hair with glints of gold—it was snooded back with a bit of blue ribbon—and her gown was of some dark-blue cotton stuff, made quite simply, and expressing the grace of her figure. On Sundays, indeed, she adorned herself with a much more elaborate toilet—copied from the Edinburgh glories of the wardrobe of Miss Crawford at Earlsferry House; and as Walter Lindsay had of late volunteered his help in the choir, and sat opposite Nellie at the other side of the precentor's square table, her pretty face and her “Sabbath claes” were present to his eyes for a long time on Sunday, and to his heart all the rest of the week.

Walter lived in St Monans, and he also had a widowed mother—but she was a very different type of widow—red-faced, imperious, and evil-tongued, in so much that Walter's home with her was very far from happy. His father, people said, had been a quiet douce-tempered man, most long-suffering

in his married life; and when the sea claimed him and all his crew in one wild winter storm ten years ago, for his sake much sympathy had been felt for his widow, and much kindness shown to her and the boy Walter. But as time went on and sympathy died out, the neighbours felt it more and more difficult to show kindness to a woman who took all their little gifts without a pretence of gratitude, who was as unwilling to do an hour's work for them as she was ready to demand their help and service for herself, who borrowed what she never returned, and was ready to find fault if you said a word to her.

The neighbourly debt of kindness came therefore to be paid more and more exclusively to Walter, who grew up a general favourite, and had a place and a welcome at any fireside he chose to visit. He was a fine lad—frank-faced and kind-hearted, strong and active about his work, and ready to do many a little handy turn for his friends. He could whistle like a mavis—and sing too—and had a blithe hearty way with him that was very popular. As he grew up—learning every day more and more of his father's craft as he hung about the pier of St Monans, and was taken out now in this boat, now in that—his work came to be worth wages, and for three years past he had “hired,” sometimes to one boat-owner, sometimes to another, but chiefly with his friends the Laings in St Monans, a family of four strapping sons under the rule of their father, a regular old Viking of a fisherman.

One day, some business on behalf of old Jamie Laing taking him over to the Elie, he saw, standing at the door of her mother's cottage at the Toft (as the fisher-

houses there were called) bonnie Nellie Davidson.

She was slighter in build and gentler in manners than any of the fisher-girls he was accustomed to see. The charm of a pretty girl's face, as of a flower, is so individual a thing, that comparisons between one and another are unnecessary. Walter did not stop to compare her with any of the St Monans girls. She was at once and for ever peerless in his eyes. But beyond an ingenuity in making errands for himself to the Elie, and, as I have said, joining the choir of the church there, ostensibly from friendship to the preacher, he gave few signs of the attraction he felt. He sat and "glowered" at her all the time of the sermon, however, as Nellie soon perceived; and after several attempts to meet his eyes and snub the ardour of their expression by her cold looks, she had been worsted, and in self-defence obliged to look away.

Then when they rose to sing, she felt he listened for her voice and matched his own with it, as can only be done of intent, and her feminine instincts once on the alert soon conveyed to her numberless hints of his devotion, all-convincing in some moods of mind, and explainable into nothingness at other times, so that with no word of love spoken between them these two young hearts were wrapt in that atmosphere of endless doubt and delicious hope, that golden haze of imagination technically called a love-affair.

As Nellie stood now on a thyme-grown knoll of the links watching Walter's approach, the path he followed led him down to the beach and out of her sight. She knew he must reappear in a few moments climbing up the rocks on which stood the Lady's Tower,

and that then he would be sure to see her. Quick as thought she turned and ran down to the shore on this side of the ruin, and having a moment before made up her mind to meet and have a chat with Walter, she now took pains to hide herself in the angle formed by two big boulders, where she could only be seen from the sea, and taking up handfuls of the fine black and grey sand, she let it run through her fingers and absorbed herself in watching for the red sparkle of rubies amid the falling grains. Her heart beat loud in her ears, conscious how nearly she and Walter had met, and either this or the interest she forced herself to give to her search kept her from hearing his approaching footsteps until they were close to her hiding-place, then in sudden alarm she looked up just as his burly figure came round the rocks and stood between her and the sea.

There was a moment's pause, and then he said with a shy smile, "I kent ye were here."

Nellie strove to seem indifferent. "I cam' to seek rubies," she said; "there's an awfu' heap o' them in the sand aboot here."

"An' I cam' to seek you," said Walter, with a sudden eloquence delightfully astonishing to himself, and discomfiting to poor Nellie, who blushed to the tips of her pretty little ears, and bent her head over the sand with an air of greater occupation than before.

Having made so good a beginning, Walter's confidence in himself increased, and in a vague way, half inspiration, half intention, he resolved to follow it up. He seated himself, accordingly, on the sloping grey shingle at her feet, with his back against one of the boulders forming her little nook; and on the pretence of

sharing Nellie's search for rubies, bent his head until it was on a level with hers.

Nellie's heart beat louder than before, and she cast about, as women will, for some means of escape from the declaration in prospect. The first point undoubtedly was to seem at ease. In an easy tone she inquired, therefore, "An' whae telt ye I was here?"

Walter saw she was afraid to look up, and, indeed, she was too conscious of the ardour of his gaze to encounter it. "Folk hae w'ys o' kennin' things," he said oracularly, "an' floers dinna grow in this fashion o' themsel's, 'at I ken o'." As he spoke, he opened his hand—there lay her cowslip-ball!

"Gie me it!" cried Nellie, forgetting her tactics and holding out her hand; "whaur did ye fin' it?"

"Wait a wee," said Walter; "them 'at fin's keeps, an' it's mine noo. I fand it up on the links, an' I kent the lavrocks cudna mak' sic things."

He waited, expecting Nellie to ask again for the flowers, but she was wary; pretending to continue her search for rubies, she watched him turning over the cowslip-ball in the palm of his big brown hand in a gingerly fashion, as if he feared his touch might bruise it.

"They're real bonnie," he said at last; "it beats me to ken hoo ye mak' them gang a' thegither like that; ye maun be real clever, Nellie." His voice dwelt on her name so tenderly that she was inclined to resent his using it, but she was at the same time afraid to raise such a personal question.

"It's easy dune when ance ye ken the w'y o't," she replied; "I mak' lots o' ba's like that ilka simmer—they last nae time." Since he was ready to make much

of the thing, she would make little of it.

"Sin' ye can mak' them sae easy, wull ye no' gie me this ane?" he asked, holding it closer to her hand that she might take it if she chose.

"I'm no' carin'," quoth Nellie, with a little toss of her head; and then, with a daring sense that she trod on dangerous ground, she added, "tho' what *you* sud want wi' it I dinna ken."

"Div ye no'?" said Walter, in a low tone; "I like it because it's sae bonnie for ae thing, an' I lo'e it because it was vrocht by ane that's mair bonnie than a' the floers." His voice trembled a little with a reserve of feeling, which Nellie tried again to ignore.

"There's ane!" she cried hastily, making a sudden dart among the sand after a supposed ruby: "no it isna; jist a bit o' shiny stane. I dinna ken why folks sud speak sae muckle aboot findin' them. I hae lookit and lookit, an' there isna ane yet that I can see. I'll awa hame."

"Dinna gang yet," pleaded Walter; "bide a wee and I'se help ye." The fact that she could not escape unless he moved to let her pass, which seemed far from his intention, did more to keep her than his words, and she resumed her search among the sands.

"Your fingers are ower big," she remarked, saucily, after some minutes' busy silence. "Ye're better at catchin' muckle fish than wee stanes."

This put Walter on his mettle. Wrapping the cowslip-ball in a coloured handkerchief, and stowing it away in his pocket with a carefulness not lost upon Miss Nellie, he turned over on his elbow, and gave all his attention to the work in hand.

The afternoon sun shone hotly upon them, and the sand poured

in a warm stream through his fingers as he sifted handful after handful. At last fortune favoured him, and he caught the ruddy gleam of a ruby among the small broken shells and sparkling bits of mica, of which the shore was mainly composed. It was quite a large one and almost heart-shaped. Without a word he picked it up and laid it in Nellie's hand.

"Eh!" she cried, "that is a bonnie ane! Hoo did ye see it? That's far bigger than the ane Jean Tamson was sae prood o'."

"Wad ye like it?" asked Walter.

"Oh, I'll maybe find ane mysel'," said Nellie, guardedly.

"It's my hert, ye see," said Walter, smiling. "An' what wad ye gie me for it?"

"I'll gie ye that cooslip-ba' ye think sae muckle o'," she answered, smiling too.

"I ha'e gotten that already," said Walter, "an' I'm no' seekin' onything. Tak' it."

"Thank ye," said Nellie, doubtfully, afraid of the consequences. "It's a grand big ane."

"What are ye gaun to dae wi' them?" he asked, continuing the search.

"Oh, I dinna ken," said Nellie. "I micht get aneuch to mak' a brooch maybe."

"I ken something better ye micht ha'e," said Walter, in a tone which invited question. But Nellie only looked mystified. "It's a thing I wad like fine to gie ye, an' I'll never gie it to onybody else." He paused again to take courage. Nellie bent over the sand. "It wad mak' a braw ring, Nellie; an', oh, I wuss ye wad mairry me!"

The almost trembling eagerness of his tone was not without its effect on Nellie's heart, but she was outwardly unmoved. Her

blue eyes looked past him and out to sea, while she said very demurely, "I think I wad rayther hae a brooch."

Walter breathed hard. He had a vague sense that her nimble wit would find some way of escape from his question, and what to say next puzzled him sorely.

"Nellie," he began at length, "I ken ye micht mak' a better mairriage."

He could not have hit on a better line of attack. She looked at him, and her heart turned traitor and was ready to yield its citadel.

"I ken I'm no' much to boast o', an' there's ither lads, I daursay, ye like mair."

"There is not," said his advocate in her bosom.

"Ye micht luik to be keepit better nor I cud dae," he continued, filled with an increasing sense of unworthiness, "an' I ken I'm no' company for you."

"There's nane better!" whispered the traitor heart. Still her pretty red lips were pressed together, and the expression of her face baffled Walter's anxious scrutiny.

"Aweel," he said, with a great sigh, "I see I'm jist teasin' ye. I was ower ready to think ye micht ha'e me." He rose slowly, with a disconsolate air, and was turning away to leave her, when she spoke, in so low a tone he could hardly hear. "I didna say I wadna," she whispered. Walter stood motionless, and she repeated the words, looking up with a mischievous little smile, and rising as she spoke.

"Ye're in sic a hurry," she complained; "you an' me's no' that long acquaint; ye sud gie me time." She leant against the rock, and plucked the yellow lichen from it nervously with one hand; the other held the ruby he had given her.

He came back to where she stood, and taking her flower-like face between his two hands, turned it up to his. "Nellie," he said, "I jist lo'e ye wi' a' my hert and soul, and every bit o' me, an' if ye lo'e me, dinna haud awa, but tell me ance for a'."

Nellie struggled a little to free herself, but felt proud at the same time that she could not. This was a man to respect and love and yield to, and the sense of his strength and manly power filled her with triumph. It was sweet to have won such love; she would not dissembly any longer. "I dae lo'e ye, Walter, I dae; but ye shudna mak' me say it."

Walter threw his arms round her in a passionate embrace, and as he pressed her fair head against the breast of his blue knitted jersey, she felt the strong beating of his heart throbbing against her cheek. They were in that high-wrought state of feeling which we only reach on tiptoe moments of life, and which will not stand contact with the outer world, when a sudden chatter of voices and a burst of laughter close by, drove them apart instantly. Nellie darted into the shelter of her nook between the boulders, but Walter stood his ground.

"Oh, whae is it, Walter? cud they see us?" she whispered anxiously.

"Na, na," said he, in a reassuring tone, "I dinna see them yet; ye needna be feart." Then he added, as the voices came nearer, "It's a waddin' frae St Minins. Sandy Begg and Jean Watson; stan' up an' ye'll see them."

"Na," said Nellie, decidedly; "I dinna want them to see me."

It was a walking wedding, common enough then, and not unknown now in Fife. The bride and bridegroom, with the best man and

bridesmaid, were walking along the shore to the minister's house in the Elie to be married. Sandy and his best man were of course in their Sunday clothes. The best man wore an orange comforter wound twice round his throat, with its ends buttoned inside his thick pea-coat. He walked first with the bride, a bonnie sunburnt fisher-girl, with a loud voice and a laugh like the cry of a sea-gull. She wore a stout purple wincey dress, and an extraordinary arrangement of white flowers on her hair, which was well oiled and tightly plaited back. The wreath, if anything so ungraceful may bear the name, consisted of two bunches of white artificial flowers firmly fastened above her temples, and the green portions of it, somewhat resembling sprays of asparagus, were liberally showered with glass dewdrops which tinkled against each other, and pattered on her forehead as she walked.

A similar wreath adorned the bridesmaid's head—and except that Sandy and Jean both wore big white kid gloves, there was no outward token distinguishing the principals from their seconds in the affair. As they took their way along the links, Sandy, who was escorting the bridesmaid, stopped to hail Walter.

"We're awa to be mairret!"

"Ay, I see that."

"I wad ask ye to come wi' us; but we ha'e nae lass for ye."

The bride and bridesmaid laughed in chorus; and after bidding him hospitably to the supper to be given in the bride's home on their return from "the Ailie," they disappeared among the sand-dunes by the shore.

Walter turned to Nellie, who was looking up at him. "They're out o' sicht noo," he said; "but I wad ha'e been prood tae be seen wi' you, Nellie."

"I daursay that," was her rejoinder, with a light laugh, as she met his meaning glance. She saw he was thinking of and exulting in her confession of love for him; and with that coyness which seems native to a girl's mind, she shrank from any more love-making. "I think ae ruby's aneuch for ae day," she said, springing to her feet and climbing the shingle and natural rocky steps up to the grass. "I'm awa hame."

"I'll gie ye a convoy," said Walter, following her—and together they threaded their way over the grass in the wake of the bridal party, whom they were careful not to overtake.

They spoke little, but Nellie knew that Walter's thoughts were all about her—that her every look and word was treasured by him; and he, on his part, hoped she really loved him—feared lest he had teased her into saying so—and longed greatly to hear her sweet confession again. He was so afraid he might forget her exact words. "I dae lo'e ye, Walter, I dae," was not that what she had said? When they came to the hollow in which Nellie had found the finest flowers for her ball, she stooped to pick some more.

"I'll get them for ye," said Walter, eagerly preventing her, and gathering with careful fingers the largest heads of blossom. Nellie stood and watched, bidding him reject some, and pointing out others, with a delicious sense of the unlimited command over him with which his love invested her. He, with that cunning with which love can gift the most simple-minded of men, led her on to exercise the authority which it is as sweet to obey as to wield, knowing that the more she exercised it the closer would be the link between them.

At last Walter's hands seemed full, and he pretended he could gather no more; "but here's an awfu' bonnie ane—twa o' them—ye micht pu' yersel', Nellie."

She bent down to pick them; he lifted his head, and their faces almost met.

"Ye micht gie me ae kiss noo, Nellie," he pleaded, "jist to mak' me sure 'at ye meant what ye said."

Nellie glanced round, but there were no prying eyes to witness—not a house in sight on shore, or a boat on the sea, no living thing, only the happy larks singing and soaring overhead. So resting her hand for a moment on his shoulder as he knelt at her feet, she gave him one fluttering little kiss, and, then blushing crimson, ran away. He followed more slowly, and did not overtake her until he reached the open gate of a little field behind the Toft, through which ran the footpath between Elie and St Monans. Here some children were playing, and a woman with a baby on her arm was sprinkling linen laid out to bleach. Nellie sat on a big stone by the gate awaiting him, safe in the presence of neighbours from further importunities. Walter gave her the cowslips, and with a brief smiling good-bye, they parted. He took his way down to the shore and along the pier, at whose further end was a breakwater, whereon most of the Elie fishers sat smoking and chatting at this hour.

Nellie watched him for a while with a strange new sense of possession, and interest in all his affairs, and then gathering her flowers into a compact bunch, she took her way slowly homewards.

She was uncommunicative by nature, and allowed one month after another to pass by without telling her mother of the under-

standing between Walter and herself.

One night in November this silence was unexpectedly broken. Nellie had been sewing at the cottage window, with a candle close beside her work. The blind was drawn down more than half-way, and on it the shadow of her head was clearly recognisable to any passer-by who knew her. Walter had been in the Elie as she knew that afternoon, and as she sewed rapidly her heart was on the alert for any sign of his neighbourhood. Her mother was also in the kitchen; but as her knitting did not require light, she leant back in a shadowy corner by the fire, the click of her knitting-wires keeping time to the sound of Nellie's rapid stitching. Suddenly the quiet was broken by an approaching footstep, one light tap on the window-pane, and a loudly whispered "Nellie!" outside, distinctly audible to both women.

The colour rose to Nellie's temples, and she looked towards her mother, who worked on in silence.

"It's some ane seekin' me, mither," she said, awkwardly. "I'll no' be lang;" and pushing her work aside, she went out of the room, closing the door behind her.

Walter stood waiting in the darkness, and before her eyes became sufficiently accustomed to it to see him, she was folded in his arms.

"I ha'ena seen ye for fower days," he said, in a fond whisper. "An' whan I saw your shadow on the blind I jist cudna gang past."

"Mither was wi' me," returned Nellie. "She's awfu' guid to me, Walter; she never speirs whaur I gang or what I dae, an' I dinna ken why I ha'ena telt her aboot you. It's no' kind. I think we sud telt her noo. Wull ye come ben?"

Walter hesitated; but when Nellie took him by the hand and drew him into the house, he did not resist. She opened the door into the kitchen, and led the way. He followed.

"Mither," said Nellie, ceremoniously, "this is Walter Lindsay. I askit him in."

Mrs Davidson rose and came forward. "I'm glad to see ye," she said, offering her hand, which Walter took awkwardly enough. Nellie pushed a chair to the fire for him, and took up her work, sewing for some moments with a fierce energy. The other two sat silent. Then Mrs Davidson began some polite talk about St Monans, the past season's fishing, and so forth, Walter furnishing elaborate answers to her questions. These flagged after a time, and Nellie, seeing neither of them were likely to take the initiative, stopped sewing, and plunged into the subject. "Mither, Walter's seekin' me to mairry him."

Mrs Davidson began in a fluttered fashion—"Weel"—and then paused.

It was Walter's turn. "I houpe ye ha'e nae objection?"

"Me!" said the meek little mother; "oh no." Then she added, "Sae lang as Nellie's happy."

A long pause followed, and then Nellie started afresh. "Walter was thinkin' we sud be mairret at the New Year."

"Sae sune's that!" ejaculated the mother, in some dismay.

"It's because he's gotten a hoose," explained her daughter, naively; "it's been empty sin' May, and the rent's doun, an' sae he tuk it; an'," she added, rather ashamed to have gone so far in their plans without her mother's knowledge, "we were aye meanin' to telt you."

Mrs Davidson was not given to

upbraiding, and she made no complaint of their silence, only it went to her heart with a little pang, that Nellie's "we" no longer included her mother.

"I'll be wae to lose ye, Nellie," she said, with a flickering smile, and in rather a tremulous tone; "but I'll no stan' in yer way."

Nellie's heart smote her. She crossed to her mother's side, and kneeling by her chair, gave her an affectionate kiss. "Ye'll no lose me, but ye'll ha'e a new son to cheer ye. Walter," with a glance of appeal to him, "wad like to be a guid son to ye."

Tears were in the widow's eyes, but her shyness in the presence of a stranger kept her silent; and after another pause, Walter rose and bade them good night.

"Haste ye back, then," said Mrs Davidson, hospitably. Nellie went with him out to the door, where, after a few lovers' last words, they parted. He took his way through the darkness, whistling some of his favourite airs, and seeing again in memory Nellie's bright face and pleasant home.

Nellie went back to the kitchen, and took up her work again, thinking what she would say. She felt that her mother had reason to be hurt; and an unusual tenderness when she thought of their parting so soon filled her with compunction and anxiety to make up for the pain her silence had caused. She waited, puzzled how to begin, and then, seeing that her mother felt an even greater difficulty in speaking, she rose, folded her work, and put it away with elaborate care, blew out the candle she no longer required, and came and stood by the fire, leaning her arm on the mantelshelf, and resting her face on her hand in the shadow.

"Mither, I see 'at yer vexed 'at I didna tell ye suner; but it's no'

very lang sin' I kenned mysel'—and I'm sorry I didna speak."

"It disna maitter noo," said the gentle little woman, unused for long to have her authoritative and rather self-willed daughter apologise to her.

"I thoct ye wadna unnerstaun'," continued Nellie, "an' I didna want fouk tae be claiverin' and makin' clashes about us."

"Ay," said her mother, "I ken ye wadna like fouk speakin' about ye; but ye nicht hae telt *me*. I'm no' ane that wad mak speaks; an' as for unnerstaun'in'," she continued, gaining confidence as she relieved her mind—"ye dinna think, Nellie, that naebody kens what luvè is but you an' Walter? Yer puir faither"—and her voice broke in a little sob—"was as likely a lad as that in his day, though ye canna mind on it; and we lo'ed yin anither sair. Eh! what I hae lost!"

Nellie, with a pang of sympathy, watched in the firelight the slow tears making their way down her mother's worn cheeks. Here had been a love as great as that which filled her and absorbed all her thoughts. "O mither!" she cried, remorsefully, "I lo'e ye; dinna greet. I nicht ha'e kent ye wad unnerstan', if I hadna been jist sae taken up wi' mysel'." And the two embraced and were at one again. They talked long that night—Nellie volunteering confidences about Walter, and planning with her mother the furnishing of the little house, in which she mentally saw herself keeping it all right and pretty.

"I'll gie ye my reid gerannum," said her mother, on hearing that the kitchen would have a window to the sun.

"That'll be fine, mither," said Nelly, gratefully—adding, "but what'll ye dae wantin' it?"

“Oh, I’ll dae fine; what’ll I dae wantin’ *you*?” she answered, in a tone that strove in vain to sound playful—“that’s mair than a gerannum.”

They put their arms round each other in the little box-bed they shared together, and the mother’s heart was comforted with the sense of her child’s love, which Nellie demonstrated all the more because of an ashamed consciousness that her mother’s love was not now so needful to her happiness, since it was to Walter that all her longings for affection turned.

“Walter’s mither’s no’ like you,” she said, with a final caress.

“Does she no’ ken yet?” asked Mrs Davidson.

“Na, he said he wadna tell her; he wad jist leave her to fin’ oot for hersel’,” said Nellie, in a sleepy tone.

“Puir thing!” murmured her mother softly, and then there was silence, and they slept.

The next few weeks passed quickly, in happy preparations for the wedding, and Mrs Davidson got a lift in a cart “going east,” as they called it, with Scotch exactitude, to St Monans, to see the little house. Walter intrusted them with five pounds he had saved from his wages, and this was laid out with much thought and care to the best advantage. Nellie’s clever fingers were busy shaping and stitching her modest little outfit; and the minister, when Walter presented himself shame-faced and blushing one evening to ask “if it would be convenient” to him to marry them at the New Year, took much kindly interest in their plans, and called next day at the Toft to bestow upon Nellie a family Bible, as part of the plenshing she should take with her to her husband’s house.

They were “cried” in church.

Nellie was duly rallied by her acquaintance on having kept her love-affair so close, and bore their teasing and criticisms more good-naturedly than she had thought would be possible. After all, how little it mattered what they thought or said. Like most sensitive people, she had dwelt in anticipation on what she dreaded in the way of neighbourly comment and gossip, until her expectations went far beyond the actual result.

The wedding was fixed for New-Year’s Day—a Thursday—and on the previous Tuesday night Walter was to pay them a final visit at the Toft, and help them to decide whether two o’clock or five would be the best hour for the marriage. The old minister had given them their choice, having an engagement between these hours. Mrs Davidson inclined to five, as two would be “some early” for the tea which they were going to provide for the few friends they had invited to be present.

Walter sent a message, much to Nellie’s disappointment, on Tuesday afternoon, that he could not come, but would meet her at the Lady’s Tower next morning at ten o’clock, and hear what they had settled. Either hour would do for him, he said.

Wednesday morning was dull and cold, with a breathless absence of wind. Nellie wrapped herself warmly in a thick shawl, and took her way swiftly along the links to the trysting-place. The short, close, faded grass was crisp under foot with hoar-frost, and the grey sky and sea were very unlike those she remembered on that far-away summer afternoon when she had taken the same road, and gathered cowslips, and met Walter. What a child she seemed to have been then, as she recalled the scene, and wondered at the Nellie who

had tried to hide from him, and had been so unwilling to confess her love.

Now as she reached the ruined tower, standing on a high rocky promontory running out into the sea, she went to one of its lancet-shaped windows looking towards St Monans, to watch for her lover. These four windows, with the entrance and a fireplace, filled the six sides of the picturesque tower—built long ago for the pleasure of some fair lady, and still, though roofless and ruined, seeming haunted by romantic fancies. Down below the two windows which looked southwards the rocks descended in broken heaps to the sea, which had worked for itself deep and sinuous channels among their tumbled masses; and as Nellie waited she could hear the gurgling sound made by each wave flooding in and filling the creeks, floating up the thick brown sea-weeds, and overflowing the little black pools, only to ebb away as rapidly, sucking the shining coils of tangle down in the receding swirl of the water.

Soon she saw Walter coming. It was not ten o'clock yet, and he was taking it easy—sauntering along with his hands in his pockets and whistling "The Flowers o' the Forest," with soft flute-notes like a blackbird. As he rose to the knoll on a level with the tower he stood and looked towards Elie. "Watching for me," thought Nellie, proudly. Then slowly resuming the mournful closing bars of the air, he turned to enter the tower.

"That's ower sad a sang," cried Nellie, springing forward to meet him; and as he threw his arms round her she asked what had kept him the night before.

"I thoct ye wad wunner," said Walter easily, drawing her to the

wide ledge of one of the seaward windows, in which they both seated themselves, his arm round Nellie, and her head leant back on his shoulder, and resting against his thick brown beard.

"Weel, what was't?" she repeated, looking up at him as she spoke.

He looked at her fondly. "Ye're sae bonnie, Nellie, I forget the very words I was gaun to say when I see ye. Weel, it was jist this. Did ye no' think I wad need a ring tae mairry ye wi' the morn'?"

"I didna mind on't," she replied, simply; and then suddenly recollecting, she turned to face him. "Was't that ye socht thon ruby for, then?"

"Ye'll see for yersel'," he replied; and drawing from his pocket a twist of paper, he gave it to her to open.

She unfolded it hurriedly. There lay a little silver ring set with the ruby, somewhat roughly cut, polished, and sunk in a heart-shaped setting.

Nellie's eyes shone with pleasure. "It's awfu' bonnie," she said. "I never saw ane like it; it's the bonniest ring I ever saw. Was that what ye wanted it for? I thoct it was for a preen for yersel' by the w'y ye spoke. Whae made it, Walter? Eh! it's been awfu' dear I misdoubt!"

Walter laughed. "No' sae dear as you, onyw'y. Was't no' Solomon 'at said, 'A gude wife's far abune rubies'? Weel, I got a man in Anster to mak' it, an' that was what keepit me. I had tauld him I'd come for it the day; and then auld Laing," he continued, looking rather anxiously at Nellie, who was playing with the ring, "said we wad need to gang oot the nicht, and so I gaed to Anster yestreen. I was feared

it wad no' be ready; but there it was for me."

Nellie's face had clouded. "Gaun oot the nicht? O Walter! dinna gang; ye said to me ye wadna. It'll come a storm, or you'll be hinnert some w'y. Oh, dinna, Walter!"

Walter stooped and kissed the sweet pleading lips. "I maun gang," he said. "It's gaun to be a calm nicht; there's nae sign o' wind. I wuss we may hae aneuch to tak' us oot; and there's sae few boats gaun. Watson's folk said they wad gie us guid prices a' this week for a' the fish we caught, an' I wadna like auld Laing to lose for me. They canna gang wi'oot me, an' they winna ask me to gang the morn, I ken that."

Nellie sighed.

"Ye'll no' do for a fisherman's wife if ye gang on that gait," said Walter, cheerily. "What are ye feared for? The sea like a deuk-pond, an' me that ha'e been oot in a' kin' o' weather, an' never drowned yet!"

Nellie laughed with him at her fears, and then sighed again.

"I'll ha'e to gang noo," said Walter, rising. "We maun be oot wi' the tide, and that's at twal' o'clock. I'll no' see ye till the morn, Nellie; an' than ye'll be sae braw, I mayna ken ye," he added, fondly.

"Weel, here's the ring; I'll ha'e aneuch o' it the morn," said Nellie, blushing and smiling as she met the love in his look. "The fouk are bidden at five," she continued,—"and dinna ye be late, Walter. Oh, I wuss ye werena gaun to sea the day. Whan will ye get in, div ye think?"

"Some time the nicht, I sud say," said Walter. "We're gaun oot ayont the May, jist roon' by the ither side o't, an' we'll win hame or the neist tide turns. It

cudna blaw the day," he added, with a careless glance at the clouds; "there's nae airt for the win' to come frae; it's mair like snaw."

"I wuss ye hadna to gang oot in winter," said Nellie.

"Weel, ye needna mairry me unless ye like," said he, smiling; and then with many kisses they parted. He to stride with long slouching gait along the shore to St Monans; and Nellie, hooded in her red shawl, took the path along the links to the Elie. They both turned at the same moment, while still within sight of each other, and Walter waved his cap and stood a moment, as if he wanted a long look to remember her by until the morrow. Then they went on their separate ways.

Nellie's thoughts were busy over the preparations for her wedding. That afternoon Jamie Morrison's cart was to come for her things; and Lizzie Laing, whose husband was in the boat with Walter, had the key of the house, and was to have on a fire, and make ready for them next day.

When she got home she found her mother carefully tying up the red geranium in a frame of sticks, and covering it with an old apron.

"I canna think the frost 'ill touch it noo," she said; "but I'se haud it on my knee for fear."

"I think I'll gang up to the minister's noo," remarked Nellie. "I'll no' be a meenit. I'll say 'at yer muckle obleeged to him, and five o'clock wull dae very weel."

She closed the cottage door behind her and took her way to the minister's. His house was one of a row of buildings, all of different heights and sizes, skirting the shore of the pretty curving bay; only the street, in some places paved, in others rough and uneven, with a little fringe of gardens on its further

side, separated these houses from the sea. Here and there a house, seemingly more adventurous than its neighbours, had forsaken the rest, and taken its place boldly among the gardens, sharing with them the salt breezes and sand-drifts, and the showers of spray which a high tide or a storm sent over them. One garden, belonging to an old sea-captain, had a flagstaff rising from its little grass plot; and here the Union-jack fluttered gallantly forth on all occasions, great and small. Another—that of a house over the way occupied by two old ladies—had a little wooden arbour in one corner, made green by a hardy privet-bush on one side, and gay on the other for a few weeks in summer with short-lived annuals. At each side of the tidy little gate was planted—one can hardly say grew—a shivering young tree. These trees had to be renewed from time to time, and during their tenancy of the garden never made any progress, but despaired, and were ready to die from the very first. But the ladies did not despair. “It gives the place a cared-for look,” they said, and persevered in planting.

Next to this garden came the minister’s. It had two fairly-grown sycamores in it, “quite forest-trees,” said the old ladies pensively; “but then, you know, they have been in for years.” On either side of the paved path from the gate to the sea-wall was a broad border of carnations, clove-pinks, and picotees. Their silver clumps were of course flowerless now; but in summer and autumn they were the glory of the street. The minister was very proud of them—not a season passed without his adding to their number; and in the summer evenings he used to sit on the

comfortable bench which stood in a sheltered corner facing west, with his telescope beside him, and the newspapers across his knee, chatting with his gardener Andrew, “the minister’s man,” and general factotum.

At this season the borders were bare of bloom, and only a few shrivelled seed-pods rattled when a breeze shook them. Nellie passed the large bow-window of the study, within which, bending over some books, she could see the white head of the good old man. She ran up the spotless doorsteps, and rang the bell.

A very trim and staid maid-servant opened the door to her, with a smile of recognition, and led the way along a little passage and down a few steps to the study door. “Come in,” said the minister, in answer to her knock, and Nellie was ushered into the warm, comfortable room.

“Please, Mr Lumsden,” she said, shyly, “mither sent me to say ’at she was muckle obleeged for yer kind message, an’ if you pleased, five o’clock to-morrow efternoon wad suit very weel.”

“Five o’clock be it then, Nellie,” was the hearty response; “and how are you? and how is your mother keeping?—well and hearty for her duties to-morrow, eh?”

Nellie murmured a reply, and was turning to go, but he stopped her, and with a few kindly inquiries about Walter, and their future home and plans, he skilfully led the way to more personal talk.

Mr Lumsden had seen Nellie several times of late, but never alone; and he was too wise to expect her to speak of her inmost feelings before others. We can neither be nor express our true selves in mixed company. But with one who is wise and under-

stands, gradually, like the sensitive plant, we unfold, we expand, we show our inmost nature. So Nellie, under the kindly questions of the minister, forgot her shyness and reserve, and spoke of her desires to "be good," as she phrased it, and to serve God in her new home. She drank in eagerly the tender counsels of the old man, and determined to practise from the very outset the unselfishness and the patience which, he said, were so specially called for in married life. When he warned her against hasty speech, she resolved that nothing should tempt her to unkind words. And when he went on to praise Walter, and with pleasant appreciation to refer to the many good points he saw in his character, and to the ways in which Nellie could help and strengthen him, she smiled in his face with tear-filled grateful eyes. "I *will* mind that," she said, earnestly. He rose to his full height, and laid his hand on her fair head in fatherly benediction before he sent her away.

"And mind, Nellie," he said, "you must not be afraid or shy about coming to me in any difficulty or trouble, when you think I might help you, even if it is just to have the comfort of telling me anything that is on your mind making you anxious. I am always glad to see any one who wants me,—that is just what I am here for."

Nellie thanked him, and dried the tears which had brimmed over and lay like dewdrops on her flushed cheeks. The minister opened the study door, and stood courteously aside to let her precede him, following her up the little stair. As they passed through the hall, he glanced at the long old-fashioned weather-glass hanging there. "Dear me!" he ex-

claimed, "what does this mean? The glass has been going down, down, down all morning, and now it's lower than I've ever seen it in my life! You that are to be a fisherman's wife, Nellie," he added, reaching down a soft felt hat from a peg as he spoke, and flinging a long plaid round his shoulders, "you'll be studying the Markie, as they call it, with the wisest of them before long." He opened the house door, and they went out together. "My way lies past the Toft," he said; "I must go and see what the coast-guard have to say to the weather. Is that the drum hoisted at the pier-head? Your eyes are better than mine."

"No," said Nellie, looking over to the flagstaff which marked the coast-guard station at the end of the pier, "I dinna see it." She walked fast, to keep pace with his big strides, and looked at him anxiously. "Is't gaun to be a storm, Mr Lumsden, do ye think?"

"I cannot say," he replied; "it does not look like it yet—that's not a windy sky," and he paused a moment to look at it. "But the glass is very significant, and not likely to go wrong."

Nellie did not quite catch the drift of his words, but her heart sank within her.

"You keep Walter on shore anyway for a day or two," said Mr Lumsden, cheerily, "and let the glass behave as it likes."

"But I canna keep him," cried poor Nellie; "he's gaun oot at twalve o'clock, he said; they were to tak' the turn o' the tide."

Mr Lumsden glanced at the beach. The dull grey wavelets had almost reached the twisted fringe of sea-weed lying on the sand at high-water mark. There was no time to interfere.

"Oh, well," he said, "I think you may trust them to know

what they are about. We landmen are very ready to croak and prophesy. Walter is in old James Laing's boat, isn't he?"

"Yes," replied Nellie.

"Well, then, you may be sure they know their own business, and they would not be such fools as to go out if a storm was brewing. Keep a good heart, Nellie. They never go far out for white fish just now; they can turn if the wind gets up."

"They're jist going ayont the May," said Nellie, cheered already by his kindly tone; "and they sud be in or nicht, Walter tauld me."

"Oh, then, they're safe enough," said Mr Lumsden; "the sea doesn't get up all at once on a dull day like this."

They had reached the Toft, and he bade Nellie good-bye as she turned up the brae to her mother's cottage. Mrs Dunsire, one of the neighbours, was out feeding her hens, and Mr Lumsden stopped to greet her and ask for her husband. "He's awa' to the fishin'," she said; "they're gettin' an awfu' price frae the curers this week. They're sendin' them a' south to Lunnun, they telt Andra. Ay, it's weel for the like o' huz; but oh! it'll no' last lang,—that's aye the w'y o't. Ae week ye'll get yer ain price for the askin', and the neist ye nicht as weel no' gang oot ava, for a' they gie ye. Mony's the time," she continued, warming to the subject, "I ha'e vrocht, early and late, up an' doon, wi' lines tae clean and tae bait and tae set, an' Andra up an' awa' i' the cauld dark mornin's,—an' a' for naething. 'Ye'd ha'e dune better to ha'e stayed at hame in your bed,' I say to him whiles; and 'deed it's true."

Mr Lumsden listened patiently till she paused for breath, and

then took flight, for she was a great talker.

"Are all the Elie boats out?" he asked, as he went on.

"Ay, they were a' out wi' the first tide, a' but John Tamson's," she called after him; "he's doon wi' the reumaticks."

Mr Lumsden looked at his watch, it wanted barely half an hour till the tide would be full. If the St Monans boats were all going out now, there was a chance that the Laings might be among the last, and if he walked fast he might get there in time to see Walter and stop him, as he felt strangely impelled to do.

He stood a moment at the corner where the footpath by the links to St Monans branched off from the road, which, carried a few hundred yards further along a rocky promontory, ended in the Elie quay with its curving breakwater. He looked at the flagstaff in the trim coast-guard enclosure which crowned the height above the pier; and at that moment, as he looked, two men came out of the quarters, and in a leisurely manner proceeded to run up the storm-signal—the cone pointing downwards to signify a gale from the south.

This decided Mr Lumsden. Flinging his long plaid more closely over his broad shoulders, he set out at a rapid walk towards St Monans, scanning the dim sea-line as he went for any sign of the Elie boats returning, but none were to be seen. As he topped the highest part of the links between the two little villages, he could see the harbour of St Monans. A boat was slowly coming out: her dark sail, hauled up with irregular jerks, hung for a moment in heavy folds, then filled out gently in the breeze, and with the easy curving motion of a conscious creature, she cleared

the rocks by the harbour-mouth and headed down the Firth. The bows of another boat followed closely in her wake, and Mr Lumsden could hear, in the still winter air, her crew running along the deck and hauling up the sail.

There was no time to lose, and he quickened his pace. The footpath led round the little churchyard, with its worn and broken gravestones, some almost hidden in the tufted grass. Among them stood the little old church, with its dwarfed square tower and bell-fry pointed like a witch's hat. The footpath ended abruptly on the back of a little burn, which ran down past the churchyard and out at the back of the harbour. Mr Lumsden stepped across the broad smooth stepping-stones, and took his way over the worn grass on the further side, where in summer mothers washed and gossiped, and children played. Beyond the grass was the narrow roughly paved main street of the village, running steeply down to the harbour. Strong smells of brine and fish, with nets and baskets standing about, rows of split and half-dried haddocks hanging from little sticks outside the cottage doors, and the piled-up rows of barrels inside the open gates of a curing-yard, all proclaimed the sole industry of the place. As Mr Lumsden stumbled down the steep little street, and came out among the group of wives and old men standing about on the quay, a cheer rose from the boats in the mouth of the harbour. Sympathetic smiles broke out on the weather-beaten faces round him. "Hear till them!" cried one pale-faced woman with a baby in her arms. "They're cheerin' Wattie Lindsay," said another, in good-natured explanation to the newcomer, whom they all knew well

by sight; "he's gaun to be mairret the morn, an' he's gotten a siller heukie for luck."

"Then Laing's boat is not out yet?" said the minister.

"She's jist gaun," piped a shrill-voiced, barefooted boy, who came running along the broad harbour-wall; "thon's her sail gaun up noo." He picked up the rope he had been sent for, and pattered back again. Mr Lumsden followed along the quay. The Laings' boat was just moving out; two of them—strong, handsome young men—were hauling up the sail; old Jamie stood at the helm; and Mr Lumsden recognised Walter Lindsay poling the boat off the harbour-wall, with the help of a boy. As the tall and majestic form of the old minister appeared, towering head and shoulders above the surrounding fishermen—well-grown men though they were—caps were pulled respectfully, and there was a murmured greeting in answer to his genial "Good day to you all." Walter stopped pushing, and rested the end of his oar on the quay.

"Are you going far out, Jamie?" called Mr Lumsden, addressing the old fisherman. "The glass is very low; and the drum was hoisted at the Elie pier as I came along."

"Na, we're nae gaun far," said old Laing slowly; "we'll be in afore the storm: there's nae sign o' it yet, as far as I see." He was a little inclined to resent weather-warnings from any landsman.

Under cover of the noise and bustle in the next boat, whose ballast was being shifted, Mr Lumsden spoke to Walter. "I wish I could persuade you to stay at home, Lindsay," he said, earnestly. "I have never in forty years seen the glass so low. If you are caught in a storm, you may have to run up the Firth; and what will Nellie

Davidson say if you don't turn up to-morrow?"

Walter smiled. "I'm muckle obleeged till ye," he said, "for tellin' us; but I maun gang wi' the rest: Robbie Laing's ill, and they canna dae wantin' me. We'se be hame the nicht, never fear."

"Noo then! what's keepin' ye?" called the men from the boat behind.

"Push her aff, Wattie!" shouted old Laing.

Mr Lumsden saw further remonstrance was useless. The *Bonnie Jean* moved slowly along by the quay, with a final shove off from Walter's oar; the ropes rattled in a coil on the deck; and the pulley creaked as they hoisted the big, flapping sail—and she stood out to sea.

Mr Lumsden took off his hat with a gesture of farewell, as he stood watching them. A glint of sunshine broke through the hazy sky, and shone on his snow-white hair and beard; his deep-set brown eyes watched the boat with an air of abstraction; then he entered into friendly chat with an old fisherman standing by. This man had also noticed the sudden fall in the barometer, and "didna ken what to mak' o' it. I saw ye thocht auld Laing wad be better to bide at hame," he remarked; "but 'deed, sir, ye micht as weel gie an advice to the sea—he'll no' tak' a word frae onybody, great or sma'."

Mr Lumsden accepted this consolation as it was meant. "Well, I could hardly expect him to take it from me," he said, laughing. "He might say he had as much right to meddle with my sermons as I have with his fishing." The old fisherman laughed too; and the minister took his way homewards.

More than once as he walked

along a puff of wind blew sharply against his face and ran in ruffling cat's-paws over the leaden surface of the sea, then died away; the sun faded from a watery white disk to a mere undefined brightness in the sky, and then was lost altogether in woolly grey masses of clouds, and the air grew increasingly chill, with that penetrating cold often observable before snow.

As Mr Lumsden passed the Toft he saw Jamie Morrison's cart at the Davidsons' door, and Jamie, with the widow and Nellie, were actively at work stowing away all the latter's belongings for the journey to St Monans. As everything was packed in, and Mrs Davidson came to the door in her bonnet and shawl with the precious red geranium in her arms, its few remaining blooms carefully screened from the weather, one slow wandering flake of snow alighting on her shawl, followed by another and another, made her look up at the sky.

"It's gaun to snaw, Jamie?" she said, hesitating.

"Weel, I ken that," said the old man. "It'll dae nae harm for a' the time we'll be. You get in, an' I'se draw the tarpaulin' up roon' ye."

But Nellie, who had come out with a chair for her mother's use in mounting the cart, was not satisfied.

"Ye'll get yer death o' cauld, mither," she said decidedly. "Ye better no' gang. I'll gang wi' Jamie, and we'll jist pit in the things an' come awa, if it's still snawin', and you bide at hame."

Mrs Davidson was in the habit of letting Nellie decide for her; and as the snow fell thicker and faster every moment in large fleecy flakes, she let herself be persuaded, and went indoors.

"I'll keep the gerannum," she said, "an' it'll gae whan I gae."

Nellie, well wrapt up, mounted the cart beside old Jamie. They started, and were soon lost to view in the dancing dazzling whirl of snow.

It was dark, and in the cottage the kettle was singing over a bright fire, before Mrs Davidson, after many fruitless journeys to the window, saw her daughter's whitened figure coming up from the road.

"Eh, sic a nicht!" said Nellie, stamping the snow from her shoes and shaking it off her shawl before she entered. "It's come on to blaw terrible, and I'm near perished."

She bent over the fire, and the flickering light played on her hair and her bright blue eyes, large and shining after her bracing walk.

"I left the cairt at the toll-gate," she explained, "no' to bring him oot o's way."

"Are a' the boats come in?" she asked suddenly, after a pause.

"Ay," said the mother, who was going to and fro setting the tea. "Mary Dunsire was in an hour syne; they were a' in thegither." She checked herself, as if she would have said more.

"What was't?" asked Nellie, sharply. "Did she tell ye ony-thing mair?"

"Naething," said the mother, evasively. "She wasna but a meenit."

Nellie asked no more. She was very silent all tea-time; and when her mother would not let her wash the dishes, saying she must be tired, she made the excuse of some trifling errand to go in to the Dunsires' end of the house. Her mother said nothing to prevent her. "Her mind's jist runnin' on Walter," she thought to herself. "Weel, I wuss we kent he was hame."

Nellie knocked at the Dunsires'

door. Mrs Dunsire called, "Whae's that? come in," and opened the door simultaneously.

She had a big rosy baby in her arms, and three older children were playing noisily on the floor. Nellie was so little in the habit of paying unceremonious visits, that her neighbour stared to see her.

"Nellie Davidson! it's you, is't? Come awa' ben; I suppose we'll no see much mair o' ye efter to-morra'."

Nellie stood hesitating. "Is Andra hame?" she asked, shyly.

"That is he," said his wife, triumphantly, "an' nae ower sune, either. It's jist an awfu' nicht, snawin' an' blawin'; his claes were near frozen wi' the wat an' the cauld. But come ben; it's cauld stan'in'," she added, with a touch of impatience.

Nellie mechanically stepped into the room, and pushed the door shut.

"I wunner," she began in a choking voice, "if he saw ony o' the boats frae St Minins?"

Mrs Dunsire had stooped to separate two of the children who were struggling for a coveted plaything, the broken lid of a teapot. She took it away, shook them impartially, and raised herself to answer Nellie, whose question she had scarcely heard.

"Eh?" she cried, with kindly concern, when she saw the distressed face of the young girl, "is't Walter? He's no' oot, is he?"

Nellie nodded, unable to speak without crying.

"Eh, puir thing," said the woman, "nae doubt but ye're anxious. Eh, I wuss I hadna spoke; but it's no' sic a bad nicht efter a'. I ha'e seen waur," eager to efface the effect of her words; "an' he wud be hame afore dark. Andra!" she called to her husband, who sat

close to the fire, his smouldering pipe on one knee, half-asleep in the grateful warmth. "Andra!" repeated his wife, "here's Nellie Davidson, askin' if the St Minins boats wad be in. Ye ken her Walter's in yane o' them. I said 'at they wad."

Andrew roused himself to comprehension. "Whan did they gang out?" he asked.

Mrs Dunsire looked to Nellie for an answer. "They didna gang till twal'," she said, "an' I was in St Minins this efternoon. I saw Easie Laing; she said they cudna be in suner than sax o'clock."

Mrs Dunsire glanced at the clock. "It wants half an 'oor," she murmured.

Nellie's eyes were fixed on Andrew, hoping for some comfort.

"If they arena in noo," he said bluntly, "they canna get in the night; the sea's verra rough by noo. They wadna try St Minins wi' the tide rinnin', an' sic a sea."

"O Andra!" said his wife, reproachfully, "ye ken they're to be mairret to-morrow, an' he *mann* get back."

"I canna help it, wumman," said her husband, placidly; then, moved to pity by the anxious look on Nellie's face, he added, "dinna tak' on, they'll rin up the Firth nae doot—they'll mak' some o' thae harbours up a bit, Leven or Kinghorn—there's nae fear o' them."

The children's noise had almost drowned his words; and as one of them now began to scream lustily, Mrs Dunsire turned to the rescue, and with a quiet "Guid nicht, and thank ye," Nellie let herself out and returned to her mother.

All night the wind roared, and the sea rose higher and higher. The moon was almost full, and when Mr Lumsden looked out from his study window at mid-

night, the clouds were driving across a clear sky, the snow had ceased, and the moonlight shone over a broad expanse of foaming broken water, as far as the eye could see. Above the prolonged steady roar of the wind he could hear the thud and crash of each wave as it broke against the sloping sea-wall of the garden, and the spray rose in sheets and was dashed with a short ripping sound against the window-panes. His thoughts were troubled. He knew no boat could make St Monans or any of the harbours on that exposed coast in such a wild sea. If Walter Lindsay was not safe and in shelter long ago, where was he? It was terrible to think of any boat, of human lives, out yonder at the mercy of wind and wave. The clock struck twelve—the old year passed into the new, unheeded. For old minister's heart was heavy with foreboding. That one life, in its bright young happiness, should be crushed by so terrible a sorrow—that another, so strong and stout-hearted, should perish in the very flower of youth—the dread, the pity of it, filled him with trouble. In prayer, which was not dictation, but an earnest cry for help, he poured out his soul before God.

At the Toft, in her mother's cottage, held in her mother's arms, Nellie Davidson lay awake hour after hour through the long night. They had comforted one another with hopes, surmises, conjectures, which neither believed. Nellie, sick at heart, had forced herself to put the last stitches into her wedding-gown. They looked out from time to time at the raging whiteness of the sea, and spoke louder as the increasing roar of the wind drowned their voices, "They'll ha'e rin up the Forth,"

said Nellie, at one moment. "They wad get in afore dark, efter ye left St Minins," her mother would say—each with an air of conviction but poorly assumed. At length they had gone to bed, and there in the dark Nellie burst into tears. "My bairn, my bairn," said her mother tenderly, folding her in her arms, "Oh dinna greet; ye maunna be feart; they wad tak' shelter or the warst o' it. They micht ha'e gane in to Anster," she said, with a sudden inspiration—Anstruther, or Anster, as it is locally called, being the port on the Fife coast nearest to the Isle of May.

Nellie caught at the suggestion. "I micht ha'e thocht o' that!" she said, in a tone of relief. Her mother rejoiced silently in the comfort she had given, and they talked for a time—reassuring themselves of Walter's safety, of old Jamie Laing's skill, of the well-known seaworthiness of the *Bonnie Jean*. Then the old woman's quiet regular breath showed that she slept. But Nellie could not sleep—the continual thundering sound of the wind and sea wearied and yet excited her to greater wakefulness. She sent her thoughts out over the wild howling waste of water—where, where was Walter? All her refuges of hope failed her: she could not hide herself in them any longer from the dread which encompassed her soul. They would not go to Anster—they never did; they would be sure to make for St Monans. And oh, these jagged black rocks! and the leaping hungry waves! She pictured them to herself with a shudder as she lay in bed. Then, though old Jamie was a good seaman—he was daring, she knew—he might have ventured too far, not turned soon enough

when the storm came on. And the boat—oh, what mattered it that she was a good boat, in such a night?—hadn't the *Welcome Home* of St Monans been lost on a night like this, five years ago, and she was a strong new boat—Nellie remembered hearing that said—yet all her crew were lost. It seemed to be some other mind through which these thoughts were passing. This could not be herself, Nellie; she that had been so happy, that was to be married on New-Year's Day. Why, she thought, with a sudden pang of remembrance, *this* was New Year's morning!

Long before it was light she rose: she dressed quietly, and stole out; the light at the pier-head was still burning. There was a lull in the wind. Holding her shawl about her—too wretched to feel the intense cold of the dark early morning—she took the road to the harbour. The tide was going out, but the sea ran high; and each great wave in succession surged into the harbour, lifting the tossing boats that were huddled together there, and racing along by the embankment of the roadway, which was whitened both with drifted snow and quivering heaps of foam.

Nellie reached the corner of the pier, and paused for a minute in the shelter of the big granary. She was going forward to the extreme end of the jetty to look out, if by any chance there should be a boat in sight, when a voice from the coast-guard station hailed her. She turned and looked up.

"Don't go any further," shouted the man on watch there; "the waves are breaking over the pier every minute. You might be carried off your feet. You would be drenched through."

Nellie recognised the voice as that of an Englishman belonging to the force. She turned in obedience to the warning.

"The boats were all in last night," he added, leaning on the little white-painted paling and looking down at her; "they are all safe."

"Yes; I ken that," she said; adding timidly, "ye dinna see ony ither boats oot at sea noo, dae ye?"

"Not one," was the reply, "and I should be sorry if I did; they're far better out of sight in a night like this, the further the better, till the sea goes down."

As he spoke a huge wave rose high above the breakwater, hung for a second, and crashed down in a flood of streaming, churning, white water, burying both wall and causeway out of sight. Nellie wearily sighed and turned away. In the faint light the man could not see her face, and he did not know her well enough to recognise her voice. "Poor soul!" he said, compassionately, as he watched her go slowly home along the road. Then he resumed his watch, pacing up and down the little green.

When Nellie got back to the cottage, she found her mother awake and dressing. The girl did not speak, but sat listlessly down by the window; her mother came and took her two hands in hers. "Nellie!" she cried in a grieved tone, "whaur ha'e ye been? Yer hauns are like ice." Nellie made no reply, but gazed at her mother in speechless misery. Mrs Davidson took off her shawl, led her like a child to the warm bed, and made her lie down in it. Pulling off her wet shoes and stockings, she rubbed and chafed her feet until they began to get warm, then she wrapped them in a shawl. She

proceeded to rub her hands until they also gained heat, and, tucking in the warm bed-clothes well round the girl, with a tender "Sleep, my lambie, sleep," went to kindle the fire. Nellie lay passive, hardly seeming aware of her mother's solicitude. She was worn out with anxiety, and when Mrs Davidson, after setting the room to rights, filling the kettle, and sweeping up the hearth, stepped lightly to the bed and bent over her, she found that her poor child was really sleeping. Thankful that she should have this respite, and dreading every moment lest some noise might chance to waken her, she sat down softly on a chair by the bedside, leaning forward so as to shade Nellie's eyes from the increasing daylight. The girl's face grew calm and peaceful as her slumber deepened; she gave one or two restful sighs, and pushed her left hand under her cheek, as was her habit at night. "She's sattled noo; she'll ha'e a guid sleep, puir bairnie," said the mother, and then she turned her thoughts to meet the events of the day. Surely news must come soon. Walter himself might come, guessing their anxiety; and yet that seemed too much to hope. As she mused—through the roar of the wind which had risen again—the sound of a footstep caught her ear; it came past the window as if to her door, and paused. Perhaps it was Walter himself! With a beating heart she rose and crept noiselessly across the room. Yes: she could just see the sleeve of his blue jersey as he stood at the cottage door. Why did he not come in? Did he think it was too early? Her fingers trembled as she opened the door of the room, shutting it carefully behind her. Then she opened the house door. A fisher-

man stood there, not Walter. She fancied, however, that she knew his face. "Aren't you yane o' the Laings?" she asked.

He nodded.

"A son o' Jamie Laing's that Walter Lindsay sails wi'?" she persisted.

"Ay," he said hoarsely, nodding again.

"An' ye're a' safe in?" she cried. "Oh, thank God! But why did Walter no' come himsel'? Did he send ye? I maun tell my Nellie," she went on, hardly knowing what she said—rejoicing, and yet, from something in his face, afraid to rejoice.

"Wait a meenit," he said, still hoarsely. "Dinna tell her. I ha'e a message for ye, but I dinna want her to hear."

"She's sleepin'," said the poor woman. "Oh! what is't? it's no' bad news? Is it Walter? Oh, what's come to him? Oh, speak, canna ye?"

"Hoo can I tell ye?" groaned the young fisherman, afraid as he saw her fear. "My faither sent me. We were afraid ye might hear ony ither gait. Puir Walter!" He stopped.

Mrs Davidson caught his arm. "He isn't drowned?" she cried. "Oh, whisht! We maunna wake her. Tell me," she whispered piteously,—“he isn't drowned? He canna be, and you here.”

The fisherman shook his head. "I wush it was him that was here, and no' me," he said earnestly. "We cudna help it; we cudna save him. My faither's near oot o' his mind sin it happened."

"Hoo was it?" she asked, trembling all over, and tightening her hold on his arm.

"I dinna richtly ken yet," he said; "it was a' ower in a moment." And then he briefly told

how, after they had reached the fishing-ground, and had begun to set their lines, the sky grew suddenly dark, and, almost without warning, a sudden squall struck the water, and filled the air with a flurry of snow. Unwilling to lose their lines, they had delayed a few minutes to take them in—the wind increasing every moment with appalling fury. The other boats had turned to run before it. They were the last, and as they shifted their sail the wind caught it and swung it round violently over the side, knocking Walter overboard. Their own imminent danger, until the sail was secured, kept them from noticing at first what had happened, for no one had seen him fall. They threw out an oar and a barrel, in the hope of his rising to the surface; but there was no sign of him. The wind was tearing up the water and driving the boat before it, so that they could not stop themselves; but they made a tack, and tried to beat back again to the same place. Then they found that, blinded by the snow, they had almost run on an outlying reef of rocks at the east end of the Isle of May; and it being impossible to make head against the wind, they had sorrowfully to give up hope and make for home. They had got in to St Monans about half an hour later than the other boats, shortly after dark. "There was an awfu' sea on," said the young fisherman. "Naeboddy but faither cud ha'e done it. I thoct we were a' gane. We jist cleared the rocks by a hand's-breidth."

Mrs Davidson hardly took in the end of his story. Walter was lost,—that was all she clearly comprehended,—and what could be done for Nellie? "You gae roon'," she said, as he ceased, "an' tell

the Dunsires, an' say 'at Nellie's had a weary, wakefu' nicht, an' she's sleepin' noo; if they wad keep the bairns quiet. Say she disna ken yet."

He went to do her bidding, and the poor mother re-entered the kitchen. Nellie lay as quiet and peaceful as a child—in deep, restful slumber. Oh, how could she break such woful news? Pondering, with an aching heart, she resolved to make her eat some food first—and then, somehow, she must gather courage and tell her—lest she should hear it from any one else, who would be less tender with her.

She set the breakfast things on the table, and made some tea. The storm showed little sign of abating, although the low winter sun shone out now on the snow which was drifted on the window-sill, and in every corner of the uneven ground between the cottage and the road. When all her preparations were made, she took her knitting, and sat down with her back to the window, so that she could watch her daughter. Her tears fell slowly, and she sighed from time to time as she worked, but her grief made little outward sign. The old recognise trouble at once when it comes to them; its place, so to speak, is waiting in their hearts, its face familiar. It is the young who fight against it as impossible—who will allow it neither claim nor right—who greet it morning by morning with renewed unbelief. Have you not felt this in youth, when death made his first inroad, and robbed you of one who seemed part of your very life? Days, weeks, months hardly sufficed to accustom you to your bereavement; and if at any moment you had been told—"It is all a mistake—your beloved

is not dead,"—how much easier *that* would have been to believe than the bitter truth Time kept silently reiterating?

But Mrs Davidson was no longer young. She had found it true that sorrow could assail her, could penetrate, thief-like, to her inmost heart. Loss, from seeming impossible, had become probable, inevitable, she thought to herself to-day, as she knitted and watched by her unconscious child.

The morning wore on. She looked out, sometimes at the people passing along the road,—at a ship in the harbour, which was all dressed with flags to greet the New Year. They flew before the wind, and were bright and gay in the sunshine. Behind them stretched the deep blue tossing water. All over it, as far as she could see, as the waves topped and broke, the wild wind caught them, and the whole surface of the sea had a thin ragged veil of spray sweeping across it; every now and then the sunshine was caught in a rainbow on this silvery mist. The worst of the storm seemed over—it would pass away. But, ah! what desolation it had wrought! She returned from the window to the bed. Still Nellie slept. After waiting some time longer, the widow took her own breakfast, knowing that, for her daughter's sake, she must keep up her strength.

Then she went about the room moving the furniture quietly into, if possible, greater order. She could not keep still. The geranium, carefully packed for the journey yesterday, stood on the window-sill. "There's nae need to tak' it ower noo," she thought with an aching heart, as she remembered the little house Nellie had taken such pride in making ready,—that now would never be

her home. She unpinned and folded away the apron she had so carefully fastened round the plant, whose scarlet flowers seemed one blur of colour before her tear-blinded eyes. Then she looked round the room again. Ah! there, on the top of the chest of drawers, lay, carefully folded, the wedding-dress, with a handkerchief spread lightly to keep the dust from the dainty little frills of lace adorning the neck and sleeves. Nellie had tried it on two or three nights ago,—it seemed two or three years,—and how pretty she had looked, and how happy she had been! She must not see it now, when she wakened; and with trembling fingers the poor woman lifted it down, so as not to alter the folds, and drew out the lowest drawer in which to hide it. But the drawer was old and fitted badly, and the creak it made was sufficient to waken Nellie, whose sleep, now that she was well rested, grew lighter. She opened her eyes, wondering to find herself lying in bed, dressed, in broad day. In an instant, however, the fear and trouble of the past night flashed into her memory, confirmed by the thundering of the sea and the wind. She saw her mother kneeling by the open drawer, and putting in something. Raising herself on her elbow, she saw it was her wedding-dress, and an imperative misgiving seized her heart and hurried her towards certainty. She tried to speak, but her voice died in her throat; the drawer creaked again as it was shut. Mrs Davidson rose and turned to the bed: their eyes met, and Nellie read the truth in her mother's grief-written face.

“It isna true, mither!” she cried, with white lips; “dinna say it! oh, dinna say it!”

Her mother hurried to her, clasped her in her arms, and they wept together.

Day after day passed slowly by, and night after night. Nellie kept within the cottage; and in obedience to her entreaties, her mother let no one in to see her—no one except Mr Lumsden, whom the poor child saw passing the house the day after her trouble came upon her, to whom she sent a message by her mother begging him to come. He came every day after that, and sat with them for a while, often silent, always showing tender sympathy. The gentle pressure of his hand on her bowed head—his few words of strong trust in God's love, and pity for His children—often gave her relief and comfort. She could escape for a little out of herself and the darkness that surrounded her, when he was there.

At other times she would sit for hours gazing from the window at the still stormy, restless, mysterious sea. With a pathetic gentleness new to her, she watched to save her mother every little trouble in the house, only shrinking so evidently from going beyond the doors, that Mrs Davidson after the first time did not suggest it.

One afternoon, in the third week of the year, Mr Lumsden was longer of coming than usual, and Nellie began to fear they would not see him. He could not go on giving them so much of his time, she knew. There were many sick or infirm or bedridden people in the village who needed him, and from whom it would be selfish to keep him. Her mother had gone to the spring behind the Toft for water, and she sat alone, when she heard footsteps. They were rapid and hurrying, not like the minister's; but she rose and went to—

wards the door, in time to see the postman, for it was he, pass the window. He pushed open the outer door, after a hasty knock, and flung in a letter. It fell almost at her feet. Then he was gone.

Nellie stooped, picked it up, and looked at the address. It was to herself, in a strange handwriting. In one corner was a bulky heavy enclosure. The postmark was Anstruther. She could remember no one there whom she knew. She turned it over. The flap of the envelope was stamped in blue, with a lighthouse and the words, "May Island Light." Her heart began to throb with a sickening surmise. Tearing open the envelope, she found a little packet wrapped in a letter, which was written in the same unknown hand. She pulled off the papers in which the packet was folded. They contained a piece of cotton wadding, and within it a silver ring—a ring with a heart-shaped ruby sunk in it—the ring Walter had shown to her when they met for the last time in the Lady's Tower.

The last hope which had, almost unconsciously, been lurking in her heart through all these long days died away. Walter, she knew now past all doubting, was indeed drowned. Here was proof. They had found his body cast up by the sea on the bleak rocky shore of the Isle of May. They had found the ring and sent it to her.

As she turned it round in her fingers, her mother came in.

"It's a' true, mither," she heard herself saying, in a strange hard voice. "This was the ring 'at he was to mairry me wi'."

Mrs Davidson stared at her in sheer bewilderment.

"That's the letter," continued Nellie, pointing to where it lay on

the floor. "I ha'ena read it, but I see its frae the lighthouse fouk; and they maun ha'e found Walter, efter he was drooned, and kent whae it was by the ring."

Her own voice, the meaning of her words, seemed as unreal to Nellie as to her mother.

"But hoo wad they ken tae send it tae you?" objected her mother. "It maun be Walter that tauld them. Maybe he wasna drooned; wait or we read the letter."

She got her spectacles from the mantelpiece, and sat down at the table, spreading the closely written sheet in front of her. It was from the wife of one of the lighthouse keepers, and was dated January 3d:—

"I write at the Request of Walter Lindsay, to Acquaint you that he is here in safety—on the May Island. His Right Arm being broken, he is prevented writing himself. He asks me to Inform you that on the Last Day of the Year, soon after his boat reached the fishing-Ground, a little to the East of this Island, a very violent Storm, accompanied with Snow, came on suddenly; and in shifting their Sail to go home, the Wind struck it, and the Boat must have Foundered instantly. He was struck on the Head, and his Right Arm broken. When he came to the Surface, he could see no trace of the Boat, or of his Companions. And it is certain they must have Perished. He found an oar from the Boat, and a small barrel, Floating near him, of which he caught Hold. The curent seems to have caried him in to the Shore. But that he should have escaped Death on the Rocks—for he is very much cut and Bruised, and that my Husband

should have seen him, for though the Snow stopped falling, it was almost Dark—this seems little short of a Miracle.”

“Eh! the Lord be thankit!” ejaculated Mrs Davidson, fervently, stopping to wipe both her eyes and her spectacles.

Nellie seized the letter, and went on reading to herself, finding the place with some difficulty, for the lines were very uneven and close together, and the long straggling capitals strayed up and down from one into another.

“Little short of a Miracle. There are many Wrecks round the Island,” went on the letter, “but it is only Twice since we came here that any one has Been Saved. We have no Hope that any of Walter lindsay’s companions have Escaped. he is very Weak from loss of blud, and the exposure; and I write this Letter to go by the steamer to-morrow,

that you may kno of his safety. he will be able to Go by the next Weekly Steamer after this one. He asks me to enclose This Ring as a tokken to make You sure of his safety. You must not be surprised if this good News should be Delayed, for it is still Such a storm, the steamer may not Come; but I have Written to be ready when she Does.”

Nellie was so absorbed in the letter that she did not notice a shadow cross the window, which made her mother start up. Nor did she hear footsteps enter the open doorway; only her mother’s exclamation, in a tone of tremulous gladness, “Eh, Nellie, wuman, see! whae’s this? whae’s this?” roused her. She looked up, and there, on the threshold, beside Mr Lumsden, whose kind face beamed with pleasure,—there, scarred and pale, his right arm in a sling, but alive, alive from the dead, stood Walter Lindsay!

THE PORTUGUESE IN EAST AFRICA.

TRAVEL in distant lands, even in these days when no portion of the earth is inaccessible, has one serious disadvantage. It makes the traveller take a view of the affairs of the countries through which he passes totally different from that which is entertained at home, and which is expected to be entertained. There is, however, one method of avoiding this disability, and of insuring that the ideas brought out from England shall be taken back again undisturbed, as a confirmation of home-made traditions which are not to be challenged lightly. This method is not unfrequently adopted by a certain class of legislator on his travels, and consists of a gratuitous lecturing of the inhabitants of the country visited on every conceivable subject—social, commercial, and political—connected with their public history, past, present, and future. These benevolent itinerants are no respecters of persons. Within an hour of their landing at the wharf-side, the Chamber of Commerce will have been lectured on all the mercantile problems affecting the community. Colonial statesmen, whose eloquence and ability would entitle them to a high position in European assemblies, listen with infinite good-breeding and patience to their crude mixtures of blue-books and mail-steamer gossip. Even the Governor is not spared; and there is a tradition in South Africa that the High Commissioner, whose knowledge on all colonial matters is probably greater than that of any living man, was lately beset by a newly arrived member of the British Parliament, who commenced by announcing

that he had only an hour to spare, and for sixty mortal minutes never took breath or gave his Excellency a chance to utter a word, while he roamed over and settled all the questions likely to agitate Africa for the rest of the century. A series of such deliverances made at the most easily got at centres of population will constitute the lecturer a permanent authority on the affairs of the continent in which he has kindly spent a portion of his holidays; and his self-satisfaction is much to be envied, for it does not fall to the lot of the traveller who is original enough to fancy that the residents of a country may possess some information about it. Even such an one, without doubt, may feel capable of writing a book at the end of ten days after his arrival; but as the weeks of varying travel grow into months, and the miles traversed can be counted by the thousand, then the wayfaring man though a fool, arrives at sufficient wisdom to show him that he is only at the beginning of knowledge of the great problems of a country which generations of inhabitants have failed to understand completely or to solve.

Much might be written on the misapprehensions that exist at home on the internal questions of British South Africa and its neighbouring Republics,—on the relations of the English and the much-maligned Boers, for instance,—but in this article I propose to deal with the position of the Europeans who possess or lay claim to the territory, the coast of which stretches from Amatonga Land and the Transvaal to the 10th degree of latitude south of the equator.

The Portuguese in East Africa are usually associated in England with the idea of German aggression, and the diligent student of home-made literature on African subjects should arrive in that continent prepared to maintain the following propositions: That Germany is intriguing to oust England from Africa; that the Boers and the Portuguese are conspiring with the Germans for this object; that Portugal is about to hand Delagoa Bay over to Germany, but that if England will only be prompt and offer money or threats, or some other consideration, Portugal will tear up Marshal MacMahon's award, and bestow on us the territory of Lourenço Marques; that in the twinkling of an eye we shall thus obtain the finest naval station and the best commercial harbour south of the line; that the Transvaal will consequently fall into our hands again, and that our enemies being confounded, everybody will afterwards live for ever happily.

The wisdom may be questioned of responsible organs of public opinion giving currency to accusations against our great and friendly ally at a most critical period when the sky of Europe is not precisely smiling. The effect on our kinsmen beyond the sea is undoubted. They are so glad to find in English prints a word on extraparochial subjects, that, while they are amazed and amused at some of the details, they conclude that statements relating to a European Power, made with the air of official inspiration, cannot be entirely the fabric of imagination.

Now it cannot be denied that Africa is the land of the mare's-nest. The true interpretation of *Ex Africa semper aliquid novi* is, "In Africa there is a new scare once a-week;" and the disturbing

reports despatched from home are quite enough to start an alarm. I confess to having set out last November on a tour of more than five thousand miles between Cape Town and Delagoa Bay with the impression that I should find—almost indeed with the unconscious intention of finding—traces of German intrigue at work in all directions. Before reaching Portuguese territory I had come to the conclusion that there was no German influence hostile to British rule to be found in South Africa, though there is much material for the manufacture of German scares.

The Transvaal is frequently described as the headquarters of German intrigue, having as its aim the Portuguese territory of Lourenço Marques, or Delagoa Bay, as it is usually styled by English-speaking people. There is certainly material to be found here out of which scares may be constructed, as the following story, which was told to me at Pretoria, perhaps may show. Last year a German, who produced high university diplomas, applied to the Superintendent of Education in the Transvaal for a schoolmastership in the north of the country, where he said he wished to reside on account of the climate. The Superintendent assured him that his qualifications were far too good for any scholastic post in the Transvaal, where the Boer tradition is not yet extinct that education is a vain thing for the elect people of this earth during their transitory passage through it. However, on account of the German's importunity, the post of tutor in a farmer's family, near the northern frontier, was procured for him. Six months later he returned to Pretoria, and showed to the head of the Education Department some admirably executed

maps of the Transvaal frontier. These, no doubt, were for the Intelligence Department at Berlin; and it is easy to see the importance with which such an incident would be invested by those who believe that the Germans intend to march from Damaraland, where they have done little more than hoist consular flags on a few mission-stations, across the north of the Kalahari Desert, thus cutting off the British trade-route to the Zambesi, and thence through Matabeleland to the Portuguese coast, where up to the present time a German has rarely been heard of. My own conviction, based on careful observation in the Transvaal and subsequently on the east coast, is, that no more significance can be attached to the story than to the generally accepted fact that the German Intelligence Department possesses surveys of every green lane in Kent and Sussex.

It would be a proposition needing very little modification to say that there is absolutely no Germanising influence in the Transvaal. A distinguished member of the judicial bench at Pretoria is German by parentage, and extremely Dutch in political sentiment, though a highly cultured Englishman in all other respects. Now he, with all his strong feeling for the independence of the Transvaal from English rule, and in spite of his origin, would sooner see the country become a British Crown colony than fall under German domination. Every one who has paid attention to the Delagoa Bay question is of course aware of the interest held by the Berliner Handelsgesellschaft, and by other Germans in the Netherlands South African Railway Company, which has been organised to construct a line from

Komati Poort, the terminus of the Lourenço Marques Railway, to Pretoria; but there is no more reason for believing that, because some of the money has been subscribed by German capitalists, therefore Prince Bismarck contemplates a protectorate over the Transvaal and the adjacent Portuguese territory, than there is for supposing that the transactions of French speculators in Kimberley diamond stock implies a desire on the part of France to annex Griqualand West.

Pretoria, the most picturesque town in South Africa, even when compared with beautiful villages like George and Somerset East, nestling beneath the hills in a bower of vegetation, looks the last place in the world to be the home of political intrigue and race animosity. The growth of its marvellous young neighbour, Johannesburg, it is to be feared will injure the peaceful aspect of the little capital. Until lately the only discordant objects were the Dutch church and the gallows: but from a distance the church-tower looks almost imposing; while the gallows, nearly as conspicuous, have a quaint rather than an offensive appearance among the green trees of an old walled garden. The prosperity of the gold-fields has already produced a hideous post-office of the London suburban school of architecture; and on the other sides of the chief square the clusters of trees and the thatched roof of the Volksraadzaal are said to be doomed. In a rural street shaded with leaves President Kruger may be found any afternoon sitting on his *stoep*, smoking his pipe and drinking his coffee in true Afrikander fashion. Oom Paul, as the Transvaalers call their chief, has not in his person borrowed much of the picturesqueness

of the place. He has long ago discarded the hat and jacket of the Doppers, to which sect he belongs, for loosely fitting clothes of presumably European shape and a tall hat. Nor is his manner exactly sympathetic; but when once his uncouthness is got over, his conversation on matters connected with his country is remarkable for its ability and grasp of detail. The room into which he takes his guests who come to talk with him is a curious combination of an Afrikaner-Dutch interior and of Tottenham Court Road vulgarity, and its chief æsthetic adornment is a portrait of himself in his green presidential scarf, which is like a Forester's sash or the ribbon of the Thistle. Nothing can be in greater contrast than the surroundings of the ruler of the sister republic, the Orange Free State, that most courtly old gentleman Sir John Brand, as he sits in the midst of his charming family circle at Bloemfontein, in the Presidency, which, by the way, is the only good house, official or private, in South Africa. None the less, a great deal of instruction can be gathered from the sententious observations of Paul Kruger. He gives the impression of being perfectly frank, and, at the same time, singularly astute, considering his defective education, which, contrary to Boer custom, he constantly laments, and which may account for some of his strong prejudices. At the time of my visit to Pretoria he was quite bound up in the Delagoa Bay railway scheme, chiefly on account of his grievance against the Cape Government two years previously, when, as he says, his offer of the monopoly of railway communication was disregarded, and, as he expresses it, he was "slapped in the face" when he proposed that,

in return, Transvaal tobacco should be admitted into the colony duty free. It would be presumptuous on my part either to adopt or to refute this view of a passage of past history. It is only referred to here as explaining President Kruger's tenacity in insisting that the first railway in the Transvaal shall be that projected between Pretoria and the Portuguese frontier. He spoke to me with very little respect of the Portuguese, but said that it suited the purposes of the Transvaal that they should be in possession of Delagoa Bay; and, from his point of view, he should object to Germany being there as much as to any other Power. As to the wild statements in English papers about the possible purchase of the territory by the South African Republic, he said, supposing his people could find the money and Portugal were willing to treat, the very last thing the Transvaal wanted was a seaboard, which would drive them under the protection of a Power which had a navy.

General Piet Joubert is as unlike Paul Kruger as two stalwart bearded Boers can be to one another. Joubert is more expansive and seemingly less cautious in his expressions. He told me that the whole Transvaal would rise if ever Germany were to attempt to lay hands on the country. He proceeded: "I fought against the English for our liberty, but I have now, as I had then, no ill-feeling whatever towards them: but I would fight with the English against any other Power; and if Germany were to make any attempt on the Transvaal, I would say to England, take us and make us yours again rather than let us fall into German hands." The hero of Amajuba was at that time a candidate for the Presidentship,

the election for which had just commenced, and his pro-English utterances, which, in his address to the electors, went so far as to suggest an appeal to the Suzerain in certain eventualities, were supposed not to have more value than the sentiments expressed by candidates at elections usually have. They gave me the impression of sincerity; but even estimated as the expressions of an opportunist who appreciates the possible political transition owing to the rush to the gold-fields, they help to show that the existence of German influence in the Transvaal is a myth.

The Ministry of Marine and the Foreign Office at Lisbon had given me letters of introduction to the Governor of Lourenço Marques, and it was my intention to proceed thither overland from Pretoria. Sir Thomas Tancred, the engineer of the Delagoa Bay Railway, had at the gold-fields advised me to go round by Natal on account of the fever season, which was at its height in the country round the frontier mountains of Lebombo. The direct route also passes through a region ravaged by the tsetse-fly, which is so fatal to horses that on the official maps a large tract between the Maputa river and the Lebombo range is marked "uninhabited (tsetse)." My inclination was to risk the fever and the fly for the sake of seeing the country, but at Pretoria it was evident that the rains might commence at any moment. Only a portion of the way can be driven; and an African journey on horseback (or on foot if the horses succumb to the tsetse) in the rainy season is an enterprise of indefinite duration, in which the traveller must be prepared to take the chance of being planted for a week or two on the

high veldt, *expectans dum defluat amnis*. In the dry months there can be no doubt that the only pleasant way of seeing Africa south of the Tropic of Capricorn is by driving or riding one's own or hired horses: there is a certain fascination in the outspannings and off-saddlings at the end of easy stages in sunny weather. But during the rains the amenities of the public post-cart must be submitted to. It must not be supposed that the varied descriptions of two-wheeled and four-wheeled conveyances, drawn by spans of from two to ten animals, which carry the mails, are not subject to delays from the flooded streams. On the contrary, it is a not unusual occurrence for the post-cart to be stopped for three or four days till a swollen river or spruit runs down; but the moment the water-way is passable, and long before it is safe, the cart dashes on, and by means of relays of fresh teams, and by dint of going hard all through the nights, a portion of the lost time is sometimes made up. These well-known incidents of African travel are only mentioned here to draw attention to the present inaccessibility of Delagoa Bay from the centre of the Transvaal. Some authorities on the subject seem to have glanced at a small map of Africa, and seeing the name of Pretoria stretching out towards the Portuguese boundary, they write as if the Governor of Lourenço Marques and the President of the Transvaal were in the habit of riding over to the frontier of a morning after breakfast to meet for an hour's plotting against the British Empire. The direct distance from Lourenço Marques to Pretoria, according to Colonel Machado's railway survey, is only 346 miles, a space that can be traversed in

Europe by daylight on the shortest day; but the time actually occupied in getting from one place to the other takes on an average longer than the journey from London to Chicago. The quickest way is really the circuitous route by road, rail, and sea, through Natal. It took me from a Friday in one week to the Saturday in the next week to get from Pretoria to Delagoa Bay; but this was remarkably rapid travelling for the wet season. The longest delay was one of only thirty hours on the banks of the Vaal, at a horrible place called Standerton; the Natal railway was reached only two days late; and the fastest of the fortnightly steamers from Durban started the morning after my arrival. The journey was not exactly agreeable. The first night was spent in an open cart under a deluge of the rain which only rains in Africa. It took ten hours to complete the first stage of thirty miles, and when day broke and revealed a cracked pole as one of the surprises of the excursion, I wished that Oom Paul might have been sitting beside me among his Majesty's drenched mail-bags. His views on the railway question would have been seriously advanced before we reached Witwatersrand. Three other nights of the journey were spent on the flooded veldt, one of them on Laing's Nek, at the foot of Amajuba Hill (of even sadder memory), in a mud-hole, out of which twenty Zulus digged and dragged the cart next morning. Just as the hotels of Cape Colony are thought to be the worst in the world before those of the Transvaal have been tried, so do travellers estimate the roads of the South African Republic until the Natal frontier has been crossed.

Had the Union steamer left Natal before the arrival of the

Transvaal mail, my visit to Delagoa Bay would have been given up; for so solemnly had people warned me that to go there in the height of the fever season was a gratuitous piece of foolhardiness, that the missing of the boat would have seemed an interposition of Providence. But the gloomiest imagination ever effected by depressing predictions could not have helped being cheered by the beauty of the summer morning, as the Anglian glided over smooth seas past Inyack island into the magnificent bay. The soft lightness of the air, the clearness of the atmosphere, the deep blue and red and green of sky and cliffs and bush, did not suggest malaria. The little Portuguese town which suddenly comes in sight gives, with its red-tiled roofs and gaily painted houses, a note of rich colouring, which is entirely wanting in the architecture of British settlements. The Portuguese ports in East Africa are doubtless both backward and degenerate; but from an æsthetic point of view, Lourenço Marques is as much more picturesque than Port Elizabeth as Lisbon is than Liverpool. Good Captain Morton of the Anglian wanted me to sleep on board, a precaution to which he attributed his immunity from fever in spite of six visits annually to the bay. With my thoughts full of mortal statistics, my first impulse consequently was to decline the Governor's invitation to be his guest; but after seeing and talking to the principal Europeans, who had not the outward appearance of fever patients, it dawned upon me that possibly for some reason the malarial traditions of the place were a little exaggerated, so I asked the Governor to let me change my mind.

It is quite impossible to get at the real truth about fever at

Delagoa Bay. At Natal it was said that during the month of January fifty-eight fatal cases of fever had occurred there among Europeans; while at Lourenço Marques the authorities assured me that in that month only eight Europeans, all told, had died, and the majority of them from drink. There are, no doubt, many deaths from fever in the district of Lourenço Marques, but my impression is that most of them are brought about by preventible causes, drink and damp clothes being the chief. The contractor's men employed on the railway have suffered severely, and they are precisely of the class who drink and who do not change wet garments; but so far from Delagoa Bay being a fever-stricken locality in the sense that some Portuguese settlements farther north are, it is certain that if the town of Lourenço Marques were removed to the high ground overlooking the Bay (as it would if it belonged to an enterprising power), it might serve as a sanatorium for the east coast. The source of the exaggerated reports about the unhealthiness of the place is Natal. The newspapers cannot be justified in publishing imaginary statistics of Delagoa Bay fever, but they certainly have a good deal of excuse. It all comes from the clamour at home for annexation, which would, at the present moment, mean the ruin of Durban and incalculable damage to Natal. Delagoa Bay is one of the finest harbours in the world. On that point there can be no exaggeration; and supposing it fell into the hands of England, or of any Power which would develop its capabilities, it would, with the simultaneous development of the railway system, divert all the shipping trade of South-east Africa. It is not, therefore, a matter of wonder

that the people of Natal should have recourse to every means to discourage annexation schemes. It is impossible not to sympathise with their feeling, however much exception may be taken to their statistical accuracy, looking to the energy and capital they have expended in making the best of a bad harbour and in other commercial enterprises. One of the home-made myths, already referred to, is that Cape Colony and Natal have an identical interest in this matter. This was the view recently taken by an anonymous writer, to whose writing a prominent position was given in an important organ. He proposed that a "free hand" should be given to the legislatures of the two colonies on the subject. To give a free hand to the Legislative Council of Natal on the subject of Delagoa Bay, would be like giving a free hand to the Liverpool Corporation on the subject of the Manchester Ship Canal. The same instructor of public opinion was, however, under the impression that the Cape and Natal constitutions are similar, and that the Legislative Council at Maritzburg contains a Dutch party!

Of course, the annexation of Delagoa Bay by Germany would be infinitely more serious for Natal than its becoming an English port; but there is not the slightest prospect of its changing hands at all. The Governor spoke to me very freely and fully on this subject during my two visits to his house. The Portuguese Government has certainly paid us the compliment of sending officials of the very best class to be at the head of affairs at Delagoa Bay. Colonel Machado, the director of public works, in appearance is the Portuguese of tradition, with his flowing black moustache and his animated ges-

ticulations, and in manner is most genial. Commander Vasconcellos, the Governor, is of a quite different stamp; but when once his courteous reserve is overcome, he is one of the most sympathetic persons possible to imagine, like the best type of French naval officer, to which profession he belongs. He is a good friend of English interests, speaking our language perfectly; and it is a matter for regret that he is anxious to go afloat again, and to terminate his official life. The soberness and moderation with which he spoke of international relations impressed me. No Government at Lisbon dare propose the cession of Lourenço Marques to any Power on any terms; but as for German intrigue, the Germans had not a consulate, or even a house of business, on Delagoa Bay. One morning we rode round to see the barracks for 1500 troops, which are being built on the hill, and the Governor described the scheme in hand of erecting lighthouses and of buoying out the channel. These works are not very magnificent from a British point of view, but they show that Portugal has no intention of yielding any of her territory. The Portuguese are the vainest nation of Europe, and they live on the reputation of Vasco da Gama. If England had seriously wished to secure any portion of the Portuguese coast, it would have been necessary to gag the crowd of irresponsible and indiscreet writers who have reminded Portugal of the value of Marshal MacMahon's award, and revealed to her the possible importance of the Transvaal gold-discoveries. It is our tradition to make our annexations quietly without public vapourings, and the nation wakes up one morning to find that the empire is larger by so many thou-

sand square miles. If the acquisition of Delagoa Bay would, apart from the Natal question, be an advantage to England, the arm-chair Chauvinists have spoiled the game by not only increasing the tenacity of Portugal's hold, but also by inspiring Germany with the feeling that we must never be allowed to go there unchallenged.

It is needless to enter into the undoubted fitness of Delagoa Bay for a naval station, as it is very unlikely we shall ever have the privilege of spending the millions necessary for fortifying it; but until the more improbable contingency has arrived of some other great Power undertaking that outlay, the splendid roadstead will be open to our ships in time of war. Delagoa Bay may become English, just as Trieste may one day become Italian; but neither change seems to be impending in the near future, and either could only be the result of European complications.

The future of the Lourenço Marques and Transvaal Railway depends on too many engineering and political uncertainties to allow of prophecy. The courteous general manager, Mr Knee, afforded me the opportunity of examining it, by giving me a special train, whereby a most agreeable day was spent amid the oddest combination of savage and civilised scenes. The line seems to run perfectly straight and perfectly level after the wondrous gradients and curves which wind round the gorges climbed by the Natal railway. The country has the appearance of a richly wooded park, such is the growth of the timber in the bush. At short intervals the train stops at little stations, sometimes to take water, sometimes to let the manager see if the station-master is drunk. At these stopping-places groups of natives run up to the

train. They have not yet lost their wonder, but they are becoming Europeanised in costume—that is, some of them wear an English hat with nothing else, while others adhere to their curious head-dress, but wear a frock-coat or a British military tunic, without trousers of course. Moveni is passed, the station whence the road for transport riders goes into the Transvaal across the Lebombo mountains which bound the horizon. One or two iron bridges are crossed, and then the great stream of the Komati comes in sight, rolling down with eyots on its surface, like a sub-tropical Loire. The line ends abruptly some miles farther at the river's edge, amid dense luxuriant bush, wide-spreading blue-gum trees, and grass breast-high. There never was such a railway terminus in this world. The engineering difficulties, it is said, will all commence from here, where the river has to be bridged, and the mountains crossed at a height of 6437 feet. The commercial utility of the venture cannot be gauged till the Netherlands South African Company has thus added its 283 miles to the 63 miles already laid; but meanwhile the Delagoa Bay Railway is quite worth the attention of sportsmen, as it runs into the midst of the only remaining accessible country where big game abounds. At the railway terminus a lion was heard roaring two days before my visit. The African lion has a way in these modern times of always appearing the day before yesterday, and nine travellers out of ten, excepting those who have devoted years to hunting, have never beheld him. It was my privilege to hear his roar one night, nearly 2000 miles from Komati Poort; but so far from appreciating it, I mistook the

sound for the domestic voice of an ox or an ass. Seriously speaking, there is a lot of big game still in this region. Crocodile and hippopotamus, which will soon be the only large animals left in Africa, swarm in the Komati and Crocodile rivers, but there are also undoubtedly to be found here the black rhinoceros, the buffalo, and sometimes the giraffe. When once the road is opened the game will trek from here, as it has disappeared from the rest of South Africa; but meanwhile, for those not predisposed to fever, there is the opportunity of getting with little trouble sport of a class which will be extinct by the end of the century, and at the same time of inspecting a most interesting country.

The musical African names of the stations, such as Temequetana and Umquanhene, are interspersed with others of true British ring, such as Transvaal Road and Jubilee River. Indeed there is nothing not English on the railway excepting the name of the engine, which is called Luiz-Philippe, not after the citizen-king, of course, but after his great-great-grandson, the Duke of Braganza's heir, who bears this ill-omened conjunction of names in honour of his two grandfathers, Dom Luiz of Portugal and the Count de Paris. In all Lourenço Marques there is little which is un-English beyond the picturesqueness of the buildings. The Boer characteristics which stamp most of our South African towns are quite wanting, and the only Dutchmen in the place are from Holland. The French also have a large house of business; the Germans have none; but though no English firm of importance is established here, English money is the currency, even Colonel Machado's native labourers being paid in it. The black troops

are a much smarter (or a less slovenly) body of men than the soldiers of the Lisbon garrison, though not to be compared with General Matthews' Swahelis at Zanzibar. They are instructed in Portuguese, with the result that they speak and understand no known tongue, and their zeal is more conspicuous than their discrimination when on sentry-duty at Government House. This is apt to be awkward for the Governor's guests when an African thunderstorm is beginning, and after dodging the sable sentinel I was more than once chased to my room at the bayonet's point.

Even to one convinced that Delagoa Bay is not for us, the noble harbour, destitute of shipping and unlined with docks and wharves, is a sad spectacle. At each of my two visits there were just four vessels anchored there, the British mail-steamer, a Portuguese gun-boat, the Great Northern Telegraph-ship, and one other craft. There is no attempt at wharfage, and the jetty is of no use for the smallest boats. All merchandise has to be taken from the ships in lighters, and from the latter carried to shore by wading natives. Even the smart little Thames-built pinnace of the Governor cannot come up to the jetty; and while one is meditating how to embark, a black head is poked between one's legs, and thus tossed on to the rower's shoulders, in two or three strides one is deposited in the boat. It would be almost a consolation to believe that Lourenço Marques is the pestilential swamp it is made out to be, instead of being capable of improvement into quite a habitable settlement. If there were the remotest chance of Germany or any other Power getting it, neither the traditions of unhealthiness, nor the interests of Natal, ought to pre-

vent our stepping in at once; but as Portugal has no intention of retiring, we ought to contentedly accept the situation of its possession by a Power which is neither wealthy nor enterprising.

My second visit took place the next month, after several weeks spent among the pleasant people of Natal, with the diversion of a rainy ride into Zululand. Governor Vasconcellos had persuaded me to return and to extend my tour up the east coast to see the rest of the province of Moçambique. The night before my departure he gave me the latest Portuguese official map of Africa, which is a remarkable document. It was printed in Paris, but the Portuguese official badge is engraved upon it; all names and notes are in Portuguese, and it adopts the meridian of Greenwich. The journeys of all Portuguese explorers are traced on it, down to that of Serpa Pinto and Cardozo in 1885-86; but the travels of Englishmen and of Germans are alike ignored with perfect impartiality. The conventions which Portugal has recently made with Germany and with France are familiar to those who have followed African questions, but their purport can only be appreciated in a map. The Portuguese draughtsman has done what alarmists have predicted Germany was about to do, and has annexed an enormous belt of continent stretching from ocean to ocean, from Loanda and Mossamedes in the west to Cape Delgado and Lourenço Marques in the east. The Portuguese frontier is made to march with the eastern and northern boundaries of the Transvaal; then, veering north-west, it embraces Matabeleland. At Victoria Falls it follows the left bank of the Zambesi till the river bends northwards, then it

takes a line almost due west to the Atlantic. The northern frontier starts from Cape Delgado and crosses Lake Nyassa about 140 miles from its northern limit, beyond which it need not be followed in detail here. The most serious portion of this paper annexation for British interests is that of Matabeleland, which includes Lo Bengula's country to the north-east of Bechuanaland. Our able administrator of British Bechuanaland will have been very much surprised to find that that potentate has been dethroned, and that his mineral treasures are now the territory of His Most Faithful Majesty. The map-maker has been good enough not to seize both banks of the Zambesi entirely, and the trade-route from the south to that river is still left open for about 90 miles above Victoria Falls.

The journey up the Moçambique coast to Zanzibar, though far from difficult and interesting, is rarely travelled by Englishmen who are not consuls, missionaries, elephant-hunters, or traders. Many travellers would group together the last three classes; but there do exist missionaries unconnected with commerce, and one meets occasionally a hunter who cares as much for sport as for ivory. Civilisation must not be an essential, and fever must have no terror for people who would find a charm in weeks of tropical travel in East Africa. It is necessary, too, to love the warmth, and to be content with the life of Adam and Eve before the Fall, in the matter of doing no work, and wearing few clothes, of being lazy and not ashamed. It is unfortunate that malaria should be worst when the sea is most favourable, between the two monsoons, when for days there is no greater ripple on the sailless waters

than the flutter of a flying-fish. Sometimes the Moçambique Channel is far from peaceful, even in the height of summer. Last year the Courland of the Castle Line was caught in a cyclone, and was four days in making a run between two ports which usually takes twenty hours, and was saved from shipwreck only by the admirable seamanship of Captain Rendall.

Inhambane, 240 miles north-east from Delagoa Bay, is another of the fine roadsteads on the east coast. It is one of the characteristic African towns which are found in picturesque variety on this coast, and nowhere else in the world. The little settlement is built on the wooded shores of a spacious estuary. Palm-trees shelter all the houses, which are painted in gay hues and roofed with thatch. The church, surmounted with a cross, is, as in all the Portuguese ports, a conspicuous object. The religion of Portugal is like its glory, a tradition. It is easier at Lisbon to procure an audience of the King than to gain admission to a church on ordinary days; but in East Africa the Bishop of Moçambique is saluted by the batteries with as many guns as if he were a Prince of the house of Braganza.

The principal house of business here is Netherlands Dutch. There is no trace of Germans to be found, nor is there an English house; but most of the trade is in the hands of British subjects here, as in all the towns of the province of Moçambique. Indeed the commerce of Africa, from Lammoo and Zanzibar to Durban, and inland thence as far as the Orange Free State, is being appropriated by the Asiatic traders, chiefly from Bombay, who in the south are called Arabs, and along the eastern coast with equal inaccuracy are known as Banyans.

The village street shows few signs of 300 years' occupation by Europeans. There is, it is true, a barracks with black sentinels at the doors, and Portuguese officers almost as black, lolling through the windows; and there is a school where fifty dusky infants of all shades, from darkest ebony to unwholesome half-caste, are shouting Portuguese monosyllables, while the dejected-looking schoolmaster also lolls through the window. The scent of the place, the heaviness of the atmosphere, the palm-trees against the hazy blue, and the sluggish life represented by a few stalwart bare-shouldered black women, all combine to make a picture thoroughly African and tropical. The effect is not undone by the incessant braying of the Portuguese bugles, as though Inhambane held a garrison as large as that of Nancy. Otherwise the street is silent, but from the bay there rises up a wild chant from the lighters which are being brought slowly ashore laden with natives returning home with their earnings from the gold-fields. A plaintive sound of soft music comes from an enclosed courtyard: it is from the prison, and behind the bars the prisoners are huddled together unemployed, and begging through the grating, just as one sees them at Cintra and other places in Portugal. The player of the wooden instrument known as the Kaffir piano wants to sell it for a rupee, but the bars are too close for him to pass it through. A native woman, with one child slung across her naked back and leading another by the hand, comes and hands food to one of the prisoners—a most pathetic figure, with her closely shaven head and the saddest face it is possible to imagine.

The island of Chiluané is hence a day's voyage, and to reach the

town a further expedition overland is necessary. The conveyance of the country, where there are no roads and many swamps, is called a *macheilla* (this is probably not the correct way of spelling it), and consists of a plank, more or less luxuriously fitted up as a litter, slung by chains on a stout bamboo-pole, each end of which is borne on the bare shoulders of two natives. It is not uncomfortable, after the proper way of reclining is discovered, so as to avoid banging one's head against the pole. The bearers proceed at a fast trot, wagging their heads as they run. At intervals, with a gentle jerk, they change shoulders without stopping: one of them sings a song of evidently humorous character, a solo of five or six notes, at the end of which the other three chorus a monosyllabic refrain, which seems to be of assent, and the burden is usually an improvised criticism of the weight and appearance of the passenger. The way through the island lies amid a thoroughly tropical scene—towering palms, bearing huge clusters of coconuts, wide-spreading bananas, and baobabs of enormous girth. The gaudy butterflies are rivalled in brightness by birds of brilliant scarlet, which flit about. Kraal after kraal of native huts is passed. The black women here are a comely, courteous people, and as one is borne past, they make a reverence of wonderful grace, holding the left elbow upon the right hand as they bend in lowly obeisance. The Portuguese town has all the appearance of a native village, and the most substantial of the thatched houses are those of the Indian traders, who are borne about in litters as though the lords of the soil. Here, again, there is neither English nor German house of business. There is one French

house, at the head of which is a Provençal, who was quite pained at my suggestion that he probably was *abonné* to *Le Petit Marseillais*, as, being a royalist, he received every two months huge bundles of *Le Soleil du Midi*. The complexions of the Portuguese here are so dark that it is only from their costume they can be distinguished from the natives, excepting in one instance of a white Kaffir woman, whose perfectly fair skin and flaxen hair could never be taken for Lusitanian. The Portuguese currency is almost unknown here; the adoption of the rupee throughout Eastern Africa is the most significant sign of the position held by the Indians in commerce. The channel which runs round the island of Chiluané might be made into an excellent roadstead; but the picturesque beach, the home of thousands of small red crabs with one huge claw half as big again as the body, shows no sign of navigation except the unfinished hulk of a vessel rotting on the stocks, and the hollow-trunk native canoes.

South of this place is the island of Bazaruto, where there is a pearl-fishery, which ought to be developed, specimens of good size and shape being found in considerable abundance. Inland to the west is the Great Place of Gungunhana, the paramount chief of these regions. Near his kraal is stationed a Portuguese Resident, Rodriguez by name; and strange stories are rife in the country of the enormous payment made by him to the chief annually in kind and in specie. The Portuguese call it a subsidy, but the black monarch considers it as a tribute, for which consideration he permits them to remain in his territory. Farther north there is a port called Sofala. No ships excepting dhows ever touch there, though

it is said that the mouth of the Pungue river is a harbour as fine as Delagoa Bay or Inhambane. The reason is that Umzila's people (as the tribe is called after the great chief, the father of Gungunhana) will not tolerate the Portuguese, whose traders have been compelled again and again to pay tribute at the assegai's point. Lying between this part of the coast and Mashonaland, the chief of which, Lo Bengula, already mentioned, is allied by marriage to Umzila's family, is the district of Manica. It is one of the hundred regions said to be the original of Ophir, which probably was not in Africa at all; but it is undoubtedly rich in precious minerals, and hitherto neglected by Europeans.

Past the main mouth of the Zambesi, Quillimane lies on a minor estuary called the Quaqua, on the low-lying banks of which stalk thousands of cranes and herons, and sometimes a hippopotamus will venture within sight of the shipping. There is not much of this, a Portuguese gunboat and a few heavy-looking Arab dhows, some flying the British flag and some the crimson of the Sultan of Zanzibar. The town is of the familiar pattern—a row of houses painted blue or white, with a church in the centre, lining the river-bank, and lofty cocoa-palms towering above the roofs, which here are of rich red tiles. The canoes belonging to the officials and the chief merchants are imposing galleys, paddled by ten natives in strange costumes, sitting two abreast, and smiting the water with short sharp strokes, to the accompaniment of a wild song. There is no doubt about malaria here: the atmosphere is heavy, the lowering clouds are charged with oppressive vapours, and even

the natives have a subdued air as they squat on their haunches by the river-side. The Governor receives me with great amiability, but there is an oppressive gloom about his beautiful house. He tells me that his wife is in great distress: two days previously the fever had swiftly carried off almost the only other Portuguese lady in the place, his secretary's wife, who was young and handsome, and the little European community was dying at the rate of three a-day. Female society in East Africa is very limited. Apart from the unhealthiness of the coast, the social arrangements of the small communities make the position of ladies somewhat embarrassing. Not counting the devoted women who are attached to the various missions, and whose goodness is the best feature of missionary life, there cannot be much more than a dozen European ladies on the 3500 miles of coast between Natal and Aden. There was one charming young Dutchwoman at Quillimane who was married by proxy in Holland to her husband, a merchant here, whom she had not seen since childhood,—a process which prevents the possibility of change of mind on the voyage, not unfrequently announced to expectant colonial bridegrooms when they go to the quay to meet their exported brides. It was curious to hear Beethoven's Sonatas played in a place where the only European music usually heard is the African version of it given by the black band of the regiment on Sunday nights. The Dutch merchant's wife had been educated in England, and she told me in perfect seriousness that though many of her dearest friends were English, she invariably found that none of us could ever quite forgive or forget

the incident of the Dutch in the Medway!

At Quillimane, as at the other Portuguese towns, there are no English, German, or Portuguese trading-houses to speak of, and the bulk of the business is in the hands of British Indian subjects, whose shops occupy the long damp avenues lined with palms and acacias in full scarlet flower, and reeking with the mingled perfume of rotting cocoa-nuts and aromatic spices. The largest European house here is the French, an important branch of an enterprising Marseilles firm established on the east coast. The red-roofed building, with its thick walls and cloistered courtyard, is like a great monastery. Here on the arched terrace it is cool to dine, amid many signs of African life, with two golden-crested Kaffir cranes stalking about the court without fear of a tiger-cat chained against the wall. The natives make admirable cooks when trained by Frenchmen. A *bouilla-baisse* cannot always be depended upon at the mouth of the Zambesi, but the *filets de gazelle* are beyond reproach. Domestic service commences early. I wanted to purchase at a store a most attractive little black fellow aged four, but the storekeeper said he could not part with him, as he was invaluable as personal attendant to his two-year-old half-caste baby; while his elder brother, a mature man of seven, was already a responsible upper servant.

Moçambique, the capital of the province, is probably the only clean Portuguese town in existence, and consists of a most picturesque cluster of red and blue houses grouped together on a coral-reef beneath a deep blue sky rarely seen in the tropics. The harbour is full of dhows, among which two British steamers lying at anchor

have an imposing appearance. It is very difficult to distinguish in the distance the flag of our merchant service from the red ensign of Zanzibar, both of which are frequently flown by the dhows. It is a pity that all our shipping, mercantile as well as naval, cannot fly one national flag as distinctive as the French tricolor or the American stars and stripes. Two Portuguese gunboats lying here are smart-looking craft; but all the time of my visit to Moçambique they showed no sign of life, and the report is that the crews are never drilled at all. Not long ago news of a disturbance down the coast was brought, and one of them was ordered off to the scene, but she could not even get up steam, as the engines were found to be out of order when the attempt was made. Though this incident is characteristic of the Portuguese, they certainly put us to shame in the housing of African Governors. The palace of the Governor-General at Moçambique is twice the size of the modest habitations of our Governors of Cape Colony and Natal put together, and a beautiful old house as well. There are several important English and German houses of business here; but here, too, the Indians command the trade. The contents of their stores are mainly of British manufacture; soft silken fabrics, for instance, which tempt the traveller as specimens of Indian work, on examination are found to bear the mark of Manchester. There can be little doubt that whatever Powers nominally own the eastern shores of Africa, the commerce will belong to Mohammedan and Hindoo subjects of the British Crown. Later in my tour I visited that portion of the Sultanate of Zanzibar which England has agreed shall be a "sphere of

German influence." The influence cannot be said to be conspicuous. At Lindi the whole Swaheli population turned out to gaze upon the unwonted sight of Europeans; and both there and at Kilwakinje, the two "German" ports, being present at the distribution and despatch of the mail, I found from the postmasters, who are Indians, that the letters both going and arriving were without exception addressed in Oriental characters to Orientals. Much in the same sense might be written about the town of Zanzibar itself.

At Quillimane, at Moçambique, and on the journey from one place to the other, I met with most of the people who had taken leading parts in the recent fighting round Lake Nyassa. The Arab attack on Karonga, and the subsequent operations at the north end of the lake, have already been described in the newspapers. There are the gravest differences of opinion as to policy even among those who took part in the fighting, but it is impossible to speak too highly of the bravery and coolness displayed by all the Englishmen who were engaged. The two consuls who superintended the successive operations are gallant officers who have each held the Queen's commission; but the missionaries and merchants appear to have confronted the Mussulman hordes with the pluck of Crusaders fighting for something more practical than the tenure of the holy places. Possibly the most plucky act of all was Consul Hawes's firmness in refusing to give official sanction for renewal of hostilities after the safety of the Europeans had been secured. The Arab invasion of the Nyassa territory is no doubt prejudicial to the spread of civilisation; but the question must be asked, Is it England's

business and interest to interfere? To my deep regret Consul O'Neill of Moçambique had contracted the fever in returning from Lake Nyassa, and this prevented my having the opportunity of any lengthened conversation with that distinguished traveller, who is so devoted to African exploration that he frequently spends his leave, hardly earned in a malarious climate, in further journeys in the cause of science. It is natural that great explorers should have strong feelings about the proprietorship of discovered territories, and it is unfortunate that prosaic considerations have to be weighed against sentiment. It ought to be an axiom for England that no new annexation should be made unless there is uninterrupted access to the sea. From the Nyassa territory the only sea-coast within a thousand miles is Portuguese or German; the only accessible coast is at the Portuguese port of Quilimane, which is reached by river-boat through a most malarious belt of country. Too much importance need not be given to the paper annexation by Portugal already referred to, which embraces two-thirds of the shores of Nyassa, and includes the seat of our consulate — although Consul Hawes is accredited “to the kings and chiefs,” and knows nothing officially of Portuguese pretensions. These pretensions would be bound to cause complications if England ventured to declare the Nyassa territory a sphere of English influence; but when those difficulties were got over, Portugal would remain in undisputed possession of the coast, and of all approaches to the coast, as against European Powers. The Arab traders who have invaded the lake shores are strong, and will need organised armed forces to

cope with them. Who is to provide and to support such equipments? or, in the case of a reverse of the Europeans, is England to enter upon a little war to avenge the atrocities which would probably be committed on our men and women? Even if the greatest commercial interests were at stake, England would undertake no such responsibilities in the present condition of Europe; but this is what was written officially last July by our excellent consul at Nyassa months before the outbreak of hostilities: “Viewed from a commercial point, the trade which the Nyassa districts at present afford is very limited. The import trade as now carried on does not amount to the ordinary business of one company; the export trade is comparatively insignificant.”

The expansion of English influence towards the Zambesi region must be from the south. If it were not for Vasco da Gama and his successors, no doubt we might have our choice of the east coast ports. Not only Delagoa Bay, but Sofala, which is lying useless, might open up the Matabele country for British enterprise, and even Quilimane might be taken with the lower Zambesi. As, however, Portugal does exist, we cannot appropriate her possessions even in the interests of civilisation. Our business is to avoid an irritating policy of striving after territory which we cannot get, and of wasting our energies in isolated and unprofitable regions. We are the paramount Power in South Africa: we already possess the choicest portions of the whole continent, and in order to maintain our position we must conciliate our neighbours, Boer, German, and Portuguese. Perhaps the day will come when it may be both lawful and politic for us to turn our attention to the

east coast; it is neither one nor the other at the present moment, looking at the situation both in Africa and in Europe. But meanwhile, if it be necessary or expedient for English influence to extend, the only possible direction is beyond our Bechuanaland protectorate, through Matabeleland, for the sake of the boundless resources of mineral wealth lying between the Limpopo and Zambesi. Portuguese claims are shadowy there, German do not exist, and the Boers

are less likely than the English to cultivate friendly relations with the great chief of Mashonaland. The future of Africa south of the Zambesi lies in its mining resources: their development, and the consequent growth of the railway system, may be too strong for treaties and conventions and boundaries, but this belongs to the domain of prophecy, which, though fascinating, is futile.

J. E. C. BODLEY.

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At Rest

FREDERICK III.: EMPEROR AND KING

JUNE 15, 1888

TWO SONNETS

BY

THE EARL OF ROSSLYN

PUBLISHED BY COMMAND OF THE QUEEN

AT REST. TWO SONNETS.

I.

AT REST! Thou noblest, sweetest-natured Man,
King-Emperor, Soldier, Servant of the State.
Patient in tribulation: truly great
By God's high gift of sympathy; in the van
Of truth and liberty, though brief the span
Of Empire given to thee; thy tragic fate
Makes all eyes weep, for who can emulate
Thy courage, stricken by so sore a ban?
Thy gentle heart was always calm and brave
And cheerful in thine anguish, but thy foe
Was still inexorable, and the Hand
That smote thee down to thy too early grave—
Alas! in Thee, for evermore laid low
The truest friend of thy loved Fatherland.

II.

VICTORIA! Empress Queen! and widowed Wife!
(Greater than earthly Titles is the Name)
Wife worthy of thy Pure Lord—whose fame
Will live beyond, aye, far beyond this life!
Consort and Comforter in sorrow, rife
With untold terrors, before which grew tame
The final doom; for, when grave words of blame
Floated in air, thy courage calmed the strife.
Loving and loved, what Greatness soothes thee now?
No worldly honour! but the King of kings
Will give thee comfort! a brief hour to wait,
To smooth the lines upon thine aching brow;
To shelter thee beneath the Silver Wings,
And thou shalt join Him at the Golden Gate.

ROSSLYN.

June 15, 1888.

A STIFF-NECKED GENERATION.

CHAPTER XVIII.—“I WHO STOOD UP FOR HIM SO BRAVELY ONCE!”

“In the heart's attachment a woman never likes a man with ardour, till she has suffered for his sake.”—SHERIDAN.

“BUT is it not the strangest thing?” cried the Gilberts, one to another, when the first shock of the second announcement had subsided. “It really is the very strangest thing.” And it rather added to than diminished the zest with which they gave out Frederick's projected alliance, that the sudden death of the titled mother of his *fiancée* had been the first and immediate result of it.

“No doubt she was overcome altogether, poor woman,” cried the soft-hearted Mrs Gilbert, very much overcome herself by the idea. “Yes, indeed, 'tis too true, Maria,” to an old neighbour and friend who had dropped in, as people did drop in all day long at the Gilberts', always secure of a welcome, and of the best of cake and wine, or tea, as the hour might be—“yes, indeed, poor Lady Caroline! Will you not take off your bonnet, Maria, and stop a bit to comfort us? Now do. That's right. But you won't take off your bonnet? Though, to be sure, you do look so nice in that bonnet, 'twould be a pity. And the room is not too hot for you? Mr Gilbert and myself, we are getting to be old people, and we like large fires. Yes, to be sure, poor Lady Caroline! Emily, my dear, just say, to let no one else in this afternoon, being as it is the funeral day,” in explanation to her visitor; “and ask them to let us have tea by four o'clock, Emily,—I seem to need my tea today; and, Emily, if there are any muffins to be had, just tell them

to get some—though I doubt if it isn't too early yet for muffins. However, they can try. Yes, indeed, poor Lady Caroline! And the marriage so agreeable to us all, and so satisfactory. But it's in my mind that it was just too much for the poor thing. An eldest daughter is an eldest daughter, say what you will about there being plenty left; and 'twill be the first break in the family. The girls may talk as they please, but when they come to be as old as I am, they'll know what it is to have feelings. It's in my bones that Lady Caroline's feelings was too much for her.”

“Delicate, no doubt,” assented Maria. “The aristocracy, as a rule, are delicate; so sensitive, there's no saying where to have them. And no doubt it was a great excitement; and Lady Caroline would, as you say, have her feelings.”

“Ah yes, Maria.”

“Girls little think of all their mothers have to go through. It's all very well for them,” proceeded Maria; “they think it mighty fine to be off with their gay bridegrooms—”

—“Ah yes, Maria.”

“But it's those left behind who know what the parting means,” and Maria looked solemnly round; “they are the ones to be pitied,” said she.

“Indeed it's true, Maria. Ah, dear,” quoth Mrs Gilbert, taking up the ball again, “they little think, as you say, Maria. My son tells me Lady Caroline was

anything but stout," added she, more briskly, "anything but stout, he said. Tall and thin, he described her; so what it could have been that was the matter with a person who was tall and thin—for of course *something* besides the feelings there must have been—I can't imagine. At first, said I, it must have been a fit; for you know there's no saying who will or who won't have fits; and I knew a lady, and I think you will remember her by name—Jane Tarvey, I mean,—who married a thin, lanky, pale-faced, long-fingered man, and he died of the cramp! Cramp is a dangerous complaint when you can't get at it; so maybe it was the cramp. And——"

"You never heard of the death till after you had written about the engagement?"

"No, indeed, or we should not have sent the letters we did, and of course we should not have written to the poor thing herself—I mean her ladyship—at all. Little did we know we were addressing a corpse! We were all in a hurry to write. For the girls were so pleased; and as we heard the family was a thought stiff and punctilious—not easy folks like ourselves—we just sat down all of us then and there, that Frederick might have nothing to complain of. And there,—to think of it, Maria,—at the very time we were writing 'Dear Lady Caroline,' was she lying stark and cold, and would never get her own letter!"

"And now, I suppose you have had to write again," said Maria. "'Tis a strange affair from beginning to end."

"Is it not?" cried Henrietta, with all the importance of being mixed up in it. "The strangest affair. You must know, Mrs Timmins, that we had been on

the look-out for this, for Frederick had confided in us girls directly he got father's consent; so then, Emily and I were on the tiptoe every time the post came in till we saw his hand. He said it would have perhaps come off even sooner than it did but for an adventure he had had—but he did not tell us what the adventure was."

"I daresay he had come near breaking his neck, or something," placidly put in Mrs Gilbert. "He is as venturesome as ever he was, is Frederick; and he will drive those nasty tandems——"

"Anyway, he was all right when he wrote, mother; and wasn't it good of him to write off the very day, and of her to put in a postscript too, Mrs Timmins? Father has the letter locked up; and he is having his nap now, or I would get it for you to see. He said it had only just come off, and was all right, and he was a 'lucky dog,' and was 'as happy as a king.'"

"Ay, that was it. Frederick all over," nodded Mrs Gilbert, beaming again. "Well, all I can say is, though he is my son, she is a lucky woman who gets him."

"Well, she wrote ever so nice a postscript," said Emily.

"Saying she hoped we should be fond of her, and that she was sure she should be fond of us," added Etta.

"Ay, to be sure, those were her very words"—it was again Mrs Gilbert's turn—"her very words, Maria; and there is no doubt we should have had her and the girls as thick as thieves directly. But there, they must wait for that, now."

"Was he in the house when—when the death took place?" inquired Mrs Timmins.

"No, it was in the night," replied his mother, with infinite

solemnity and enjoyment. "In the night. Towards the morning. Ah! At the turn of the night, as they call it. That's the time they go, mostly. Poor Lady Caroline!"

"Come now, mother, there's no need to go on any more about 'poor Lady Caroline,' making us all melancholy," here suggested Miss Emily. "Let's think about the wedding and all that. When can it be, I wonder?"

"People are not so strict about mourning as they used to be," quoth Mrs Timmins, sagely; "a year at most——"

"La! a year!" cried Emily. "Why, what ever are you thinking of, dear? A year!"

"Oh, we couldn't wait a year you know,—we really couldn't," added Henrietta. "Besides, it is not done now among fashionable people. Six months perhaps,"—and she broke off sorrowfully, for even six months seemed an age to wait, when before they had contemplated—taught by their brother—six weeks at the latest.

"Well, I don't pretend to be fashionable," retorted Mrs Timmins, with some pique, "but I hope I know what's proper and becoming. One need not be fashionable to pay decent respect to the dead; and though I am only a plain person——"

But she was not to be allowed to call herself a plain person.

"Now, Maria, don't you go and think the girls meant anything of that kind," cried Mrs Gilbert, as peacemaker. "They wouldn't think of such a thing as your not knowing about the fashions as well as anybody. But they are regularly upset, poor things, and no wonder. When you and I were girls, ways were different, and——"

"And an engagement was just an engagement," said Maria, "and young people were engaged, and

there was an end of it for many a day. There was no running and flying to be married; especially when, as often as not, there was little or nothing to marry upon, and when——"

"But, you see, that is not the case with Mr Gilbert's son," interrupted Mr Gilbert's wife, with an elation which it was impossible to refrain from showing. "Papa has come down more than handsomely. I really am surprised myself at papa's liberality. The young folks need wait for nothing, and want for nothing."

"I know Frederick had meant the marriage to be at once," added Henrietta.

"Through papa," subjoined her mother.

"He spoke of Christmas," further informed Emily.

"Ay, we had Christmas in our minds, all of us," said her mother; "and if the wedding had come off a week or so before, we could have had a real nice Christmas gathering, and made a great occasion of it. Isn't it a pity now? There is papa so well, with less trouble in his joints than he has had for years, and myself pretty hearty too. I declare it does seem a thousand pities,"—and she could almost have found it in her honest heart to be indignant with her new connection that should have been, whom fate had transformed into such a marplot and killjoy.

It would have been so dearly to her mind to have had a brave Christmas merrymaking for her bonnie bride and bridegroom; the whole house agog with fires, and fumes, and feasting; her comely board bubbling over with good things, and rare wines from the innermost recesses of the cellar on the sideboard.

Many a splendid gift and many

a choice hint would have been delightedly bestowed, neighbours would have been by scores presented to the bride, and the bride would have been trotted far and near, from house to house, in return. Frederick should have seen that his old mother was not so old yet.

And now the luckless Lady Caroline had spoilt all.

Not only had the dame of quality upset every scheme for present enjoyment, but she had even robbed the future of half its gilding. To say nothing of the festive season having gone by ere the nuptials could now be consummated, it would not be the thing—not the thing at all, as the poor woman sadly owned, with tears in her eyes—to make of the affair the overflowing jollification it should have been, had nothing happened.

Of all Major Gilbert's family, she was the one most to be pitied.

Ema and Etta could still look forward to being bridesmaids, and conjure up visions of future visits to King's Common, and even derive some comfort from the thought that these need be no longer such formidable and doubtful pleasures now that the great lady, who had even awed Frederick himself, and who would indubitably have frightened them out of their wits, was no longer there; but poor Mrs Gilbert, who was too old for new sights and scenes, and who had composed her excuse for not attending the wedding, even before her son had informed her of the engagement,—the poor lady, whose imagination had merely radiated among the flesh-pots at home, felt herself defrauded of her all.

"We must just make the best of it, Maria," in the end she concluded; "but I do say, let those deny it who will, 'tis a mysterious

dispensation, and a most afflicting one all round;" and probably there was no one present who doubted the sincerity of her woe, or failed to divine its true cause.

Let us now return to the neighbourhood of King's Common; but before we once more approach that smitten household, still numb beneath its terrible experience, let us take a peep into another, a lesser, and a brighter home.

A brother and sister were together in a snug little parlour, each occupied in his and her several way, when suddenly the latter, whose business was not of an absorbing nature, in that it consisted of some mild family mending, raised her head, and thus delivered herself of the outcome of the previous half-hour's meditation.

"Jack, are you not going to call upon the Liscards?"

"Certainly."

"When? I thought you would have done so by this time."

"I will do it very soon."

"A clergyman usually calls the day after the funeral."

No response.

"The funeral was yesterday."

Still no response.

"I think you ought to call at King's Common to-morrow." But as even this very direct suggestion provoked neither assent nor refusal, the rector's active-minded little sister and prompter decided within herself to push the subject no further at present. Jack was busy, his hands were full of papers, and his nose was buried in the same: he was probably thinking of his sermon—Lady Caroline's funeral sermon, which all the parish would come to hear, and which it would be no easy matter to preach—he must not be worried with other and more sublunary affairs.

She was a very thoughtful and intelligent little person, this Miss Clemmy, and confined herself to her own sphere in a way that was quite surprising for a parson's daughter and a parson's sister; so that, although it might appear from the above that she was in the habit of whipping up her brother to the post of duty, it needed but half an hour's discourse with the fond and faithful little creature, or indeed but half a minute's look into her honest little face, to set all fears at rest for Jack. He had brought her there to be his little comforter, his little counsellor, and his little trotter round the cottages—each of which three functions she performed to admiration. His comfort was the study of her life, his honour and glory the sunshine of it. They were all in all to each other.

It has probably been forgotten that the rector of Hartland-on-the-Hill had been a boyish friend of the young earl, and that soon after his own succession to the title, Hartland had been able to offer Mr Stoneby the living. The small, rural, and somewhat isolated parish was exceptionally lucky in its having been accepted. For many, such a place would have had but few attractions; but Stoneby's health was not robust, and he was possessed of a small independence. He therefore had neither the desire for heavier work, nor the need for a larger stipend. He had, moreover, come to Hartland to look after its spiritual interests, and he did not consider that these were sufficiently discharged by his being in his pulpit of a Sunday. He meant to know his people, and to live among them; to teach the ignorant, strengthen the weak, hold out a hand to the falling, recover the lost. That his old

friend Dick Verelst, now become the Earl of Hartland and a great man, dwelt hard by, had not been allowed to rank as an inducement when considering the offer; but once it had been upon other grounds conscientiously accepted, he had allowed himself delightful prognostications of walks and talks, with not a few kindly and wily resolutions for turning to the advantage of his flock those affectionate feelings which he knew were cherished towards himself.

The result had been completely successful. Hartland had indeed become by degrees so much attached to the society of both brother and sister, that Lady Caroline had grown to lift her eyebrows and Lady Julia to prick up her ears—poor anxious dears—if he did but take over a pheasant or a hare to the rectory. Neither of them had been at all sorry for unconscious little Clemmy's absence during the latter part of the past summer, though it had been caused by illness in the family, and had been a real trouble to Jack. "He must just learn to get on without her. He must take a wife," Lady Julia had decided, cheerfully.

Clemmy, however, had now returned, having been away during the entire period when all eyes had been fixed on Rosamund and Major Gilbert, and, in consequence, she now knew of the engagement, without understanding the general attitude towards it.

She was immensely interested. There are certain people to whom an engagement, be it what it may, must infallibly be interesting, even if those most concerned in it have no especial claims to notice; but Rosamund—Rosamund, with her wild vagaries and rebellious beauty; Rosamund, who knew no laws, owned no ruler, and sent wisdom

to the winds, yet who was so young and sweet, and had had so miserable an upbringing — Rosamund was a sort of queen in Clementina's eyes, and her happiness a thing whereon to muse and ponder.

She pictured it all to herself; conjured up the past; wondered where the two had first met, and what the effect of each had been on the other; drew in her mind's eye a portrait of that conjunction of the brave, manly soldier and the bewitching maid. How delightful! how romantic! He, mute, confounded, adoring; she, transported and enthralled! A—h! delicious!

Could she now but steal one glance — only one glance, — have but one actual vision whereon to base fresh castles in the air? No, not yet; she could not go to King's Common yet, and it was at King's Common only that the enchanting play was going on. But Jack could go, and Jack must and should, — and it was this reflection, still more than the fact that it was the day after the funeral, which induced the question, "Are you not going to call on the Liscards?"

After a time Jack looked round.

"What did you say about the Liscards?" inquired he, absently. "You were not thinking of going there, were you?"

"No, not I; but you. I could not go yet; but they will expect you."

"Who will expect me? Whom am I to ask for?"

"Rosamund, of course."

"And suppose Major Gilbert is there?"

"Which he is certain to be. Well?"

"I should feel foolish. It is not pleasant to have wound yourself up to perform a duty, and——"

"Wound yourself up! But

why 'wound up'? What is there about an ordinary call at King's Common to——"

"This is not an ordinary call."

"You need not say anything."

"Of course I shall not say anything. But still—— However, I shall have to go, I suppose. You don't think I could ask for Mr Liscard?"

"He would never see you."

"Just what I hoped."

"Then you would have to ask for Rosamund after all."

There was no escape for him; and as he had none of his sister's desire to know whether or not engaged people looked and behaved like ordinary mortals, it was certainly hard that she could not have gone in his stead. But this could not be. Rosamund had never made a friend of Clementina, and had, indeed, opened wide her eyes at the bare suggestion.

"Would not Miss Stoneby be better than the Waterfields?" Hartland had put forth on one occasion.

She had laughed outright.

"Your mother would not see it?"

She had nodded.

"Not good enough, eh?"

Not "good" at all, according to Lady Caroline's ideas of "goodness," he had been enlightened. What? People who could not tell to what family they belonged, or, indeed, if they belonged to any family at all? Could it be supposed that a Miss Stoneby, who might be a Miss Anybody, could possibly consort, that was to say consort in any but the slightest and most superficial manner, with a daughter of Lady Caroline Liscard?

All of this in Rosamund's best sarcasm. But she had presently dropped it, and spoken like herself.

"At the same time, Hartland, it is not altogether mamma; I own I am not drawn to swear a friendship with Clemmy Stoneby on my own account. My soul does not knit itself to hers. I do not dislike her—oh no. I see her to be good, and amiable, and busy, and useful—but——"

"Come on," said he. "But——?"

"She is so very, very old," said Rosamund, seriously.

"Old? She is not twenty-one——"

"Oh, I know—not in that way old; not in age—but she never, never could have been a girl like me. She never could have got into scrapes, and muddles, and all the rest of the hot water—now, could she, Hartland? I can never think of her—no, not if I think of her at two feet high—but as engaging servants, adding up accounts, paying her weekly bills with her little basket on her arm, inquiring after absentees from her Sunday-class, and being bobbed to by a dozen in a row, whenever she stops to admonish one. If I do but walk half a mile with her, it is, 'Oh, just let me look in here,' or 'I just want to run in there,' at every cottage-door we pass; and all with so business-like and competent an air, that I feel as if she had been ages and ages going in and out of cottages, and bustling along the rectory road."

"You have hit her off, undoubtedly."

"With a little round bonnet just fitting her face."

"I know it."

"And woollen mittens over her gloves, because of her chilblains."

"True to life. Both mittens and chilblains."

"And it does make a person old never to be young, Hartland?"

"I daresay."

"You 'daresay.' Well, I do

call it hard to be 'daresayed' at after all. Can you not think of something to say, not to 'dare' to say? Can't you suggest something, anything on the other side?"

But he had been wise enough not to do this. Unopposed she was nearly certain to work out for herself the neglected argument, whereas contradiction would have scattered it to the winds. Oh, if others could but have understood that wilful nature as well!

It did not surprise the young man at all to find a kinder and friendlier feeling towards his *protégées* spring up after this encounter. At King's Common the brother and sister were looked upon as his *protégées*, and had the two both been men, they would have been held in excellent favour in consequence; but, as we have said, Lady Caroline held that plain and dowdy, or fair and fine, a young woman was still a young woman, and that Hartland was just a little too often over at the rectory.

In consequence, the Stonebys had never advanced in intimacy, and Mr Liscard's occasional "I wonder why we don't see more of the rector," had led to no results. They were now to come to the front by force of circumstances.

To every person, as to everything under the sun, there is a season, a time when, for the nonce, he or she attains an elevation and importance, even though it be of an artificial or an evanescent nature, and the mere shuffling of the cards in everyday existence, at times throws up the hidden ones to the surface.

Thus it was now the Stonebys' hour.

The visit reluctantly undertaken by the brother, and anxiously urged by the sister, proved such a

success that he could not but go again when pressed by all to do so. He went the next day and the next; and when he took Clementina also on the second occasion, the two were quite hailed in by the servants, who had marked how willingly any diversion was received in the great dreary drawing-room of the mourning mansion.

That Major Gilbert was already there with Miss Rosamund was nothing; he had come over early and been with her most of the day: added to which, if the lovers had cared about being interrupted, they would not have been sitting in an apartment into which any one might walk at any moment. There they were known to be when the door-bell rang, and there the visitors were forthwith ushered in.

Gilbert, it appeared, was quite at home. Instead of the uneasy attitude and restless movements which he had been wont to exhibit in that chamber of horrors, and instead of sitting edgeways on the formal central ottoman full in the draught betwixt two doors, he now either lolled easily on Lady Caroline's own couch by the fire, or exchanged it for the broad, low, pillowed arm-chair which Mr Lis-card still claimed in the evening.

On the entrance of Mr Stoneby and his sister, he rose, with an air of rising to do the honours, met them half-way, poked the fire, pressed them to draw within the precincts, moved a table out of Clementina's way, and finally subsided again into the low chair, laid his head back, crossed his legs, and twirled his watch-chain. Ease and intimacy could not have been carried to a finer pitch.

"Chilly to-day," he observed presently, with a comfortable yawn. "We have got into 'chill

October' at last, and no mistake. How the leaves are dropping!"

"But there is so much evergreen to be seen from this window that the dropping leaves are scarcely observable," replied Miss Stoneby.

"Oh, ain't they, though?" rejoined Gilbert. "When I came up by one of the garden-paths this morning, I could hardly find my way. Give you my word, I lost it ever so often."

"You came through the woods, I suppose?"

"I did—more fool I! Never saw such mud in my life. Though I turned up my trousers—and, by George! I've forgotten to turn them down again!" and he did it before her very eyes.

("What a very——" but the lady hesitated to know what adjective to use. Instinctively she glanced at Rosamund, but Rosamund was busily talking, and saw nothing. "Dear me! I hope he is a well-mannered man," reflected Clementina, rather doubtfully.)

Then Gilbert yawned again, turned his head round on the chair-pillow, and addressed his betrothed.

"Rosamund, I thought you would like to see some letters I am expecting by the second post, so I told Netley to send over one of his men to the barracks about now. My servant will give them to him."

But Rosamund was still talking to Mr Stoneby.

"Two posts a-day are a nuisance, to my mind," continued the speaker (for, a dozen years ago, few rural neighbourhoods had their second post): "I, for one, could do jolly well without dose number two in one day; could not you, Miss Stoneby?"

"I must confess I always go or send for mine," owned she. "We

do not have them delivered; but we can get our afternoon letters by sending to the post-office. Most of my interesting letters come in the afternoon."

"Ah, that's always the way with you ladies!" cried the jocose ladies' man,—“always on the look-out for ‘interesting’ letters. Now, what do you call an ‘interesting’ letter, eh? Tell me now,” he went on familiarly; “four sheets long, and crammed to the throat, eh? Is that your idea of an ‘interesting’ letter, Miss Stoneby? I wonder, Rosamund, are my letters ‘interesting’ enough for you?” and again he turned indolently round on the pillow.

He could not, it was true, see her face; but it was strange that he had not begun to mark when that silence fell between them, and what it meant; that he had not begun to suspect something wrong when she was deaf and dumb to his sprightliness. If he could only have known! Only have heard a warning note! Only have dreamed that she was awakening, and that to one of her mood such an awakening was doom!

There was now no one to accuse him, none from whom to shelter him, and, alas! none to hold him in any sort of check. Daily she struggled with the light which was stealing in upon her; thrust it back, shut it out, closed her eyes, and all in vain. Could it—could it—*could* it be that others had been right after all? That those against whose injustice and narrow-mindedness she had revolted, whose littleness she had despised, and to whom she had felt herself so superior, had been nearer to the truth than herself! Nay, impossible. She would not give in to such a fancy.

Oh no; it was, she told herself, only that she was grieving to have

gone against her poor dead mother's wishes, and was unable to forget that the two had bidden each other a last “Good night,” that “Good night” which had been a farewell for evermore, with mutual coldness. No word of regret had passed the daughter's lips, no syllable of affection the parent's. A stony kiss, a bald “Adieu”—and the two had parted, never more to meet.

In her agony of remorse, the one left had now none to turn to.

To her lover naturally could no hint be dropped; and how be loyal to him, and yet seek other sympathy?

In her first burst of indignation, Lady Caroline had used words and epithets which had burned themselves in as fire on her child's heart; and although later, in the exuberance of spirits which had been mistaken for happiness, the generous Rosamund (with whose nature, faulty as it was, nothing mean nor petty ever had to do) had striven to obliterate the remembrance, it had, as we know, been stirred up afresh by her mother's demeanour during the evening. At its close she had been quite as angry with Lady Caroline, as Lady Caroline had been with her, and had proudly maintained the justice of her resentment.

The next morning she had been called in to see the lifeless clay in its hushed and shrouded chamber of death,—and what wonder if, even upon that day, the first faint glimmerings of reaction had been felt towards the lover who had caused her this new and almost intolerable anguish?

These now stole on apace.

“Would you not be glad of tea after your walk, Miss Stoneby?” came in Major Gilbert's loud, brisk voice across the hearth—he had

never attempted to modulate his accents nor compose his countenance after the first day or two—"tea can never come in too early on a raw, cold day like this; and though it is only a little past four, what do you say, Rosamund, shall I ring, and hurry up the tea?"

Now if there had been one thing on earth as to which Lady Caroline had been more inflexible than another, it had been having everything at King's Common done by rule. Breakfast, luncheon, dinner, and even the cosy little five-o'clock meal, had been for years served at precisely the same hour, and to "hurry up" anything was not in the household code.

Against this code had the fair Rosamund many a time and oft rebelled. "Why are we so stiff and precise? Why do we not have nice little merry informal ways like other people?" she had been wont to cry out; and during that brief heyday when all were bowing down before the gay, glad young empress, there had been actual and perceptible symptoms of giving way in this as in other respects. But then all too soon had come the admirer, the lover, the new theme for thought, and matter for contest—and lesser and more trifling grievances had been overlooked, and let go.

It did seem now as if it were hardly his place, the place of one so recently admitted to the bosom of the family—and moreover admitted, as was ever present to her remembrance, by the very skin of his teeth—to overturn the old established habits of the house, which from time immemorial had been as the laws of the Medes and Persians. His hand was already on the bell: he was looking carelessly towards her, and her eye, turned at last perforce

his way, was furthermore fretted by the upturned corner of the handsome hearth-rug, rolled up beneath the chair which he had dragged towards the bell. To her view the action was slovenly, disrespectful, negligent. She could not forget that this was Clementina's first visit to the house of mourning, and that none knew better than Miss Stoneby what manners had been wont to prevail in Lady Caroline's drawing-room.

"Pray don't," she exclaimed, stung to sharpness by the thought.

"Eh?" exclaimed Gilbert, dropping the bell-handle.

"I am sure Clementina is in no hurry," continued Rosamund, turning to her with gentler address, but still with the heightened colour in her cheek. "It is so kind of you both to come, that we hope you will stay for a good long visit. The tea will appear at its proper time, Frederick," in a tone which Frederick had begun to hear of late.

"Oh, as you like, of course," said he, rather slowly. "I only thought we should all be equally glad of it. And what's a cup of tea?" he went on, with a little laugh not quite pleasant to hear. "At my father's you can ring up a cup of tea at any hour of the day or night. Tea should never be a set thing, to my mind."

"It is a set thing here," said Miss Liscard.

"So I see; the very reason you should break down the idea. It is great nonsense."

"Being the idea, however, and having always been so——" then Rosamund recollected herself. "I do not wish to alter anything that used to be," she said more gently. "Even the servants would think it strangely soon."

"Those servants of yours are a pampered lot," observed Gilbert,

who felt that he had been snubbed almost as in the days of the *blue gown*. "It seems to me they have it all their own way in this house. I met one of the maids driving off to Longminster in the dogcart. Positively, being driven off by William in the dogcart, as cock-a-hoop as possible. I should have thought that in such a very particular household as this, such a thing would hardly—but I suppose there may be some explanation?"

If there were, it was not for him.

He received none, and might have known he should receive none.

Once before he had spied upon the household, and had told a tale which had been proved to be perfectly true, and vastly unpleasant.

Rosamund had had to own that it had been well the misdemeanour had been brought to light, but neither she nor Mrs Ossory had thanked the person who had shown it up. The young mistress had indeed been even more annoyed than the old housekeeper, and had almost shown her lover that he would do well to keep his eyes and his ears for other uses.

Who wanted to be cognisant of every single thing, whether right or wrong, that went on in the backyard or the stable?

Things had always got along somehow without the need for prying and peering.

He had, on his part, expressed surprise and disapproval of the system prevailing at King's Common; and had emphatically advocated the need of a master's supervision, even to the lowest details, in the affairs of stable, or kennel,—while he had exclaimed "Good Lord!" a dozen times when informed that Lady Caroline had only interviewed Mrs Ossory

twice in the week, and no one else at all.

"A pretty housekeeper you'll make, you little piece of ignorance," he had cried merrily. "I know how it will be. I can hear you already ordering in legs of beef and steaks of mutton! Never mind. I can stand it. I shan't be hard upon you. And you must take lessons from my old mother when we go there. I shall put you under her wing for a bit. She is a rare good hand, is my old ma; and would enjoy teaching you of all things. Lord! she would go clucking about like a hen with one chick; for the girls have got beyond her already, and think they know as much as she does; so she complains she has nobody to take in hand, poor old thing! It will be famous for her to have you trotting at her heels, Rosamund."

Unluckily Rosamund had not felt that it would be quite so famous, nor that the programme altogether was likely to be so felicitously carried out as planned. She had not seen herself trotting at Mrs Gilbert's heels, nor dutifully drinking in her instructions. And what was worse, she had not liked the tone in which her lover had commented on her dead mother's habits and rules. It had not mattered that he should think herself ignorant and untrained; but he should—yes, he certainly should—have forborne to meddle with what Lady Caroline had done, or been.

It had been a different thing her complaining to him—although she now devoutly wished she had never done so; but still, she could not help feeling that she should not have been taken advantage of, and that this advantage Major Gilbert had taken.

She had poured out to him, in

the first warm burst of confidence, all that had been uncongenial and distasteful in her past life—even before her engagement, she had allowed herself to hint at much as to which her lips should have been sealed; and the result had been that Gilbert knew a great deal more than he need have known, and was not the man to let the knowledge lie fallow.

Neither would he now perceive that it was not his place to comment.

If he saw a neglect, or omission—and what did he not see? he rarely came to the house without having observed something or met some one—he never dreamed of holding his tongue. It would be—“By the way, I ran against So-and-so somewhere”—where So-and-so had very likely no business to be; or, “What was Such-another-one doing somewhere else?” with a shrewd idea that the said Such-an-one was not about anything strictly within his own line of duty.

On these occasions Rosamund would, according to her mood, either lightly let the inquiry pass, or answer that if there were any complaint to be made, she should have it through Mrs Ossory, or Netley, or Thunder. Only through the medium of these functionaries had rule and justice ever been administered at King’s Common, and only through them did she mean to continue to administer it.

“As long as you are mistress here,” she had been reminded; but she had not always smiled at the reminder, and the hint conveyed.

In one respect, however, Rosamund was certainly wrong.

Major Gilbert’s jolly, familiar ways with the servants—ways which were perfectly inoffensive and respectable, but still were not the ways of King’s Common—were by no means as objectionable

below-stairs as she supposed. She fancied him undignified—she had yet to learn that there are two ways of maintaining dignity; and a manner which might jar upon her own sensibilities might not necessarily estrange less fastidious mortals: the real truth being, as we have before said, that Gilbert was popular enough, and was thought none the less of for being “down upon” delinquents in his own abrupt military fashion.

But Rosamund herself?

Alas! she had begun to be ashamed of him, and every little straw floating upon the new current of her thoughts seemed to bend in the same direction.

“I will go myself and let papa know Mr Stoneby is here;” and she now rose hastily, thinking as she did so, “I would not have Baddeley come in, and see Fredrick sprawling about like that.”

Mr Stoneby was heartily welcomed in the library, and had never found his host more mildly cheerful. The widower had felt that by this time he might venture to unpack the box of new books which had arrived the night previous to Lady Caroline’s demise, and upon which his yearning vision had ever since been cast. He was now having a delightful afternoon sorting and arranging, and the presence of a scholarly and congenial assistant was particularly appropriate; the rector’s call could not have been better timed, and the two were immediately engrossed, and disposed of for the time being.

But Rosamund did not all at once return to the drawing-room. “They can get on very well without me,” she murmured, half aloud, as she stole up-stairs to solitude and reverie. “Oh dear, dear! how is it that I, too, can get on so well without them—or is it, him? It

must be my own fault. I am so pettish, so womanish with him; no man could like it. I have lived so long in this one spot, that I worry if poor Frederick does but ring a bell, or give a message unlike one that I, or any of us, would have given. How absurd I am! Silly—ridiculous—prudish. And I who stood up for him so bravely once! And it was but the other day that Hartland praised me to Aunt Julia for being above trifling prejudices! If he could hear me now, he would change his tune. I am as bad—I am worse than them all put together! It is not Frederick who is changed—at least I do not think he is changed, though certainly he is easier and more—I don't know what; more inclined to loll about, and kick out his feet, and use his—his handkerchief and his toothpick. Oh, what would mamma have thought if she had seen him bring out his toothpick! He scarcely ventured to breathe or move when she was by, looking at him as she used to look; but I think when away from her, that he would always have been—been—I don't know what. He certainly is more free than most people in his way of speaking and bantering, and calling by name. He is wonderfully soon at home with strangers. I suppose it is his frankness. I suppose there is no harm in it. I liked it once: surely I cannot now be going to mind the very thing that pleased me so much that first afternoon we met—his singling me out, and making much of me, and saying 'Good-bye' as

if we had known each other all our lives. I thought it quite delightful of him—though I do not think Mrs Waterfield did. I know it was soon afterwards that I heard her tell mamma he was much too familiar; and how angry I was! Well, when we are married I must give him one or two little hints. But I wish—oh, how I wish that till then I could hold my tongue! I know it is not for me to speak, only when he *will* say the very thing he should not—pshaw! who cares? I won't, whoever does. No, I won't; so, Aunt Julia, you need not expect any relenting in that quarter, my dear auntie. She will soon like Frederick; she likes everybody, the good soul. Hartland likes him—I *think*. All the children like him. And the very servants, though he watches and reports them, like him in their way. Oh, I am all right—I am all right," and giving herself no time for more, she went swiftly down again to the drawing-room.

And it had grown more cheerful there. The log-fire was blazing brightly, as though to defy the mists outside; and Gilbert, who had missed her, and had thought he had vexed her, and was really in love, poor fellow, came anxiously—and not too demonstratively—forward, drew up her chair, but did not take his wonted possession of it and her—and altogether made just enough, and not too much, commotion; so that she could not help cheering up, and the fit of the blues vanished—for that time.

CHAPTER XIX.—THE CAGED BIRD.

“Oh, what could it grieve for? It's feet were tied
With a silken thread of my own hands' weaving.”

—KEATS.

“What do you say to having the girls here?”

The suggestion was Gilbert's, and it was made after six weeks' experience of King's Common as a house of mourning.

For himself he was not dull: he had his military duties at Longminster to look after; his engagement and the family bereavement to announce; and Rosamund to make love to, and give presents to; but he fancied—perhaps justly—that she was not having quite so good a time.

The novelty of the situation had worn off, and it was no longer strange and dismal to her to behold the hatchment over the portico, and the black hangings in the family pew; it no longer seemed a liberty to touch any of what had been Lady Caroline's particular environments, to head the table at meals, and give the signal to rise after dinner. Mr Liscard had resumed his wonted habits, and, as before, pursued his own path; while the lawyer and the steward transacted between them such business as had formerly fallen to his wife's share. Miss Penrose had recommenced lessons and rules; all—with one exception—had fallen back, more or less, into the old groove, with a diffidence of the new, natural under the circumstances,—all but Rosamund, and for her everything was changed.

She was now not only mistress of her father's household, but prospective mistress of another, and had thus to take up two positions at once.

But although the future was

surcharged with importance and variety, it seemed that, for the present, there was nothing where-with to while away the tedious hours. As soon as all the black-edged epistles had been responded to, and the dressmakers and milliners had executed their final orders, nothing remained which could very well, according to her views, be put forward and turned into an occupation. By nature, as we know, she was neither intellectual, nor possessed with a turn for any of the fine arts; and although by no means deficient either in wit or sense, these hardly stood her in much stead at this pinch.

Society was out of the question; her old friends the Waterfields, who indeed might have been admitted to intercourse, were absent from home; Lady Julia was obliged to be careful of cold winds, and was, moreover, apt to look wistful and let fall inconvenient remarks; the Stonebys—she soon came to an end of the Stonebys,—so that, all said and done, Major Gilbert himself was the only resource of his betrothed, and it is to be feared she did not find him a sufficient one.

He was very kind; he had invariably provided something where-with to amuse and enliven her, when he came boldly tramping in at the door, ringing no bell, but admitting himself as a man who has a right to do so. As invariably, he had brought with him a fresh colour, and a fine appetite—the rewards of exercise and health. Usually he walked at this time, one of his horses being laid up; and knowing Rosamund to be also

a walker, he did not like to find her sitting over the fire on a fine, breezy afternoon, in a room warmer than was wholesome, and with a book she laid aside but languidly on his entrance.

He thought she did not go out enough, did not run about enough. He remembered her as running in and out of the garden door all day long.

The weather was not tempting perhaps, but there were days when a good run and a blow in the soft south winds would have done her all the good in the world—and it transpired that on these she had not set a foot outside! She had been afraid it was going to rain. Had he known Rosamund of old, he would have been still more surprised than he was. She who had snapped her fingers at waterspouts, to be daunted by the chance of a shower!

He saw enough as it was, however, to fancy she wanted a shaking up, and the happy idea forthwith presented itself of providing a treat for Emily and Henrietta, and at the same time giving his fair one something to do and to think about.

“What do you say to having the girls here?”

“The girls?”

“Em and Etta. I daresay they would come. They are longing to know you. And just now, when the house is quiet, and nothing going on, you would get to know each other a long way better than at another time. What do you think?”

“Oh, I think—yes, I think I should be very glad.” It was not exactly hearty, but it was as much so as he had expected. Rosamund had not been hearty about anything of late. “If my father has no objection,” proceeded she; “and of course they would understand

that we can have no amusement for them.”

“Of course. I should say they would prefer it. They are lively girls themselves, and need no entertaining. Oh, they would be happy enough.”

“Then I will ask papa, and write at once.”

“Oh, no hurry, wait till we have had our chat;” and he drew near, affectionately, for he had just arrived.

“If I do not write now, I shall be too late for the post.”

“I forgot. That alters the case. Well, if you are as keen as all that,—” and he strove to be pleased that it was so, and easily persuaded himself that it was merely a renewal of her girlish ardour, and no desire to escape from his embraces, which sent Rosamund so quickly out of the room. She was some time in coming back, but excused herself by producing the note already written, and inquiring, prettily, whether it were worded as he liked. Would it do?

Yes, it would do very well; ye—es—turning over the page again; very well, on the whole; it was, perhaps, just the least bit in the world formal; but after all—oh, it would do nicely, and it was very kind of her and her father, and the girls would be immensely pleased.

“How soon do you think they will come?” She was beginning to feel really a little pleased and curious herself, and was not sorry to have something—anything—to look forward to.

“What day did you ask them for? I forget. Did you name a day?”

“No. I said the first that was convenient. This is Tuesday. Perhaps about Friday?”

“I hardly think Friday,” said Gilbert, who had his own reasons

for saying so. "We'll call it Monday. I'll just scratch a line myself," and he sat down again at the now neglected davenport, and wrote a hasty despatch.

Which was just like him, all at home declared. For it was to the effect that "the girls" were to be sure to come, but they were to be equally sure not to come one day sooner than that for which they could be fully and suitably equipped at all points. If they wanted frocks and hats, and fal-lals, they were to get them straightway, and he would see that the bill was paid; all he bargained for was that the young ladies, when they did appear, should do him credit. There were also several considerate suggestions, which the prompt and clear-headed brother had thought out in the interval between making the proposal, and Rosamund's return with it carried out; and finally, he promised to meet their train and go with them up to the house.

As he had foreseen and fore-ordained, a joyful acceptance was speedily received, and Monday was the appointed day. But unfortunately, when the Monday came, there came with it some military business which brooked of no delay, and which could only be transacted, as ill-luck would have it, during the very hour at which the sisters' train was due. He had no time to let them know; he did not know himself till after they must have started on their journey.

"Poor things! I am really sorry about it," he considered. "I know they will be in a blue funk. And it would have taken off the edge if I could have gone up with them. But it can't be helped. I shall get over to King's Common as soon as possible; and after all, they may thank their stars they have only to encounter Rosamund—not Rosamund's mother." . . .

"Emily, he is not here."

An anxious face looked up and down the station platform, when the long train from London pulled up that afternoon about four o'clock. "Frederick is not here," exclaimed Henrietta Gilbert, in accents almost tragic. "And he promised faithfully, and he knew how we should feel! I did think——"

"'Sh," murmured Emily back. Her eye had caught sight of a tall footman lugubriously corded, and instinct told her whom it was this functionary sought. "I suppose Rosamund is outside," added she, "and has sent him in for us."

Half of the conjecture, and half only, proved correct. The footman was for them, but Miss Liscard was not outside. Miss Liscard would explain herself what had detained her. Then it became evident that the man was looking for a maid. He had taken the young ladies' bags and rugs; but it was not until Miss Gilbert herself volunteered to point out their luggage, that he desisted from further quest.

"Did he think there were more of us?" inquired Henrietta, aside.

But she was nudged to silence, and neither spoke again till they were safe within the large roomy omnibus which was used for station work at King's Common.

"Well, here we are at last!" cried Etta, then. "Here we are, and here we go! Really and truly we are now to make this grand visit we have talked so much about. If only Frederick had been with us now, I should feel perfectly happy. I can hardly yet believe it: I keep thinking all the while that something or other will be sure to turn up to stop us. Every morning lately I have expected a letter saying that some one else had died——"

——"Do take care."

"Oh, I shall take care, never fear. I shall be as quiet as a mouse as soon as ever we get there. Directly the smallest corner of the house comes in sight, my heart will sink down into my boots, just as it did at the station. That footman gave me a turn, and—I wonder how far we have to drive?"

"I am afraid not far."

"Why? How do you know?"

"I remember Frederick said about two miles."

"Only two miles! Oh dear, we shall take no time over two miles at this rate! I wish it had been ten."

"I am sure I don't," said Emily, who was more courageous. "I am tired with sitting still so long already; and now that there is no Lady Caroline, there is nothing really to mind."

"Oh, isn't there, though? If there *had* been a Lady Caroline, I do not believe I should ever have come."

"Perhaps we should never have been asked—except, of course, to the wedding."

"I almost wish we had not been. We could have got on famously at the wedding. We should have been driven up, for one thing, together with a lot of others—not all by ourselves in state, like this. The carriage would not have been sent only for us, and that great footman would not have discovered we had no maid. Emily, why didn't we bring one of the housemaids?"

"We never did such a thing before," said Emily. "I never once thought of it. And I know plenty of girls don't," added she, "though I suppose some do. And after all, Etta," with a touch of sound sense, "what good would it have done, when the very first thing that would have come out among the servants would have been that she was not

a real maid? We have never been fine people. Why should we begin to pretend?"

"Emily, only think what it would have been had we been going to face Lady Caroline now! As it is, this is only a girl of our own age—younger, really—and Frederick says she is most anxious to be friends, and that we must make friends of her, and draw her out. He seems to think she rather needs drawing out—what? What is it?"

"I see the lodge," said Emily, in a low, quavering voice.

"O—h!"

"Don't hold me so. It will do no good."

"Oh dear—dear—dear! Oh, how I wish it were over!"

"So do I. Never mind. It will be over in a few minutes."

They drove in through the great gates, and then on for some time, between rows of half-denuded beeches.

"I don't see the house anywhere," observed Emily at length.

"Could that have been the lodge, then?" debated her sister, for they were not accustomed to long avenues. "Oh, Em," cried she, the next minute, "do look! Look at the deer, look at that beautiful park, look at——"

"I see. Do be quiet. Don't shout like that, or the men will hear you. Frederick told us about the deer park, don't you remember? Etta, is my hair tidy behind? Do tell me. Don't say 'yes' without looking."

"Quite," said Etta, after a hasty glance. "Am I right too? I suppose Frederick is sure to be here, at any rate. It will be such a comfort to have him. Oh, when will that house come?—and yet every moment I wish it farther off."

Emily was silent, too miserable for speech.

"If it would only come," moaned Etta, who, on the contrary, found relief in sighs. "Come, and be gone, and the whole thing over, and we comfortably in our rooms up-stairs, unpacking. I would give anything to have the next half-hour safely done with. What are we stopping for?"

For although there was no house, no gate, no hindrance of any sort visible, the coachman was drawing rein, and the next moment the nimble footman was on the ground, the carriage-door was being opened, and the loveliest face in the world appeared beside it.

Ere either occupant could draw a breath, the formidable meeting was over, and had been shorn of all its terrors.

"I thought I should catch you here," said Rosamund's pleasant young voice, which had such a sweet, reedy thrill about it, that even Emily and Henrietta felt the charm at once.

"I could not come down," she added, stepping inside, and taking each by the hand, "because we had an escapade in our stables, and I had to borrow my aunt's horses, and all the arrangements having to be made at the last moment, no one told me how it had been settled till too late. That is a very good train, the one you came by. It is our best train in the day. We are very much behind the rest of the world in the matter of trains, but we do boast one good one. Did you have a pleasant journey? Was it very wet!"

All the time she was thinking faster and faster. ("They are very good-looking. They are nicely dressed. They seem dreadfully shy. I wonder what they think of me?")

"We shall be there directly," she ran on. "There are the stables,

and the garden walk. That is the tallest poplar in the county. There are my little sisters, just let loose from lessons."

"Is my brother here?" inquired Emily Gilbert, at last. It was the only question for which she could find voice.

"I don't know. He may be somewhere about," replied Rosamund, carelessly. "If you are not tired we might take a stroll after tea. It is fine to-day, but what weeks and weeks of rain we have had."

"Frederick told us it had been very wet," observed Henrietta, with effort number two. "This is rather a wet place, is it not?"

Here her sister frowned. ("A wet place," muttered Emily to herself, "as if anybody liked to be supposed to live in a wet place! Stupid thing.")

Rosamund, however, appeared readily to coincide.

"Wet is not the word," she said; "we have been dripping for the last month. It has been unutterably, hopelessly miserable, day after day;" and in her tone there was no trace that sunshine within had banished gloom without.

"Poor thing! how unhappy she has been!" thought the good-natured pair, and felt all at once more at home with her than they had done before; and they dismounted the steps, and followed Rosamund across the hall, and through the anteroom, so often trod by Frederick, and so vividly described by him, feeling much less alarmed than they had ever dared hope to be.

Still the youthful hostess had to keep the talk in her own hands. Careless and girlish, she chattered on, perceiving how ill at ease were her guests in spite of all; and at length so obvious did it become that she was bearing all the bur-

den, that each sister began in her heart to upbraid the other. ("Etta can rattle on against any one," reflected the aggrieved Emily, "yet there she sits now, as if butter would not melt in her mouth!")

("Emily told me I was not to speak, but to let her take the lead; and now, why doesn't she take the lead?" internally burned the no less outraged Henrietta.)

Each looked with undisguised eagerness for any signs of the burly Frederick, their protector and referee-in-ordinary—scanning every apartment for his hat, his gloves, tumbled pillows, chairs out of place, all the divers signs by which his presence was made known at home,—but nothing was visible.

"I suppose my brother has been detained," at last observed Emily anew, as though the subject could not but be of interest.

"Possibly," said Rosamund. "Will you take off your hat? And you too?" to Henrietta. "Throw them down here," throwing down her own. "Do you take sugar? No? Hardly anybody takes sugar in tea now. I do. I take quantities. But I do wonder at any one's liking coffee without."

"I like coffee without," acknowledged Etta, almost as if it were a crime, "and," brightening up, "so does Frederick."

"You never take sugar in anything then?"

"Oh yes, I do, and Frederick is as fond of sweet things as I am; but not in coffee. You should see his plate at dessert, all heaped up, and——"

"Yes, really," drawled Miss Lis-card, absently. "How brightly the sun has come out! No salt with your brown bread and butter? Really? It appears I am alone both in my sugar and my salt. We have not found much in common yet, have we?"

It certainly appeared they had not found Frederick in common. There was no response to his name, no interest in his tastes, no knowledge of his whereabouts; and whereas on every other topic the pretty tea-maker appeared ready to prattle sweetly, to each allusion to her lover she was deaf. Only when this became observable, did the sisters experience any recurrence of that terrible *arrival* feeling known too well to the young and shy. They had now got over the worst. They had surmounted the station, the front door, the being ushered—as might have been—into a great unknown presence-chamber, whose depths might disclose anything—the tea, and that without any presiding elder in a big arm-chair—but what was to come next?

Ought they not now to ascend solemnly to their room and their trunks, begin to lay out dresses, hang up cloaks, find snug nooks for hats and bonnets? Ought they not, in their mother's homely phraseology, to be "shaking themselves out," and getting into their quarters generally?

But here was Rosamund putting on her hat, and talking anew about a stroll in the garden, as if they had nothing else in the world to do!

"I—I—perhaps we had better unpack first," suggested the elder Miss Gilbert, for the case, to her eyes, was desperate. "We have a good deal to take out——"

"You did not bring a maid? Oh, send the key to mine, and she will put out everything."

"Thank you very much," replied Emily, doubtfully, "but I should hardly like to trouble her."

"Em always looks after us both," chimed in Etta.

"Still, perhaps—as the evening is turning out so fine——" said Emily,—"if——"

—“The key, then, the key,” cried Rosamund, merrily. “Throw clothes, and trunks, and all of it to the winds. I always do. Here,” holding out a beckoning hand with peremptory archness,—“here, yield up the apple of discord, the bone of contention—the——”

She stopped short, her hand fell, and the sparkle died out of her eyes. “I did not expect you so soon,” continued the same voice, but strangely altered, to some one behind the group.

But in the shout of welcome from the other two, this passed. There was a simultaneous cry of “Frederick!” and with one accord both Em and Etta sprang upon him.

“Frederick! Oh!” cried Emily, with a burst of relief and joy. “Oh, Frederick!” She had no further words.

“You were not at the station, and so we thought we should find you here, and when you were not here, we wondered what ever had become of you, and if we had gone out—and we were just going out—we should have missed you again,” cried her sister, letting out in one brief half-minute all the dammed-up volubility of the past hour. “When did you come? How did we not hear you? What kept you? Em said she thought——”

“Shut up, you chatterbox,” said Frederick, good-humouredly. “I say, Rosamund, has she been putting on the steam like this ever since she came? How are you today, eh?” when at last he was allowed to make his way to her. “You looked pretty bright when I came in. What was it all about, eh?”

“The key of your sister’s portmanteau.” There was no brightness now, however.

“And they wouldn’t give it up? Wanted no one to rummage about among their goods and chattels, I

suppose. Well, here you are at last, you two,” holding the sisters at arm’s-length, and regarding them with such a look of affectionate approbation as compensated for all they had struggled through. “Three bonnie lasses; and by Jove! I am the only man for you all! I say, Rosamund, we must get over Hartland for the girls. As he is a lord, he ought to cut up into two, and let them go halves. Is he to be here to-night?”

“No.”

“Humph! Well, I thought he might, that’s all. He is here often enough, I am sure. Or at least he used to be,” continued the speaker, “he has not been quite so much of late. I fancy he has taken to going the Stonebys’ way. Oh, but we really cannot allow Hartland to throw himself away upon that little goody-goody, twopenny-half-penny Clemmy Stoneby.”

Rosamund made no reply. The other two laughed, and looked for more.

“Aunt Julia is not half sharp,” proceeded Gilbert, bent upon showing himself one of the family; “she is a good creature——”

“We need not discuss my aunt, if you please,” said a voice that would have done credit to Lady Caroline herself; “your sisters have not yet made her acquaintance.”

“They will soon, though, I hope. You will take them over to the Abbey to-morrow, I daresay? It will be a nice walk for you all, and the girls will like to see the place. They are as good as you at walking, Rosamund; they must start you again, for it strikes me you have been lazy of late. Of course there has been a reason,” with a sudden turn to solemnity, “of course when there has been a death in a house—eh, what? Rosamund? Oh, she’s off.”

She was off. She could not endure more just then.

"Awfully sensitive, and all that, you know," nodded Gilbert, looking sagely after her. "Can't bear me even to speak of her mother; though, by George! I do my level best to speak civilly. I sail uncommonly near the wind, I can tell you. But Rosamund—well, Lady Caroline was her mother—and I suppose there's no more to be said. That sensitiveness is in the blood—and a great nuisance it is—but I ought to remember it. What do you think of her?"

On this point he could not but be satisfied; they had been greatly

struck both with Rosamund's beauty and her air, and testified to the frank and pleasant welcome she had bestowed on them. To be sure, she had awed them a little, but—

"All right," said he, "I knew you would get on with her. Only remember the sensitiveness, you know;" and then the three drew together for a long, close, delightful confabulation, in which all were of one mind, and no one had any sensitiveness to beware of,—and it struck Em and Etta that even Frederick himself breathed more freely when out of the presence of his beautiful betrothed.

CHAPTER XX.—MAJOR GILBERT'S CASE.

"She's such a miser, too, in love,
It's joys she'll neither share nor prove.
Blushing at such inglorious reign,
I sometimes strive to break my chain.

Ah, friend, 'tis but a short-lived trance,
Dispelled by one enchanting glance;
She need but look—and I confess,
Her looks completely curse or bless."

—SMOLLETT.

"How ridiculous of her!" cried Henrietta, the moment the sisters were alone. "I never knew anything more ridiculous in my life. As if *we* were anybody! As if it could have mattered before *us*! She had been as pleasant as possible up to the instant Frederick appeared; and then, Emily, then did you notice what a change there was?"

"No one could have helped noticing," said Emily, "and I must say I had thought Rosamund would have been above such affectation; but as Frederick did not seem to mind, it is not for us to pick holes."

"We don't pick the holes; we only see them when they are there. To begin to play off her airs directly a man was by! And

it was not as if she could have supposed he would admire them, for at one time he was almost huffy himself."

"You mean about Lord Hartland?"

"Why, she quite snapped at him."

"Oh, not 'snapped,'" said Emily, with a swift perception that it would be out of keeping for an earl's granddaughter to 'snap'; "but Rosamund certainly did not like it. I wonder why, for Frederick said nothing she could have minded."

"She thinks this fine cousin of hers too good for us."

"Perhaps," Emily nodded thoughtfully. "Frederick said they made a great deal of him, as the head of the family."

"But we must see him and

speak to him some time," quoth Etta, recovering. "He will not keep away from the house because we are here. And I do think that if Rosamund is going to be ashamed of us——"

——"Hush! Nonsense! How you do run on! Who said Rosamund was going to be ashamed of us? Just because she coloured a little when Frederick jested about Lord Hartland cutting up into two——"

——"But why should he not? Why should Frederick not? Why——"

——"Why — why — why," cried her sister, impatiently. "If you are going to say 'why' to everything you meet with here, it is a pity you came. How am I to tell the 'why' of things any more than yourself? Here we are, and we must make the best of it——"

"Make the best of it! And I thought we were going to be so happy and so comfortable, once we were safely in our own room, unpacking all our nice new things, and talking over everything!" cried poor Etta, almost in tears. "I declare I don't feel happy a bit. I wish I was at home again. I wish we had never come."

"Rubbish! Don't be silly," exhorted Emily, with a suspicious little choke in her own voice. "I suspect we are both a couple of simpletons. We feel rather out of it somehow in this great big place, where everything is so stately and solemn, and so unlike our own ways at home; besides, Frederick's not meeting us at the station gave us the shivers, and we got upset; and so, because he and Rosamund did not fall into each other's arms——"

——"That was it, I daresay," assented Etta, somewhat comforted. "And I am tired too, Em;

aren't you? And my head aches with that hot hat; and then, though I drank the tea, I could not eat one atom of my bread and butter, and I have such a sinking inside me now. Yet it isn't hunger. I don't believe I shall be able to touch a morsel of dinner, unless—— unless Rosamund is different."

"She did give one cross look, I own. But you know, Etta, every one says we are a good-natured family, and we don't understand cross looks. Oh, we may be quite sure, certain, positive, it is all right between them. Of course it is, or would he have looked so content and well satisfied? There, now; that settles the question. Now, Etta, roll up those empty papers and put them back into the basket, to be ready for the return journey, and we will begin to dress in earnest."

Dressing in earnest meant dressing speedily and satisfactorily. Accustomed to waiting on themselves, the sisters had refused all proffers of aid, and now arranged their own hair, selected their own ornaments, and fastened each other's frocks—and insensibly their spirits revived beneath the process.

It was a lovely autumnal evening, mild as summer, though the season was mid-November, and the balmy air came through their open windows long after darkness had settled down over the land, and had rendered candles imperative within; while the peaceful stillness of the hour was broken only by the tinkling of the sheep-bell, or the faint rumble of a solitary cart in the distance. To ears accustomed to the ceaseless hum of a suburban neighbourhood, whose nearest approach to silence was the cessation of near and dominant sounds, the absolute hush which at nightfall pervaded the precincts of the old country mansion, sur-

rounded by its own woods and glades, and with a thinly peopled, far-stretching rural district beyond, was a new experience. The youthful strangers had never before imagined anything of the kind, and in the present bewildered state of their thoughts and feelings the repose of nature had a soothing and tranquillising influence.

"We must go down-stairs, I suppose," said Emily at last, with a sigh. "I wish we could have stayed quietly here a little longer; but I suppose it would not be polite. I suppose it would hardly do. If we had anybody to tell us these things,—but as we have not, it is best to be on the safe side."

"And I think I am quite ready for down-stairs again," responded her sister, cheerfully. "I feel brightened up; and I want to see all that is to be seen, and find out all that is going on, and get over our next meeting with Rosamund."

It was got over sooner than she thought, and as unexpectedly as the first had been. They ran against a light figure on the staircase, and it appeared that while they were in all the glory of blue silk, smart sashes, embroidered slippers, brooches, bangles, and lockets, Rosamund was still in her plain morning-dress, and was only now beginning to pull off her rough outer jacket, while her hat swung on her arm. All betokened haste and lateness. She had been out in the dusk, she explained hurriedly; had stayed later than she knew; was flying to dress now; would not be a minute; and would they go down-stairs to the drawing-room, where there was sure to be some one, probably her next sisters Catharine and Dolly, who had been promoted to appearing there, and would be so delighted?—and the

end of the sentence was dropped from the banisters of the upper landing.

"There, she is all right again," murmured Emily, much relieved. "I told you we were making mountains out of molehills. How pretty she looked! I daresay," still lower,—"I daresay, Etta, she and Frederick——" and a pinch of the arm supplied the rest.

"O—h!" Down went Etta's mouth, and up went her eyebrows: enlightenment could go no further. Sly Rosamund! Lucky Frederick! They knew what they were about after all, and—but behold! The next sight was Frederick himself, luxuriously stretched beside the drawing-room fire, in full evening dress, conning the paper with the air of a man who has had leisure for every portion of it, advertisements included, and who now laid it aside with the greatest alacrity.

"It's you, is it? That's right. I thought it could hardly be Rosamund; she's not of the punctual sort. Well, now, let me look at you. Ay, you'll do very well. I should say you are all right. Up to the mark. They dress a lot in these houses, or else perhaps"—with a shade of doubt—"perhaps you might seem a little overdone for just now. Rosamund, you see, can't put on anything but black, and I don't think she has a single black ornament."

"But she expects us to dress," said Etta. "She spoke of 'dressing for dinner' as if it were the usual thing."

"Of course. So it is. She dresses every evening of her life. All I mean is, that I wish you could have seen her in full fig for a ball, or as she looked that first day I dined here—the day we were engaged. By Jove! but she has never looked like it since, poor girl."

"She looked lovely just now," cried Etta, enthusiastically. "We met her on the stairs, and she looked so fresh and bright——"

"Ay, that's what she does, when she is at her best. But she needs the open air to set up her colour. She was not in good face to-day; she had not been out enough."

"She has just come in now."

"Just come in!—come in now? My goodness! do you mean that she has been out till now? I thought she had been with you," cried he, in surprise and vexation. "I thought you had all been together unpacking. Has she never been near you?"

"Indeed, yes. She came to us directly we went up-stairs—after we left you, when her maid called us, you remember," eagerly replied Emily. "She could not have been kinder; only we wanted no help, and I think she saw that—that Etta and I would rather be alone. You know, Frederick, we are not used to visiting, especially at these great houses, and Rosamund seemed to understand exactly, and we thought it so kind of her to leave us a little to ourselves."

"That was it, was it?" said he, mollified. "Oh, it is all right, if that was the way. Oh, I knew Rosamund would be kind, and all that; but I want her to be friendly and chummy with you—what girls are with each other. She has often told me she never could be really thick with those prigs of Waterfields; and she don't take to Clementina Stoneby, the only other girl at hand, and so I thought she would be sure to hit it off with you two. I have no doubt she will, by-and-by."

"Oh yes," said Henrietta, cheerfully. "It doesn't take long to know us; and Em and I want to be friends above everything."

"Have you seen any of the young ones yet?"

"No. Rosamund thought some of them would be here."

"They were, but they made off. There was something or other on hand. They have not been with Rosamund either, then?"

They had not, for they came in at the moment, satisfactorily accounting for their departure, and eager to make acquaintance with the new-comers. Neither of the two possessed the beauty or grace of their elder sister, and whether it were due to this cause or no, it is certain that the Miss Gilberts at once felt more at home with them,—the redness and sharpness of Catharine's arms, and the sadly vulgar cold in the head under which poor little Dolly was labouring, reducing them, it seemed, to any level.

Moreover, the plain black frocks had been made at home, and made to allow for growth: they neither fitted, nor had been meant to fit; they were long and loose, and hideously unbecoming. At an age when every art is required to soften irregularities and shade defects, the straight, business-like, uncompromising breadths seemed as though they had sworn to conceal nothing and lend themselves to no illusions, and the effect on Emily and Henrietta was, as we have said, immediate and exhilarating.

They could at once proceed to interrogate names and ages after the approved fashion, and in less than five minutes Dolly was trying on Etta's bracelets, and Catharine was waving Emily's fan, as if they had been acquainted all their lives.

Gilbert looked on approvingly. He was really fond of girls and boys, and had already, by timing well his applications, obtained for these two in particular, divers indulgences, which, to tell the truth,

he desired almost as much for his own sake as theirs. To him they owed their freedom of this present hour: from him came boxes of chocolate-creams and other sweet things; through him and his engagement was opened up the brilliant prospect which formed the subject of their daily talks and nightly dreams. It followed that he was a favourite, and that his sisters would have been well received on that ground alone; but directly it became apparent that the grown-up misses, in their finery and trinkets, were ready to be friends with them, and did not condescend, nor—horror of horrors!—treat them as *little girls*, Catharine and Dolly were soon at home, and all the party were chattering gaily and loudly together when a quiet step was heard within the doorway, and Mr Liscard, rather astonished by the unusual hilarity, appeared on the scene.

"My sisters, sir," said Gilbert, with something of a flourish. "This is Miss Gilbert; and this is Henrietta. You would never know which was the eldest if I did not tell you," he added, parenthetically.

"That means that papa will have to take the eldest in to dinner," explained Dolly, for the general benefit.

"Then I must dine too to take in the second," cried Catharine, seizing on the idea. "Do, Frederick, say that I must. Ask Rosamund when she comes in, won't you? Somebody must take you in," she added to the appreciative Etta; "and here am I, if Rosamund will only let me."

"Ask your papa," suggested Gilbert, who had found the wisdom of so doing in his own case.

"Papa, may I? Oh, papa, do say yes. May I go and tell them to lay a place for me? Say yes,

papa. *Please*, papa, be quick before Rosamund comes in. Is it 'Yes'? I know it is 'Yes,'" and the usually placid and demure Catharine almost shook the coat-sleeve she held in her urgency.

Everybody laughed.

"You will have to give in, sir," said Major Gilbert, merrily; "you cannot possibly resist such an attack."

"Eh, what? But—but——" hesitated the poor widower, who well knew he was being imposed upon, and in what light a demand so audacious would have been looked upon in past days—"stop a minute. Wait till your sister comes down. Here she comes."

"Then all hope is over," muttered Catharine, letting the sleeve go. "I know she won't. Cross thing. She never lets us have any fun. She is worse even than—than it used to be," evading a more direct reference. "If I had only got papa to say 'Yes,' and had told Baddeley——" But here she stopped in amazement.

Major Gilbert had himself put forth her petition, and—wonder of wonders!—Rosamund was actually consenting to it. Yes; consenting readily—somewhat hurriedly—quite graciously—and with no reservations.

She could hardly believe her ears.

Even Gilbert was surprised, since the young lady had not been exactly inclined to be acquiescent and compliant of late, but rather the contrary—disposed to dispute a position merely because it had been taken up, and argue against an opinion for no other apparent reason than that it had been put forward.

He had good-temperedly borne with and humoured her, as he would a fractious child, telling himself that she was not well and

not herself ; but, like Catharine, he had certainly rather anticipated a brief refusal now than otherwise, and had thought it would be a good thing to have the matter settled before her appearance.

To his mind Catharine, since she was disposed to be chatty and genial, would be a distinct acquisition to the small and possibly somewhat silent party. Mr Lis-card hardly ever talked, his sisters would relapse afresh under the new ordeal of the stately repast, and Rosamund—it might chance that Rosamund was in one of her moods.

He was now agreeably surprised by her easy assent, and furthermore, to find no one called over the coals—as Catharine had more than once been of late—for presuming and encroaching. He looked at his betrothed with gratitude and admiration. He thought she looked as she did upon that memorable evening. As on it, she was now but carelessly arrayed, and there had been no time to rearrange the loose tresses of her hair. Moreover, she was literally without ornament or ribbon ; but in the haste and incompleteness he thought he read an effort made for his sake—and that was enough.

The changing colour and dropping eyelids were more to him at the moment than any dazzling display of charms ; and the apologetic “I am so sorry—I am afraid I have kept you waiting—I see I am late,” was all that was needed to draw him to her side.

“In the best of time,” he said, heartily. “One minute only after the dinner has been announced. That is quite as near as any one can expect, isn’t it?” and he pressed the hand on his arm kindly.

“Is it? I—I am very glad.”

“You were late coming in. I

think, from what my sisters tell me, that you deserve a medal for accomplishing such a transformation in so short a time. You certainly must be the quickest dresser in the world. I daresay it comes from being alone. Two, when they get together, talk.”

“Yes, I suppose so.”

“You had a run before dinner?”

“Yes. I had asked your sisters to go round the gardens with me,” continued Rosamund, “but they seemed to prefer being taken to their room, being just off a long journey——”

——“Ay, they are no great travellers, and had had an early start. Besides, coming here is an event to them. So you had to go alone? You did not think of me?” as he led her to her seat.

“You? No. I—I thought you had had a long walk already.”

“You might have given me the refusal.”

But it was said without ill-will, and was so obviously meant to be taken in good part that she went so far as to make no answer at all.

They seated themselves at table, and grace was said.

For Em and Etta there was certainly now their first taste of the sweets of grandeur. To begin with, all preliminary terrors—even to the first shake of their host’s hand, and to the doubt as to which he would offer his arm to, and the wonder what should be done if he offered it to the wrong one—had now been happily disposed of. Then the tempting dinner-table, sweet with flowers, and shining with glass and silver, had been reduced to a square to suit the smallness of the party, and the party itself was disposed to be cheerful. So that, though the room in which they sat was large and lofty, and the meal was a composed, noiseless, and stately

affair, so far as eating and serving was concerned, it was by no means either what it would have been beneath the iron sway of the dead Lady Caroline, nor yet what Rosamund might have made it had she been so minded.

There was no oppression in the air. There was even a general consciousness that conversation, or rather prattle which could hardly be dignified by the name, was being anxiously encouraged and timorously cultivated.

Then Major Gilbert talked and jested freely, having soon begun to do so under such conditions. He could almost have fancied the earliest days of his courtship back again, in meeting Rosamund's supporting applause, and the challenge that her dark eyes flashed around.

When he drew her on to unite with him in recounting games they had won, and fights they had fought together on the archery or tennis lawn, she was ready to attest and smile almost as she once had been. When he went still further, hinting broadly at what the future might have in store, the flush on her brow told of no cold rebuke nor indifference, but rather of a vivid and strong emotion, and the silence which followed seemed but its natural sequence.

He was more than satisfied—he was absolutely radiant.

"Come, Em, bless my soul! you don't say you don't like apple-fritters?" said he, as she let the appetising dish pass. "Why, there's nothing in the world beats apple-fritters when they're good, and they are always good in this house," helping himself plentifully. "These are simply first-rate," after the first mouthful. "Your own apples, of course, Rosamund? You

have had a rare crop of apples this year."

His next sally was confidential.

"I say, Etta," to the sister next him, "look at Em now. By Jove! she knew what she was about. She waited for the pancakes, the greedy monkey. I thought one ought never to have pancakes except on Shrove Tuesday. I thought it went against people's consciences, Rosamund."

"I don't know about consciences," said Rosamund, "but certainly neither of these are correct company dishes. Your sisters must excuse our very old-fashioned cook."

"Faith, I will, if they don't," said Gilbert, laughing. "Long may old-fashioned dishes abound for me! I hope you will remember the sentiment, Rosamund. There's no resisting 'em. But, I say, how's this? You take nothing. Now I think of it, I don't believe you have eaten a single thing all through the dinner! You have said 'No' to everything. How is it? 'Not hungry?' Oh, but that will never do. You must have a glass of wine, anyway," and he seized the decanter from the man who was pouring out some for himself.

She took it to please him.

Had he offered her a cup of poison at the moment, I almost think she would have taken it all the same.

"Are you cold?" said he, suddenly. It seemed to him that she shivered as she put the wine-glass to her lips, and he laid his hand on hers. "Why, it is burning hot!" he cried. She started as if she had been pricked with a dagger's point. She stared at him as if she wondered what he meant when he spoke.

CHAPTER XXI.—TEMPEST.

“What shall I do? Resentment, indignation,
Love, pity, fear, and memory, how I’ve wronged him;
Distract my quiet with the very thought on’t,
And tear my heart to pieces in my bosom.”

—OTWAY.

No, she was not going to break with him.

She had only had the idea presented to her.

An hour before, she had met Hartland in the garden, and he had come upon her in an unguarded moment: some scene, some recollection, had been present immediately before, and fancying herself unseen and unheard, she had been giving vent in irrepressible sobs, and sighs, and broken articulations, to the tempest of her heart.

She knew now that she did not love the man to whom her troth was plighted—that she never had, never could have loved him; and forthwith it seemed to her that every living creature, free from such a chain as bound herself, was to be envied.

Her own hands had, as it were, locked the chain, and locked it must remain; but oh! would God she had never known Frederick Gilbert!

All her youth, all the brightness and sweetness of the life on which she might now have entered as a free, glad, heedless creature, seemed at once to rise and mock her folly, who had crewhile held it cheap.

Her old home, that she had once panted to be quit of, how dear, how delightful might it now have become! Her father? He would have promoted everything, tolerated everything, given her free scope in everything. Aunt Julia would have been the head and front of every sort of happy misrule. The children should have had a bright

childhood. The boys should have brought home their school friends; the neighbours would have gathered round; summer festivals, autumn shooting-parties, and winter revelries in accord with the merry Yule-tide season—all would have been within reach, and there would have been now no one to run counter to, and extort a grudging consent from (alas! it was Rosamund’s own mother of whom the girl thought, although the vision was an involuntary one)—and on all of this fair prospect she had now to turn her back, and receive, as solitary compensation, Frederick Gilbert, whom every day she loved less, and matrimony, which every day she dreaded more.

It had never been these; it had been the gratification of self-will, and the thirst of her soul after emancipation and freedom, which had been the bait.

That very morning—the morning of the sisters’ arrival—something—some trifle—had vexed her spirit afresh. She had meant to conceal the annoyance, but had been betrayed by her lover’s sudden appearance into revealing more than she had been herself aware of, as we know. She had but been pettish, she thought, and Frederick never seemed to mind such pettishness. It was not worth thinking about on his account, but—but—and she had rushed into the balmy dusk afterwards, like a wild thing escaped from its snare, there to wring her hands and sob unseen.

Inadvertently Hartland had

caught her thus. He did not waste time in preliminaries.

"You may as well tell the truth, Rosamund," he said; "nothing but the truth will save you and him now."

"The truth?" She struggled to rein in the rushing breath and quivering lip, and, with head averted, made a desperate feint even yet to hold her own. "The truth! What truth?"

"It is only doing Gilbert injustice," proceeded her cousin, unheeding the question. "He has acted in a plain, straightforward manner towards you, and you—I am afraid you are deceiving him."

"Hartland!"

"And yourself too."

"Hartland!"

"I have no motive for saying so, you know; and, of course, if your mother had been alive, I should never have interfered; but the fact is, it seems there is no one else to speak. No one else seems to see."

"And you—you——?"

"Oh, I see plainly enough. You took this good fellow in an obstinate fit, and now you have got him, you don't care to keep him. You think he is not worth the trouble. Well, I'll be plain, and I'll say I think he is being confoundedly badly used. What's more, Rosamund, if it were not for his own sake, I should say you were bound to stick to him. You would have no right to throw him over. But for his——"

"You think he is too good for me?"

"He is too good for you to play fast and loose with."

"Hartland, how dare you?" A sudden flash.

"Oh, I dare because there is no one else," said he, indifferently.

"Your father will not——"

"Certainly he will not. My

father never spoke to me in my life as you have done."

"Just so. Neither would your aunt."

"No indeed."

"Nor any one else—now?"

"No."

"Somebody must," said Lord Hartland, doggedly.

"For his sake, I suppose?"

"For his sake, yes. I am, of course, sorry also for you, but——"

"It is natural to put him first."

"Because he has done no wrong," maintained Hartland, looking her steadily in the face.

She was silenced. A full minute passed, and neither would nor could be the first to break it. At length, as often happens in such cases, both burst forth at once.

"The fact is, Rosamund——"

"I must say, Hartland——"

"Well?" said he, yielding precedence.

"You—you might have spoken sooner."

"Oh." This was hardly what he had expected, and it must be owned he was somewhat taken aback by it. "Well, I suppose I might," he said slowly, at last.

"You have been on the watch, you have played the spy," continued his cousin, excitedly clasping and unclasping her hands, and drawing quick, short breaths as she spoke. "How, then, how has it happened that while you have been so clear-sighted and penetrating, you have not said a word, nor——nor——"

"I have *not* played the spy, Rosamund, or I might have done so. I only saw, when the light was forced upon me; I only knew, when ignorance became impossible."

"You mean by—by——"

"Your face, your voice, your manner, your everything. You

are a changed creature. You are ungracious, sullen, bitter—you who used to be——”

“Never mind what I used to be.”

“When he is by, I could almost call you shrewish.”

“It is a pity he does not find me so.”

“At other times you are sunk in melancholy, or—or else——”

“Or else?—what else?”

“As I found you just now,” said he, in rather a low voice.

There was another pause.

“And all the rest,” said Rosamund, presently. “How is it that you alone have perceived what all beside have been blind to? You have been so clever—where have their wits been?”

“You may well ask that. I ask it of myself continually.”

“You mean that I have done nothing to—to keep up appearances?”

“Not much, certainly.”

“It is false,” cried Rosamund, passionately. “I have tried and tried, no one knows how much,”—she bit her lip, and wrenched her hands apart, furious with herself for an admission so inadvertent. “You have no right to force this out of me; your cruel accusations oblige me to—to——”

“You have told me nothing I did not know before,” said he, quietly.

“You think Major Gilbert is not satisfied?”

“Of that you must be a better judge than I.”

“You think he is being duped?”

“Ask that of yourself. There again you should know best.”

“And this is the friend of the injured man, who now interposes on his behalf,” exclaimed Rosamund, with renewed fire; “this is the benevolent bystander, who cannot stand by and see ‘a good

fellow’ played ‘fast and loose’ with! How brave of you, my cousin! How noble! It is a pity, however, the effect is somewhat marred by over-caution. He marches boldly enough to the attack, but directly it comes to close quarters he knows nothing, and can give an opinion on nothing. Oh, the diffidence, the modesty of some people! Pray, Lord Hartland, accept my humble commendations. I cannot sufficiently applaud the course you have chosen to adopt.”

If she had hoped to taunt him into recrimination, the effort failed.

“Applaud or not, as you please,” said Hartland, bluntly. “I expected you’d be angry, and I suppose I ought to say you have a right to be. All the same, do for heaven’s sake, Rosamund, take my words to heart, and put an end to this—this mistake, as soon as you can.”

“How dare you speak so? How dare you call it ‘a mistake’?”

“I could easily call it by a worse name. But,” and his tone softened, “I will only say ‘mistake,’ and a very unfortunate one. This engagement should never have taken place; but since it has taken place, the only remedy is to break it off as speedily as possible.”

“I will never break it off!”

He stopped short, surprised at last. He now knew that he had meant her to snatch at the suggestion.

“You will not?” he said.

“Not while I live.”

“You prefer lifelong misery to a passing humiliation?”

“I prefer keeping my word to breaking it.”

“You are not keeping it: you are only keeping the shell of it. You are keeping it in the letter only—the spirit is already broken.”

"He does not know this. He never shall know it."

"How are you to keep it from him? And even if you do keep it, are you to go on befooling him through all life——"

——"Befooling him! Hartland—Hartland." She was choking with passion. "How cruel, how wicked you are! How—how can you—how dare you speak to me like that? And you,—you know all;—you know how hard I had to fight for him, and how I had to stand up for him before everybody; and how I—I,—oh, you must remember that dreadful scene!—and there were many, many more that you know nothing of, besides that one! Mamma was so determined against him. Aunt Julia was against him too; and my friends, I think that every one of them was the same. Only I—and—and only you, were for him."

"Nay, Rosamund, I never——"

——"You never what? Do you mean now to say that you never encouraged me, never told me I was right, and——"

——"Only when I thought your heart was engaged. Had I known more——"

——"What more could you have known? You knew as much as any one; quite, quite as much as I did myself. No one really knew——"

——"Take care," said Hartland, softly touching her arm; "do not let us be overheard," pointing to some gardeners at work near. "Come back this way," and he led her again into the narrow hedged-in path from which, unconsciously, they had been about to emerge. "Do not suppose that I underrate all the difficulties that have beset you, Rosamund," he proceeded, after a few minutes' pause. "From the first you have had a thorny path

to tread, and you have had to tread it alone and unaided. But you seemed so strong and resolute, and so entirely able to cope with the task you had set yourself——"

——"The task? I don't understand. What task?"

"It must always be a task to run counter to one's family. Forgive me for speaking in plain words, but——"

——"Oh, the plainer the better."

"We are getting no nearer the point," said Hartland, suddenly, "and time is passing—we must not waste it in idle retrospect: it is no use looking back—all that can now be done——"

"Nothing can now be done—nothing, nothing. Oh, why did you come here to try me, to tempt me?" cried Rosamund, bitterly. "I never asked your help, I never went to you with my story—I could bear it myself, if I were only let alone. The others are far kinder than you. They say nothing, and see nothing. And after all," defiantly,—“after all, what is there to see? I am not, perhaps, recklessly and wildly in love, as the saying is,” with a laugh of scorn. "I have found out that—that Major Gilbert is but a man, and not a hero. He does very well. He is very kind. He is quite good enough for me. What is all this stir about, then, I should like to know? And who are you, that you should interfere, and presume to——" and again rising resentment choked her utterance.

"If we go on like this we shall never come to an end," exclaimed Hartland, with what seemed but the natural impatience of a man under feminine circumlocution, though a close observer might have dimly suspected another emotion struggling beneath.

"Rosamund, look how the darkness is creeping on. I cannot wait—nor can you. We must not be longer here together, and this may be my last, very last chance of seeing you alone. Do hear me, do not be angry with me. You say you mean to marry Major Gilbert, although you own—yes, you do, you *have* owned that you no longer love him. You may do this thing, Rosamund—I suppose there is no one to prevent your doing it; but remember that when you have fulfilled your promise as it now stands, you have only just begun the horrible farce——"

—"Why need it be a farce?" But in spite of herself, she was awed by his vehemence.

"It would be a farce you would have to keep up year after year——"

—"It need never be one at all. I could learn to feel differently. Others do. I have often heard it said that affection comes after marriage——"

"Not to women like you, Rosamund. With you, to love would be to love, and to hate to hate," proceeded the speaker, in a slow, unimpassioned tone, which seemed to be but the outcome of his own thoughts addressed to the silent dusk and no human ear. "With you the dawn of disenchantment would close at night in thunders of despair. You would grow desperate—perhaps worse. You would make all around you miserable, and your own heart would bleed to death. I know you well. I should be afraid for you—afraid for you." He turned away his head.

Another silence, another long interval, wherein the two dimly outlined figures paced on side by side, each occupied with an internal struggle.

"You are so young," said Lord Hartland at length, "you did not know what you were about. The world will blame you if you now faithfully confess as much, but those who know you best will understand and forgive. After all, however, it is not for yourself that I plead—it is for him. He may be, he must be wounded in his tenderest point, if you confess to him the truth—as you know the truth in your own heart to be; but think, Rosamund, only think what that wound would be were it to take place when there was no remedy! His whole life would be ruined by his having been the victim of your caprice. For God's sake, Rosamund—dear Rosamund—do not so barbarously use a heart whose only fault is loving you."

Before she could find voice for a reply he was gone.

"Rosamund, dear Rosamund!" The words rang in her ears, and throbbed through all her pulses. He had never at any time so addressed her hitherto; she had never had an affectionate word from him that she could remember.

And now, of all times, to call her "dear"! Now, at the close of such a conversation upon such a subject. Now, when the hardest things had been said, and the coldest tones used, and no veil, not the thinnest, of charity had been thrown over the ugly, naked truth.

No shade of consideration had been shown. Scarce an excuse had been offered.

He had divined her misery, and those haunting suspicions which ceaselessly hung overhead where'er she moved or turned; and he had ruthlessly dragged the dark shadow from the background, and told her what it was, and how it should be dealt with. He had expressed no pity, no regret for her. A mere

perfunctory "I am sorry for you" could not take rank as any real compassion; and it had been almost more than either her temper or her pride could bear, to be exhorted to courage and openness, as though she were some cowardly child shrinking from a well-merited punishment.

With difficulty she had held back the flood-gates of her wrath; and then, that one little word, that one soft tone, had altered all. Her swelling heart hung upon the remembrance. Every former feeling vanished.

It grew late, yet she could not go in to face her lover, her guests, light, noise, and merriment.

Out in this kindly spot she must have another, and yet another brief moment for thoughts unutterable and pangs unintelligible.

How had this strange interview come about? How had it begun?

She strove to call to mind his opening sentence, and the shock it had given her.

She had, she knew, experienced a momentary convulsion, a sudden upheaval of emotions, in which amazement, shame, and anger had struggled for the mastery.

Then had come a woman's swift instinct for concealment. She would allow nothing, acknowledge nothing, if possible betray nothing; and in her poor, weak, childish way she had, as we have seen, again and again endeavoured to divert the charge, turn it aside, and carry the war into the enemy's country.

She had summoned every power she possessed to her aid, and had been undeniable in her spirit, and prompt in maintaining her independence.

For all his seeming insensibility,

he could not but have winced now and again.

She had meant him to wince; would fain have hurt, tortured him—done anything to revenge the agony he was inflicting on her. For her he had not had one kind thought. Therein lay—although Rosamund little knew it—the sting of the whole.

The hot tears streamed unchecked over her cheeks now. Not one kind thought!

And she had been so used to his approval, to his partisanship,—she had so counted on having him always on her side in battles past! He had been her shield, her stay, her stronghold in Lady Caroline's time,—his word on her behalf had been worth its weight in gold, his support invincible.

She had allowed to herself that the consciousness of his applause had been one of the sweetest ingredients in her cup of triumph.

All was now withdrawn. In his eyes she had forfeited every claim to approbation. The nobility of mind wherewith he had credited her, what did he think of it now?

As plainly as though he had put it into words, it had been shown that he despised her in the sharpness of his disappointment, and looked with scorn upon the childish whim which he had mistaken for something finer.

She snatched a blossom from her path, and tore the petals out.

Resentment, mortification, and a fierce desire yet to acquit herself of the hateful charge, raged in her burning bosom. It was no longer Gilbert of whom she thought: he was nothing—less than nothing—to her at the moment. She had no quarrel with him, had received no injury from him.

Had he then and there con-

fronted her, she would have received him—as she did afterwards receive him—with gentleness and shamefacedness.

Had he at once demanded and urged the fulfilment of her promise, the request would almost certainly have been granted.

Anything to put Hartland in the wrong; chafe and thwart Hartland; flaunt her resolution before Hartland's eyes. Who was he that he should stand forward and constitute himself the champion of the absent?

Had she not chosen Frederick Gilbert of herself and by herself; held to him in the teeth of difficulty, resistance, and oppression; faced Lady Caroline at her worst, and won the game against all odds?

And yet now, forsooth, for the man's own sake, because Gilbert was her poor defenceless victim, because his life would be ruined by her constancy, must this meddling step in between, and with a high hand command her to let her lover go!

Opposition, indeed, passive as

well as active, she had hitherto experienced. Lady Julia had been tearful, other relations dubious, the neighbourhood generally unsympathetic. But the feeling had so obviously emanated from a sense of *her* having found no fitting mate, of *her* superiority to the match, that she had been able haughtily to ignore it.

Now the tables were turned. She was informed that it was she who was not good enough for Gilbert.

He was true—she was a deceiver. He was honest—she was playing a part.

The insult was too much.

And then, just as this point had been reached, would come to pass a strange, inexplicable transformation of the whole. A word, two words—two little words, and a falling tone, and a troubled eye, would come between all else and memory; and the rankling thorn, and the cruel rebuke, and the still more cruel indifference, would all vanish, be lost, swallowed up in—in what? "*Dear Rosamund.*"

THE BRITISH MUSEUM AND THE PEOPLE WHO GO THERE.

THE opening of the White Wing of the British Museum is an event which has aroused the attention not only of literary and artistic London, but of the whole world of letters and science in its widest sense. Indeed it would almost seem that it has excited a stronger interest in the capitals of Europe and America than among ourselves. It is an unfortunate characteristic of Londoners that they fail to appreciate the wealth of rarity and of beauty which lies at their doors, and regard only as objects of admiration those things which are foreign and strange. The interest which is excited at Berlin, St Petersburg, Paris, and New York by any changes in or additions to our national collections, finds but a comparatively faint echo in the centre of their attraction; and for every hundred visitors from the Eastern and Western continents who make their annual pilgrimages to the public institutions of London with all the devoutness of Mohammedan pilgrims to the holy places at Mecca, not more probably than ten or twenty Londoners, apart from the general public, pay the homage due to the shrines of knowledge which lie within their reach.

A thing which can be done at any time has a tendency to be put off to that convenient season which never comes; and if by any chance a visit to the British Museum is made at the instance of a country cousin or of children at home for the holidays, the ease with which it is accomplished seems to obviate the necessity of making any preliminary study of the objects which are to be seen within the building.

The result is that such visitors as we are supposing arrive at the entrance-hall without any knowledge of the geography of the Museum, or any acquaintance, however slight, with the contents of the various departments, and thus wander, at the bidding of the merest chance, either among the statues of Greece and Rome, the sculptures of Egypt and Babylonia, the books and manuscripts of all nations, the porcelain and pictures of China and Japan, the ancient glass vessels of Venice, mummies from the banks of the Nile, or weapons and gods from the Peloponnesian islands. Even if fortune should be so kind as to guide their steps in the direction of those objects for which, by the light of nature, they may have a taste, the want of even a passing preliminary inquiry deprives them of all power of either understanding or really enjoying them. In these circumstances the inevitable result is easily foreshadowed. They grow weary of looking at they know not what, and they leave the building voting it dreary, uninteresting, and very tiring. Thackeray in one of his books quotes an Eastern fable, in which an owl gives it as his opinion that a nightingale is a much overrated bird; and we cannot help feeling that such people as we have described have something in common with the owl in the adage.

This is the more to be regretted, since, when rightly understood, the Museum is

“An epitome of all that is pleasing to man.”

It is like an exceeding high mountain, from which all the na-

tions of the earth can be seen. In its galleries may be surveyed the history of nature and mankind from the time of Noah down to the present day. On the monuments there collected may be read the annals of those mighty empires of old, whose triumphs in the arts and sciences and whose power in arms have excited the wonder of succeeding ages; and there may be traced the records of their successors in the government of the civilised world, and of the savage races which have in bygone days fought with flint spears and arrows, dwelt in lacustrine huts, and left memorials of themselves in heaps of stones and rude carvings. So also is unfolded the course of nature, beginning from those forms which are hidden in the depths of the earth and sea, to the modern flora and fauna of every land under the sun; while in the library are collected the books of all nations and languages. Thus a visitor to the Museum whose eyes are opened may claim to be a denizen of every clime and a contemporary of every age. Guided by the uncorrupted evidences of the monuments, he may start from almost the cradle of the human race, and beginning from some centuries before the time when Abraham "went forth from Ur of the Chaldees," he may trace the history of the world through all succeeding centuries. He may stand as a witness to the combats of Nimrod, "the mighty hunter before the Lord," with lions, and may join in the triumph of the mighty one when his victims crouch dying at his feet. He may listen to the story of the Flood told by Noah to his great-grandson, the same hero, and may see copies of tablets originally written about 3000 B.C. containing an account of the Creation, from the time "when on high the

heavens were not proclaimed, and beneath the earth recorded not a name." And he may study deeds of partnership and official reports which were indited more than forty centuries ago. Compared with these dates, the records of Tiglath-pileser III. (745-727 B.C.) seem almost modern documents. But what they lose in antiquity they gain in completeness. The visitor may see this warrior-king wearing his royal robe, and, with staff in hand, standing as though in the act of command. He may see him go forth to war, as when he "distressed" King Ahaz, and carried away the Israelites into captivity; and he may see him conducting sieges and receiving tribute from the hands of conquered princes. Later again he may march with him against Media, Armenia, and Van, and after terms have been made with Ahaz, King of Judah, may follow in the invasion of Syria, undertaken at the request of that sovereign, and may join in the triumph at the defeat of Rezon the king. He may witness the rout of the armies of Pekah, King of Israel, and the plundering of his country; and at the close of these exploits, he may "assist" at the court held at Damascus by the victor, and may see Ahaz and other vassals bowing low before their suzerain.

One and all of these mighty deeds are chronicled on the monuments, where also are to be found the achievements of a long line of sovereigns, of whom Sennacherib, son of Sargon of Assyria (720-705 B.C.), was one of the most conspicuous. Before his victorious troops Merodach-baladan III., King of Babylon — the flight of whose army through the marshes of Guzummanu are figured on the slabs in the Kouyunjik Gallery with

great force—was compelled to crave for mercy. There are seen the Babylonian fugitives hiding themselves among the bulrushes, or attempting to escape by plunging into the river from the pursuing Assyrian soldiers, who neither give nor ask for quarter; and there are also to be seen incidents in a later campaign undertaken by the conqueror against Hezekiah, King of Judah, whom also he reduced to submission. His song of triumph on this occasion is most interesting. After giving a long list of his earlier victories he says:—

“In the course of my expedition I besieged, captured, and carried off the spoils of the cities Beth-Dagon, Joppa, Beneberak, and Azaru—cities of Sid-kā, who afterwards submitted not to my yoke. The nobles, princes, and people of Ekron, who had placed Padî, their king, keeper of the agreement and oath of Assyria, in bonds of iron, and had given him to Hezekiah, King of Judah,—evilly in the darkness they had done it,—feared in their hearts. They called for help, and there came the kings of Egypt and the soldiers, archer-charioteers, and horses of the King of Ethiopia, a countless force. . . . I drew near to Ekron, and I killed the nobles and princes who had committed evil, and I hung their bodies on stakes within the city. The people of the city doing sin and wickedness I took as spoil; the rest of them who had done no evil or wrong, who had no sin, I commanded their release. Padî, their king, I caused to come forth from the midst of Jerusalem and to sit upon the throne of lordship over them, and I imposed upon him the tribute of my lordship; but Hezekiah, of the land of the Jews, who had not submitted to my yoke, twenty-six of his strong cities, fortresses, and the smaller towns which were around them, which were innumerable, with advance of battering-rams, and throwing of darts, smiting of clubs, breach-

ing, cutting, and earthworks, I besieged and captured. I brought out from the midst of them, and counted as spoil, 200,150 people small and great, male and female; horses, mules, asses, camels, oxen, and sheep innumerable. Him I made as a caged bird within Jerusalem, his royal city. I surrounded it with towers, and turned the exit of the great gate of his city, and it was conquered. . . . Terrible fear of my lordship struck Hezekiah, the wandering Arabs and coloured soldiers which for the strengthening of Jerusalem he had brought in and to whom he had given payment. He sent down after me 30 talents of gold, 800 talents of silver, glass, precious stones, large pieces of lapis-lazuli, couches of ivory, standing thrones of ivory, elephants' skins, elephants' tusks, *esû* wood, and instruments of all kinds, a valuable treasure, and his daughters, the eunuchs of his palace, *nâri* and *nâvâti*, to the midst of Nineveh, the city of my dominion, and to give tribute and do obeisance he sent his messenger.”¹

Numerous sculptures, representing scenes in the campaigns of Sennacherib here referred to, line the walls of the gallery.

But though victorious abroad he was not able to gain the mastery in his own household. After a reign of nearly a quarter of a century, during which he triumphed incessantly over his foreign enemies, he was murdered by his sons “in the house of Nisroch his god, . . . and Esar-haddon his [youngest] son reigned in his stead.”² The victories of this monarch almost surpassed those of his father. He invaded and conquered Egypt; and, on a later occasion, “took Manassch among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon.”³

But not the least interesting ob-

¹ The Official Guide to the Kouyunjik Gallery, pp. 29, 30.

² Isaiah xxxvii. 38.

³ 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11.

ject in this department is a cast of the Moabite stone, which, as will possibly be remembered, contains an account of the war of Mesha, King of Moab, against Omri, Ahab, and Ahaziah, kings of Israel. Close to this cast is one of the inscription (B.C. 700) at the Pool of Siloam, which now stands exactly as it did when the blind man bathed his eyes in the water at the bidding of Christ, and which recounts how the workmen began to excavate at the tunnel which connects the spring and the pool at both ends and met in the centre. "When as yet the two bodies of miners were separated by a distance of three cubits of earth, they heard each other's voices. They hewed away, pickaxe against pickaxe, and the waters flowed from the spring to the pool, a distance of 1200 cubits."

Second neither in antiquity nor in interest to the Assyrian antiquities are the objects contained in the Egyptian rooms. No doubt the cases containing the mummies are those which attract the largest amount of popular interest. In no museum in the world, with the exception of that of Boulak, on the banks of the Nile, are there collected so many mummies of kings and nobles as in the British Museum. To the eye of an expert, the sarcophagi of men of wealth and position are easily distinguishable by their massive construction, in granite, basalt, alabaster, or breccia; and the inscriptions on the lids make the identification of the dead a matter of certainty. One of the earliest mummies in the collection is that of King Mykerinos, who reigned about 3400 B.C. After having rested undisturbed for more than 4000 years, his tomb was opened by bandits, who stole all the valuables they could find. In this half-robbed

condition the sepulchre was re-discovered in 1838, by Mr Vyse, who carried off the mummy and the sarcophagus. Unfortunately, during a storm in the Straits of Gibraltar, the ship bearing this royal burden went down to the bottom, and the sarcophagus with it. But happily the box containing the mummy floated; and the unwrapped remains of the poor king are now to be seen in the third Egyptian room. Side by side with these royal fragments lie the veritable flesh and bones of many a noble, who may

"Have walked about (how strange a story!)

In Thebes' streets three thousand years ago,
When the Memnonium was in all its glory,

And time had not begun to overthrow
Those temples, palaces, and piles tremendous,
Of which the very ruins are stupendous."

And there is no positive anachronism in our surmising with Horace Smith that—

"Perchance those very hands, now pinioned flat,
Have hob-a-nobbed with Pharaoh glass to glass,
Or dropped a halfpenny in Homer's hat,
Or doffed their own to let Queen Dido pass;
Or held, by Solomon's own invitation,
A torch at the great temple's dedication."

But though the mummies are objects which strike the imagination by their individual reality, they do not present the same historical and literary interest as the papyri, in which the Museum is particularly rich. In these are embalmed the ancient mythological beliefs of the people, the annals of their kings, and the social habits of the early Egyptians. The Book of the Dead is, of all the known papyri, the most

valuable in a scientific sense. In it we find many of the Christian beliefs in embryo; and in the legend of the destruction by fire of the demons of mist and rain by the Sun-god, we have the myth on which the Copts, and afterwards the whole Christian world, based the idea of hell. In the early Coptic documents the demons of the mist are converted without an attempt at concealment into the souls of the lost. In the same way is foreshadowed the legend of St George and the dragon in a papyrus describing the victory of the Sun-god over Apepi, the spirit of evil. In another curious papyrus of the 14th century B.C., occurs the tale of the two brothers, Anpu and Bata, which is in effect the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife, the wife of Anpu being the treacherous maligner. Another document, about 1400 B.C., contains the diary of an Egyptian traveller through Palestine and Syria. With curious minuteness he describes the moving accidents by flood and field which befell him, as well as a most untoward difficulty in which a flirtation with a lovely damsel, whom he found picking grapes in a vineyard, involved him. If, however, we were to reckon the value of papyri by their length, the palm must be given to one which measures 135 feet in length, and which contains the records of the reign of the great monarch Rameses III., with a detailed list of the temples which he built and the presents which he offered to the gods. But, to our minds, the gem of the collection is one recently brought from Egypt by the indefatigable and erudite Egyptologist, Mr Budge. As much by judicious management as good fortune, he managed to secure this treasure within a few hours of the time when the house

to which the papyrus had been removed was surrounded and taken possession of by Egyptian soldiers in the interest of the Boulak Museum. The tomb in which it was found had never been touched since the time when, upwards of thirty centuries ago, the bodies it contained were laid to rest within its walls. The wine-jars, the cakes, and other offerings were there as when they had been left by the mourners; and this beautiful papyrus was lying in all its entirety scarcely touched by the hand of Time, with the script as legible, and the illuminations as brilliant in colour, as when they were first delineated. We are accustomed to admire the early Flemish and Italian illuminations, and we do well; but for richness of colour and classical beauty, they certainly do not excel the strangely beautiful illustrations of the Egyptian artist who adorned this scroll. In one of the panels seven kine are represented, with reference, evidently, to some well-known legend which may very probably have been present in the mind of Pharaoh when he dreamed his celebrated dream. This is only one of the numerous treasures which Mr Budge brought back with him from the East, not the least interesting of which is a small weight, which, as we learn from the trilingual inscription which it bears, belonged to Darius the Great, when king of Babylon.

When, however, we pass into the sculpture-galleries of the Greek and Roman department, we come into an atmosphere of beauty and poetic feeling incomparably superior to that which surrounds the statues of Assyria and Egypt. The magnificent marbles, for instance, from the Parthenon which fill the Elgin room, are unsurpassed in beauty of form, depth of feeling,

and skill in execution. Designed and sculptured by Pheidias, or his disciples, at a time when Pericles ruled the destinies of Athens, they represent the most perfect Greek art at the most perfect period of its development. Every form is instinct with life and godlike grace—

“ All, all divine—no struggling muscle
glows,
Through heaving vein no mantling life-
blood flows,
But animate with deity alone,
In deathless glory lives the breathing
stone.”

No wonder that to many an excited and over-burdened nature the sight of these marbles has brought calm and peace; and we do not envy the mind of any one who can walk through the room without being impressed with the majesty and beauty of the figures. We have especially mentioned these sculptures, as they are pre-eminent in their exceeding loveliness; but in the adjoining rooms there are many others which can scarcely be said to be inferior to them.

Another section of this department is devoted to bronze sculptures, and a third to fictile vases. No one should visit the Museum without going to see the head of Aphrodite and the winged head of Hypnos, the god of sleep, which are shown in the second bronze room. The first, which is a unique example of a Greek bronze sculptured in a large commanding style, was found at Satala in Cappadocia, and is executed with all the feeling and skill which belongs to Greek art. The head of the god of sleep is smaller, and illustrates the thoughtful fancy with which the Greek artists worked out their labours of love. Curiously enough, though this head has been admired and discussed by *connoisseurs* for

years, it was not until Professor Owen casually pointed out one day that the wings on the head are those of a night-jar, that the full meaning of the artist became apparent. It is a peculiarity of the flight of the night-jar that it is absolutely noiseless, and thus its wings form a singularly apt and beautiful emblem of the silent approach of gentle sleep.

Another feature of this department is the collection of fictile vases which have been recovered from Hellenic tombs, and which display the course of the development of Greek art in this direction between the 7th and 3d centuries before Christ. Like everything those gifted people touched, they have adorned these vases with every form of beauty. Most of the vases are those which were given to the prize-winners at the Athenian games, and which were preserved with their other highly prized properties in their tombs. One, known as the Burgon vase, from the name of the discoverer, is noticeable from its having been won in 550, just after the reforms were made in the games, and from the inscription it bears, “I am one of the prizes from Athens.” A set of ten vases, also, which were won at Athens by natives of Cyrene, is interesting. On each is depicted the form of the contest in which the prize was won, and the dates (4th century B.C.) are indicated by the names of the presiding magistrates. Many bear the names of the artists, and in one case is arranged for the benefit of students a set of vases having black figures on red ground, all of which are signed. In one other instance a signature revives the memory of a more than usually tragic story. On a fragment are the words: Φάνης με ανέθηκε τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι τῷ Μιλησίῳ ὁ Γλαΐκου.

From Herodotus we learn that this Phanes was one of the Greek mercenaries who enlisted under the Egyptian banner to fight against Cambyses. In an evil moment he deserted to the enemy; and when the two armies were drawn up in opposing lines, his former comrades, in proof of their abhorrence of his treachery, deliberately killed his sons in sight of the contending hosts, and, having poured their blood into a wine-vase, drank of the mixture.

The transition from the department of Greek and Roman antiquities to that of coins and medals is natural and easy. As works of art the early coins of every land are remarkable and interesting, recording, as they do, the successive phases and the local varieties of the arts. But they do more than this: they illustrate the local conceptions of the gods and heroes worshipped by the ancients, with their attributes and symbols; they present characteristic portraits of sovereigns; and they help to verify and correct the nomenclature of the early writers as preserved to us in manuscripts. By the system of arrangement adopted in the cases, it is possible, for instance, to trace the development of the coinage, from the rude lumps of metal which served as currency (700 B.C.), to the finished and artistic pieces of the most perfect period—viz., B.C. 400-336. On the reverse of the earlier coins, the designs, as the visitor may notice, are figured in incused squares; and it is curious to observe that at a later period, at towns which, so far as we know, had no currency conventions with each other—such, for example, as Sybaris, Melapontis, Poseidonia, and Croton—the unusual practice of stamping the designs of the obverse on

the reverse of the coin invariably obtained.

The English coinage is of a comparatively modern date, the earliest exhibited coin being of the seventh century of our era. English medals, in which the Museum is exceptionally rich, are, again, of a much later period, and were not cast until the reign of Henry VIII. But from that time onwards almost every political event is chronicled on medals. Like so much that belongs to the pure region of art, the earlier medals are superior in every way to those of a later day. An attempt is now being made by the Society of Medallists to revive the art, and it is to be hoped that it may be successful; the miserable designs on the latest coins are a sufficient measure of the necessity for a renaissance. Some of the Italian medals, more especially those by Pisano, are very beautiful. For a specimen of fine workmanship and skilful treatment we would point to one bearing the head of Titian.

Nowhere in the world have students of ethnology so complete and well-arranged collections to consult as in the ethnographical galleries of the British Museum. There they may survey mankind from China to Peru, as illustrated in his weapons, beginning from flint implements to the highly polished swords of Japan, his wearing apparel, sometimes scanty enough, his ornaments, and his gods. With these are associated large and carefully chosen collections of porcelain, jade, and earthenware, a large proportion of which has been presented to the trustees of Mr Franks, the keeper of the department; while in the new room of the White Wing may be traced the development of the manufacture of glass, from the

beads found in Egyptian tombs, dated 3400 B.C., to a wine-glass used at the festivities at the coronation of George IV. Round the walls of this room are arranged specimens of Persian, Rhodian, and other wares, which for richness of colour and quaintness of design are not to be surpassed; and in the adjoining gallery are now exhibited the finest collection of Japanese drawings which exists anywhere. This collection¹ was made by Mr Anderson during a residence of some years in Japan, and became, on his return to this country, the property of the nation. Under the skilful direction of Mr Sidney Colvin, into whose department of Prints and Drawings we have now wandered, these paintings have been so arranged as to illustrate the origin of the art, and the styles of the various native schools. Beginning with some early eleventh and twelfth century Chinese drawings, the visitor can follow the introduction of the art into Japan, and can observe its different phases under the religious and other influences which moulded its developments. The beauties of this collection have been so fully described elsewhere that nothing more need be said about them here, and we are free to glance in at the historical exhibition of Prints in the second northern gallery.

This is a most interesting exhibition, and in the rooms devoted to it the enlightened visitor may follow every process in the art of engraving, from the "Trinity" and the frontispiece to the "Apocalypse" of 1498 by Albrecht Dürer to the works of Mason Jackson, "who still survives as chief of the art department of the 'Illustrated London News,'" and the litho-

graphs of the present day. In a collection where the works of Deutsch, Holbein, the De Jodes, father and son, Rembrandt, Van Dyck, Claude, and Hollar, are well represented, it is difficult to point to any of exceptional merit; but among the earlier engravings it is impossible to pass by the exquisite illustrations from the graving tool of the "Tyneside lad and Newcastle apprentice, Thomas Bewick." His "Chillingham Bull" and "Waiting for Death" are excellent specimens of his skill. While among the engravings on metal, the productions of Robert Strange, a native of the Orkney Islands, are deserving of the highest praise. The portraits by Van Dyck are worthy of the great master; and Wilkie's etched subject-pieces are delightful specimens of his forcible and effective manner.

The prints and drawings exhibited, form, however, but an infinitesimally small portion of the entire collection, which may be inspected at leisure by any one who chooses to ask for the privilege. By passing through a swing-door the visitor may find within his reach the prints and drawings of the greatest artists which the world has known.

"Now that the Alexandrian library is destroyed this is probably the largest in existence," said a clergyman lately to some friends as he walked with them through the library of the British Museum. The speaker was evidently confounding the destruction of the library of the Ptolemies by the Caliph Omar in 641 with the burning of Alexandria in 1881. If, therefore, this part of his assertion be omitted, as well as the word "probably," the rest may be

¹ See 'Blackwood's Magazine' for February 1887.

held to be correct. At the present time there are nearly two millions of volumes in the library of the Museum; and that number is being added to daily, at a rate which, if it were not for a system of movable presses lately invented, would quickly fill to overflowing the otherwise available space. Of course in such a huge collection there are works which are valueless and worse than valueless; but in no library in the world are there collected so many priceless treasures as at the British Museum. The Caxtons alone are worth a king's ransom, and the collection of early printed Bibles is unrivalled. The fortunate possessor of the Mazarine Bible, which was sold at the Syson Park sale for £3900, may see an even finer example than his at the Museum; and collectors of "Breeches" Bibles, "Vinegar" Bibles, "Bug" Bibles, "Wicked" Bibles, "Treacle" Bibles, "He" and "She" Bibles, and all the other known varieties, may find duplicates of their treasures in the British Museum. In first editions of Shakespeare's Plays and Sonnets which have been picked up at odd times, and sometimes after strange vicissitudes, the Museum is particularly rich. The Museum copy of the first edition of 'Hamlet' (1603) was bought for a shilling by a bookseller in Dublin; the next possessor, who gave £70 for it, sold it to Mr Halliwell-Phillips for £120; and the Museum ultimately purchased it from this last-named gentleman at a somewhat further advance of price. The first edition of 'Love's Labour's Lost' was acquired by the nation for £346, 10s., and an early edition of 'Venus and Adonis' (1596) for £315. The curious ways in which books are

sometimes preserved from destruction are illustrated by the adventures of Lydgate's translation of Boccaccio's 'Fall of Princes,' printed by Pynson in 1494. A Mr Pierce happened to notice a child in the village of Lamberhurst, in Sussex, sucking a sugar-stick which was partially wrapped up in a piece of paper printed over in old type. In answer to an inquiry, the child said she had bought the sweets at the village shop. Thither Mr Pierce went with all speed, and found to his horror the shopman cutting up the pages of Lydgate's work into square pieces to be used for parcelling up his wares. Without much trouble he effected a purchase of the remainder, which may now be seen in the British Museum, with a number of pages made up of the mounted square scraps which were originally destined to hold sugar-plums.

But these are only the off-chances of literature. Other accidents, however, of a historical kind, and therefore of a more enduring interest, cluster round many of the Museum books. The visitor may see for instance, in one press, the splendid volumes which constituted the library of Henry VII., and to the purchase of which he devoted large sums of money. In another he may admire Henry VIII.'s copy of Cranmer's Bible, and may stand amazed at the vindictiveness of the king in causing the arms of Thomas Cromwell, after his fall, to be struck out of Holbein's beautiful border around the title-page. And he may follow the same king's thoughts in his manuscript notes on the chapter on matrimony in a copy of Nannus Mirabellius's 'Polyanthea.' Those passages referring to second marriages seem to have claimed the king's special attention, from which it may be argued that the notes

were made at an early period of his matrimonial career.

One may smile also at Queen Elizabeth's pride which made her repent of describing herself as Anne Poyntz's "friend" in her inscription in a book of Gospels which she gave to that maid of honour. "Mistress" commended itself to her second thoughts, and so was substituted for the offending word. No such punctiliousness afflicted King Philip II. of Spain when, in presenting a magnificent Polyglot Bible to the Duke of Alva, he ordered the words, "In æternum pietatis monumentum optimi regis optimo ministro donum detulit," to be inscribed in the book. This work, in 13 folio volumes, was printed by Plantin at Antwerp from 1569-1572, and is a splendid example of sumptuous typography. With a truer perception of realities James I. dedicated his book on the Lord's Prayer to Buckingham in these words—"I cannot surely find out a person to whom I can more fitly dedicate this short meditation of mine then (*sic*) to you, Buckingham. For it is made upon a very short and plain prayer, and therefore the fitter for a courtier: For courtiers, for the most part, are thought neither to have list nor leisure to say long prayers, liking best courte Messe and long disner."

But the outsides of some of the books are almost as interesting as their contents. In the King's Library are exhibited some magnificent specimens of bindings by Nicolas and Clovis Eve, Le Gascon and other masters in the art. Readers of 'John Inglesant' will be interested in finding a handsome book bound by the fair hands of Mary Collet; and students of French Court life and manners will admire, possibly without surprise, a copy of 'Petri Bembi Cardinalis

Historia Veneta' (Venice, 1551), bearing on the sides the arms of Henry II. of France, and the monogram of the king and Diana of Poitiers.

In the Manuscript department there is collected such a wealth of interest that it is impossible here to speak of its contents except in the most general terms. In the Cottonian, Harleian, and Old Royal Libraries are to be found remarkable collections of State papers; and in the 50,000 volumes and the 50,000 charters and rolls which stand on the shelves of the department, are contained materials for the history of the whole civilised world, in the handwritings of those who have made history. Some few treasures from the recesses of the department are shown in the King's Library and in the Manuscript saloon. Admirers of illuminated manuscripts may there feast their eyes on superb specimens of the work of English, French, and Flemish artists, from the time of King Edgar down to the present day. Close to these may be seen a complete set of the Great Seals of English sovereigns, from Edward the Confessor to Queen Victoria; and a series of historical deeds, including photographs of Magna Charta, the original Bull of Leo X. conferring on King Henry VIII. the title of Defender of the Faith, a mortgage deed bearing the signature of William Shakespeare, and the Recognitions of Clement of Rome, written at Edessa in A.D. 411, being the oldest dated volume in existence.

But the objects of more popular interest exhibited are those which stand in the cases devoted to autograph letters from English sovereigns and statesmen, and from historical and literary personages. A visitor to this part of the collec-

tion may read the *ipsissima verba* of English kings and queens in their own hands-royal. He may read King Richard II.'s ideas on the restoration of the Castle of Brest to the Duke of Brittany; he may study Henry VIII.'s epistolary style in a letter to "myne awne good Cardinall," Wolsey; and he may trace James I.'s handwriting in a letter to his "dearest sonne," ordering him home from Spain, and bidding him "to preferre the obedience to a father to the love ye carrie to a mistresse. And so God bless you." In Charles I.'s instruction to Sir Edward Herbert relative to the impeachment of Lord Kimbolton and the five members, he may see from the erasures indications of how completely the inclusion of Lord Kimbolton's name was an afterthought; and he may study William III.'s directions to Admiral Herbert for the disposal of the person of King James II. in case of his capture at sea. He may read the lines in the handwriting of Lady Jane Grey, addressed to the Lieutenant of the Tower and to the Duke of Suffolk, on the margin of the manual of prayer which she used on the scaffold; and he may admire the writing of her Most Gracious Majesty when she was yet but four years old.

Turning to more ancient texts the visitor may examine among a host of exhibits a volume of the 'Codex Alexandrinus'; a portion of Homer's 'Iliad' written in uncial characters, on papyrus, in the first century before Christ; and the only extant MS. of the oration of Hyperides against Demosthenes, which, like the 'Iliad', was found in an Egyptian tomb. Or if his taste be neither in the direction of regal nor of antique MSS., he may amuse himself with letters from Wolsey, Lord Burghley, the great

Duke of Marlborough, Sir Robert Walpole, and a number of other statesmen and notabilities who have strutted and fretted their little hour upon the stage. He may peruse a letter written by Lord Nelson to Lady Hamilton, on the eve of Trafalgar, and he may trace her own words of misery written across the paper after the fatal day, "Oh miserable, wretched Emma! Oh glorious and happy Nelson!" And he may see a letter from Gordon, dated "Kartoum, 27th Feb. 1884," in which he tells his sister that he has "sent Stewart off to scour the White Nile," and which he concludes almost despairingly, "All things are ruled by Him for His glory, and it is rebellion to murmur against His will."

We have not space at command to speak of the dissevered Natural History collections at South Kensington. We regret this the more as they are second in interest only to the contents of the parent institution in Bloomsbury; but on this occasion we are compelled most unwillingly to inflict on them the penalty due to "separatists" of being left out in the cold.

The exhibits to which we have drawn attention are mere indications of the countless objects of interest which are to be seen by those visitors to the British Museum whose eyes have been enlightened. But, as we have already said, it requires some preliminary study rightly to gather up even the crumbs of superficial knowledge which are to be found in every gallery and in every case. To the ordinary sight-seer, both educated and uneducated, the contents of the Museum present a maze which confuses the mind without enlightening it; and the extraordinary wealth of the col-

lections in all that is obtainable suggests to his imagination the certain possession of the impossible. Not content with finding records of the Pharaohs and kings of Assyria, whose names are made familiar by Holy Writ, he expects to meet with such things as Aaron's rod which budded, or the cloak which Paul left at Troas. One eager partisan, during the Colenso controversy, begged to be allowed to see a contemporary and well-authenticated plan of Noah's ark, that he might refute the arguments of the Bishop, and was much disappointed that the officials had not one to show him.

Only the officials themselves know the depth of the ignorance of the public mind on subjects of antiquarian and literary interest; and were a record kept of the questions put, not only by the uncultured classes, but by those who are presumably well-informed, the world would be astounded at the folly and ignorance displayed. Not long ago a visitor, for instance, presented himself in the Manuscript department and asked to be allowed to see "the original samshrift." After some beating about the bush, which was complicated by the visitor's assertion that the object of his search was the foundation of every language under the sun, it occurred to the official that a Sanskrit manuscript might after all be that which he wanted to see. So a palm-leaf MS. was shown to him and completely satisfied his curiosity. He had seen a reference to a work which was said to have been "translated from the original Sanskrit in the British Museum," and he came expecting to find that "the original Sanskrit" was a single document which he might touch and handle. The variant of the word Sanskrit which he used

is accuracy itself compared with misnomers which are commonly applied to subjects far better known than the ancient language of India.

Every great upheaval of the public mind, whether in the direction of religion or of politics, produces a corresponding crop of absurd inquiries, and the Irish question has been no exception to the rule. The rapidity with which Mr Gladstone's "items" had to scrape together some rags of arguments with which to cover their political nakedness, drove them into strange difficulties and confusions, and as a last resource many of them applied to the British Museum to help them out of the quagmire. One Milesian representative of a Milesian constituency, considered that an argument he intended to urge would be strengthened if he were able to produce for the purposes of comparison the constitution of Ireland before the Union, with the constitution as fixed after the Union; and he consequently posted off to the British Museum, and inquired, with all the impatience of an explorer on the verge of a discovery, for the two sheets of foolscap containing the precious information. He looked in dismay at the books which he was recommended to consult, and with the converse of the feeling which actuated Naaman the Syrian, turned and went away in a rage at the great thing which it was given him to do.

On one well-known occasion the presumed ignorance of a would-be visitor was turned to a useful account. It sometimes must happen that the patience even of the gatekeepers becomes sorely tried, and that the temptation to shoot folly as it flies becomes wellnigh irresistible. This was probably the case

when one morning a pretentious man of the people, on finding the Museum closed, protested vehemently against this infringement of the public rights, and demanded as a citizen and a ratepayer to know why the gates were shut. The old gatekeeper, whose favourite study of mankind was man, had arrived at a just estimate of the gasconader, and answered with imperturbable gravity, "Well, if you must know why the Museum is closed, it is because one of the mummies is dead, and the officers are attending the funeral." The reply fulfilled its purpose, and the complainant went away gratified at the thought that so momentous an event had been the cause of his exclusion.

But such persons as these are only to the officials what mosquitoes and prickly-heat are to the dwellers within the tropics. They irritate and annoy; but the only public inconvenience they cause is the loss of time occasioned by their frivolous inquiries, for it must be understood that the stream of such questions is perennial, and the officials have no protection against these desecrators of the Museum. A man may be in the midst of deciphering an obscure Assyrian seal, or he may be arranging with microscopic exactness the petals of a flower brought from the other end of the earth, or he may be applying a subtle chemical to make plain an otherwise illegible manuscript; but whatever he may be doing, he is liable to be disturbed by these chartered libertines of folly.

There are, however, visitors of another class, who are far more pernicious than these, and they are those who, either from madness or folly, consider that they are born to set the world right, and with iconoclastic zeal to destroy

all that they deem in their wisdom to be unfit for the public eye. The most notorious instance of this mistaken ardour was illustrated by the destruction of the priceless Portland Vase, which was smashed to atoms by a certain William Lloyd, about forty years ago. The vase, which was first discovered in the sixteenth century, was a beautiful cinerary urn of transparent dark-blue glass. It had been bought by Sir William Hamilton, in 1770, out of the Barberini palace at Rome, and subsequently became the property of the Duchess of Portland. In 1810 the Duke of Portland handed it conditionally over to the trustees of the Museum, by whom it was exhibited, to the infinite delight of every lover of art. The beautiful figures, which are delicately executed in relief on its sides, however, outraged the feelings of William Lloyd, who with a blow of his stick broke it to pieces. With extraordinary ingenuity Mr Doubleday collected the fragments, and pieced them together with such wonderful accuracy, that it now stands a complete though blurred representation of its former loveliness. The initiation of the rule which forbids visitors to carry sticks or umbrellas in the Museum, dates from this piece of Vandalism, which also gave birth to a law making such acts for the future punishable by flogging as well as imprisonment.

But there is another class of visitors who are almost as irritating to much-occupied officials as the askers of foolish questions, and these are the possessors of objects which, in the narrow circles of Peckham Rye or Hoxton, are considered rarities, and which are brought with much parade to the British Museum, and offered at prices which might

buy a first-folio edition of Shakespeare or a tablet from Nineveh. Not a day passes but a set of prints of the Georgian period, or a French atlas of the last century, or a few leaves of a missionary translation of the New Testament into some oriental tongue, are produced with conscious pride, out of numerous folds of paper, to the gaze of the weary custodians of the public collections, and corresponding disappointment is manifested when the possessors are told that the Museum already has numerous and perfect copies of them.

Occasionally, as in the case of the Shapira manuscripts, objects are brought to the Museum as a kind of touchstone to test their genuineness or the reverse. In this particular instance the authorities on the Continent were divided in their opinion on the subject. Professors Schroeder and Guthe, with Dr Hermann of Leipzig, believed them to be genuine. Professor Schlottmann, on the contrary, pronounced them to be forgeries; while a committee at Berlin, presided over by Lepsius, after a session of an hour and a half, declined to inquire further into them. This caution was probably engendered by a knowledge of the tainted source from which they came. Shapira's name was notorious at Berlin as that of the successful purveyor of forged Moabite pottery. What more natural, therefore, that these Moabitish manuscripts had been in like manner artificially concocted? But it is not always safe to assume in the matter of antiquities that there cannot proceed out of the same spring sweet water and bitter; and when, therefore, the manuscripts were presented at the British Museum, it was deemed advisable to put their authenticity to the

severest test. The story told by Shapira was simple and straightforward. So long ago as 1878, an Arab sheikh had casually mentioned to him the existence of some black fragments of writing which had been found in caves in the neighbourhood of Amor by Arab refugees. Later, on the occasion of a dinner given by the sheikh, further reference was made to the manuscripts, and subsequently one of the precious documents was brought to Shapira. At his instigation others followed, and when he had collected all that he could obtain, he determined to submit them to the critical eyes of Europe.

The nature of the documents, and the evidence on which they were pronounced unhesitatingly to be forged, are so curious, that no apology is needed for briefly recapitulating them. The skins themselves were of varying blackness, as though very ancient, and the characters were of various degrees of illegibility. By the help of chemicals and magnifying glasses, the entire texts were read by Dr Ginsburg, and were found to contain a more succinct narrative of the journey of the children of Israel than that given in Deuteronomy; the Ten Commandments; and the blessings and cursings pronounced on Mounts Gerizim and Ebal. The writing, which exhibited the oldest alphabetical characters hitherto known, greatly resembling those on the Moabite stone, was at first sight in favour of the authenticity of the documents. But a prolonged and careful study of the skins revealed certain very fine perpendicular lines such as are commonly drawn on synagogue-scrolls to mark the margin of the columns of the texts. On these skins they did not serve this purpose, as was shown by the fact

that the text was written over them. It was further observed that the upper edges of the skins were clean cut, and that the lower edges were frayed. Putting these two indications together, Dr Ginsburg had no difficulty in arriving at the conclusion that the skins had at one time been the lower margins of synagogue scrolls, and had been appropriated by the forgers to give an air of antiquity to the documents. Dr Ginsburg further came to the conclusion that the texts had been compiled by either a Polish, Russian, or German Jew, and had been dictated by him to a scribe or scribes. This opinion he based on the circumstance that the scribe had confused the undageshed *caph* with the guttural letter *cheth*, and *tau* with *teth*—confusions which could only have arisen from the words having been dictated by a Jew of Northern Europe, and which could not have been made by the compiler of the texts, who was unquestionably a profound scholar. Strange corruptions crept into the texts in consequence of these mistakes, and in one passage where the compiler had intended to say that God was “angry,” the scribe had made him charge the Deity with a heinous crime.

Day after day, as Dr Ginsburg was making these investigations, Shapira sat by him. If he was not a believer in the genuineness of the MSS., he was a most consummate actor. When at last he was told definitely that the documents were forgeries, he turned ashy pale, and declared himself to be a ruined man. Some people believed that the announcement was not a surprise to him, but the last despairing act of his life was the act rather of a dupe than of an impostor. A few days after

the inquiry closed he blew his brains out.

The converse of this case has occasionally happened, and it has in some few instances been the proud lot of visitors to prove that the Museum authorities have formed an incorrect estimate of the value of objects. A notable example of this occurred some years ago, when a certain Saxon coin, which was believed to be unique, was proved to be otherwise. As on the one occasion when the story appeared in print it laboured under the disadvantage of forming part of a tale of fiction, it will be well to give here a correct version of it. The circumstances of the discovery were peculiar. A well-known collector came to the coin-room and asked to be allowed to see the celebrated coin. The tray on which the treasure was kept was handed to him, and when at the end of the day the attendant was in the act of replacing it in the case, he observed that the coin was missing. The visitor asserted his belief that he had put it back, but this was met by the very obvious fact that it was not there. A careful search was made of the table at which he had been sitting, and among the books he had been using, but all to no purpose. In this emergency the keeper of the department was summoned, and a further search having proved unavailing, the keeper reluctantly asked the visitor to allow him to feel in his pockets. This the visitor vehemently refused to consent to; and after many useless attempts at persuasion, the keeper said—

“If you refuse to let me feel your pockets, I have only one alternative. I am in duty bound to send for the police.”

"That you may do," replied the visitor, "but you shall not touch my pockets."

Accordingly the inspector on duty was sent for; but before he arrived, an attendant who had been examining the books which had been used, found the missing coin between the leaves of a work. Great was the relief to every one concerned; and, "Now," said the visitor, "I will tell you why I refused to let you search me. Your coin is not unique. I have a duplicate of it in my pocket; and if you had found it there, you would have charged me with having stolen your coin." So saying, he produced the duplicate, and received the keeper's congratulations, which were modified only by the discovery that the crowning glory of uniqueness had departed from his coin.

To all those who know the exquisite joy of possessing a unique specimen of any object, the acute disappointment of the coin-keeper at finding that his much-vaunted coin owned a fellow will be fully appreciated. But the Museum officials are anything but selfish gatherers of rarities. Very many objects have from time to time been returned to their rightful owners, through the action of the keepers of departments, to whom they have been offered. Only a year or two ago a beautiful missal of the Seville use was offered for sale to the librarian. The book was dated 1507, was without covers, and the price asked for it was £200. The person offering it stated, in answer to inquiries, that it had been sent to him for sale by a friend in Paris. This might have been considered satisfactory so far as it went; but before concluding the purchase, the librarian, thinking it a long cry

from Seville to Paris, requested the would-be vendor to inquire from his friend in Paris the circumstances under which it reached that city. Meanwhile he detained the book. In the course of a few days the reply came that it had been sent to Paris by a gentleman at Cadiz, who had bought it at the sale of the library of a suppressed monastery. Still the librarian's mind was oppressed with doubts, and he communicated with the Spanish consul in London, requesting him to telegraph to Seville to inquire whether such a book was missing from the Cathedral library. The first reply was in the negative; but subsequently an answer came that not only that particular missal, but many other books of great value, had mysteriously disappeared.

Thereupon the Spanish authorities invoked the aid of the law to empower the librarian to retain custody of the book, and the vendor was subpoenaed to throw all the light he could on the matter. But when called upon to identify the volume, the Seville librarian declared himself unable to do so; and this most beautiful book—only one other copy of which is known to exist—became, by purchase, the property of the Museum. In the number of the 'Bibliophilia' for June and July 1885 is given a long list of the books which left Seville about the same time, in whose possession deponent sayeth not.

But besides inquirers, amateur vendors, and dealers, there is the greater army of sight-seers who daily throng the galleries and libraries, representing all sorts and conditions of men.—Londoners, mostly of the poorer classes, who wander through the collections without any special knowledge of the objects displayed, but with a

keen relish for those particular things which strike their fancy; people from the country, of all ranks and classes—from the country magnate to the peasant or small shopkeeper, to the less cultured among whom the Assyrian tablets are a stumbling-block, and the Egyptian monuments foolishness. "She must have thought herself mighty good-looking to have been 'took' so often," was the remark of a country Phyllis on the row of statues of the cat-headed goddess Pasht. And such is the kind of remark which is made every day on the basalt figures in the Egyptian Galleries. Being ignorant of history, the Phyllises and their friends reduce everything to the level of the present time, and submit the sculptures of Egypt and Assyria to the same criticism as the latest pieces from the *ateliers* of Woolner or Boehm.—Germans, mostly be-spectacled, and armed with well-studied Baedeker's guide-books, who thus secure to themselves a rich harvest of intelligent enjoyment. Being for the most part acquainted with the museums of their own country, they are able to compare their contents with those of the British Museum. The autumn vacation is the time of the principal Teuton invasion, when not only the galleries present an almost foreign appearance, but the reading-room is thronged by scholars eager to collate manuscripts, or to consult books which are to be found only on the shelves of the Museum.—Americans, whose first inquiry is for the oldest objects, and the next for those which have cost most money. Many of these our cousins have a strong touch of bibliomania, and admire the Caxtons and first editions with an enthusiasm which appears strange to the majority of

Londoners, in whom familiarity has bred something like contempt for such things. But while these and other crowds are passing to and fro along the galleries, there may commonly be seen, seated in obscure corners, poor woe-begone persons who seek the friendly shelter of the Museum to protect them from the cold and rain,—men and women who have unmistakably seen better days, as the saying is, but who now, by the world forgot, find their warmest welcome in the Museum galleries. There not unfrequently sleep relieves the monotony of their absolutely vacuous existences, which are only occasionally cheered by the chance possession of old newspapers. After years of constant attendance, during which shabbiness and decay become more and more acute, and the heartrending evidences of want become more and more apparent, they one after another fade away, and their weary life is rounded with a sleep from which they are no longer disturbed by the shout of "All out!" as the Museum closes its doors.

But it is in the reading-room that the various types of Museum visitors are most prominently accentuated. In no capital in Europe is admission granted to the national library with so free a hand as at the British Museum. A nominal guarantee of respectability is all that is required to give any one above the age of twenty-one ready access to incomparably the best library in the world. Any book asked for is immediately handed to the reader, and practically no limit is put to the number of books he may ask for at the same time. An official, chosen out of a staff of men of unusual attainments for his intimate knowledge of books and his wide acquaintance with the

literature of the world, is seated in the room to answer questions and to help students in their literary researches.

It is, therefore, a paradise for scholars and students. There are daily to be seen those giants of literature who are stamping on the age an impress of scholarly thought and deep research. There also are those whose time is not yet, but who by patient work and judicious study are preparing to take their places by-and-by in the great field of letters. Within its walls history takes shape, the lamp of philosophy is kindled which is to enlighten the world, the arts and sciences find their most brilliant expression, and fancy records its greatest triumphs.

But with manhood suffrage as the order of the day, it will readily be imagined that some people who are neither scholars nor students find their way into the reading-room. They are necessary evils and have to be endured, but they in no way fulfil the conditions which should apply to readers. They are the dead flies which spoil the ointment, and, instead of recognising their true position and striving to be as little burdensome as possible, they are commonly troublesome, restless, and disturbing in inverse ratio to their claim to scholarship. The most trivial inquiries and the most trashy pursuits are held to justify repeated visits to the room which should be sacred to study. At the time when the word-competition mania was at its height, the room was flooded with lady readers, who, so soon as the door was opened, rushed in and took possession, for the remainder of the day, of all the English dictionaries which stand on the reading-room shelves. So great was the inconvenience

to readers caused by this sordid absurdity—for it was always pursued with a view to money profit—that the authorities were compelled to issue a regulation that the dictionaries were not to be thus impounded. So also, while the imaginations of foolish people were inflamed by stories which credited Mother Shipton with having prophesied the erection of the Crystal Palace, the construction of the underground railway, and many other triumphs of modern civilisation, troops of ladies, among them not a few dames of high degree, came asking to see the original edition of the old woman's legend. One lady came with a more than usually detailed request, and begged to be shown the edition of the legend which was *printed in 1442*. As this was about thirty years before the art was introduced into England, the inquirer must have supposed that Mother Shipton could not only foretell events but was able to foredo them.

With these searchers after the husks of knowledge are to be found people whom reviewers call "general readers," and who lounge into the reading-room, to the annoyance of real workers, to while away a few hours over the last book of travel and the latest works on art or popular science. Novels also are largely in request, and generally those which should be most avoided are most read. It is a curious fact, as illustrating the contrasts of mind peculiar to "general readers," that the pages of the catalogue which show signs of most constant use are those which contain the headings of "Zola" and "Ruskin." But even Zola's novels are innocence itself compared with books which some readers, not always of the sterner sex, are occasionally seen smug-

gling away to their seats. Then, again, there are the drudges of literature,—men and women who eke out a scanty livelihood by copying, looking up references, and scraping together odds and ends of information to fill paragraphs for the newspapers. These are the representatives of Grub Street, the wrecks and failures in the world of literature. In cases not a few the whole scene of their gradual decline, from the first step down the ladder until they have touched their mother earth, has been patent to all the *habitués* of the room. The decline, however, is not always continuous: temporary breezes, laden with good fortune, come to them as well as to others, and they appear for a time like moths lately developed from the grub stage. But the law seems to be inevitable that the gloss should presently wear off, and that the old order of things should return with an accelerated tendency downwards.

The reading-room is a favourite haunt also of Americans who are desirous of tracing their pedigrees back to English families of the bluest blood and betitled names; and of readers of the Miss Fay class, who fancy that large properties are wrongfully withheld from them—who credit judges, barristers, attorneys, and witnesses alike, with combining against them—and who fancy that somewhere in the British Museum may be found books which will shatter the hostile conspiracies, and will restore to them their lawful possessions. The figures of the two brothers—the last of the Stuarts—will long be remembered by the older generation of readers; and at all times there have been others who, like them, have devoted their lives to

the tantalising pursuit of unattainable goods. Other readers there are who seem to take the reading-room as a shelter from the obloquy which a doubtlessly unjust world has showered upon them. Ladies and gentlemen, on whom Justice in her blindness has by chance cast social shadows, and who find in letters a “balm for hurt minds” and a salve for wounded spirits, devote their time to the study of all that is best and noblest in the literature of this and other lands, and with a lofty desire to return good for evil, meet the buffets of the world by writing books for its edification and instruction.

But though the names of the different sorts of readers is legion, for they are many, it is to be presumed that they all find within the hospitable walls of the British Museum books which suit their particular tastes, and in connection with which, alas! they level questions in quick succession at the long-suffering and almost omniscient superintendent on every conceivable subject. Most of the frequenters of the “Room,” as it is familiarly and affectionately called by readers, must have been constantly amused by the audible questions put to the superintendent by their *confrères*, and have divided their wonder between his patience and the fact “that one small head should carry all he knew.” One lady says that she remembers having seen when a child a cookery book, the frontispiece of which represented the scientific mode of carving a goose; she can neither remember the title nor the name of the author—could the superintendent help her to find it? A venerable-looking clergyman next advances, and instead of asking a question, as might have been

expected, on patristic literature, wants a reference to the best book on billiards. Another reader deep in Miss Gordon Cumming's 'Wanderings in China' begs to be told the length of a *li*. "I am not a good German scholar," says one, "and should be much obliged if you would translate and explain the passage which is here quoted from Heine." A theological student is convinced that if he could read the Codex Alexandrinus, the contractions in which are beyond him, he would be able to prove that all Bible commentators up to date have been entirely misled. Would the superintendent read some passages for him? A "general reader" wants to know who was the author of "Two lovely black eyes"; and another cannot remember the name of a female character in three syllables beginning with "B," which occurs in one of Walter Scott's novels, he is not certain which—can the superintendent remember it? A third would be very much obliged if the superintendent would tell him whereabouts in Mexico the village of Baconola stands. An amateur orientalist comes up to complain that he cannot find in the catalogue the well-known Assyrian grammar by "Stacy." And no wonder; for with this *alias* he dubs for the occasion the deputy professor of comparative philology at Oxford.

But we have heard enough, and will leave to the imagination the kind of questions which are asked by the constant stream of inquirers which pours up to the central desk for the remainder of the day. But it is not only in connection with even such literary pursuits as are indicated by the above questions that readers claim the attention of the superintendent. It seems

to be a law of nature that wherever any gratuitous privilege brings together a number of people among whom the gentler sex figures, whether in almshouses, in apartments in royal palaces, or in reading-rooms at the British Museum, there must of necessity be quarrelling. A reader has been in the habit of sitting in one particular seat, and by so doing she—for this form of complaint is feminine in its nature—considers that she has acquired a prescriptive right to it. If by chance she finds it occupied, fiercely she strides to the central desk, and pours her complaint, with many a poisoned shaft of hate, into the ears of the superintendent. If she does not gain the satisfaction to which she thinks she is entitled, she probably takes up a position close to the intruder, and

"There sits our sulky, sullen dame,
Gathering her brows like gathering
storm,
Nursing her wrath to keep it warm."

Or it may be that a reader is too loquacious and disturbs his neighbours, or that some one monopolises the books of reference wanted by another, or that some hyper-fanciful student imagines that another bites his thumb at him. In fact, there is no cause too trivial or too unreal to suffice to raise a storm in the room which should be sacred to Harpocrates and the Muses.

But these persons are desirable readers in comparison with those, fortunately few, who either carry off books or mutilate them through careless usage or from malice prepense. A certain reticence is observed by the officials with regard to books which have mysteriously disappeared; but it is no secret that so many volumes of the Bohn's Libraries vanished—they are of a size very suitable for the pocket—

that it became necessary to remove the set into the inner library. Not very long ago it was noticed that a reader disappeared suddenly from the "Room." One Saturday evening, when the Museum closed, a piece of work on which he had been engaged was still unfinished. As it was important to him that he should complete it without delay, he yielded to temptation, and carried home the book of reference which he was using. With an ingenuousness which did more credit to his heart than to his intelligence, he handed the book back to the superintendent on Monday morning, and explained the circumstances under which he had had it in his possession. From that day to this, the "Room" has known him no more. Other readers are not so frank. In one case some years ago, Death, which commonly consigns the past to oblivion, became a revealer of secrets. A letter was received from a landlady stating that among the effects of a lodger who had died in her house had been found several Museum books. Thus these were at once recovered. On another occasion an anonymously sent parcel was received by the superintendent, which, on being opened, was found to contain a number of Museum books which had been 'missing' for some time. But it is not too much to say that the careful watch which is now kept on the books, and the system of stamping employed, by which not only the first and last pages of every volume, but also every plate, engraving, and map in it are marked with the Museum coat-of-arms, makes an attempt at abstraction so hazardous, that only under very exceptional circumstances would any one venture to run the risk.

But it is easier to mutilate books than to steal them, as an inspection of some of the much-used volumes testify. In numbers of instances maps, engravings, and pages are missing; and not many weeks ago a reader was tried at Bow Street for cutting leaves from a volume of Scottish newspapers. On one occasion a German student, who afterwards figured in the Cambridge police court, returned a copy of Macrobius, which had been made more precious than rubies by the presence of a number of Bentley's manuscript notes, with the margins cut off wherever the great scholar had made his emendations. It is difficult to account for this piece of Vandalism, except by the supposition that whoever did it was desirous of publishing the notes as his own.

During the principal librarianship of Mr Bond—which, to the regret of all those who are interested in the British Museum, has within the last few weeks been brought to a close by his resignation of the office—the facilities offered to readers have been enormously increased. The introduction of the electric light has enabled them to continue their studies through foggy days and winter evenings; a beginning has been made in the herculean task of printing the general catalogue; readers' tickets have been converted from temporary to permanent passes; and the accommodation in the room itself has been extended to four hundred and sixty seats. But *pari passu* with these facilities, the demand for tickets has so increased that it is often impossible to obtain a seat after mid-day. If only those who are worthy of the privilege of admission were allowed in, there would be room and to spare for

all; but the difficulty, as may be well understood, is where to draw the line. Many suggestions have been made to relieve the existing congestion, not the least amusing of which was lately advanced by a mechanic, who proposed that as he and his fellow-craftsmen find it convenient sometimes to go to the reading-room on Saturday afternoons, clergymen, who are always to be found there in goodly numbers on Saturday, should on that

day be excluded from it. As we must wait for the adoption of any such course until that halcyon day arrives when King Mob shall be supreme, we must hope that some feasible plan will presently be devised by which the inestimable advantages offered by the Museum reading-rooms shall be enjoyed only by those who are worthy of them, and shall not be thrown away upon hangers-on to the skirts of literature.

SIBYLLINE LEAVES.

THE story of our love is incomplete;
 The leaves of childhood and of youth are missing;
 Yet "better late than never" 'twas to meet,
 Our lips, at least, are not too old for kissing.

What rapture to have loved as boy and girl!
 How sweet to have been playfellows together;
 Over one fairy-tale our heads to curl,
 Inseparable birdlings of a feather!

To mate in the first freshness of our youth
 Was happiness life never to us granted;
 Lonely apart we pined, each seeking truth!
 Together, we had found love's land enchanted.

The past is flown, the future still have we;
 So let our twin souls blend beyond the ages,
 Till, young and fair, beside the Jasper Sea,
 We may discover all love's torn-out pages.

GEORGE HILL.

IN A GARDEN OF JOHN EVELYN'S.

"I NEVER had any desire so strong, or so like to covetousness, as that one which I have had always; that I might be master at last of a small house and large garden, with very moderate conveniences joined to them; and there dedicate the remainder of my life to the culture of them, and the study of nature; yet I stick still in the inn of an hired house and garden among weeds and rubbish."

So wrote Abraham Cowley the poet, in the dedication of his poem, 'The Garden,' to his friend "John Evelyn, Esquire, of Wotton," more than two hundred years ago.

The scene around us and the summer afternoon are alike fitting in time and place to recall the memory of the poet, and of his friend, the author of 'Sylva'; the name itself bringing up ideas of leafy solitudes, the shade of trees, and a healthy country life. Within a two hours' ride over the downs is Chertsey, where Cowley spent the few last years of his life, and where he probably wrote his dedication. From the top of that hill crowned with fir-trees, we can see the wooded valley in which stands the house where Evelyn was born; and the delightful old garden which spreads around us is one of those which he aided to lay out and plant, for his friend the then owner, one of the Howard family, who afterwards became Duke of Norfolk.

There are few, if any, remaining which retain as much of the original plan, or show more distinctly the taste of the designer.

Evelyn had spent ten years of his life abroad, and had cultivated his taste and increased his know-

ledge of all that was beautiful in nature and art; and he had brought from Italy ideas, new to the generality of his countrymen, especially in the adornment of their homes and the planting and laying-out of gardens.

After two hundred years of change of ownership, and the various chances which might have lessened its extent, and shorn it of many of its most attractive features, it is a charming garden which we have come upon in our day's holiday, and are privileged to enter, and to linger in a while, as we let our thoughts travel back those two hundred years, and we recall the life and circumstances of the man whose taste, aided by bountiful nature, imagined and formed a place which, at the present day, with its delicious shade, its retirement, and its picturesque incidents, seems so perfectly to fulfil our ideas of what a garden should be.

It is perhaps an ancient pleasure more than a garden such as belongs to the present day; one which happy circumstances and good taste has left untouched in all its principal features. The growth of years has but added to its charm, and has produced the grandeur of the trees, which must be its chief attraction to a pilgrim to the shrine of "Sylva Evelyn."

It is a rare day for a holiday spent in such surroundings. The July sun is pouring down from a cloudless sky; but there is coolness and deep shade to be found under the spreading branches of the yew-hedge, believed to have been planted by Evelyn, but which has long outgrown the form of a hedge strictly so called. The close-

clipped verdant wall is still a shelter from the southern sun, and the topmost branches stretch overhead in dense layers of shade. The air is hazy with heat; but it is the time of roses, and every breath is loaded with their sweet musky scent. There is no wind to speak of below, but the tops of the great lime-trees, which stand along the margin of the stream flowing through the garden, sway gently to and fro, with a soft rustle, while the leaves of the poplars send out a light shiver with every breath of the summer breeze, suggesting freshness and coolness, though we may not feel it.

There is as much shade as sunshine around us here, and the position, as it slopes to the south, lends itself to all that is most suitable for garden or pleasure. It might be too hot, facing as it does the full sunshine, but for the depth of shade.

Few signs of modern taste have entered here: "bedding out," and those monsters of horticulture known as *massifs*, are unknown. There is not a single ribbon-border anywhere, nor beds of tropical plants: they would be out of place in this garden. The long walk under the yew-trees is trodden hard with the pacing to and fro of feet for two hundred years—it is smoother and softer than any roller could make it; and when the sun finds a space through which to send a shaft of light, it stains the old branches a rich crimson, and throws flecks of tremulous gold on the soft grey of the shadow below.

Here is a space set apart for a rose-garden, and the roses have had their own way in it for years. Trellised arbours lead to it, and the entrance is darkened by overhanging clusters. Below the rose-garden the ground slopes to the

margin of the stream, a swift rippling rivulet, the same which waters all this "sweet valley," as Evelyn calls it, and which has its rise among the heather and fern that clothe the dark-blue ridge, crowned by a tower, which rises over the woods six miles away. There are thickets along the stream, and many a winding walk below tall trees, and all kinds of flowering shrubs overhanging the stream. We notice fewer brilliant effects than tender colours and sweet scents, except at intervals, where great scarlet poppies flaunt in the sun, contrasting with yellow day-lilies or spires of blue lupin, or where masses of golden crocus catch the sunshine in early spring. And here and there among their more cultivated sisters, there is space for a wild flower to find shelter. On the south bank, below the yew-hedge, where the ground is covered with a network of ivy, tufts of sweet violets have found a home; and on this July day, where the sun throws fitful gleams on the ivy-leaves, wild strawberries are ripe, hanging on their slender stems, like little balls of coral. In one dark corner of the yew-hedge, a great root of white bryony hides itself for six months in the year, and then suddenly flings a veil of tenderest green over the dark yew-boughs, studded in autumn with knots of scarlet berries.

Here is a group of ilex-trees, whose shadow falls upon some old brick-work, and flights of stone steps, which lead up to the chief attraction and crowning feature of the garden, a broad grassy terrace, stretching in long perspective for a quarter of a mile. Half-way down its length is a semicircular recess and a pool of clearest water, covered with water-lilies, and dark with overhanging trees, which

hide the entrance to the grotto. The never-ceasing sound of water, cool and clear from its bed, deep in the chalk hills which shut in the valley from the north, falling from a basin of mossy stone ; the abrupt hanging wood of great oak and ash trees above the terrace ; and rising over all, the splendid group of firs, which throw their great limbs and rounded crests to the sky,—all bring back recollections of the sunny south, and the gardens Evelyn had seen in Italy must have been in his thoughts when he planned the scene before us. On the old walls which bound the terrace on the left, there is a delicious mingling of fruit and flowers—China roses and honeysuckles, honey-sweet green-gages, and the rambling branches of an old vine.

“There is continued spring and harvest here ;
Continued, both meeting at one time ;
For both the boughs do laughing blossoms bear,
And with fresh colours fleck the wanton prime.
And eke at once the honeyed trees they climb,
Which seem to labour under their fruits' load,
The while the joyous birds make their pastime
Amongst the shady leaves.”

Spenser's graceful ideal pleases us more than Cowley's poem of the 'Garden,' though it was approved of, and dedicated to the genius whose taste presided over the gardens of the day. It is metaphysical, and the verses of both poets are full of fanciful conceits, and, like others of that date, are puzzling to unclassical readers, burdened as they are with mythological allusions. Cowley's, especially, seems to lack the simplicity and true ring we expect to find in the expressions of one who really appreciates

sylvan scenes and pleasures. His life, passed among the intrigues, the disappointments, and the heart-burnings of an exiled Court, and in a society to which he was not born, and yet depended upon, must have fostered artificial tastes, and have induced him sometimes to envy his friend, whose position as a gentleman of good family and fortune enabled him to indulge in his inclination for a country life in its pleasantest aspects, and his taste for all that was beautiful in nature and art. Cowley died at Chertsey, and it was there most probably, “in the inn of an hired house and garden,” that he wrote the dedication of his poem.

We can imagine the two friends meeting there, when Mr Evelyn rode his good horse over the Surrey hills from his brother's house at Wotton, which afterwards became his own, and where he had in early days, he tells us, “built a study, and made a fish-pond, and an island, and some other solitudes and retirements, resolving to possess himself in some quiet.”

The friends may have discussed the progress of Mr Evelyn's great work, the 'Elysium Britannicum,' which he did not live to publish, in which he discourses, with unwearied interest in his subject, of all things pertaining to horticulture, including what he terms the “celestial influences” and the “philosophico-medical garden” ; the proper arrangements of “knots and parterres, borders and embossments, close walks, and other relievos,” not forgetting such trivial matters as chaplets and festoons, nose-gays and posies, as well as of “vineyards,” which evidently at that time formed part of all English gardens.¹

¹ We have proof of this in the fact of the name still adhering to grounds in

Or Mr Cowley may have criticised Evelyn's proposed answer to Sir George Mackenzie, who had written a book in praise of 'Solitude,' while Evelyn vindicates the higher aims of 'Public Life and Active Employment.' In a letter to Mr Cowley, however, he owns that he had taken up this view of the subject only for argument's sake, adding that he speaks his very soul to his friend when he assures him that he was still of the same mind as he ever had been in his love of a solitary life; and that there "was no person alive who does more honour and breathe after that life and repose."

We can hardly believe that either of the friends had much experience of what a solitary life in the retirement of the country really was, both their experiences being in a very opposite direction, and probably a trial of it would have led them to be of Touchstone's mind: "In respect that it is solitary I like it very well, but in respect that it is private it is a very vile life. Now in respect that it is of the fields it pleaseth me well, but in respect that it is not of the Court it is tedious."

The two friends had much besides in common, for both were ardent royalists. They had both lived to see the triumph of the rebels; to endure the iron rule of those who called themselves the "keepers of the liberties of England"; and to rejoice in the Restoration. Cowley, who had

worked hard for his party, seems to be one of the many who had felt himself neglected when fortune changed; but he seems to have found consolation in the society of his friend, notwithstanding the difference in their circumstances. Evelyn belonged to that class of whom Macaulay speaks, as "well-descended and opulent gentlemen, to whom nothing was wanting of nobility but the name, —high-spirited and ardent, and accustomed to consider dishonour more terrible than death." His fortune made him independent of Court favour, though he was distinguished (if the friendship of Charles II. could be a distinction) whenever he appeared there. Loyalty was part of his religion, and the duty of a loyal gentleman of his position of that time, was to appear frequently at Court. Under such circumstances the conversation between the friends at Cowley's little house at Chertsey may have been on graver matters and of larger interest than those relating to the 'Solitary Life,' or 'Elysium Britannicum.'

It is a sign, however, that John Evelyn took personally no prominent or responsible part in the troubles and distractions of the time, that he was able to turn his thoughts and concentrate his interest upon occupations of a nature so entirely apart from them. His strongest principles had been outraged, his deepest feelings of loyalty wounded; but he had kept him-

the vicinity of some towns and manor-houses. The steep hillside, fronting the south-east at Bath, now entirely built over, is still called the Vineyard; and part of the garden of a fine old manor-house of the Fanes in Kent, situated on the southern slope of the valley of the Medway, also bears the name. The district is celebrated for its hops; and it is remarkable that grapes of an exceptionally fine flavour ripen in the open air on the garden walls. Our forefathers' tastes in wine might, however, be questioned in these days. During his stay in Padua, Evelyn speaks in his 'Diary' of purchasing as a winter provision, 3000 lb. of grapes, and "pressing his own wine, which proved incomparable liquor."

self uninvolved and irresponsible for the failures and disappointments inseparable from the adherents of a failing cause, or a life of political struggle, and we can realise the fact better here than elsewhere,—in this quiet spot, where there is only silent growth and as silent decay, where the only movement is the soft fanning of leaves, the only sounds (for even the birds are silent in the heat) the fall of water. The world is outside us here, though it is not far away, and in two hours' time we might, if we chose, be in the heart of London, with its wear and tear, its fret, worry, and excitement.

Here we know nothing of it, and all is in strong antithesis to it. Meditation, study, perhaps light labour; but we must be able to leave "worry" behind us to enjoy such a scene as this. There is no antidote here for "carking care," unless indeed we are able to shake it off altogether, and to look back upon it in peace. But if this is impossible, if wherever we go care or anxiety (which is the worst form of care) sits up behind, we shall not find anything congenial here. If we would distract our thoughts from a present trouble, or should have a knotty point to settle with ourselves, let us go out of doors by all means, and gain all the help and strength we can from it. We may climb the cliff, and look down upon the great sweep of the sea-shore, and mark the grand rhythmical movement of the advancing tide, whose slow majestic march into the bay can be likened to no other movement visible to mortal man, when solemn movement and solemn sound are merged in one, perfect time, and perfect tune. There we may forget our cares for a time, and be able to

see their littleness, or our minds may be stretched to a great conclusion. Or we may mount the hill inland,—a breezy down perhaps, where the world below is bounded only by the sky,—when miles of country lie before us in all the variety of hill and dale, tower and town, and where distance turns the "busy hum of men" into a profound silence; there we may lose sight of ourselves and of our personal aims and interests, and for once "take a generous impulse for our guide." Here, in these secluded bowers, there are no such outlets for the turbulent spirit—the influences are too gentle, too serene—they may sooth and heal, but they do not rule.

What, then, were the circumstances and surroundings of the man who could give time and thought, during the troubled era in which he lived, to the planting of trees, and the laying out of gardens and pleasure-grounds, for his friends or for himself? Few of his class and position had leisure for it. At the time of Evelyn's entrance into the world, the country was in the utmost confusion. The dispute between the King and the Parliament had broken out in open rebellion—dividing relations, friends, and neighbours, and making it a necessity for all men of position to declare themselves on one side or another.

For nearly a hundred years England had had peace within her borders. The last blood shed in civil war had been caused by the Rising of the North in the reign of Elizabeth, and a comparatively settled state of things had followed. The great feudal castles and fortified houses had given place to such stately homes as Hatfield, Penshurst, and Burleigh, and many a country house of lesser pretension, each surrounded by its park and

woods. Many a manor-house had its vineyard and walled garden, its bowling-green and "pleached arbour," for outdoor enjoyment and leisure; and it was to the further improvement of these that Evelyn brought his taste, his experience, acquired abroad, and his love and interest in country life and its pursuits, which had been fostered, we cannot but think, by the beauty and sylvan solitude of his native place, which seem always to have been keenly appreciated by him, for he dwells continually in his 'Diary' upon them, and upon the charms of the woods and valleys, and the running streams of the country round Wotton.

Altered as it is in many ways by increased population, and the advanced civilisation of two hundred years, the district is still lonely and retired. The great city, within thirty miles' distance, has made giant strides into the country; but the valley of the Tillingbourne is Evelyn's "sweet valley" still.

There still remain large districts shaded by thick woods; breezy commons clothed in heather and bracken; steep sandy lanes, relics of the time when the traffic of the country was carried on by pack-horses, with high precipitous banks darkened by overhanging trees; whitewashed cottages, with timber and weather-tiled walls, nestle in orchards and green lanes. The roofs of many of the old churches and farmhouses are still covered with heavy Sussex slate; rapid streams still ripple through the meadows which surround Evelyn's early home, and beneath the woods he loved. The great mass of Leith Hill rising to the south of the house, and its surrounding woods, still remains in its uncultivated beauty, clad in heather

and fern and fir-forest; and when Evelyn came over from Wotton, and designed for his friend Mr Howard this stately terrace, and laid out the "plot of his canal and garden," and the "crypta" through the hill, he may have watched the sun sink behind St Martha's hill and chapel, as we see it to-day. Close at the back of the "mountain and Pausilippe,"—as, evidently in remembrance of Italy, he calls the grotto, cut through the steep bank above the terrace,—is a narrow track called the "Pilgrim's Way," where for three hundred years came troops of pilgrims gathered from all parts of Europe, making their way from the sea-coast to the shrine of the great St Thomas of Canterbury.

It could have been little more than a hundred years before Evelyn was born that the stream of pilgrims began to dwindle, and then ceased; for, as we read in Dean Stanley's 'Memorials of Canterbury,' it was in 1511 that Erasmus and his friend Dean Colet made their memorable visit to the shrine itself, and dared to express their disapproval of what they saw, which was the beginning of the end. And it may have been when the shrine, and the pilgrims themselves, fell into disrepute, that the name of the chapel on the hill overlooking the "Pilgrim's Way," and called after the "Martyr," was changed into one less likely to give offence.

The abrupt hill, broken by wild ground and wooded to the base, with the blue outline of Hind Head in the distance, and crowned by the chapel of the "Martyr," must often have recalled an Italian landscape to Evelyn. The house of Wotton itself, standing amid deep woods, has been greatly altered and enlarged since the time when John Evelyn inherited it

from his brother; but the site is the same, and a portion of the old dwelling exists on the southern side of the house, which he describes as "large and ancient, suitable to those hospitable times, and sweetly surrounded by venerable woods."

In the house, carefully preserved, is the library collected by Evelyn; the MSS. of many of his works, and the correspondence of men prominent in the political events of the time. There we may see, too, the sketches he drew, and the plans he made for future works in designing "plots, canals, and grottos." Evelyn was an enthusiastic royalist; and one of the most interesting and well-authenticated of the relics at Wotton is the Book of Common Prayer, bound in crimson velvet, with a stain on one of the leaves, which indeed suggests the truth, that it was used by Charles I. on the scaffold.

Within a mile of the house stands the little parish church of Wotton, so often mentioned in the 'Diary.' There is nothing in the architecture to tell its date, or of any special interest, except traces of a "lepers' window" in the chancel, and the unpretending little edifice of which Evelyn speaks in his 'Diary,' as the porch where he learned to read.

The monuments within, of black and white marble, representing the heads of the family, and quaint rows of kneeling children,—the two plain white marble sarcophagi, coffin-shaped, beneath which lie the remains of John Evelyn and his wife, have nothing remarkable in them, or different from what we find in many an old country church.

In the small black marble tablet into the wall, we seem to see traces of a sad story, in the epi-

taph and the few simple words recording the death of Elizabeth Darcy, at the age of twenty years. We remember that she was the daughter of John Evelyn's parents, whose early death occurred when he was a boy, and of whom he speaks, as "of a virtue beyond her years, or the merit of her husband, the worst of men;" and we wonder if the touching lines on the tablet to her memory came from the mother who mourned her till her death, or from the brother who speaks of her with such strong affection.

The sunshine, coming through the deep green of the trees which stand round the church, stains the white walls of the chancel containing the monuments of the Evelyns of Wotton. The rooks swing and caw round the quaint old tower and low wooden belfry; the song of blackbirds and thrushes comes from the thorns and hollies which grow on the slope beyond the churchyard: all else is silence and peace.

It was among such scenes as these that, in the year 1620, John Evelyn was born, the second son of that branch of his family which had settled at Wotton. The Evelyns were declared Royalists, but it does not appear that any of them had hitherto taken an active part in public affairs, or had ever risked life or fortune in the Royal cause.

When the war between the King and the Parliament broke out, John Evelyn alone, then barely of age, made any attempt to take up arms for the King—in which he failed; for he tells us in his 'Diary,' quaintly, and in as few words as possible, how, after the fight at Brentford, which followed shortly upon the battle of Edgehill, he "came in with his horse and arms, just at the retreat of

the rebels, but was not permitted to stay, by reason of the army marching to Gloucester, which would have left him and his brothers exposed to ruin, without any advantage to his Majesty."

A cadet of the family, and having lost his father the year before, he was probably far more dependent upon his brothers and others than he chooses to state. An explanation of the cause of his leaving the army, and taking no further measures to support the King, may have reflected upon the character and loyalty of those nearest to him, and he preferred to take upon himself the consequences of a course which has been considered to have left a blot on his character.

In the 'Diary' we are told little beyond the bare facts; but it is likely that he suffered considerably for his persistence in openly declaring his adherence to the King, though no active part was possible to him. He refused steadily to sign the Covenant (to which refusal he adhered to the end); and having, he tells us, "sent by a friend his black *manège* horse and furniture (a valuable gift in those days) to his Majesty at Oxford," he obtained a licence to travel from the King, and left England for the Continent, where he remained for ten years. It is probable that the firm and independent line of conduct taken by him in these early days, showing remarkable decision of character in so young a man, was the beginning of the strong affection always shown for him by King Charles I. and by his family. In after-years he proved his loyalty and zeal by serving the Royal cause boldly and ably, and often at the risk of life and property, by his writings, and by his influence, which he used wherever he could make it felt.

It was during the years which he spent abroad that John Evelyn's education may be said to have been principally carried on. He had been to Oxford before his father died, but, by his own admission, did little to distinguish himself there; and he had been entered in the Inner Temple, where he tells us he spent some months in "studying a little, but dancing and fooling more." He was evidently one of those whose mental powers needed to be roused and attracted by congenial subjects, and to whom a routine marked out for him was antagonistic; whatever were the means used to attain the end, he certainly became one of the most accomplished scholars of his time; a lover and connoisseur of art in a degree much more rare in the days in which he lived than in our own; and an enthusiastic student of science of every kind. There can be no doubt that added to these he was a man of high principle and religious faith; a loyal subject and a true friend; as well as an affectionate husband and father.

His 'Diary' is a book well known to all English readers; less perhaps of this generation than the last. There is much in the reading of it to increase our regard for one who may be said to have been a sagacious spectator, though not an actor, in the troubled times when the England of the Tudors and the Stuarts was passing into the hands of the constitutional sovereigns of Great Britain.

That part of the 'Diary' which relates to his early life abroad, presents a remarkable and attractive picture of the interests and amusements of a young country gentleman and a Cavalier, of whose character and conduct we are accustomed to form a very different opinion.

Wherever he went, we find him attracted by all that was most worthy in the men and women among whom he was thrown, and in the aspects of religion, science, and art. All was new to him, and claimed his ardent pursuit. At one time we find him entering with zeal into deep theological arguments with the Jesuit fathers, or with the doctors of the Sorbonne. At another, his interest and admiration are awakened by the pictures and priceless objects of that art which had, for the last two hundred years, become a new power in Europe, making the *cinque cente* an era in itself. Now, we find him going deep into natural philosophy and physics, and attending lectures upon anatomy, a study for which he seems to have had especial interest; and again we hear of him leaving Rome, that he may devote himself for a whole winter to hard study in Padua, where he succeeded in gaining the highest honours ever accorded to a foreigner; and through all we trace the deep religious tone of his mind, the firmness of his Christian faith, and the high standard by which he chose his friends. Of his long after-life, spent chiefly at Sayes Court; the zealous part he took in bringing about the Restoration; his literary occupations and various employments in the public service; his sorrows and disappointments in the loss of his children, only one of whom survived him,—we may read the detail in the 'Diary,' first published in 1819. John Evelyn's judgment and conduct, during a life passed at a time of excited action and great political change, were guided less by *opinions* than by strong principles; and these were not affected or disturbed by the failure and weaknesses of the individuals

who were the chief actors. He worked zealously and honestly for that cause which he believed to be the right, without looking for private advancement or reward; and he died, as he had lived, a plain country gentleman.

It is nearly two hundred years since "Sylva Evelyn" was laid in his grave in the quiet country church at Wotton, within sight of the woods surrounding his beloved home. Among the many subjects of far greater importance to which he gave his attention for the benefit of others, we may note that to which we have already alluded, and one especially impressed upon us here, and feel grateful to his memory, believing it was he who first gave an impetus to the more general planting of woods, the cultivation of flowers, and to the laying out and adorning of gardens in many a country home—especially when we realise how much such interests and occupations go to the enjoyment of our lives at the present day.

The gardens of his day were set apart much less for the display of flowers and the exercise of horticultural skill than for the enjoyment of rest, leisure, and retirement. Trees, water, sheltered walks, sweet sights and sweet scents, were made the principal objects, and were more sought after than the brilliant floral effects now aimed at. Flowers formed but a part, and were accessories to the whole; but the gorgeous masses of colour, the multitudinous variety, cultivated with the utmost skill to ensure perfection in bloom and size, such as we have now, were quite unknown. Roses, red and white, carnations, stocks, and many hardy sweet-smelling perennials had each its individual charm,

seldom improved by high culture or "hybridising," and they lent their sweetness and bloom to adorn the trellised walk or shady arbour, or made gay with a delicate and sober gaiety the parterre which ended the vista of clipped hornbeam or yews, in a far more modest fashion than in the present age of "panels" and "ribbon-borders."

And if this was so in our northern climate, it was still more so in Italy, from which Evelyn drew so many of his ideas, and where the natural beauty of the scenery, the climate, and the habits of the people, all conduce to the enjoyment of outdoor life, making shade, coolness, and retirement the very essentials of a garden.

Evelyn could not reproduce in his native country the stately groves of cypress and ilex, the stone-pines and aloes, the balustraded terrace and open *loggia*, which made up so much of his recollections of Italian gardens; but he could in some measure please his taste in a likeness of them in the formal lines of the yew-hedge, the grotto in the cool shade of the trees, and in the groves of hardy fir, as graceful and picturesque as any Italian pine, and in the forming of such stately terraces as the one we have before our eyes. Neither could he attain to the fountain with its abundant supply of water, poured from the lip of some old marble cistern, a relic of classic times, the cool refreshing rush made more welcome by the burning sun. But he has left on record his ideas on the acquisition of "running water" as almost indispensable in a garden intended for perfect enjoyment; and we may even now benefit by some of his experiences in his remarks made in his 'Diary'

on every garden or pleasure-ground which came under his notice in his travels abroad, or in his after-life at home.

His love and interest in the subject is unflinching, whether as a young man on his travels he describes the magnificent gardens in Paris, the origin of the present "Elysian Fields," just then laid out at an enormous cost by Mary of Medici; or visits Richelieu's garden at Ruelle, with its grand display of fountains and water-works, "with curious contrivances to *wet* the spectator" (!); or when we find him lost in admiration of the gardens attached to the villas and palaces at Verona, Florence, or Rome: whether we see him leaving London with his friend Lord Cornbury, in his "swift coach," to superintend the improvements making at the great man's country house in Oxfordshire; or when he gratifies some more humble friend and neighbour by a visit to his "orange-house," or Dutch flower-garden.

Since that day the taste and skill exercised in these things has grown and increased to such proportions as almost to have changed their aspect, and to have lost in a great measure the simplicity and the love of natural beauty in which they originated. Flowers have become one of the many objects of luxury of the nineteenth century, and a great source of wealth to many. The world has certainly entered into our gardens and has laid its grasp upon the flowers; but we must still acknowledge that it was John Evelyn who was one of the first who brought such tastes into our country life, under their best aspects. Many a quiet country home has gained in grace and beauty; many a troubled and

solitary life has been gladdened, and has found interest, rest, and even happiness in the pursuits he loved, and preferred among many more generally engrossing occupations.

He wrote his 'Sylva' for those who were able to plant extensive woods, and lay out acres in terraced gardens such as these; we are sure that had he lived in our days, his kindly heart and genial sympathy would have rejoiced to know how many there are who now feel as great delight in cherishing a few flowers in some small garden; in making bright and attractive the surroundings of some humble home, as he did in the "plots, canals, and parterres," which he designed for his friends in the larger world in which he lived.

But the setting sun is casting long shadows across the terrace; the water-lilies gleam white through the shadows which are darkening the pool; the lights are fading; and the pictures of two hundred years ago, the associations of a good man's life, long gone to rest, are passed as a dream. We may linger no longer in John Evelyn's garden and pleasance; but as we leave it let us express a hope that such gardens, rare as they are, may long retain their character, their depth of shade, their seclusion, and their sylvan grace, which make them so fitting for the indulgence of a luxury *not* on the increase,—but which is daily becoming more rare to find, and more difficult to keep,—the luxury of "retired leisure."

A NIGHT IN A SCOTCH SWAMP.

READER, have you ever passed a night in a swamp, Scotch or otherwise? Because if you have not, take the advice of one who has, and in the short but emphatic phrase used by Mr Punch on a memorable occasion, Don't! It is not agreeable, and might have unpleasant consequences. But as Montaigne truly says, the profit of one man is the inconvenience of another; and if I now consent to tell you how I came into that *galère*, it is that you may be saved from a similar mischance. That there is need of a warning voice is sufficiently proved by the fact that no season passes, as I am told, without one or more parties of unfortunate pedestrians losing themselves precisely as I did, and being overtaken by night in that same swampy glen. If, then, in relating this adventure, I should seem to you to be writing myself down an ass, think not that it is in any way because I share honest Dogberry's ambition in that line, but solely because I would benefit my kind, and would wish that my inconvenience should turn to your profit.

And who can tell how many of my readers may not be grateful to me some day for this note of warning? For the scene of my adventure was the Isle of Arran, perhaps the best known and greatest favourite of all the health resorts on the west coast of Scotland: a miniature Switzerland, surrounded by the element the Briton loves and was born to rule. Everybody goes to Arran at some time in his life. And no wonder. For every one who has been there chants its praises. Its beauty, its endless walks and mountain

climbs; its fishing, its boating, its bathing; its health-giving air, and its freedom from the surveillance of Mrs Grundy. It is said to be the one spot in the British Isles where that lady has been unable to establish a footing,—no doubt owing very much to the fact that the Duke (in Arran the "Duke" always means the Duke of Hamilton) will allow no building in the island; so that there is hardly anywhere to be seen a structure—barring the Duke's own castle and shooting-lodges—more imposing than a whitewashed cottage. And these cottages are packed with visitors all through the summer in a way that would do credit to the capabilities of that London lodging-house where, it is said, the occupants of one room were quite happy until the lodger in the middle took in a friend! The normal inhabitants of the cottages retire in the summer months to the cow-shed or byre, a fact which will account for the question attributed to the Duke on some occasion when a cottager asked him for permission to build a byre. "And I suppose, Sandy, you will want a fireplace in it?" How these small low-roofed cottages can contain all the large persons who may be seen to emerge from them during the summer months has ever been a standing puzzle. But I am divagating. What I wanted to impress upon the reader was, that since every one goes to Arran sooner or later, the chances are very great that he may some day be glad to have had this note of warning sounded for his behoof.

As already indicated, I was spending the summer in Arran. I had done most of the steamer

excursions round and about the island and its neighbourhood. I had driven to most parts of the island, and I had taken a few moderate walks. Suddenly I was fired with an ambition. I would walk from Brodick, our headquarters, to Corrie, and thence to Glen Sannox, the grandest of the Arran glens; would then walk up Glen Sannox, and crossing what is called the "Hunter's Saddle," a low *col*, I would get down into Glen Rosa, and so home again. This was the walk a friend had sketched out for himself and me to do on the first available opportunity. But the available opportunity seemed to tarry, whilst the desire of distinguishing myself by a walk that really could be called a walk—for up to the year 1822, when this particular walk was, to the astonishment of every one on the island, perpetrated by two young ladies, it had always been regarded as rather an impracticable feat, except for shepherds and hunters, "and suchlike,"—I say the desire of distinguishing myself burned ever more intensely. So that at last I confided my design of attempting it, without my friend's guidance, to my daughter, a maiden of just fifteen summers, whom, as her name is not M., I will call N. She also was ambitious of trying her powers of walking; she had never climbed anything in her life higher than Primrose Hill, and she caught eagerly at the idea. I made the prudent mental reservation that I would turn back at any moment if I found that what we were climbing, or had to climb, seemed dangerously steep,—at any rate to persons like ourselves, unused to climbing, and unprovided with any of the paraphernalia which that wise and intrepid mountaineer Tartarin de Taraseon took care to

arm himself with before he set out to perform his great mountain-ering feats. No grappling-irons, or ice-axe, or rope warranted to stand any amount of strain, had we. Not even the regulation nails in our boots; not even an alpenstock! Only our umbrellas. I was well resolved, then, I would run no risks. A heavy man of forty-five, *père de famille*, weighted with cares and responsibilities, has no right to run risks; and I knew my duty to myself. Walking was one thing—it might keep down the podagra. Broken limbs was quite a different matter. So, well fortified with judicious resolves, and also with a flask of whisky, and satchel filled with sandwiches, the usual concomitants of a walk in Arran, where inns are few and far between, we started. But, strangely enough, nothing was said at home about the ambitious part of the walk. That was to remain a profound secret, to astonish their weak minds with when we should come home. All that was given out was that we were going for a good long walk, should probably go as far as Glen Sannox, which would be fifteen miles out and home, and might possibly explore a little way up the glen.

The morning had broken both dark and hazy, betokening rain; but in Arran the old distich, "Rain before seven, fine before eleven," is so often verified, that notwithstanding the torrents which had poured down all through the preceding day, I made up my mind that the chances were at least even that the day would improve, and I would not let a little uncertainty in the weather—where all is such uncertainty—daunt us in our project. My provisions were fulfilled. When we started, the mountain-tops were

hardly visible through their cloud-caps, and the opposite Ayrshire coast was quite invisible. But as the day advanced it gradually grew finer and finer. The sun drove clouds and mist away, and shone down on us in full blaze all through the afternoon. Gaily we sped along the six miles of flat but beautiful road which leads from Brodick to Corrie, skirting the sea-shore all the way,—the only sound the lapping of the little waves against the beach, broken occasionally by the cry of a seabird. Although the morning was no longer young, we met few people on our way; but Corrie was very much alive, its inhabitants in flannels and light-coloured dresses sitting and lying everywhere about on the beautiful rocks; while in front of the hotel, on a small patch of level greensward, some vigorous lawn-tennis players were busily at play—or rather, I should perhaps say, at work, for tennis is a serious business now,—despite the fact that every ball which was hit out of court must inevitably go into the sea. By the time we had reached Glen Sannox it was nearly two o'clock; so, looking out for comfortable seats on the rocks beside the lovely burn which comes bounding down the glen, we halted for our mid-day meal. We had rather ridiculed the idea of taking such a large pile of sandwiches as thoughtful hands had prepared for us; but it had been suggested that we might be glad of a second meal before we got home; and lucky for us it was, as it afterwards turned out, that we had been thus liberally provided. Besides, I *have* observed that a pile of sandwiches which looks mountainous when you are called upon to carry it, especially when you happen to

have just finished a good breakfast, has a trick of ceasing to retain that mountainous character when it comes to be confronted by two good appetites, sharpened by a long walk. Anyhow, there was not too much left on this occasion for a second meal; and glancing up the glen at the formidable-looking height we should have to ascend, I felt it was by no means unlikely we should be glad of something more before we got back.

Glen Sannox is the wildest of all the glens in Arran, its sides being formed of great granite mountains, whilst at the end shoots up the rugged Cior-Mhor or Great Comb. Now, the Ordnance map shows a plain road the whole way up the glen, and across the saddle into Glen Rosa. It seemed, therefore, that there could be no doubt about the way. All we had to do was to adhere to the path from the beginning. I soon found, however, that what was marked on the map as a plain road or path, was no road, and was not plain. A mountain-track, which disappeared again and again, and required the sharpest attention to pick up afresh, was the only guide. Still, as it followed the route prescribed by the map—viz., the left side of the burn—it seemed all right, and we plodded steadily forward. Progress was considerably retarded by the long heather, and by our having to avoid marshy bits of ground, as well as little rivulets which frequently crossed our path; and it was nearly four o'clock by the time we came to the head of the glen. As I know now, we had followed the left side of the burn too long, and consequently the saddle to our left hand, which was the one we ought to have climbed, was almost left behind us; and the wall which

towered above us on that side was so sheer, that I felt certain it could not be intended that we should get over it. The other saddle, which lay rather to our right hand, and was the one to which our mountain-track seemed to lead, was to my mind evidently the right one. If I had fully realised at the time that the Hunter's Saddle was to the left of Cior-Mhor, and that the monster which blocked the end of Glen Sannox, and which we were now quite close to, was Cior-Mhor, I should have known that we had missed the proper place where the path crosses the burn, and should have felt we must retrace our steps and seek for guidance as to the right way some other day. Unfortunately, at that time I did not distinctly know these things. What I knew was, that there was a saddle which led into Glen Rosa, and a plain path on the map the whole way. The path—such as it was—had certainly not crossed the burn up to that point, and therefore I concluded I must be still right; and we accordingly continued to pursue the even tenor of our way. Moreover, what was before us looked in no way too difficult, if only the spots which at the distance seemed hard rock would yield heathery bits when we came up to them, as some which we had now passed had done. For I was well aware that it would be dangerous for us with no nails in our boots to attempt any rock work. We were gradually getting up very high; and the sight of all these wild peaks which now surrounded us was grand in the extreme. It is a curious circumstance about Glen Sannox, and adds to its wildness and grandeur, that the sun never shines into it. We had had the sunshine on us at the entrance,

but directly we had got into the glen itself we were in the gloom almost of twilight. In order not to feel the steepness, we zigzagged as the diligences do in Switzerland; and after about an hour's climbing we reached what I was fondly supposing would be the top. Imagine my surprise and chagrin when I found another wall of mountain confronting us at a short distance off, and over which we must climb if we were to get out of Glen Sannox! I had seen this from below, but had fancied that it must be one of the side walls of Glen Rosa. I had never supposed it was another barrier to be surmounted. What was to be done? A council of war must be held. It was evident that we were not where we ought to be, and that if we climbed our new enemy we should have a much greater climb than we had ever bargained for. At the same time, looking behind us, I did not like the idea of a descent. Although I knew we could zigzag down as we had zigzagged up, I felt nervous as to my ability to face the precipice beneath us, into which one false step might hurl us. I knew I could give N. no assistance, though, to do her justice, she seemed much less in need of it than I did myself, for she climbed far more easily, springing upward like a young goat, and she did not seem nervous about the descent; but there was one place where we had had to go up four steps of perpendicular rock with the water running over it, making it slippery and in the highest degree difficult and dangerous to descend. The recollection of that place decided us. We must try the second ascent, and trust to Providence as to where we should land. Accordingly we pressed forward,

hoping for the best. This second ascent proved worse than the first, there being great beds of shale that we had to get over, which being loose in many places made it difficult to secure a foothold. Of track there was none here to speak of,—at least there were many sheep-tracks, crossing and re-crossing one another, but no one track to lead us aright. At one moment we found ourselves brought up by an absolutely impossible piece of rock; and I was wondering what would happen next, when fortunately I descried an easier way at some distance off, and “making careful tracks” sideways for a considerable distance, we reached this coign of vantage, from which we managed to turn our formidable assailant’s flank; and finally, by going on hands and knees for the last bit of steep and loose shale, we were able to scramble to the top. Yes, we were actually on the top at last, with a long grassy slope before us leading down to a glen which I still fondly hoped might prove to be Glen Rosa, although it did not look in the least like Glen Rosa as I had seen it when exploring the other end in a walk from Brodick! We were far higher than we should have been on the Hunter’s Saddle; and in so far as we had climbed even a more formidable height than we had intended, N. had the pleasure of feeling that she had really done something in the way of climbing, and had proved that she could climb! After our exertions we both felt that some refreshment would be welcome, and sitting down by one of the ever-present burns, we attacked the remaining sandwiches, gratefully thanking those whose wisdom had provided them, and thinking how much more we needed them than they had ever imagined we should.

It was at best a very light repast; but I thought it prudent to reserve one sandwich each in case we should want it more before we got back to civilisation. To tell the truth, I was by no means happy. I hoped, but I could hardly believe, that the glen which we saw at some distance was Glen Rosa. And if it was not, what was it, and where were we? I looked again and again at the map without becoming any wiser. However, there was no use in hesitation. The cry must still be, Forward. So on we walked. By the time we got to the bottom of the slope and found ourselves in this valley, all doubt vanished. It was too certain that we were not in Glen Rosa; and we should clearly have an immense additional walk before we could get into it, or on to some way that would take us home. I could not help admiring N.’s brightness and courage under these circumstances. Although the child knew we were lost, that we should certainly have several hours’ more walking before us, and were quite uncertain when we might get home, or what might be in store for us, she was as cheerful as though we had been on the right road and quite close to home. She could call my attention to a magnificent waterfall which we were now passing, and which I had not, I confess, the heart to look at or admire; and she was keen to pick white heather or any rare or interesting plants she could find, putting them into my sandwich-satchel to keep for her. Gloomy thoughts began to assail me as I saw day gradually fading, and we, though resolutely walking forward, seeming to make no progress in that great glen. For path there was none, and all we could do was to follow the course of the burn, which seemed to flow all

down the glen, and must eventually bring us out somewhere! But the burn twisted and turned in the most provokingly serpentine way, not going straight ahead, like a decent sort of burn, but provokingly winding, and almost doubling back; and if ever we attempted to cut off a corner, "splosh" we floundered in the marshy soil, and had at once to retreat. The one single spot that seemed at all dry was the very edge of the burn, all else was one vast morass. Again and again we hoped for better things, made attempts on the mountain-side, or made attempts to leave the provoking burn; but all to no effect: we were ignominiously driven back—the swampy ground was everywhere. Hour after hour went on in this way; darkness was rapidly setting in. Still the end of the glen looked as far off as ever. I was just speculating whether I should be able to keep my footing so close to the burn if it grew much darker, when I was suddenly plumped into the stream, the contingency which I was contemplating having arrived. Here was a nice addition to the comforts of the situation! N. had already talked of our having to sleep in the open air—a course which I was much afraid of, and unwilling to agree to if it could possibly be avoided. But this would make it sheer madness. To lie down, wet through, would be courting certain death, or at least rheumatic fever. No; we must stumble on as best we could until we could find some sheltering cottage. Happily neither of us felt at all tired, though tramping for hours through heather and long reedy grass which reached to one's knees, might have been expected to fatigue us pretty considerably. About half an hour after my souse in the stream, and when I was beginning to get a

little dry, we were forced to cross the stream, as the ground on our side seemed suddenly to have developed from only a swamp into an absolute lake. To find a fordable place in the half-dark was no easy matter. Finally, I chose a place which only demanded a few strides and did not seem very deep. I waded across first; it was considerably over my knees. As I was wet through already, the additional wetting seemed of little consequence; but N. thought it best to take off her boots and stockings, which she threw across to me to take charge of for her. Whilst she stooped to do this, she became the butt of myriads of midges. They had been troubling us for some time; but now they availed themselves of her helpless condition to pour in whole broadsides upon her, and in a few moments there was not a spot of her face left that did not tell the tale of their visitation. Talk of mosquitoes! Midges are very nearly as maddening; and there is this point about them which makes them worse—you cannot kill them. There is nothing to kill. They are mere invisible specks, giving you no more satisfaction in sweeping them out of existence than in flipping specks of dust off your coat. Whilst to kill a mosquito! Who does not know the grim satisfaction of killing one of those foes of the human race? You feel as if you were avenging yourself and committing a good action at the same time. But mosquitoes and midges must alike be put up with. They are the flies in the pot of ointment of life, which otherwise might be too unmixedly good for those who live in the lovely countries which produce these pests. It is Nature's way of restoring the balance and making things a little even. However, N. bore her

troubles like a man—or rather, I ought perhaps in fairness to say, like a woman; for women suffer more, and make less ado about it, than men, as a rule.

Well, we had crossed the burn, and found at first that we were better off; but the darkness was coming on apace, and it was soon impossible to distinguish stones from water. Tributary rills came down to our burn, and across these it was now difficult to get, for we could not see one foot before the other. Another council of war was held; and as we could see neither to go forward nor to go backward, the wisest thing seemed, after all, to wait where we were until the dawn should once more enable us to see where we were going. There was no moon, and not the ghost of a star. With the greatest difficulty I could just manage to make out the time by my watch. It was a quarter past nine. It would not be light enough for us to resume our march till half-past four. We had therefore seven long hours before us. It would be too fatiguing to stand. We must therefore lie down; but I felt that with my boots filled with water as they were, not to speak of my clothes generally from head to foot being only half dry, it would be dangerous to let myself go to sleep, as I should then wake with a chill. We had no wrap or rug to throw over us, nor anything to put under us. The ground was covered with heather, but was soaking wet. However, that could not be helped. Happily the night was warm, and, by way of some sort of covering for us, I plucked, until my hands were quite sore and I was obliged to desist, some of the dry grass and heather about us, and strewed it over us. I then made N., who is a chilly little mortal by nature,

nestle as close into me as I could, and so we lay all through that night. About every hour we got up and changed our position. By that time the side that was uppermost was pretty cold, and was wet with the heavy dew which fell; the undermost was wet from the damp earth, and painful from the lying on our hard couch. A change of posture was therefore necessary, both to relieve the aching, and to chafe the cold, limbs. For the first three hours, despite the fact that my boots were full of water, my feet remained warm, owing, I suppose, to the long day's exercise in the open air having thoroughly heated my blood; but as early morning set in, my feet, too, began to get cold, and I had then to stamp about and hug myself, cabman fashion, whenever we rose. Our heather blanket gradually got dissipated by our movements, and it, too, being quite wet with the dew, made a sorry substitute for a rug. The hours went by wearily, wearily. The silence was intense. The darkness utter. We wondered what they were thinking at home,—whether they would be sending out people to search for us, or whether they would hope that we had got to some friendly inn, too tired to go on farther and too late to telegraph. Our hope was that; our consolation, that they could not see us. Towards two o'clock a cold wind began to sweep across us, and at one moment I feared it was going to rain. Happily that misery was spared us. Having had but three sandwiches since two o'clock, I began to feel the pangs of hunger, to throttle which I fastened my waistband as tightly as I could. N. declared she was not hungry; and as she was not used, as I was, to a nine-o'clock supper, she had not suffered quite

such a disarrangement of meals, and it may have been true. I determined, however, that we must keep our last sandwich as long as we possibly could, and that it would not do to breakfast off it when we got up. We did not know whether there might not yet be another climb before us and we should want all our strength for it if there were. Turning over the matter in my mind in the night, I felt nearly sure that the glen we were in was Glen Iorsa (pronounced *Ersa*), and if so, we must come out at last at Dugarry, the Duke's hunting-lodge on the sea-shore on the west side of the island. There we should, no doubt, be able to get some food. Just as, after all these hours' watching, I was getting perilously near to dozing off, we saw that it was light enough for us to move. We therefore struck our tents, which consisted in throwing off the little wet grass and heather that had still kept faithful to us, washed our faces and hands in the burn, and started. As I had nothing to eat, I thought the next best thing was to drink; and so, on hydropathic principles, I took in a good supply of cold water as something to walk on,—having a constitutional inability to walk on an empty stomach. My whisky had gone the day before, except just a drop that, like the sandwich, I was reserving for the last extremity.

Strangely enough, we felt in quite good spirits, and even rested by our unrestful (as I should have thought it) night. The good spirits were no doubt due to the feeling that we had escaped something; for lying down there in the open country with no sort of protection, one felt at the mercy of any man or beast or any ghostly inhabitant that might be prowling about. One requires to get used to these

things. And it was the first time I had ever slept in the open air in my life! In the early morning I remember being startled by strange croakings that seemed to cry "Go back! go back!" and if I had been inclined to be superstitious, I should no doubt have taken this for a warning that I was on the wrong road, and might have been induced to desist from my project of following the burn, and have actually turned back. But fortunately I saw that this was simply an aural delusion, and that it was but the croaking of the frogs who were talking to each other in their own way, and were not concerned with us or the road we were to take.

The ground, after our getting through the particularly swampy bit which had foiled us the night before, proved drier as we gradually advanced, and by-and-by we could see something like a path. At last the burn ran into a lake. This proved to me beyond doubt that the glen must be Glen Iorsa, and that we were now not very far from Dugarry. Finally, about two hours after we had started, we descried a cottage in the distance (the first sign of human life that we had seen since we had turned into Glen Sannox the preceding afternoon), and as it was clear we should have no more rocks to encounter, I felt we might indulge ourselves with that last sandwich. In another half-hour we reached the Duke of Hamilton's shooting-lodge, and there we were most kindly and hospitably received by the game-keeper's wife, who first insisted on our having some spirits, and then provided us with a bountiful Scotch breakfast. I may safely say I never ate such a hearty one in my life, for I was half-famished and was growing

quite faint with hunger. Indeed, I doubt whether I could have gone on much longer. The good woman would not hear of our paying anything; but seeing that most of those who lose themselves in that great glen trying, as I was doing, to get into Glen Rosa, find their way ultimately to her house, it must be a considerable tax on her hospitality, and the only return which I can make to her is to endeavour to diminish this tax.

Here I must take leave of the reader. Having once got back to the haunts of men, there was no further difficulty to encounter. I need not harrow him with any description of the anxieties which those at home had gone through. We reached home, fortunately, just in time to prevent their sending out searchers for us. We arrived exactly twenty-four hours after we had set out, having, as I calculated, walked no less than forty-two miles during that time;

and yet, strange to say, neither of us felt tired, and N. had stoutly refused even the offer of a lift in a friendly cart on our way back from Dugarry to Brodiek, being bent on achieving the whole distance on foot. But when we had arrived and found ourselves in bed—a precaution which was wisely insisted on, and to which we had to yield—I must confess that we found we *were* tired. But sleep was out of the question—one's brain was in too great a state of excitement; and after two or three hours' rest we could stay in bed no longer. How far it was due to this precaution when we arrived, and how far it was due to the quality of the Arran air, I could not say; but certain it is, and marvellous to relate, we neither of us had the slightest cold, or any ill effects of whatsoever sort or kind, from having passed "the night in a Scotch swamp."

C. L. L.

WANDERINGS AND WILD SPORT BEYOND THE HIMALAYAS.

NO. II.

IN hunting the *Ovis Ammon* or *nian*, as in Tibet it is called, the sportsman must expect to undergo a great deal of fatigue and frequent disappointment, and to have his patience and endurance tried pretty severely; but should he have the luck to secure even one really fine specimen, he may think himself well rewarded for all his trouble. One may wander for days and days over known good localities without seeing large rams; and when they are found, their "cuteness" is in proportion to their size, for even then they may have to be followed for many a mile, and, as likely as not, without getting a shot at them after all. An old ram *Ovis Ammon* is certainly the most wary and restless game animal that exists: even the crafty Highland stag is a fool compared with him, and the ground he frequents is usually so open and bare as often to make approaching him there next thing to impossible. The ever-blowing wind, too, which is so shifty among these undulating uplands and ravines, frequently baffles the best of stalkers; but all this only makes the pleasure of success the greater.

A detailed description of the *Ovis Ammon* (or *Ovis Argali*) would here be out of place. Suffice it to say, that a full-grown ram stands about twelve hands. The general colour of its pile—which is short, soft, and close—is a kind of light-brownish grey. Its massive, deeply creased horns are well arched upwards and backwards, their points curling round to the front beside the cheeks like cart-wheels. In weight the horns

are not exceeded by those of any other known animal of the sheep tribe except the *Ovis Poli*, which inhabits the Pamir steppes and other more northern parts of Turkestan. About 40 inches long and 17 or 18 inches in circumference at the base may be considered a fair average size for a good *Ovis Ammon* ram's horns, though they often grow bigger. A head of about this size weighs quite 40 lb., yet it does not look disproportionately large, nor does the animal appear to be at all inconvenienced by its ponderous horns. The ewes are considerably smaller than the rams, and rather lighter in colour. They carry comparatively short and thin curved horns. Strange to say, they are much less wary than the old rams, which is rather unusual with the females of the majority of gregarious wild animals. Although *Ovis Ammon* usually affect open and more or less undulating ground, they often ascend the sloping mountain-sides to very great heights; but they are not much addicted to nor adapted for climbing, like the other kinds of Himalayan wild sheep. The *Ovis Ammon* is strictly a Tibetan animal; but, as it sometimes frequents the more gentle slopes on the eastern side of the Himalayas, it may be included among the game of those mountains.

This magnificent wild sheep, owing to the remoteness of its haunts and the difficulty in circumventing it when you get there, not to mention the grandness of its trophies when secured, is perhaps more prized than any other Himalayan game. In fact, the

man who fairly stalks and kills his big ram, *Ovis Ammon*, may consider he has gained the "blue ribbon," so to speak, of Himalayan sport.

On the 10th July we left Lookoong for Chooshul, a fair-sized Tartar hamlet near some borax-mines, about eight miles southward of the Pangong *tso* (lake), along the side of which the greater part of our three days' journey to it lay. Not a living thing was there to be seen, nor was there a sound to break the dead silence around this watery waste save the monotonous splash of the wavelets breaking along the sandy shore. From the unmistakable evidences about its margin, the water of this lake must be steadily receding; and Changter informed me that a long low rock which appears above water near its northern end was, within his recollection, quite invisible, and that each year it is gradually becoming more exposed. The water, although clear as crystal, is quite undrinkable, from having an intensely salt and bitter taste.

After replenishing our supply of flour and changing our baggage-yaks at the hamlet, the Major proceeded to work the undulating hills in the vicinity of the Pangoor *tso*, a more elevated but much smaller salt-lake than the Pangong, some ten miles east of Chooshul. As I was feeling rather "out of sorts," I delayed my start in a more southerly direction for a few days. Changter recommended my taking two or three dogs and their owner with me from here, as being useful for hunting *nāpoo* (*Ovis nakura*)—the burrel or blue wild sheep of the Himalayas, which he said we might also find on the ground he recommended my hunting over for *Ovis Ammon*. They were ugly, half-starved look-

ing curs, but doubtless were well up to the work for which they were intended. It turned out, however, that I nearly had cause to repent having taken them, as will presently be seen.

After three days' rest I was fit enough to set out again, under Changter's guidance, so the baggage-animals were collected and packed. As yaks are sometimes apt to make free use of their horns, especially towards strangers, loading them is not always an easy job. The Tartars usually collect them in a ring, with their heads turned inwards, and their horns tied together until all are laden, when they are again set free, and driven on their way.

Our route led over a low pass, or what looked a low one from the open level ground around Chooshul, which was already about 14,000 feet, but the ascent to it was pretty steep. On reaching the summit, a lonesome picture of flood and fell appeared stretching away beyond. About a mile from, and considerably below us, lay the Mirpa *tso*, an irregular-shaped sheet of dark, sullen-looking water, some four or five miles in circumference. Rising almost from its margin on every side were brown-coloured, rounded, and sterile hills, with nothing to break the dreary monotony of their appearance save a few patches of snow that lay near the top of some of their long stony slopes, and in one or two of the deeper hollows of the gullies that ran down between them. The scanty tufts of herbage that existed on the sides of this huge natural water-basin, as it were, were rendered almost invisible by distance, except in a few low and more level spots, where the moisture, derived either from springs or from trickling streamlets, had given the scraps of turf there a most

vivid green, which was quite a relief for the eye to rest on.

After a short time spent in contemplating this joyless solitude, we descended to the shore of the lake. Not a breath of the usual wind was then stirring to ruffle its placid surface, which resembled a sheet of polished steel. The dull grey light of a cloudy day, and the solemn silence that reigned supreme, combined with the bleak and dismal aspect of the surrounding hills, were such as to induce a feeling of utter loneliness which was almost irksome. The men with me stretched themselves out on the dry white sand that bordered the lake, and were soon fast asleep. Even the pony seemed to feel the depressing influence of the profound stillness, as he stood listlessly there with drooping head and closed eyes. The only signs of life or motion to be seen were exhibited by the dogs, as they tugged and gnawed at some dry bits of skin that partially covered the sun-bleached bones of a dead animal that lay close to the water's edge. If from this inadequate sketch the reader can picture it to himself, such was the ground in which I hoped to find the objects of my present search.

I was not sorry when my meditations, which, under the circumstances, were not of the liveliest order, were interrupted by the sound of footfalls, and on looking round, I saw my cook approaching with the men who carried the *kiltas*¹ containing breakfast. After appeasing my appetite, which had not been so much affected as my spirits, we skirted along the shore of the lake, and camped at its southern end.

For the two following days we wandered high and low over these

desolate hills, which I found to be a great deal steeper than they had at first looked. Carefully did I scan every hillside, glen, and corrie through the telescope, without a living thing appearing in its field except *kiangs*, or an occasional marmot, as it sat basking near the entrance to its burrow. Not even a fresh mark of an *Ovis* did we see to encourage us. The animals had evidently shifted their ground, so we resolved to follow their example.

With this intent, next morning, leaving instructions for the traps to be brought on some distance behind us, in case of our meeting with game, we were on the move shortly after dawn. We had crossed a high ridge, and were descending a gentle slope beyond it, when one of the dogs, which, being little more than a puppy, his owner did not think it necessary to tie up, suddenly showed signs of more knowledge of his calling than he had been given credit for. This young beast, that answered to the name of Lukkur—or rather, ought to have done so—was now drawing ahead, apparently on the scent of something, and neither the persuasions nor the threats of his master had any power to stop him. We had not proceeded many yards when, on the face of a low spur that had hitherto been hidden from our sight, we descried the cause of Master Lukkur's movements. A flock of seven male *Oves* were standing huddled together, evidently watching the dog, which had disappeared in a hollow lying between them and us; and almost immediately the sound of his bark was followed by the herd scampering wildly over the crest of the spur. My feelings at that moment

¹ Baskets made for carrying loads on the back.

can easily be imagined. My anger and vexation were so great, that I could with difficulty refrain from shooting the confounded young beast as he came trotting back after the mischief he had done. There was, however, one chance left, though a very poor one. Fortunately the dog had not followed the animals far, and their attention had been so much taken up with his movements, that they in all probability had not observed ours. We therefore resolved to follow them, on the chance of again finding them.

By the greatest good luck we overtook them about a mile beyond where they had disappeared. Although some of them had begun to feed, they were still in a restless state, so the only thing to be done was to patiently watch them as they kept slowly moving up the hillside. At last one of them lay down, and the rest soon followed his example. Crawling backwards until we were well under cover, we again got on our feet, and as the wind was favourable, we resolved to try and get above them. To effect this was by no means easy, as the face of the hill we had to climb was awfully steep, and composed of nothing but loose sharp fragments of rock, that afforded most uncertain footing, and frequent stoppages were necessary to take breath.

On reaching what we considered a sufficient height to be well above the place where the flock was lying, after a few minutes' rest, we had to resume the stooping and crawling process for some distance. But, notwithstanding all our caution, the wily animals detected us in some manner, for the next sight I got of them was at about 200 yards, as they were galloping away up the sloping hillside. Sighting for that distance,

and making for a lump of rock a few yards in front, that offered a good rest, I placed my cap under the rifle and waited until they stopped, as I expected they would do before going far, to look back. Taking a full bead on the one I thought had the largest horns, I let drive. Away they went in a cluster over the rise above them, leaving the lord of the flock half dragging his hind quarters after him as he in vain tried to overtake the rest. I gave them a parting salute with the other barrel as they topped the rise, which compliment they failed to acknowledge. This was a lucky chance, as the distance must have been quite 250 yards. The poor brute dragged himself on his haunches for fully a quarter of a mile down the other side of the hill before his strength failed him, and on our approach raised himself on his fore-legs and menaced us with his horns.

By the time we got back over the hill, the baggage-yaks had arrived at the place where we had left the pony and dogs below. As the country about looked promising, and there was water at hand, I decided to camp here for a day or two. Good as it seemed, and although we worked hard over it, as well as a more distant beat, to reach which we crossed a rocky ridge that must have been considerably above 19,000 feet, our success was no better here than on our last ground. We saw only four *Oves*, which the spy-glass spared me the trouble of going after, by showing them to be either ewes or very young males. How many a weary and useless mile does a good telescope thus save! We also came across a black wolf, but he was too far out for a shot, and his long slinging trot soon took him out of sight. The only other animal I

emptied my rifle at in this neighbourhood was a marmot, as it sat up whistling away, near the mouth of its burrow, not far from my tent. It was somewhat smaller than the Himalayan variety, and of a uniform yellowish-grey colour, and appeared to be identical with the Alpine marmot. The Tartars consider marmots excellent eating, and probably they are so, though I could never bring myself to try them. When we happened to encamp near their burrows, of which there are generally a number together, like the prairie-dog "cities" in America, our men would sometimes secure them by smoking them out of their holes, and killing them with sticks and stones. To cook them they were first singed bodily in the fire to remove the hair, and then cut up and boiled, skin and all.

The Major and I had arranged to meet at a place called Numa, on the Indus, where it is fordable or ferryable, according to the season, as we should there have to cross it on our way to the Hanlé country, where we intended to try our luck after the *goa* (Tibetan gazelle). As my camp was at an elevation of over 17,000 feet, calculated by boiling-point thermometer, and was fearfully cold and windy, I was not sorry to turn my steps downwards in the direction of Numa, which we reached in two days.

The Major had seen many big rams on the ground he had been working over, but, unfortunately, had failed to shoot any; so we decided that I should return there with him, as he said there was plenty of room for two guns. Were I to here record all the vicissitudes and disappointments during the several days we spent in endeavouring to circumvent these wary animals, without even

the satisfaction of getting a shot, they would doubtless be as trying to the reader's patience as they were to ours; so let us return to Numa, and thence continue our wanderings.

South of the Indus, in the wild, almost uninhabited districts of Hanlé and Rookshu, there are good localities for *Oves Ammon*; but as Changter refused to budge an inch farther than the river, and we were unable to get any one else, who was able or willing, to show us where to find them, we resolved to make direct for the village of Hanlé, there to engage a guide who had been recommended to the Major. Thence, after hunting up the *goa* in the country beyond it, we proposed returning with our new guide to again try our luck at the big sheep.

Getting our traps ferried over the Indus at Numa was rather a tedious business, which was accomplished by their being placed, a few at a time, on little rafts made of a rough framework of thin sticks tied over about a dozen small inflated goat-skins. Each raft was towed into the stream as far as possible, and then paddled across the deeper rapid water by a couple of sturdy Tartars in the costume of their most ancient forefather, minus the fig-leaves. After a considerable amount of splashing and exertion, the latter chiefly of the lungs, the raft reached the opposite shore several hundred yards lower down stream than the starting-point.

We had already seen some bright colouring on these Tibetan mountains, but nothing to compare with what we beheld along our desolate route between Numa and Hanlé. There some of the high rocky eminences looked actually blood-red in the reflected light

of the setting sun. As the ground we traversed was in some places literally paved with fragments, large and small, of a kind of red jasper, which had evidently been detached from the heights above, we naturally concluded from the colour of the latter that they too were entirely formed of the same valuable material which here seemed so common. Among these red fragments I observed others of a dull black hue, which, when broken, presented a shining metallic surface. They were so extraordinarily heavy that I concluded they must have contained either quicksilver or lead. How often I wished I could have wielded the geologist's hammer to some purpose up here in such a rich field for its use!

The hamlet of Hanlé, which we reached in three days, is the chief and almost the only inhabited place in the extensive district of the same name. Although so prominently marked in maps, it consists merely of some miserable-looking stone hovels situated at the foot of an isolated eminence surmounted by a big *gompa*. On our arrival we were received by the Lama Superior or Abbot of the monastery. This divine, who also acted as "Goba" or head-man of the province, was attired in his sacerdotal robes of purple cloth, and wore a profusion of ornaments and silver amulets about his person; a costume that contrasted rather oddly with a capital pair of English shooting-boots with which he was shod. He presented us with some rice and a little sugar, both rather rare commodities in Tibet. In return we begged his acceptance of a canister of gunpowder, with which he seemed highly delighted. A similar interchange of civilities with some other traveller in these wilds,

might account for his possession of the boots.

The hamlet presented a rather animated scene, as most of the inhabitants, male and female, were bustling about packing their goods and chattels on yaks, preparatory to a sojourn in their black-blanket tents in the wilderness, whither they were about to proceed to graze their flocks on the nutritious but scanty herbage.

To the south and east of Hanlé, stretching away for some twenty-five miles to the confines of the Chinese dominions, lies a desolate expanse of rolling uplands and ravines with an exceedingly limited amount of vegetation scattered over them. These stony downs, as they may be termed, the altitude of which ranges between 15,000 and 17,000 or more feet, are a favourite haunt of the *goa*.

Standing from 22 to 24 inches in height, on most delicately formed limbs, the *goa*, or Tibetan gazelle (*Procapra picticaudata*), is perhaps one of the most graceful little creatures that exists. Its general colour is a pale-brownish fawn. On the stern is a pure white disc bordered distinctly with a yellowish-brown mark. The horns, which in a full-grown buck are 11 or 12 inches long, are more curved than those of the Indian gazelle; they are closely annulated to within about 2 inches of their tips, where they turn slightly upwards, and sometimes inwards, and from being planted rather forward, and their springing well upward in their curve, they give the beautifully formed little head a most jaunty appearance. The doe almost exactly resembles the buck, except that she carries no horns. In this respect she differs from the female Indian gazelle, which has small horns.

On the day we left Hanlé, as we

were trudging along in advance of our baggage-yaks, we got our first sight of a buck *goa* as he beat a hasty retreat over some distant rising ground.

The following morning we were both afoot very early, each taking a separate line of country; whilst our traps were to follow direct to our next camping-place, in the vicinity of which the Major's guide said there was a chance of finding *Oves Annon*.

Phœbus was just waking up as I topped the brow of a rise and carefully looked over, when I noticed that the light of his countenance was shed on two small objects that stood on the face of an opposite slope. They did not look much like stones, though they were just as motionless. Pointing them out to a Tartar who was following me, he merely ejaculated "Goa!" and instantly squatted. On taking a spy at them through the glass, they turned out to be two fine bucks; but the sharp-eyed little creatures, notwithstanding the distance we were from them, had already detected our heads—for they could have seen nothing more—and were gazing straight towards us. Presently one of them went bounding and skipping away up the slope, sometimes turning round for a few seconds to look back, until he at length disappeared over its brow. His companion continued to gaze; but as we kept perfectly still, he at last appeared to think that he must have been mistaken in his suspicions, for he quietly turned round and began feeding. In a short time, however, he became restless, and after wistfully looking about him, as if he had suddenly missed his companion, trotted off in the direction he had gone, hardly stopping until his form appeared on the sky-line at the top of the

slope; and after a good look around him, he, too, moved out of sight.

Up we jumped and followed at our best pace, which, in the thin air of an altitude of well over 16,000 feet, could not be very fast, although the ascent was quite gentle. On nearing the brow I made for some large stones, from behind the cover of which to view the ground beyond, and at the first glance had the satisfaction of seeing both the bucks feeding within 130 yards of where I lay. Singling out what I thought the better of the two, I luckily dropped him in his tracks. The other sped off for a short distance and then pulled up. If I hit him with the second barrel, as, from the sound, I thought I had, it must have been too far back in the body, for he galloped off and was lost to view in a dip of the ground. Exchanging the empty Whitworth rifle for another, a breech-loader, I followed after the buck, and found him standing at the bottom of the hollow; but before I could get my aim he bounded off, though only to a short distance, when he again stood and offered a fair broadside chance. I pressed the trigger,—click! a bad cartridge, thought I, and cocked the other hammer; click! again, and away trotted the *goa*. I opened the breech and found nothing but daylight in the barrels: dolt that I was, I had forgotten to put in the cartridges.

As the buck had taken a direction exactly opposite to the one I wished to go, and my Tartar guide said it was a long way to our next camping-place, I abandoned further pursuit, as, even if wounded, the animal might have led me a long and a hungry chase, for I had stupidly neglected to take any provender with me that morning. We therefore returned to pick up the

buck I had killed; and the Tartar having shouldered him, we made the best of our way in the direction our yaks had gone, overtaking them in time for a late breakfast, to which I felt quite ready to do ample justice.

In the afternoon, before we could get the tents pitched, we were overtaken by a tremendous storm of thunder and hail. The Major had not turned up, but fortunately he had found shelter by paying a call on some Tartar ladies from Hanlé at their temporary country residence in a black yak's-hair tent, where his urbanity towards these fair dames had also obtained him hospitable entertainment, in the shape of a draught of butter-milk.

After working over this ground from morning to night for two days, seeing only the ubiquitous *kiang*, a few female *goa* with their young at foot, and a fine pair of horns attached to the sundried remains of a ram which had probably died of starvation in winter, we shifted camp towards the source of the Hanlé river, near the Chinese border. Several more *goa* were seen on our way there; but all being "hummel," I refrained from shooting at them lest the firing should disturb better game, though I would fain have had some more venison in camp, our Tartars' appetites being voracious.

As this locality was considered a sure find for *goa*, the Major and I started very early next morning in quest of them. He took the right side and I the left of a fairly wide valley, towards the head of which there was a pass leading over from the Hanlé province, which is under the rule of the Maharajah of Cashmere, into the Chinese-Tibetan territory of Chumurti, we having previously

arranged that the first of us to reach the summit of the pass, some seven or eight miles distant, should await the other's arrival there.

The scenery of the upper part of this valley was perhaps of a grander character than any we had as yet seen in Tibet. This was owing to the mountains on both sides looking more rugged, precipitous, and snow-clad than usual, and from there being at the head of this wild glen a confluence of two fine glaciers, from the base of which the Hanlé stream issued, and thence flowed in a broken, tortuous torrent, between banks of bright green turf, down through the otherwise almost verdureless valley. Our pass, however, led over a depression at the top of a high stony acclivity on the left of the glen, where the steep mountain-slopes on either side approached each other more closely, five or six miles short of the glaciers.

Among some broken raviny ground in the valley I found a herd of several *goa*, and further on a solitary doe. The former made off without giving me a chance; the latter, although offering an easy shot, I did not molest, for which she afterwards served me a good turn in a rather singular manner.

On nearing the top of the pass I observed several men sitting behind the shelter of a big stone. These my Tartar companions (one of whom was our interpreter Kurreen) informed me, were "Cheen lóg" (Chinese people), who were keeping watch and ward there, having probably heard that two Europeans were encamped in the vicinity. As we approached, they retired out of sight; but on our arriving at the summit, one of them suddenly reappeared and

squatted himself on the ground some distance from us. On getting up to him, a rather animated conversation was commenced between him and my men, who informed me that he was remonstrating against our proceeding any farther. On its being explained to him that we had no intention of invading his country, he seemed satisfied; but on my moving forward a short distance down the gently sloping Chinese side of the pass, in order to obtain a better view of the country beyond it, I fancy his suspicions were aroused, for, although he offered no further remonstrance, he proceeded to tell us, with a view to intimidation I suppose, that some more men would soon be up to join him.

I now sat down to wait until the Major should arrive. A quarter of an hour had scarcely elapsed when the clatter of horses' hoofs, and the jingle of the little bells that are always attached to Tibetan bridles, were heard coming up the pass, and presently three or four Tartars, mounted on capital ponies (for which Chumurti is famed), hove in sight. One of them, a rather well-dressed corpulent individual, turned out to be the head functionary of the Chumurti province. They galloped by without at first observing us as we sat amongst the rocks and stones; but on suddenly catching sight of us, the stout party, seemingly in a high state of excitement, wheeled round his pony and rode straight towards us, shouting and waving his arm in the air, as if he were leading on his army of Tartars, who had not as yet arrived in sight. Very soon, however, parties of two or three men at a time began to appear in the most marvellous manner, as though they had suddenly arisen out of the ground, like "Clan Alpine's warriors true,"

until a small crowd, numbering about forty or fifty, had collected around us. Where they had all come from so quickly was impossible to conjecture, for the top of the pass was as desolate-looking a spot as a height of, I should say, nearly 18,000 feet could make it. A dirtier or more ill-favoured lot than the generality of them were I never set eyes on. Had they carried any other weapons than their wool-spindles, and had I not been aware that the resistance offered by these borderers to European travellers or sportsmen attempting to cross the Rubicon of the Chinese empire in Tibet was usually more of a passive than a forcible kind, I should have felt considerable relief of mind at being reinforced by the Major and his men, who, having crossed the stream below the pass, soon appeared on the scene of action. I took the precaution, nevertheless, to keep my rifles within reach, in case of any attempt being made to appropriate them.

Whilst the Major and I sat there making futile attempts at polite conversation with the stout potentate, who of course could not understand a word we were saying, his myrmidons were gesticulating and clamouring away in an excited manner, quite as unintelligible to us, with one exception, which was a kind of pantomime of the act of binding the hands behind the back. All this, we afterwards learnt, was inveighing against the Hanlé men for taking us up to the pass, and threatening to bind the Major's guide, whom they considered the arch-offender, hand and foot, and drown him, as they put it, for doing so. Their having suggested this mode of disposing of him struck me as being scarcely compatible with the means, considering that, as far as we could see, there was

not water enough to drown a flea in nearer than the river far down below. When we arose to depart, they all collected around their portly leader, and, as we retired, followed us for a short distance, still vociferating loudly, and finally they saluted us with a parting derisive jeer, evidently under the impression that they had frustrated an attempt on our part to enter their country. At hearing this, such was the Major's ire, that he was for turning back to forcibly resent what he considered an insult, and I had some difficulty in persuading him that, under the circumstances, discretion was the better part of valour.

On our way back to camp, I thought I would again look up the place where I had in the morning seen the solitary doe, as she did not then seem to be at all scared. This time I was determined not to lose another chance if she gave me one, as our supply of animal food was done, and bucks were scarce. I had not much difficulty in finding her again; but now she seemed to have some suspicion of my deadly intent, for on each occasion that I tried to steal a march on her among the broken ground, she would move off just out of range. This sort of thing had happened for the third or fourth time, and I had just topped a rise over which she had gone, when, instead of seeing the doe, up sprang two fine bucks from a hollow in front. As I felt pretty sure that before going far they would stop to look back, I instantly lay down, got my elbows well planted on the ground, and the rifle levelled for a steady shot. Sure enough they pulled up at about a hundred yards. There was little to choose between them, so I took the one that offered the better mark, and dropped him on the spot. The other trotted on some

twenty yards, and then turned to look back for his companion. I had only his chest to aim at, but fortune again favoured me, for he, too, went down, never to rise again. Great was the astonishment of my Tartar companions, when, on coming up, instead of finding, as they expected, that I had shot the doe, or perhaps missed her, I showed them a dead buck, and still greater was it on my pointing out a second lying within twenty yards of him. But where was the doe? She had vanished, and her having thus been fortuitously the means of my finding two such beautiful bucks, after my forbearance towards her in the morning, was really a curious coincidence; for had I shot at her then, I should never have got them. The Tartars soon shouldered the game, and we bent our steps towards camp rejoicing. Both pairs of horns were just over a foot long.

The Major got back soon after me. He had found no *goa*, but had seen two black wolves, which unfortunately he was unable to get a shot at. They must have been two I had made out with the telescope from my side of the valley in the morning, when my attention had been attracted towards them by their dismal howling. During our absence it appeared that the camp had been invaded by some of our mounted friends from the pass, at whose unexpected advent, our Indian domestics informed us, the Hanlé yak-drivers seemed much exercised in their minds.

We now returned to Hanlé by a different route to the one we had travelled from it. On our way we made a Sunday halt, which our men devoted to marmot-hunting. A few *goa* were seen, but nothing was bagged except some hares. It had been our intention to hunt up the big sheep on the ground north

of Hanlé ; but man proposes, and the *Ovis Ammon* very often disposes, at any rate of itself. We now learnt that this ground had just been hunted over by the two Changchenmo sportsmen unsuccessfully, owing to the *Oves* having this season left it. When too late we had discovered the mistake we had made in not persevering longer in our pursuit of the splendid rams we had seen north of the Indus.

Only remaining one night at Hanlé, we thence took a westerly direction, and after traversing a long level stretch of dreary country, which appeared quite destitute of any sort of animal, and almost so of vegetable life, we camped late in the afternoon on a patch of greensward in a wild gorge east of the Lanak la, which rises between the Hanlé and Rookshu districts. Next day we crossed the pass, which is somewhere about 17,000 feet high ; but, as is so often the case with Tibetan passes, the gradient was easy. Some distance down on its western side, among the broken, stony slopes, hares were numerous, but generally so wild as to afford better rifle practice than sport for a shot-gun. Here we found perfect parterres of sweetly-scented, pale-blue flowers, with which our Tartars at once proceeded to deck their caps, after the manner of the Swiss mountaineers with the Alpine roses. Notwithstanding the sterile aspect of the country, the variety of beautiful wild flowers growing in many Tibetan localities would delight the heart of a botanist. In the sterile wilds of Changchenmo, on damp spots, at an altitude of quite 17,000 feet, I sometimes found whole beds of a kind of polyanthus, with delicate pink flowers, and usually, strange to say, in places where there was scarcely a blade of any other vegetation to be seen.

Another day's journey brought us to a little oasis called Ooti, a few level acres of bright green turf moistened by the snow-drainage from the neighbouring heights, and thickly besprinkled with flowers principally of a yellow hue. These poor little Tibetan flowerets have so few places to flourish in, that when they do find a favourable spot they seem to take every advantage of it.

The following morning, as we traversed the desert tract westward towards the Tso Morari, we saw one or two packs of a large kind of pinnated sand-grouse, which, I was told, frequent these bare uplands in considerable numbers at this time of year. They were about the size of the large migratory sand-grouse found on the plains of India in winter, but their plumage more resembled the smaller pinnated variety. I found them very wild, and only got one long shot, which fortunately brought down a bird.

That evening we pitched our camp in a sheltered nook near the southern end of the Tso Morari, which is 15,000 feet above sea-level, and almost, if not quite, the highest of known lakes in the world. Although much smaller than the Pangong tso, being only about 15 miles long by 5 or 6 broad, it has even a grander appearance, from the more precipitous nature of some of the adjacent mountains. It has the same strangely intense blue colour so characteristic of all Tibetan lakes when rippled by wind ; and as its water is not salt, there is a certain amount of verdure here and there along its margin, and beside the streams that flow into it, which gives a pleasing variety to its otherwise barren scenery. The surrounding mountainous country is desolate to a degree, there not

being a human habitation within a radius of at least 40 miles of it, except the miserable little hamlet of Karzok, with its small monastery situated on its western shore. The water, to me, seemed perfectly good, although rather flat, so to speak, to the taste; but the Tartars have an objection to drinking it. Although there is a large amount of drainage into the lake, there is no visible outlet from it. This is a remarkable fact; and evaporation alone, one would suppose, could hardly account for the disappearance of the constant and abundant supply of water from the great quantity of melted snow draining into it off the neighbouring mountains.

On our way to Karzok along the shore of the lake, we got numerous shots at wild geese of the bar-headed kind, and as they had young goslings with them, I concluded they bred in the vicinity. Fortunately the strong wind was blowing shorewards, as most of them dropped on the water, and we had no dog to retrieve them. The old birds were dreadfully tough—and even our Warren's cooking-pot failed to extract much flavour from them when made into soup; but the goslings were much more palatable.

Whilst at Karzok, we were surprised, late one evening, by the advent of a solitary sportsman who had just come over the Parang la into Tibet, with the intention, late in the season as it was, of hunting in Changchenmo. He seemed to have suffered pretty severely from the combined effects of cold, wind, and sun on the pass, as his face was in rather a sorry plight, being something like a raw beef-steak, and the deep cracks on his lips and nose were profusely patched with bits of sticking-plaster. The account he gave us of

some hunting-ground for *nāpoo*, on the south side of the Parang la, was so seducing as to cause us to alter our intended return route over the Baralacha Pass into Lahoul, for that across the Parang la, and thence through Spiti. In course of conversation he told us that we should get lots of "fees" at some of the halting-places on the south side of the Parang la. Not wishing to expose our ignorance as to the sort of game, or whatever else "fees" might be, nor to seem impolite by suggesting that he could possibly mean anything in the pecuniary line, we made mental note of the information, and adroitly changed the subject. It afterwards struck us that he had meant the vegetable pea, which we were rejoiced to find growing in abundance about the villages where we happened to camp in Spiti. His poor lips were so cracked and sore that he had substituted an *f* for a *p*, as being less painful to pronounce. We gave him what information we could, and, after exchanging a few creature-comforts and good wishes, saw him off on his way next morning.

There now only remained about a fortnight before we should have to commence retracing our steps across the Himalayas. This I resolved to devote to a final search for *Oves Ammon* in the vicinity of the Tsokár, better known as the Salt Lake, three or four days' journey to the north-west of Karzok.

Leaving the Major at Karzok, where he preferred to remain shooting wild geese and trying his luck on the ground about the Tso Morari, the second evening found my camp pitched on the east side of the Kazura la, at an elevation of about 17,500 feet, calculated by boiling. In the grey

of the following morning I was very loath to turn out into a temperature of twelve degrees below freezing (and this in the month of August), although my sleep had not been either of the soundest or most comfortable kind, from my being unable to respire freely in a recumbent position at such a height. The cold, too, was dreadful, as the wind blew through the thin canvas of the little tent, which I had exchanged for my own blanket-lined one with my two Indian domestics, who felt the severity of the climate much more than I did. I must confess, however, that this was not done out of pure philanthropy; there was a certain amount of selfishness in it, as one's own comfort on a trip of this kind so much depends on keeping one's servants in health and good-humour.

A skull and massive pair of ram's horns lying bleaching in the sun showed us we were once more among the haunts of the big sheep. About two hours' slow walking—for I was now afoot again, having sent back the pony from the Indus with Changter—took us to the top of the pass, on the farther side of which the Karzok men had told us we should find an encampment of Rookshu people, where a guide for the locality could be procured. On and on we trudged over the bare, hard ground, under the glaring sun, and against the everlasting, cutting wind, for hour after hour, not meeting with a sign of life except a few marmots, and the cheerless relics of a Tartar camp in the shape of smoke-blackened stones and dilapidated *pullas*¹—all was silent solitude.

Towards the afternoon we topped another rise, from whence we got a fine view of the Tsokar lying far away below. Situated in the middle of an extensive barren valley, surrounded by arid brown hills, the Tsokar is, I think, the least interesting, as far as appearance goes, of any of the larger lakes of this part of Tibet; and to increase its dreary aspect, the shore, for some distance from its crooked margin, is covered with a white saline efflorescence, from which a most abominable glare is reflected. It is curious that, in the same valley, and only about a mile or so from this salt-lake, there is a smaller sheet of fresh water, bordered to a certain extent with green turf, presenting a remarkable contrast to its salt neighbour. On the fresh-water lake numbers of wild-fowl congregate, affording some sport for a shot-gun. The mountains in the vicinity hold both *Oves Ammon* and *nāpoo*, and the valley, I believe, a few *goa*, if one has the luck to find them there.

After a gentle descent for some distance, a strange scene suddenly presented itself. Instead of a small encampment, as I had expected to find, there appeared a perfect city of black blanket-tents, pitched on either side of a rivulet that flowed through a long, narrow, comparatively low-lying valley, the bottom of which was carpeted with bright greensward. There must have been considerably over a hundred tents. It seemed as though the whole nomadic population of Rookshu were collected on this meadow-like spot. Vast herds of sheep, goats, and yaks were scattered over the neighbouring heights,

¹ A *pulla* is a low wall built of loose stones, which the Tibetans build round the bottom of their tents, or more frequently in the open, as a protection from the wind; for these hardy nomads seem to care little for any shelter except from the cruel biting blast. We always piled large stones, of which there was never any lack, round our little tents, if only to keep them from being almost blown away.

where the wild yodling kind of halloo of the Tartar herdsmen and the barking of their dogs was heard on every side.

This did not look much like a locality near which to find such vary game as *Oves Ammon*, and I could not but feel that I had been regularly humbugged by the Kurzok men. Of one fact I was now more than ever convinced, that as a rule, to which there may be occasional exceptions, the sportsman, in this part of Tibet at any rate, must undergo the vexations and disappointments of a first season's personal experience in that country to ensure success on a second visit.

Unpropitious as matters looked, I was, nevertheless, determined to give the ground a trial; but after several days of severe work, during which I must have sometimes been considerably over 19,000 feet, I saw nothing but a flock of *nāpoo*, a few *Oves Ammon* ewes with lambs, and one or two young males, at which latter I did not attempt to shoot lest I should disturb better ones. *Kiangs* were numerous as usual, but, of course, were never molested; the Tartars, however, being hippophagous, did not seem at all to appreciate my thus abstaining from horse-butcherly. One evening I came suddenly on a brood of snow-pheasants, large handsome birds of a gamely marked, pale-grey colour. They were at first unwilling to rise, but made such good use of their legs that I had to put my best foot foremost for some distance to overtake them before I could get a shot. At such a height this exertion, slight as it was, so completely pumped the breath out of me that I was only just able to loose off both barrels into the "brown" of the covey as it rose. I had not another yard left in me

to secure the runners; but my Tartar attendants, who had wisely followed more leisurely, gathered the old hen and three well-grown chicks. The old one proved rather dry and tough, even after many days' keeping; but the chicks were as tender and well-flavoured birds as I ever tasted.

It was now time to return to Kartzok, as I had promised to meet the Major there on a certain date. The cold, too, at the great heights I had camped during the last few days, had become unpleasantly intense, owing to frequent snowstorms and to the sun having been obscured by clouds. There was, however, no lack of sunshine on the day I started for Kartzok by a short cut across the mountains, where the ground was completely covered with new-fallen snow, off which the glare was almost intolerable. For several miles our way led gently upward through a narrow glen, which wound along between rolling rounded hills. The crisp snow that at first merely crunched under our feet became deeper and more laborious to trudge through as we gradually ascended. Not a vestige of any living thing was visible in this white solitude, save here and there a tailless kind of rat that, scared at our approach, would dart away over the snow, and, with a shrill eerie chirp, suddenly vanish; and one little bird, something like a robin, that followed us for a long way, flitting and hopping from stone to stone in the ice-bound brook beside us, as if courting our companionship. So profound and deathlike was the solemn hush that brooded over mother earth as she lay wrapped in her snowy shroud, that one was almost startled at the slight rustling noise caused by the slipping of melting snow from off some neigh-

bouring rock; for, in the still frozen air of that high silent region, fancy almost led one to imagine the sound resembled the mysterious whisperings of invisible beings whose sanctuary we were invading. Even on emerging from this dismal glen upon more open ground, nothing met the weary aching eye but a vast lone wilderness of white undulating hills, and, more distant, domes and pyramids of snow. At last we reached the culminating point, and began to descend, when it was quite a relief to look down on a bit of dark-blue water of the Tso Morari, some 2000 feet below us, cold and cheerless though it appeared as it lay amidst mountains which were now draped in virgin snow almost to its margin.

The Major's luck with the rifle had been no better than mine. To tell the truth, we were both getting a little tired of toiling after game day after day from morning to night over these desolate regions to so little purpose; so next morning we were not sorry to retrace our steps along the shore of the lake, *en route* for the verdant and forest clad slopes of the Himalayas. One or two more geese were bagged; but they had now become very wary from having been potted at so freely, and generally kept well away from the shore. On a marshy bit of ground, near the end of the lake, I killed two specimens of the ruff. Another British bird that we frequently saw up here was the common magpie; also that cosmopolitan bird, the hoopoe.

Next morning we forded the Parang, a turbid broken flood of melted snow, which, as is usual with these capricious snow-fed torrents of Tibet, was only passable at an early hour. For three days we trudged up the valley of the Parang, a seemingly endless

narrow glen, totally destitute of vegetation, and closely hemmed in by steep stony landslips and precipices of a brownish-yellow hue, rising stark and gaunt one above another to a stupendous height, like gigantic stair-steps, save where the V-shaped cleft of some lateral gorge disclosed the broken termination of a glacier, or a towering white mountain-summit.

The Parang la, with its glaciers and perpetual snow, is quite in keeping with the wild approaches to it on either side. It is, perhaps, as savagely grand as any of the passes that are ordinarily used as highways for crossing the "divide" or backbone, as it were, of the Himalayan range into Tibet, as well as being one of the highest and most arduous to traverse. And certainly, from my experience of it in September, when its difficulties are supposed to be at their minimum, I can quite imagine it to be the latter. Its height is about 18,600 feet, and it is seldom, if ever, open before June, and generally becomes again impracticable to cross about the beginning of October. On our arrival at Leh in June, we found several Indian servants of some travellers who had just come over this pass, laid up there in a pitiable plight from frost-bite; one of them had lost many of his toes, and his companions were little better off.

The evening previous to our crossing, we camped a short distance below the foot of the glacier that extends down almost from the summit of the pass for some four or five miles on its northern side. Snow began to fall thickly just before dark, and continued to do so, more or less, during the night. In the morning the weather at first looked rather promising, but the tents were frozen as stiff

as boards, and were so incrustated with hard snow that we had to delay our departure until the sun, of which we only got an occasional glimpse, should thaw them a little. After our breakfast, which we managed to cook over a smoky little fire made of the few remaining scraps of wet fuel which, with considerable difficulty, we had coaxed into burning, we loaded the yaks and started just as it again began snowing more thickly than ever. The limited supply of fuel we had brought up with us was done, and the poor yaks had already been fasting for two days or more; besides this, there was some fear, if the snowstorm continued, that the pass might become permanently closed for the winter: we therefore determined, under any circumstances, to make an effort and push over it at once into Spiti.

For more than six weary hours did we toil up against the almost blinding snow and piercing wind that chilled us to the very marrow, although the distance to the summit was only six or seven miles. It was truly wonderful to see the way in which the yaks struggled through the deep snow, and scrambled over places which were often difficult, and sometimes dangerous, to traverse. Nothing could have exceeded the powers of endurance evinced by these animals, which were game to the backbone and as sure-footed as goats. One of them, notwithstanding, lost its footing on a steep slope of *névé*, and went rolling and sliding down until it was fortunately stopped by a friendly rock, otherwise it must have disappeared for ever under the glacier, and with it my dear old Whitworth rifle, which, among other things, it was carrying. On regaining its feet the creature merely shook itself, and on being

disentangled from its load soon clambered up again.

For the last three miles of the ascent our way was over the glacier, where we waded and floundered through the soft fresh-fallen snow, with an occasional dive into it up to the middle, as we followed in the steps of our Tartar leader, who, in order to avoid hidden crevasses, cautiously sounded the way with his long mountain-pole. Here we experienced a regular *tourmente*; for, besides the falling flakes, the dry drifting snow was whirled up into our eyes and nostrils by the freezing blast, causing a suffocating sensation which was most trying, and the cold was so intense that my beard, from my breath on it, became a mass of ice, and was frozen hard to my coat. Whilst on the glacier all the marks we had to indicate the right track were the giant outlines of the white eminences rearing up on either side, and these only occasionally loomed dimly through the driving snow. Never shall I forget the ludicrous picture of utter misery presented by my Hindustani cook as he sat resting himself on a bank of snow, his head closely enveloped in a black blanket, and his beard covered with icicles. Blank despair was depicted on his face as he gazed ruefully, through a pair of green goggles, on the bewildering scene around him. Right glad were we all to reach the top at last, where we sat down for a short time to rest our weary limbs, and to admire the grand landscape before us; for the snowstorm had passed over, and the blue mountains of Spiti were gradually becoming disclosed to view through the broken masses of cloud and mist that came rolling up from below.

But our day's work was not to

end here, for the descent on the Spiti side of the pass was so steep and rough, that even after we got clear of the snow, the track was almost worse than if covered with it. As the Major remarked, "It was macadamised with a vengeance." Such a howling wildness of sharp pinnacles of rock, and bare, rugged, perpendicular cliffs, piled tier upon tier to an appalling height, as flanked the stupendous cañon down which our route lay, I never beheld. Some of the lofty fantastic-shaped summits bore a striking resemblance to ruins of gigantic towers and turrets. As the last rays of the sun, sinking behind the mountaintops, shed a parting gleam of golden radiance on these aerial castles, rock-spires, and snow-crowned peaks, leaving the profound depths of the abyss beneath wrapped in gloomy shade, the effect was truly magnificent. The scenery was altogether so sublimely wild, so awe-inspiring, and on so vast a scale, as to be quite beyond description, and almost beyond conception. Dame Nature must indeed have been in a terrible mood when she fashioned such awful works.

When darkness compelled us to call a halt, we were still several miles short of the usual camping-place; and as there was not a blade of grass in the vicinity, the poor yaks had to fast another night. Fortunately we found sufficient fuel for cooking purposes.

A short but very stiff walk on the following morning up through another wild gorge, brought us to our next camping-ground, on the heights above which was the locality for *nāpoo*, recommended by the sportsman we had met at Karzok. Some of our Tartars were half-blind from the effects of the previous day's snow on the pass, notwithstanding their having im-

proved kind of goggles of wisps of black hair pulled from their yaks' tails, and tied loosely over their eyes, none of them having brought the woven yak-hair spectacles they often use on such occasions with them. I found one man sitting by the wayside endeavouring to extract blood from his nostrils with the point of his knife, at which surgical operation he implored me to assist him, at the same time handing me the knife. A good punch on his proboscis would, I thought, have been much less dangerous, and just as effectual, as regarded relief to his eyes. Our Indian servants had not suffered so much, owing to their having been provided with green goggles. There was plenty of grass here for the famished yaks, and how they did pitch into it! Never have I seen animals making such good use of their time and teeth. But, to use a much hackneyed, though in this case a rather appropriate phrase, *revenons à nos moutons*.

Although the wild sheep, here called *nāpoo*, are numerous in many parts of Tibet, I have hitherto made but little mention of them, as I seldom hunted expressly for them, owing to my time having been fully occupied in searching for other game not found on the south side of the Himalayan chain, specimens of which I was then more anxious to secure. Stalking *burrell*, as these animals are called in the Himalayas, is really splendid sport on ground where they are fairly plentiful.

A full-grown male *nāpoo* or *burrell* (*Ovis nahvra*) stands about 33 inches at the shoulder usually, but its size seems to vary in different localities. The thick arching horns, which spread laterally and curve downwards, and slightly backwards near their points, occa-

sionally attain a length of 30 inches, or even more, and are about a foot in girth. The beautiful skin, with its thick elastic pile, is of a bluish-grey, bordered with distinct jet-black and pure white markings. In winter it is handsomest, when the colour becomes more decidedly slate-blue. The ewes are rather smaller than the rams, and their horns are much thinner and shorter, their colour paler, and the black-and-white bordering less distinctly defined. They usually produce two lambs in spring. Towards autumn *burrell* often assemble in very large flocks, but in spring and summer they are generally found in much smaller batches, sometimes only two or three together, the large rams, as a rule, herding separately. The flesh of a young male or ewe is, in autumn, as fat, tender, and better flavoured than domestic mutton. Although the favourite haunts of the *burrell* are open and comparatively gentle slopes of short grass just under the snow-line, these sheep are quite as sure-footed and agile as the wild-goat tribe on precipitous rocky ground, which is never very far distant from the slopes where they feed, and to this they usually resort when scared. They have the most acute sense of smell, so it is always necessary to take this into account before arranging a stalk. If *burrell* have sighted you, it is generally useless to follow them. They at once commence moving off, slowly and deliberately at first, feeding as they walk, leading on an inexperienced sportsman for miles, until they have fooled him sufficiently, when they gallop away, and seldom stop before they are lost to view among the eternal snows and glaciers. When disturbed the *burrell* gives a shrill double whistle, which alarms every

other animal within sound of it; and you will seldom, if ever, get a shot after hearing it. Early in summer the best of *burrell*-shooting can be got on the upper ranges of the mountain provinces of Kumaon and Gurhwal, without having to cross the passes into Tibet for it.

As the ground for *nāpoo* in this vicinity was so limited as only to admit of one of us shooting over it, and a few days' journey farther on there was a similar bit of country for ibex, the Major and I arranged that I should have a turn at the *nāpoo*, and he at the ibex, which he was more anxious to get.

Having bundled up a few requisites for a night's absence from our camp, I started upwards about noon next day, and, after a long and stiff pull of several hours, reached a huge sort of corrie where my Spiti guides expected we should find our game. On our way we passed through the village of Kiwar, situated at an elevation of 13,400 feet. Although at such a high altitude, it is a fairly large, well-to-do village, and several kinds of grain are raised there (chiefly buckwheat and barley) entirely by irrigation, for the climate of Spiti is extremely dry and almost rainless. As the village lies on the south side of the mountains, it is tolerably warm.

After a careful scrutiny of the ground with the glass, I discerned a flock of about fifteen *nāpoo* nearly a mile off. As none of them appeared to be old rams, and we were not very far from where we intended to pass the night, I remained watching them, in the hope that bigger fellows might show themselves as evening drew on. However, as no others put in an appearance, and the sun was getting low, I commenced a stalk after those in sight, with

a view to supplying our empty camp-larder with good venison. We got within easy range of them rather unexpectedly, as they had fed quickly down towards us whilst hidden from view during our stalk, when the excited behaviour of my two men, on suddenly seeing the beasts so near us, was very ludicrous. Whilst one of them snatched my cap off, the other seized me under the arms and tried to lift my head over the top of some rocks, behind the cover of which we had been stealing towards the animals, he being under the impression that I could not see them. After shaking one fellow off at the risk of the *burrell* detecting us, and recovering my cap from the other, I was able to shoot, and took down two right and left with the old Whitworth, much to the delight of my excited companions. After securing the beasts, and dragging them to a convenient spot for leaving them until next morning, we made the best of our way to the place we intended passing the night, under the lee of a rock. The cold was bitter lying out at night, as there was keen frost and a high wind.

We were afoot early next morning over fresh ground, and soon descried a large flock with two fine rams in it. But our attempts to approach them were fruitless, as they were in a very open position, and proved too crafty for us. Nothing more was seen except a brood of snow pheasants which we flushed on our way down to the tents.

A few days' travelling brought us to the ibex ground, where the Major had an unsuccessful hunt, whilst I took a good rest in camp.

Any attempt of mine to describe the glacier scenery of the Spiti and Laboul mountains, through which our way led for

several days, would be quite inadequate to convey the slightest idea of its wild grandeur. Suffice it to say that the longest of Alpine glaciers, the Aletsch, which is some twenty miles in length, cannot be compared in size with many of those in the Himalayas, the largest of which are found in the Karakorum range, far to the north-west of Cashmere and Ladak. Colonel Godwin-Austen, the greatest authority on Himalayan glaciers, gives the length of the Biafo glacier as 64 miles of continuous ice; the Baltoro as 35 miles up to K2 (now named Mount Godwin-Austen), the second-highest known peak in the world—but this glacier took him some 55 miles of walking, and then he had not reached the watershed.

The ponies bred in Spiti are much more celebrated for their comeliness than are its human inhabitants, more especially with respect to the womankind. And justly so, if I may judge from the personal appearance of a batch of sturdy-limbed females who one day, after depositing the heavy loads they had carried on their backs for ten miles or more, treated us to a terpsichorean performance, accompanied by their unmelodious voices. They are, however, as cheery and almost as unsophisticated a set of people as the Tibetans. Here, where the inhabitants are Buddhists, even the clerical members of the community are not too proud to earn a trifle by carrying your baggage; and after depositing their loads, these holy Lamas may be seen receiving the obeisances of the villagers, and distributing blessings with outstretched hands.

After quitting the snow and ice on the top of the Hampta pass between the districts of Spiti and Kulu, how changed was the aspect

of the mountains on its southern side, from the barren dreary solitudes amongst which we had been roaming during the past four months! With what keen delight did we hail the first glimpse of the green slopes, birch-woods, and pine-clad hills of Kulu—a country as famed for the romantic beauty of its scenery as for its bonny lasses! Of these latter, we met two very pretty specimens as we were descending the track from the pass. One of them in particular was a perfect model of rustic beauty, as, with her long glossy tresses falling dishevelled about her shoulders, and the olive complexion of her face all flushed from climbing up the hill, she stopped to take breath, her large brown eyes wide open with half-startled amazement at thus unexpectedly meeting with two such wild-looking figures as the Major and I presented, with our red sun-cracked faces and old travel-worn clothes. Most of these Kulu belles endeavour to heighten their natural charms by wearing, in addition to their own hair, a long thick plait of black worsted coiled round a little cap of some bright colour jauntily set on the crown of the head. They are very fond of adorning themselves with flowers, with which we noticed most of the women we met had tastefully decked their *chignons*. The men also had generally a flower or two

stuck in their caps or behind their ears.

On reaching Sultanpore, the chief town of Kulu, we put up in a house and procured some fresh vegetables—luxuries we had not indulged in for months, the aforementioned “fees” in Spiti excepted. A newspaper many weeks old, that had been left there by some former occupant, was greedily pounced upon. From it I learnt that my regiment was to form part of a force about to proceed on active service. There was no time to lose; so we hurried through the beautiful Kangra valley, with its numerous tea-plantations, to Dhurrunsala, the nearest military station. Here I bade good-bye to the Major, who was bound for the Punjab.

Irrespective of the ground worked over in hunting, we had covered during this, my first trip beyond the Himalayas, a good 1300 miles of regular mountain travel, about a thousand of which were in Tibet, at an elevation, on an average, of nearly 15,000 feet—almost as high as the top of Mont Blanc, though not quite so snowy. But my pleasure in looking back to these wanderings is mingled with sorrow, when I think that my boon companion throughout them has since then gone on another long journey, and this time to the “happy hunting-grounds” from whence there is no returning.

MICHEL ANGELO.

THE overthrow of the pagan religion was the death-blow of pagan Art. The temples shook to their foundations, the statues of the gods shuddered, a shadow darkened across the pictured and sculptured world, when through the ancient realm was heard the wail, "Pan, great Pan is dead." The nymphs fled to their caves affrighted. Dryads, Oreads, and Naiads abandoned the groves, mountains, and streams that they for ages had haunted. Their voices were heard no more singing by shadowy brooks, their faces peered no longer through the sighing woods; and of all the mighty train of greater and lesser divinities and deified heroes to whom Greece and Rome had bent the knee and offered sacrifice, Orpheus alone lingered in the guise of the Good Shepherd.

Christianity struck the death-blow not only to pagan Art, but for a time to all Art. Sculpture and Painting were in its mind closely allied to idolatry. Under its influence the arts slowly wasted away as with a mortal disease. With ever-declining strength they struggled for centuries, gasping as it were for breath, and finally, almost in utter atrophy, half alive, half dead—a ruined, maimed, deformed presence, shorn of all their glory and driven out by the world—they found a beggarly refuge and sufferance in some Christian church or monastery.

The noble and majestic statues of the sculptured gods of ancient Greece were overthrown and buried in the ground, their glowing and pictured figures were swept from the walls of temples and dwellings, and in their stead only a crouch-

ing, timid race of bloodless saints were seen, not glad to be men, and fearful of God. Humanity dared no longer to stand erect, but grovelled in superstitious fear, and lashed its flesh in penance, and was ashamed and afraid of all its natural instincts. How then was it possible for Art to live? Beauty, happiness, life, and joy were but a snare and a temptation, and Religion and Art, which can never be divorced, crouched together in fear.

The long black period of the Middle Ages came to shroud everything in ignorance. Literature, art, poetry, science, sank into a nightmare of sleep. Only arms survived. The world became a battle-field, simply for power and dominion, until religion, issuing from the Church, bore in its van the banner of chivalry.

But the seasons of history are like the seasons of the year. Nothing utterly dies. And after the long apparently dead winter of the Middle Ages the spring came again—the spring of the Renaissance—when liberty and humanity awoke, and art, literature, science, poesy all suddenly felt a new influence come over them. The Church itself shook off its apathy, inspired by a new spirit. Liberty, long downtrodden and tyrannised over, roused itself, and struck for popular rights. The great contest of the Guelphs and Ghibellines began. There was a ferment throughout all society. The great republics of Italy arose. Commerce began to flourish; and despite of all the wars, contests, and feuds of people and nobles, and the decimations from plague and disease, art, literature, science, and religion itself,

burst forth into a new and vigorous life. One after another there arose those great men whose names shine like planets in history — Dante, with his wonderful ‘*Divina Commedia*,’ written, as it were, with a pen of fire against a stormy background of night; Boccaccio, with his sunny sheaf of idyllic tales; Petrarca, the earnest lover of liberty, the devoted patriot, the archæologist and philosopher as well as poet, whose tender and noble spirit is marked through his exquisitely finished canzoni and sonnets, and his various philosophical works; Villari, the historian; and all the illustrious company that surrounded the court of Lorenzo the Magnificent — Macchiavelli, Poliziano, Boiardo, the three Pulci, Leon Battista Alberti, Aretino, Pico della Mirandola, and Marsilio Ficino; and, a little later, Ariosto and Tasso, whose stanzas are still sung by the gondoliers of Venice; and Guarini and Bibbiena and Bembo,—and many another in the fields of poesy and literature. Music then also began to develop itself; and Guido di Arezzo arranged the scale and the new method of notation. Art also sent forth a sudden and glorious coruscation of genius, beginning with Cimabue and Giotto, to shake off the stiff cerements of Byzantine tradition in which it had so long been swathed, and to stretch its limbs to freer action, and spread its wings to higher flights of power, invention, and beauty. The marble gods, which had lain dethroned and buried in the earth for so many centuries, rose with renewed life from their graves, and reasserted over the world of Art the dominion they had lost in the realm of Religion. It is useless to rehearse the familiar names that then illumined the golden age of Italian art, where

shine pre-eminent those of Leonardo, the widest and most universal genius that perhaps the world has ever seen; of Michel Angelo, the greatest power that ever expressed itself in stone or colour; of Raffaele, whose exquisite grace and facile design have never been surpassed; and of Titian, Giorgione, Veronese, and Tintoretto, with their Venetian splendours. Nor did science lag behind. Galileo ranged the heavens with his telescope, and, like a second Joshua, bade the sun stand still; and Columbus, ploughing the unknown deep, added another continent to the known world.

This was the Renaissance or new birth in Italy: after the long drear night of ignorance and darkness, again the morning came and the glory returned. As Italy above all other lands is the land of the Renaissance, so Florence above all cities is the city of the Renaissance. Its streets are haunted by historic associations; at every corner, and in every byplace or piazza, you meet the spirits of the past. The ghosts of the great men who have given such a charm and perfume to history meet you at every turn. Here they have walked and worked centuries ago; here to the imagination they still walk, and they scarcely seem gone. Here is the stone upon which Dante sat and meditated,—was it an hour ago or six centuries? Here Brunelleschi watched the growing of his mighty dome, and here Michel Angelo stood and gazed at it while dreaming of that other mighty dome of St Peter’s which he was afterwards to raise, and said, “Like it I will not, and better I cannot.” As one walks through the piazza of Sta Maria Novella, and looks up at the façade that Michel Angelo called his “*sposa*,” it is not difficult again to people it with the

glad procession that bore Cimabue's famous picture, with shouts and pomp and rejoicing, to its altar within the church. In the Piazza della Signoria one may in imagination easily gather a crowd of famous men to listen to the piercing tones and powerful eloquence of Savonarola. Here gazing up, one may see towering against the sky, and falling as it were against the trooping clouds, the massive fortress-like structure of the Palazzo Publico, with its tall machicolated tower, whence the bell so often called the turbulent populace together; or dropping one's eyes, behold under the lofty arches of the Loggia of Orcagna the marble representations of the ancient and modern world assembled together, —peacefully: the antique Ajax, the Renaissance Perseus of Cellini, the Rape of the Sabines, by John of Bologna, and the late group of Polyxines, by Fedi, holding solemn and silent conclave. In the Piazza del Duomo at the side of Brunelleschi's noble dome, the exquisite campanile of Giotto, slender, graceful, and joyous, stands like a bride and whispers ever the name of its master and designer. And turning round, one may see the Baptistery celebrated by Dante, and those massive bronze doors storied by Ghiberti, which Michel Angelo said were worthy to be the doors of Paradise. History and romance meets us everywhere. The old families still give their names to the streets, and palaces, and *loggie*. Every now and then a marble slab upon some house records the birth or death within of some famous citizen, artist, writer, or patriot, or perpetuates the memory of some great event. There is scarcely a street or a square which has not something memorable to say and to recall, and one walks through the streets

guided by memory, looking behind more than before, and seeing with the eyes of the imagination. Here is the Bargello, by turns the court of the Podestà and the prison of Florence, whence so many edicts were issued, and where the groans of so many prisoners were echoed. Here is the Church of the Carmine, where Massaccio and Lippi painted those frescoes which are still living on its walls, though the hands that painted and the brains that dreamed them into life are gone for ever. Here are the *loggie* which were granted only to the fifteen highest citizens, from which fair ladies, who are now but dust, looked and laughed so many a year ago. Here are the *piazze* within whose tapestried stockades gallant knights jostled in armour, and fair eyes, gazing from above, "rained influence and adjudged the prize." Here are the fortifications at which Michel Angelo worked as an engineer and as a combatant; and here among the many churches, each one of which bears on its walls or over its altars the painted or sculptured work of some of the great artists of the flowering prime of Florence, is that of the Santa Croce, the sacred and solemn mausoleum of many of its mighty dead. As we wander through its echoing nave at twilight, when the shadows of evening are deepening, we may hold communion with these great spirits of the past. The Peruzzi and Baldi Chapels are illustrated by the frescoes of Giotto. The foot treads upon many a slab under which lie the remains of soldier, and knight, and noble, and merchant prince, who, centuries ago, their labours and battles and commerce done, were here laid to rest. The nave on either side is lined with monumental statues of the illustrious dead. Ungrateful Florence, who

drove her greatest poet from her gates to find a grave in Ravenna, *patriis extorris ab urbe*, here tardily and in penitence raised to him a monument, after vainly striving to reclaim his bones. Here, too, among others, are the statues and monuments of Michel Angelo, Macchiavelli, Galileo, Lanzi, Aretino, Guicciardini, Alfieri, Leon Battista Alberti, and Raffaele Morghen.

Of all the great men who shed a lustre over Florence, no one so domineers over it and pervades it with his memory and his presence as Michel Angelo. The impression he left upon his own age and upon all subsequent ages is deeper, perhaps, than that left by any other save Dante. Everything in Florence recalls him. The dome of Brunelleschi, impressive and beautiful as it is, and prior in time to that of St Peter's, cannot rid itself of its mighty brother in Rome. With Ghiberti's doors are ever associated his words. In Santa Croce we all pause longer before the tomb where his body is laid than before any other—even that of Dante. The empty place before the Palazzo Vecchio, where his David stood, still holds its ghost. All places which knew him in life are still haunted by his memory. The house where he lived, thought, and worked is known to every pilgrim of art. The least fragment which his hand touched is there preserved as precious, simply because it was his; and it is with a feeling of reverence that we enter the little closet where his mighty works were designed. There still stands his folding desk, lit by a little slip of a window; and there are the shelves and pigeon-holes where he kept his pencils, colours, tools, and books. The room is so narrow that one can scarcely turn about in it; and

the contrast between this narrow, restricted space and the vastness of the thoughts which there were born, and the extent of his fame which fills the world, is strangely impressive and affecting. Here, barring the door behind him to exclude the world, he sat and studied and wrote and drew, little dreaming that hundreds of thousands of pilgrims would in after-centuries come to visit it in reverence from a continent then but just discovered, and peopled only with savages.

But more than all other places, the Church of San Lorenzo is identified with him; and the Medicean Chapel, which he designed, is more a monument to him than to those in honour of whom it was built.

Here, therefore, under the shadow of these noble shapes, and in the silent influence of this solemn place, let us cast a hurried glance over the career and character of Michel Angelo as exhibited in his life and his greatest works. To do more than this would be impossible within the brief limits we can here command. We may then give a glance into the adjoining and magnificent Hall, which is the real mausoleum of the Medici, and is singularly in contrast with it.

Michel Angelo was born at Caprese, in the Casentino, near Florence, on March 6, 1474 or 1475, according as we reckon from the nativity or the incarnation of Christ. He died at Rome on Friday, February 23, 1564, at the ripe age of eighty-nine or ninety. He claimed to be of the noble family of the Counts of Canossa. He certainly was of the family of the Berlinghi. His father was one of the twelve Buonomini, and was Podestà of Caprese when Michel Angelo was born. From his early youth he showed a strong inclination to art, and vainly his father

sought to turn him aside from this vocation. His early studies were under Ghirlandaio. But he soon left his master to devote himself to sculpture; and he was wont to say that he "had imbibed this disposition with his nurse's milk"—she being the wife of a stone-carver. Lorenzo the Magnificent favoured him and received him into his household; and there under his patronage he prosecuted his studies, associating familiarly with some of the most remarkable men of the period, enriching his mind with their conversation, and giving himself earnestly to the study not only of art, but of science and literature. The celebrated Angelo Poliziano, then tutor to the sons of Lorenzo, was strongly attracted to him, and seems to have adopted him also as a pupil. His early efforts as a sculptor were not remarkable; and though many stories are told of his great promise and efficiency, but little weight is to be given to them. He soon, however, began to distinguish himself among his contemporaries; and his Cupid and Bacchus, though wanting in all the spirit and characteristics of antique work, were, for the time and age of the sculptor, important and remarkable. After this followed the Pietà, now in St Peter's at Rome, in which a different spirit began to exhibit itself; but it was not till later on that the great individuality and originality of his mind was shown, when from an inform block of rejected marble he hewed the colossal figure of David. He had at last found the great path of his genius. From this time forward he went on with ever-increasing power—working in many various arts, and stamping on each the powerful character of his mind. His grandest and most characteristic works in sculpture and paint-

ing were executed in his middle age. The Sistine Chapel he completed when he was thirty-eight years old, the stern figure of the Moses when he was forty, the great sculptures of the Medici Chapel when he was from fifty to fifty-five; and in his sixty-sixth year he finished the Last Judgment. Thenceforth his thoughts were chiefly given to architecture, with excursions into poetry—though during this latter period he painted the frescoes in the Pauline Chapel; and after being by turns sculptor, painter, architect, engineer, and poet, he spent the last years of his life in designing and superintending the erection of St Peter's at Rome.

One of his last works, if not the last, was the model of the famous cupola of St Peter's, which he never saw completed. In some respects this was departed from in its execution by his successors; but in every change it lost, and had it been carried out strictly as he designed it, it would have been even nobler and more beautiful than it is.

Here was a long life of ceaseless study, of untiring industry, of never-flagging devotion to art. Though surrounded by discouragements of every kind, harassed by his family, forced to obey the arbitrary will of a succession of Popes, and, in accordance with their orders, to abandon the execution of his high artistic conceptions, and waste months and years on mere mechanic labour in superintending mines and quarries—driven against his will, now to be a painter when he desired to be a sculptor, now to be an architect when he had learned to be a painter, now as an engineer to be employed on fortifications when he was longing for his art; through all the exigencies of his

life, and all the worrying claims of patrons, family, and country, he kept steadily on, never losing courage even to the end—a man of noble life, high faith, pure instincts, great intellect, powerful will, and inexhaustible energy; proud and scornful, but never vain; violent of character, but generous and true,—never guilty through all his long life of a single mean or unworthy act. A silent, serious, unsocial, self-involved man, oppressed with the weight of great thoughts, and burdened by many cares and sorrows. With but a grim humour, and none of the lighter graces of life, he went his solitary way, ploughing a deeper furrow in his age than any of his contemporaries, remarkable as they were,—an earnest and unwearied student and seeker, even to the last.

It was in his old age that he made a drawing of himself in a child's go-cart with the motto "Ancora imparo"—I am still learning. And one winter day toward the end of his life, the Cardinal Gonsalvi met him walking down towards the Colosseum during a snowstorm. Stopping his carriage, the Cardinal asked where he was going in such stormy weather. "To school," he answered, "to try to learn something."

Slowly, as years advanced, his health declined, but his mind retained to the last all its energy and clearness; and many a craggy sonnet and madrigal he wrote towards the end of his life, full of high thought and feeling—struggling for expression, and almost rebelliously submitting to the limits of poetic form; and at last, peacefully, after eighty-nine long years of earnest labour and never-failing faith, he passed away, and the great light went out. No! it did not go out; it still burns as

brightly as ever across these long centuries to illumine the world:

Fitly to estimate the power of Michel Angelo as a sculptor, we must study the great works in the Medicean Chapel in the Church of San Lorenzo, which show the culmination of his genius in this branch of art.

The original church of San Lorenzo was founded in 930, and is one of the most ancient in Italy. It was burned down in 1423, and re-erected in 1425 by the Medici from Brunelleschi's designs. Later, in 1523, by the order of Leo X., Michel Angelo designed and began to execute the new sacristy, which was intended to serve as a mausoleum to Giuliano dei Medici, Duke of Nemours, brother of Leo X., and younger son of Lorenzo the Magnificent; and to Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino, and grandson of the great Lorenzo. Within this mausoleum, which is now called the Medici Chapel, were placed the statues of Giuliano and Lorenzo. They are both seated on lofty pedestals, and face each other on opposite sides of the chapel. At the base of one, reclining on a huge sarcophagus, are the colossal figures of Day and Night, and at the base of the other the figures of Aurora and Crepuscule. This chapel is quite separated from the church itself. You enter from below by a dark and solemn crypt, beneath which are the bodies of thirty-four of the family, with large slabs at intervals on the pavement, on which their names are recorded. You ascend a staircase, and go through a corridor into this chapel. It is solemn, cold, bare, white, and lighted from above by a lantern open to the sky. There is no colour, the lower part being carved of white marble, and the upper part and railings wrought

in stucco. A chill comes over you as you enter it; and the whole place is awed into silence by these majestic and solemn figures. You at once feel yourself to be in the presence of an influence, serious, grand, impressive, and powerful, and of a character totally different from anything that sculpture has hitherto produced, either in the ancient or modern world. Whatever may be the defects of these great works, and they are many and evident, one feels that here a lofty intellect and power has struggled, and fought its way, so to speak, into the marble, and brought forth from the insensate stone a giant brood of almost supernatural shapes. It is not nature that he has striven to render, but rather to embody thoughts, and to clothe in form conceptions which surpass the limits of ordinary nature. It is idle to apply here the rigid rules of realism. The attitudes are distorted, and almost impossible. No figure could ever retain the position of the Night at best for more than a moment, and to sleep in such an attitude would be scarcely possible. And yet a mighty burden of sleep weighs down this figure, and the solemnity of night itself broods over it. So also the Day is more like a primeval titanic form than the representation of a human being. The action of the head, for instance, is beyond nature. The head itself is merely blocked out, and scarcely indicated in its features. But this very fact is in itself a stroke of genius; for the suggestion of mystery in this vague and unfinished face is far more impressive than any elaborated head could have been. It is supposed he left it thus, because he found the action too strained. So be it; but here is Day still involved in clouds, but now arousing from its slumbers,

throwing off the mists of darkness, and rising with a tremendous energy of awakening life. The same character also pervades the Aurora and Crepuscule. They are not man and woman, they are types of ideas. One lifts its head, for the morning is coming; one holds its head abased, for the gloom of evening is drawing on. There is no joy in any of these figures. A terrible sadness and seriousness oppresses them. Aurora does not smile at the coming of the light, is not glad, has little hope, but looks upon it with a terrible weariness, almost with despair—for it sees little promise, and doubts far more than it hopes. Twilight, again, almost disdainfully sinks to repose. The day has accomplished almost nothing: oppressed and hopeless, it sees the darkness close about it.

What Michel Angelo meant to embody in these statues can only be guessed—but certainly no trivial thought. Their names convey nothing. It was not beauty, or grace, or simple truth to nature, that he sought to express. In making them, the weight of this unexplained mystery of life hung over him; the struggle of humanity against superior forces oppressed him. The doubts, the despair, the power, the indomitable will of his own nature are in them. They are not the expressions of the natural day of the world, of the glory of the sunrise, the tenderness of the twilight, the broad gladness of day, or the calm repose of night; but they are seasons and epochs of the spirit of man—its doubts and fears, its sorrows and longings and unrealised hopes. The sad condition of his country oppressed him. Its shame overwhelmed him. His heart was with Savonarola, to whose excited preaching he had listened, and his

mind was inflamed by the hope of a spiritual regeneration of Italy and the world. The gloom of Dante enshrouded him, and the terrible shapes of the "Inferno" had made deeper impression on his nature than all the sublimed glories of the "Paradiso." His colossal spirit stood fronting the agitated storms of passions which then shook his country, like a rugged cliff that braves the tempest-whipped sea — disdainfully casting from him its violent and raging waves, and longing almost with a vain hope for the time when peace, honour, liberty, and religion should rule the world.

This at least would seem to be implied in the lines he wrote under his statue of Night, in response to the quatrain written there by Giovan' Battista Strozzi. These are the lines of Strozzi :—

"La notte che tu vedi in sì dolci atti
Dormire, fu da un angelo scolpita
In questo sasso; e, perchè dorme, ha
vita
Destala, se no 'l credi, e parleratti."

Which may be thus rendered in English—

"Night, which in peaceful attitude
you see
Here sleeping, from this stone an angel
wrought.
Sleeping, it lives. If you believe it not,
Awaken it, and it will speak to thee."

And this was Michel Angelo's response :—

"Grato mi è il sonno, e più l'esser de
sasso
Mentre che il danno e la vergogna dura
Non veder non sentir m'è gran ventura
Però, non mi destar; deh! parla basso."

Which may be rendered—

"Grateful is sleep—and more, of stone
to be :
So long as crime and shame here hold
their state,
Who cannot see nor feel is fortunate—
Therefore speak low, and do not waken
me."

This would clearly seem to show that under these giant shapes he meant to embody allegorically at once the sad condition of humanity and the oppressed condition of his country. What lends itself still more to this interpretation is the character and expression of both the statues of Lorenzo and Giuliano, and particularly that of Lorenzo, who leans forward with his hand raised to his chin, in so profound and sad a meditation that the world has given it the name of *Il Pensiero*—not even calling it *Il Penseroso*, the thinker, but *Il Pensiero*, thought itself; while the attitude and expression of Giuliano is of one who helplessly holds the sceptre and lets the world go, heedless of all its crime and folly, and too weak to lend his hand to set it right.

But whatever the interpretation to be given to these statues, in power, originality, and grandeur of character they have never been surpassed. It is easy to carp at their defects. Let them all be granted. They are contorted, uneasy, over-anatomical, untrue to nature. Viewed with the keen and searching eye of the critic, they are full of faults, *ebbene si muove*. There is a lift of power, an energy of conception, a grandeur and boldness of treatment which redeems all defects. They are the work of a great mind, spurning the literal, daring almost the impossible, and using human form as a means of thought and expression. It may almost be said that in a certain sense they are great, not in despite of their faults, but by very virtue of these faults. In them is a spirit which was unknown to the Greeks and Romans. They sought the simple, the dignified, the natural; beauty was their aim and object. Their ideal was a quiet passionless repose,

with little action, little insistence of parts. Their treatment was large and noble, their attitude calm. No torments reach them, or if passion enter, it is subdued to beauty:—

“Calm pleasures there abide, majestic pains.”

Their gods looked down upon earth through the noblest forms of Phidias with serenity, heedless of the violent struggles of humanity—like grand and peaceful presences. Even in the Laocoon, which stepped to the utmost permitted bounds of the antique sculpture, there is the restraint of beauty, and suffering is modified to grace. But here in these Titans of Michel Angelo there is a new spirit—better or worse, it is new. It represents humanity caught in the terrible net of Fate, storming the heavens, Prometheus-like, breaking forth from the bonds of convention, and terrible as grand. But noble as these works are, they afford no proper school for imitation, and his followers have, as has been fitly said, only caught the contortions without the inspiration of the sibyl. They lift the spirit, enlarge the mind, and energise the will of those who feel them and are willing only to feel them; but they are bad models for imitation. It is only such great and original minds as Michel Angelo who can force the grand and powerful out of the wrong and unnatural; and he himself only at rare intervals prevailed in doing this violence to nature.

Every man has a right to be judged by his best. It is not the number of his failures but the value of his successes which afford the just gauge of every man's genius. Here in these great statues Michel Angelo succeeded, and they are the highest tide-

mark of his power as a sculptor. The Moses, despite its elements of strength and power, is of a lower grade. The Pietà is the work of a young man who has not as yet grown to his full strength, and who is shackled by his age and his contemporaries. The David has high qualities of nobility, but it is constrained to the necessities of the marble in which it is wrought. The Christ in the Church of the Minerva is scarcely worthy of him. But in these impersonations of Day, Night, Twilight, and Dawn, his genius had full scope, and rose to its greatest height.

These statues were executed by Michel Angelo, with various and annoying interruptions, when he was more than fifty-five years of age, and while he was in ill health and very much overworked. Indeed such was his condition of health at this time that it gave great anxiety to his friends, and Giovanni Battista Mini, writing to his friend Bartolommeo Valori on the 29th of September 1531, says: “Michel Angelo has fallen off in flesh, and the other day, with Buggiardini and Antonio Mini, we had a private talk about him, and we came to the conclusion that he will not live long unless things are remedied. He works very hard, eats little and that little is bad, sleeps not at all, and for a month past his sight has been weak, and he has pains in the head and vertigo, and, in fine, his head is affected and so is his heart, but there is a cure for each, for he is healthy.” He was so besieged on all sides with commissions, and particularly by the Duke of Urbino, that the Pope at last issued a brief, ordering him, under pain of excommunication, to do no work except on these monuments—and thus he was enabled to command his time and to

carry on these great works to the condition in which they now are, though he never was able completely to finish them.

Of the same race with them are the wonderful frescoes of the sibyls and prophets and Biblical figures and Titans that live on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. And these are as amazing, perhaps even more amazing in their way, than the sculpture of the Medicean Chapel. He was but thirty-four years of age when, at the instigation of Bramante, he was summoned to Rome by the Pope Julius II. to decorate this ceiling. It is unpleasant to think that Bramante, in urging this step upon the Pope, was animated with little goodwill to Michel Angelo. From all accounts it would seem he was jealous of his growing fame, and deemed that in undertaking this colossal work failure would be inevitable. Michel Angelo had indeed worked in his youth under Ghirlandaio, but had soon abandoned his studio and devoted himself to sculpture; and although he had painted some few laboured pictures and produced the famous designs for the great hall of the municipality at Florence, in competition with his famous rival Leonardo da Vinci, yet these cartoons had never been executed by him, and his fame was chiefly, if not solely, as a sculptor. Michel Angelo himself, though strongly urged to this undertaking by the Pope, was extremely averse to it, and at first refused, declaring that "painting was not his profession." The Pope, however, was persistent, and Michel was forced at last to yield, and to accept the commission. He then immediately began to prepare his cartoons, and, ignorant and doubtful of his own powers, summoned to his assistance several artists in Florence, to learn more properly

from them the method of painting in fresco. Not satisfied with their work on the ceiling, he suddenly closed the doors upon them, sent them away, and shutting himself up alone in the chapel, erased what they had done and began alone with his own hand. It was only about six weeks after his arrival in Rome that he thus began, and in this short space of time he had completed his designs, framed and erected the scaffolds, laid on the rough casting preparatory to the finishing layer, and commenced his frescoes. This alone is an immense labour, and shows a wonderful mastery of all his powers. The design is entirely original, not only in the composition and character of the figures themselves, but in the architectural divisions and combinations in which they are placed. There are no less than 343 figures, of great variety of movement, grandiose proportions, and many of them of colossal size; and to the sketches he first designed he seems to have absolutely adhered. Of course, within such a time he could not have made the large cartoons in which the figures were developed in their full proportions, but he seems only to have enlarged them from his figures as first sketched. With indomitable energy, and a persistence of labour which has scarcely a parallel, alone and without encouragement he prosecuted his task, despite the irritations and annoyances which he was forced to endure, the constant delays of payment, the fretful complaints of the impatient Pope, the accidents and disappointments incident to an art in which he had previously had no practice, and the many and worrying troubles from home by which he was constantly pursued. At last the Pope's impatience became imperious; and when the vault was

only one-half completed, he forced Michel Angelo, under threats of his severe displeasure, to throw down the scaffolding and exhibit it to the world. The chapel was accordingly opened on All Saints' Day in November 1508. The public flocked to see it, and a universal cry of admiration was raised. In the crowd which then assembled was Raffaëlle, and the impression he received is plain from the fact that his style was at once so strongly modified by it. Bramante, too, was there, expecting to see the failure which he had anticipated, and to rejoice in the downfall of his great rival. But he was destined to be disappointed, and, as is recounted, but as one is unwilling to believe, he used his utmost efforts to induce the Pope to discharge Michel Angelo and commission Raffaëlle to complete the ceiling. It is even added that Raffaëlle himself joined in this intrigue, but there is no proof of this, and let us disbelieve it. Certain it is that in the presence of the Pope, when Michel Angelo broke forth in fierce language against Bramante for this injurious proposal, and denounced him for his ignorance and incapacity, he did not involve Raffaëlle in the same denunciation. Still there seems to be little doubt that the party and friends of Raffaëlle exerted their utmost influence to induce the Pope to substitute him for Michel Angelo. They did not, however, succeed. The Pope was steadfast, and again the doors were closed, and he was ordered to complete the work.

When again he began to paint there is no record. Winter is unfavourable to fresco-painting, and when a frost sets in, it cannot be carried on. In the autumn of 1510 we know that he applied to the Pope for permission to visit

his friends in Florence, and for an advance of money; that the Pope replied by demanding when his work would be completed, and that the artist replied, "As soon as I shall be able;" on which the Pope, repeating his words, struck him with his cane. Michel Angelo was not a man to brook this, and he instantly abandoned his work and went to Florence. The Pope, however, sent his page Accursio after him with pacific words, praying him to return, and a purse of fifty crowns to pay his expenses; and after some delay he did return.

Vasari and Condivi both assert that the vault of the Sistine Chapel was painted by Michel Angelo "alone and unaided, even by any one to grind his colours, in twenty months." But this cannot be true. He certainly had assistance not only for all the laying of the plaster and the merely mechanical work, but also in the painting of the architecture, and even of portions of the figures; and it now seems to be pretty clear that the chapel was not completed until 1512. But this in itself, considering all the breaks and intervals when the work was necessarily interrupted, is stupendous.

The extraordinary rapidity with which he worked is clearly proved by the close examination which the erection of scaffolding has recently enabled Mr Charles Heath Wilson and others to make. Fresco-painting can only be done while the plaster is fresh (hence its name); and as the plaster laid on one day will not serve for the next, it must be removed unless the painting on it is completed. The junction of the new plaster leaves a slight line of division when closely examined, and thus it is easy to detect how much has been accomplished each day. It

scarcely seems credible, though there can be no doubt of the fact, that many of the nude figures above life-size were painted in two days. The noble reclining figure of Adam occupied him only three days; and the colossal figures of the sibyls and prophets, which, if standing, would be eighteen feet in height, occupied him only from three to four days each. When one considers the size of these figures, the difficulty of painting anything overhead where the artist is constrained to work in a reclining position and often lying flat on his back, and the beauty, tenderness, and careful finish which has been given to all parts, and especially to the heads, this rapidity of execution seems almost marvellous.

Seen from below, these figures are solemn and striking; but seen near by, their grandeur of character is vastly more impressive, and their beauty and refinement, which are less apparent when seen from a distance, are quite as remarkable as their power and energy. Great as Michel Angelo was as a sculptor, he seems even greater as a painter. Not only is the design broader and larger, but there is a freedom of attitude, a strength and loftiness of conception, and a beauty of treatment, which is beyond what he reached, or perhaps strove for, in his statues. The figure of Adam, for instance, is not more wonderful for its novelty and power of design than for its truth to nature. The figure of the Deity, encompassed by angelic forms, is whirling down upon him like a tempest. His mighty arm is outstretched, and from his extended fingers an electric flash of life seems to strike into the uplifted hand of Adam, whose reclining figure, issuing from the constraint of death, and quivering

with this new thrill of animated being, stirs into action, and rises half to meet his Creator. Nothing could be more grand than this conception, more certain than its expression, or more simple than its treatment. Nothing, too, has ever been accomplished in art more powerful, varied, and original than the colossal figures of the sibyls and the prophets. The Ezekiel, listening to the voice of inspiration; the Jeremiah, surcharged with meditative thought, and weighed down with it as a lowering cloud with rain; the youthful Daniel, writing on his book which an angel supports; Esaias, in the fulness of his manhood, leaning his elbow on his book and holding his hand suspended while turning he listens to the angel whose tidings he is to record; and the aged Zacharias, with his long beard, swathed in heavy draperies, and intently reading. These are the prophets; and alternating with them on the span of the arch are the sibyls. The noble Erythrean, seated almost in profile, with crossed legs, and turning the leaves of her book with one hand while the other drops at her side, grand in the still serenity of her beauty; the aged Persian sibyl, turning sideway to peruse the book which she holds close to her eyes, while above her recline two beautiful naked youths, and below her sleeps a madonna with the child Christ; the Lybian, holding high behind her with extended arms her open scroll, and looking down over her shoulder; the Cumæan, old, weird, Dantesque in her profile, with a napkin folded on her head, reading in stern self-absorption, while two angels gaze at her; and last, the Delphic, sweet, calm, and beautiful in the perfectness of womanhood, who looks serenely down over her shoulder to charm us

with a peaceful prophecy. All the faces and heads of these figures are evidently drawn from noble and characteristic models—if, indeed, any models at all are used; and some of them, especially those of the Delphic and Erythrean, are full of beauty as well as power. All are painted with great care and feeling, and a lofty inspiration has guided a loving hand. There is nothing vague, feeble, or flimsy in them. They are ideal in the true sense—the strong embodiment of great ideas.

Even to enumerate the other figures would require more time and space than can now be given. But we cannot pass over in silence the wonderful series illustrative of Biblical history which form the centre of the ceiling, beginning with Chaos struggling into form, and ending with Lot and his children. Here in succession are the division of light from darkness—the Spirit of God moving over the face of the waters (an extraordinary conception, which Raffaele strove in vain to reproduce in another form in the Loggie of the Vatican); the wonderful creation of Adam; the temptation of the serpent, and the expulsion from Paradise, so beautiful in composition and feeling; the sacrifice to God; and finally the Flood.

Besides these are the grand nude figures of the decoration, which have never been equalled; and many a Biblical story, which, in the richness and multitude of greater things, is lost, but which in themselves would suffice to make any artist famous. As, for instance, the group called Rehoboam, a female figure bending forward, and resting her hand upon her face, with the child leaning against her knee—a lovely sculptural group, admirably composed, and full of pathos; and the stern de-

spairing figure entitled Jesse, looking straight out into the distance before her—like Fate.

Here is no attempt at scenic effect, no effort for the picturesque, no literal desire for realism, no pictorial graces. A sombre, noble tone of colour pervades them,—harmonising with their grand design, but seeking nothing for itself, and sternly subjected and restrained to these powerful conceptions. Nature silently withdraws and looks on, awed by these mighty presences.

Only a tremendous energy and will could have enabled Michel Angelo to conceive and execute these works. The spirit in which he worked is heroic: oppressed as he was by trouble and want, he never lost courage or faith. Here is a fragment of a letter he wrote to his brother while employed on this work, which will show the temper and character of the man. It is truly in the spirit of the Stoics of old:—

“Make no friendship nor intimacies with any one but the Almighty alone. Speak neither good nor evil of any one, because the end of these things cannot yet be known. Attend only to your own affairs. I must tell you I have no money.” (He says this in answer to constant applications from his unworthy brother for pecuniary assistance.) “I am, I may say, shoeless and naked. I cannot receive the balance of my pay till I have finished this work, and I suffer much from discomfort and fatigue. Therefore, when you also have trouble to endure, do not make useless complaints, but try to help yourself.”

The names of Raffaele and Michel Angelo are so associated, that that of one always rises in the mind when the other is mentioned. Their geniuses are as absolutely opposite as are their characters. Each is the antithesis

of the other. In the ancient days we have the same kind of difference between Homer and Virgil, Demosthenes and Cicero, Æschylus and Euripides. In later days, Molière and Racine, Rousseau and Voltaire, Shakespeare and Sir Philip Sidney, Beethoven and Mozart, Dante and Ariosto, Victor Hugo and Lamartine; or to take our own age, Delacroix and Ary Scheffer, Brown- ing and Tennyson. To the one belongs the sphere of power, to the other that of charm. One fights his way to immortality, the other woos it.

Raffaelle was of the latter class—sweet of nature, gentle of disposition, gifted with a rare sense of grace, a facile talent of design, and a refinement of feeling which, if it sometimes degenerated into weakness, never utterly lost its enchantment. He was exceedingly impressionable, reflected by turns the spirit of his masters,—was first Perugino, and afterwards modified his style to that of Fra Bartolommeo, and again, under the influence of Michel Angelo, strove to tread in his footsteps. He was not of a deep nature nor of a powerful character. There was nothing torrential in his genius, bursting its way through obstacles and sweeping all before it. It was rather that of the calm river, flowing at its own sweet will, and reflecting peacefully the passing figures of life. He painted as the bird sings. He was an artist because nature made him one—not because he had vowed himself to art, and was willing to struggle and fight for its smile. He was gentle and friendly—a pleasant companion—a superficial lover—handsome of person and pleasing of address—who always went surrounded by a corona of followers, who disliked work and left the exe-

cutation of his designs in great measure to his pupils, while he toyed with the Fornarina. I do not mean to undervalue him in what he did. His works are charming—his invention was lively. He had the happy art of telling his story in outline, better, perhaps, than any one of his age. His highest reach was the Madonna de S. Sisto, and this certainly is full of that large sweetness and spiritual sensibility which entitles him to the common epithet of “Divino.” But when he died at the early age of thirty-seven, he had come to his full development, and there is no reason to suppose that he would ever have attained a greater height. Indeed during his latter years he was tired of his art, neglected his work, became more and more academic, and preferred to bask in the sunshine of his fame on its broad levels, to girding up his loins to struggle up precipitous ascents to loftier peaks. The world already began to blame him for this neglect, and to say that he had forgotten how to paint himself, and gave his designs only to his students to execute. Moved by these rumours, he determined alone to execute a work in fresco, and this work was the famous Galatea of the Palazzo Farnese. He was far advanced in it, when, during his absence one morning, a dark, short, stern-looking man called to see him. In the absence of Raffaelle, this man gazed attentively at the Galatea for a long time, and then taking a piece of charcoal, he ascended a ladder which stood in the corner of the vast room, and drew off-hand on the wall a colossal male head. Then he came down and went away, saying to the attendant—“If Signore Raffaelle wishes to know who came to see him, show him my card there on the wall.” When

Raffaello returned, the assistant told him of his visitor, and showed him the head. "That is Michel Angelo," he said, "or the devil."

And Michel Angelo it was. Raffaello well knew what that powerful and colossal head meant, and he felt the terrible truth of its silent criticism on his own work. It meant, Your fresco is too small for the room—your style is too pleasing and trivial. Make something grand and colossal. Brace your mind to higher purpose, train your hand to nobler design. I say that Raffaello felt this stern criticism, because he worked no more there, and only carried out this one design. Raffaello's disposition was sweet and attractive, and he was beloved by all his friends. Vasari says of him, that he was as much distinguished by his *amorevolezza ed umanità*, his affectionate and sympathetic nature, as by his excellence as an artist; and another contemporary speaks of him as of *summe bonitatis*, perfect sweetness of character. All this one sees in his face, which, turning, gazes dreamily at us over his shoulder, with dark soft eyes, long hair, and smooth, unsuffering cheeks where Time has ploughed no furrows—easy, charming, graceful, refined, and somewhat feminine of character.

Michel Angelo was made of sterner stuff than this. His temper was violent, his bearing haughty, his character impetuous. He had none of the personal graces of his great rival. His face was, as it were, hammered sternly out by fate; his brow corrugated by care, his cheeks worn by thought, his hair and beard stiffly curled and bull-like; his expression sad and intense, with a weary longing in his deep-set eyes. Doubtless, at times, they flamed with indignation and passion—

for he was very irascible, and suffered no liberties to be taken with him. He could not "sport with Amaryllis in the shade, or with the tangles of Neera's hair." Art was his mistress, and a stern mistress she was, urging him ever onward to greater and greater heights. He loved her with a passion of the intellect; there was nothing he would not sacrifice for her. He was willing to be poor, almost to starve, to labour with incessant zeal, grudging even the time that sleep demanded, only to win her favour. He could not have been a pleasant companion, and he was never a lover of woman. His friendship with Vittoria Colonna was worlds away from the senses, —worlds away from such a connection as that of Raffaello with the Fornarina. They walked together in the higher fields of thought and feeling, in the region of ideas and aspirations. Their conversation was of art, and poesy, and religion, and the mysteries of life. They read to each other their poems, and discoursed on high themes of religion, and fate, and foreknowledge. The sonnets he addressed to her were in no trivial vein of human passion or sentiment.

"Rapt above earth" (he writes) "by power of one fair face,
Hers, in whose sway alone my heart delights,
I mingle with the Blest on those pure heights
Where man, yet mortal, rarely finds a place—
With Him who made the Work that Work accords
So well that, by its help and through His grace,
I raise my thoughts, inform my deeds and words,
Clasping her beauty in my soul's embrace."

In his *soul's* embrace, not in his arms. When he stood beside her

dead body, he silently gazed at her, not daring to imprint a kiss on that serene brow even when life had departed. If he admired Petrarca, it was as a philosopher and a patriot,—for his canzone to Liberty, not for his sonnets to Laura. Dante, whom he called *Stella di alto valor*, the star of high power, was his favourite poet; Savonarola his single friend. The ‘*Divina Commedia*,’ or rather the “*Inferno*” alone, he thought worthy of illustration by his pencil; the doctrines of the latter he warmly espoused. “True beauty,” says that great reformer, “comes only from the soul, from nobleness of spirit and purity of conduct.” And so, in one of his madrigals, says Michel Angelo. “They are but gross spirits who seek in sensual nature the beauty that uplifts and moves every healthy intelligence even to heaven.”

For the most part he walked alone and avoided society, wrapped up in his own thoughts; and once, when meeting Raffaëlle, he reproached him for being surrounded by a *cortège* of flatterers; to which Raffaëlle bitterly retorted, “And you go alone, like the headsman” —*andate solo come un boia*.

He was essentially original, and, unlike his great rival, followed in no one’s footsteps. “*Chi va dietro agli altri non li passa mai dinanzi*,” he said,—who follows behind others can never pass before them.

Yet, with all this ruggedness and imperiousness of character, he had a deep tenderness of nature, and was ready to meet any sacrifice for those whom he loved. Personal privations he cared little for, and sent to his family all his earnings, save what was absolutely necessary to support life. He had no greed for wealth, no love of display, no desire for luxuries: a better son never lived, and his unworthy

brother he forgave over and over again, never weary of endeavouring to set him on his right path.

But at times he broke forth with a tremendous energy when pushed too far, as witness this letter to his brother. After saying, “If thou triest to do well, and to honour and revere thy father, I will aid thee like the others, and will provide for thee in good time a place of business,” he thus breaks out in his postscript:—

“I have not wandered about all Italy, and borne every mortification, suffered hardship, lacerated my body with hard labour, and placed my life in a thousand dangers, except to aid my family; and now that I have begun to raise it somewhat, thou alone art the one to embroil and ruin in an hour that which I have laboured so long to accomplish. By the body of Christ, but it shall be found true that I shall confound ten thousand such as thou art if it be needful,—so be wise, and tempt not one who has already too much to bear.”

He was generous and large in his charities. He supported out of his purse many poor persons, married and endowed secretly a number of young girls, and gave freely to all who surrounded him. “When I die,” asked he of his old and faithful servant Urbino, “what will become of you?” “I shall seek for another master in order to live,” was the answer. “Ah, poor man!” cried Michel Angelo, and gave him at once 10,000 golden crowns. When this poor servant fell ill he tended him with the utmost care, as if he were a brother, and on his death broke out into loud lamentations, and would not be comforted.

His fiery and impetuous temper, however, led him often into violence. He was no respecter of persons, and he well knew how to stand up for the rights of man.

There was nothing of the courtier in him; and he faced the Pope with an audacious firmness of purpose and expression unparalleled at that time; and yet he was singularly patient and enduring, and gave way to the variable Pontiff's whims and caprices whenever they did not touch his dignity as a man. Long periods of time he allowed himself to be employed in superintending the quarrying of marble at Carrara, though his brain was teeming with great conceptions. He was oppressed, agitated, irritated on every side by home troubles, by papal caprices, and by the intestine tumult of his country, and much of his life was wasted in merely mechanical work which any inferior man could as well have done. He was forced not only to quarry, but to do almost all the rude blocking out of his statues in marble, which should have been intrusted to others, and which would have been better done by mere mechanical workmen. His very impetuosity, his very genius, unfitted him for such work: while he should have been creating and designing, he was doing the rough work of a stone-cutter. So ardent was his nature, so burning his enthusiasm, that he could not fitly do this work. He was too impatient to get to the form within to take heed of the blows he struck at the shapeless mass that encumbered it, and thus it happened that he often ruined his statue by striking away what could never be replaced.

Vigenero thus describes him:—

“I have seen Michel Angelo, although sixty years of age, and not one of the most robust of men, smite down more scales from a very hard block of marble in a quarter of an hour, than three young marble-cutters would in three or four times that space of time. He flung himself upon

the marble with such impetuosity and fervour, as to induce me to believe that he would break the work into fragments. With a single blow he brought down scales of marble of three or four fingers in breadth, and with such precision to the line marked on the marble, that if he had broken away a very little more, he risked the ruin of the work.”

This is pitiable. This was not the work for a great genius like him, but for a common stone-cutter. What waste of time and energy to no purpose,—nay, to worse than no purpose—to the danger, often the irreparable injury, of the statue. A dull, plodding, patient workman would have done it far better. It is as if an architect should be employed in planing the beams or laying the bricks and stones of the building he designed. In fact, Michel Angelo injured, and in some cases nearly ruined most of his statues by the very impatience of his genius. Thus the back head of the Moses has been struck away by one of these blows, and everywhere a careful eye detects the irreparable blow beyond its true limit. This is not the Michel Angelo which we are to reverence and admire; this is an *abbozzatore* roughing out the work. There is no difficulty in striking off large cleavings of marble at one stroke—any one can do that; and it is pitiable to find him so engaged.

Where we do find his technical excellence as a sculptor is when he comes to the surface—when with the drill he draws the outline with such force and wonderful precision—when his tooth-chisel models out, with such pure sense of form and such accomplished knowledge, the subtle anatomies of the body and the living curves of the palpitant flesh; and no sculptor can examine the colossal figures of the Medici Chapel without feeling the free and mighty touch of a

great master of the marble. Here the hand and the mind work together, and the stone is plastic as clay to his power.

It was not until Michel Angelo was sixty years of age that, on the death of Antonio San Gallo, he was appointed to succeed him as architect, and to design and carry out the building of St Peter's, then only rising from its foundations. To this appointment he answered, as he had before objected when commissioned to paint the Sistine Chapel, "Architecture is not my art." But his objections were overruled. The Pope insisted, and he was finally prevailed upon to accept this commission, on the noble condition that his services should be gratuitous, and dedicated to the glory of God and of His Apostle, St Peter; and to this he was actuated, not only from a grand sentiment, but because he was aware that hitherto the work had been conducted dishonestly, and with a sole view of greed and gain. Receiving nothing himself, he could the more easily suppress all peculation on the part of others.

He was, as he said, an old man in years, but in energy and power he had gained rather than lost, and he set himself at once to work, and designed that grand basilica which has been the admiration of centuries, and to swing, as he said, in air the Pantheon. That mighty dome is but the architectural brother of the great statues in the Medicean Chapel, and the Titan frescoes of the Sistine Chapel. Granted all the defects of this splendid basilica, all the objections of all the critics, well or ill founded, and all the deformities grafted on it by his successors—there it is, one of the noblest and grandest of all temples to the Deity, and one of the most beautiful. The dome itself, within and

without, is a marvel of beauty and grandeur, to which all other domes, even that of Brunelleschi, must yield precedence. It is the uplifted brow and forehead that holds the brain of papal Rome, calm, and without a frown, silent, majestic, impressive. The church within has its own atmosphere, which scarcely knows the seasons without; and when the pageant and the pomp of the Catholic hierarchy passes along its nave, and the sunlight builds its golden slanting bridge of light from the lantern to the high altar, and the fumes of incense rise from the clinking censer at High Mass, and the solemn thrill of the silver trumpets sounds and swells and reverberates through the dim mosaicked dome where the saints are pictured above, cold must be his heart and dull his sense who is not touched to reverence. Here is the type of the universal Church—free and beautiful, large and loving; not grim and sombre and sad, like the northern Gothic cathedrals. We grieve over all the bad taste of its interior decoration, all the giant and awkward statues, all the lamentable details, for which he is not responsible; but still, despite them all, the impression is great. When at twilight the shadows obscure all these trivialities, when the lofty cross above the altar rays forth its single illumination and the tasteless details disappear, and the towering arches rise unbroken with their solemn gulfs of darkness, one can feel how great, how astonishing this church is, in its broad architectural features.

At nearly this time Michel Angelo designed the Palazzo Farnese, the Church of Sta Maria degli Angeli in the ruins of the Baths of Diocletian, the Laurentian Library and the palaces on the Capitol, and various other build-

ings, all of which bear testimony to his power and skill as an architect.

For St Peter's as it now stands Michel Angelo is not responsible. His idea was to make all subordinate to the dome; but after his death, the nave was prolonged by Carlo Maderno, the façade completely changed, and the main theme of the building was thus almost obliterated from the front. It is greatly to be regretted that his original design was not carried out. Every change from it was an injury. The only points from which one can get an idea of his intention is from behind or at the side, and there its colossal character is shown.

We have thus far considered Michel Angelo as a sculptor, painter, and architect. It remains to consider him as a poet. Nor in his poetry do we find any difference of character from what he exhibited in his other arts. He is rough, energetic, strong, full of high ideas, struggling with fate, oppressed and weary with life. He has none of the sweet numbers of Petrarca, or the lively spirit of Ariosto, or the chivalric tones of Tasso. His verse is rude, craggy, almost disjointed at times, and with little melody in it, but it is never feeble. It was not his art, he might have said, with more propriety than when he thus spoke of painting and architecture. Lofty thoughts have wrestled their way into verse, and constrained a rhythmic form to obey them. But there is a constant struggle for him in a form which is not plastic to his touch. Still his poems are strong in their crabbedness, and stand like granite rocks in the general sweet mush of Italian verse.

Such, then, was Michel Angelo, —sculptor, painter, architect, poet, engineer, and able in all these arts. Nor would it have been possible for him to be so great in

any one of them had he not trained his mind to all; for all the arts are but the various articulations of the self-same power, as the fingers are of the hand, and each lends aid to the other. Only by having all can the mind have its full grasp of art. It is too often insisted in our days that a man to be great in one art must devote himself exclusively to that; or if he be solicited by any other, he must merely toy with it. Such was not the doctrine of the artists of old, either in ancient days of Greece or at the epoch of the Renaissance. Phidias was a painter and architect as well as a sculptor, and so were nearly all the men of his time. Giotto, Leonardo, Ghiberti, Michel Angelo, Verrocchio, Cellini, Raffaëlle,—in a word, all the great men of the glorious age in Italy were accomplished in many arts. They more or less trained themselves in all. It might be said that not a single great man was not versed in more than one art. Thence it was that they derived their power. It does not suffice that the arm alone is strong; the whole body strikes with every blow.

The frescoes in the Sistine Chapel at Rome, and the statues in the Medicean Chapel at Florence, are the greatest monuments of Michel Angelo's power as an artist. Whatever may be the defects of these great works, they are of a Titanic brood, that have left no successors, as they had no progenitors. They defy criticism, however just, and stand by themselves outside the beaten track of art, to challenge our admiration. So also, despite of all his faults and defects, how grand a figure Michel Angelo himself is in history, how high a place he holds! His name itself is a power. He is one of the mighty masters that the world

cannot forget. Kings and emperors die and are forgotten—dynasties change and governments fall,—but he, the silent, stern worker, reigns unmoved in the great realm of art.

Let us leave this great presence, and pass into the other splendid chapel of the Medici which adjoins this, and mark the contrast, and see what came of some of the titular monarchs of his time who fretted their brief hour across the stage, and wore their purple, and issued their edicts, and were fawned upon and flattered in their pride of ephemeral power.

Passing across a corridor, you enter this domed chapel or mausoleum—and a splendid mausoleum it is. Its shape is octagonal. It is 63 metres in height, or about 200 feet, and is lined throughout with the richest marbles—of jasper, coralline, persicata, chalcedony, mother-of-pearl, agate, giallo and verde antico, porphyry, lapis-lazuli, onyx, oriental alabaster, and beautiful petrified woods; and its cost was no less than thirty-two millions of francs of to-day. Here were to lie the bodies of the Medici family, in honour of whom it was raised. On each of the eight sides is a vast arch, and inside six of these are six immense sarcophagi, four of red Egyptian granite and two of grey, with the arms of the family elaborately carved upon them, and surmounted with coronets adorned with precious gems. In two of the arches are colossal portrait statues,—one of Ferdinand III. in golden bronze, by Pietro Tacca; and the other of Cosimo II. in brown bronze, by John of Bologna, and both in the richest royal robes. The sarcophagi have the names of Ferdinand II., Cosimo III., Francesco I., Cosimo I. All that wealth and taste can do has been done to celebrate and perpetuate the memory of these royal

dukes that reigned over Florence in its prosperous days.

And where are the bodies of these royal dukes? Here comes the saddest of stories. When the early bodies were first buried I know not; but in 1791 Ferdinand III. gathered together all the coffins in which they were laid, and had them piled together pell-mell in the subterranean vaults of this chapel, scarcely taking heed to distinguish them one from another; and here they remained, neglected and uncared for, and only protected from plunder by two wooden doors with common keys, until 1857. Then shame came over those who had the custody of the place, and it was determined to put them in order. In 1818 there had been a rumour that these Medicean coffins had been violated and robbed of all the articles of value which they contained. But little heed was paid to this rumour, and it was not until thirty-nine years after that an examination into the real facts was made. It was then discovered that the rumour was well founded. The forty-nine coffins containing the remains of the family were taken down one by one, and a sad state of things was exposed. Some of them had been broken into and plundered, some were the hiding-places of vermin, and such was the nauseous odour they gave forth, that at least one of the persons employed in taking them down lost his life by inhaling it. Imperial Caesar, dead and turned to clay, had become hideous and noisome. Of many of the ducal family nothing remained but fragments of bones and a handful of dust. But where the hand of the robber had not been, the splendid dresses covered with jewels, the silks and satins wrought over with gold embroidery, the richly chased helmets and swords crusted with gems and gold, still

survived, though those who had worn them in their splendid pageants were but dust and crumbling bones within them.

“ Here were sands, ignoble things,
Dropped from the ruined sides of
kings.”

In many cases, where all else that bore the impress of life had vanished, the hair still remained almost as fresh as ever. Some bodies which had been carefully embalmed were in fair preservation, but some were fearfully altered. Ghastly and grinning skulls were there, adorned with crowns of gold. Dark and parchment-like faces were seen with their golden locks rich as ever, and twisted with gems and pearls and costly nets. The Cardinal Princes still wore their mitres and red cloaks, their purple pianete and glittering rings, their crosses of white enamel, their jacinths and amethysts and sapphires—all had survived their priestly selves. The dried bones of Vittoria della Rovere Montefeltro (whose very name is poetic) were draped in a robe of black silk of exquisite texture, trimmed with black and white lace, while on her breast lay a great golden medal, and on one side were her emblems, and on the other her portrait as she was in life, and as if to say, “ Look on this picture and on this.” Alas, poor humanity! Beside her lay, almost a mere skeleton, Anna Luisa, the Electress Palatine of the Rhine, and daughter of Cosimo III., with the electoral crown surmounting her ghastly brow and face of black parchment, a crucifix of silver on her breast, and at her side a medal with her effigy and name; while near her lay her uncle, Francesco Maria, a mere mass of dust and robes and rags. Many had been stripped by pro-

fane hands of all their jewels and insignia, and among these were Cosimo I. and II., Eleonora de Toledo, Maria Christina, and others, to the number of twenty. The two bodies which were found in the best preservation were those of the Grand Duchess Giovanna d’Austria, the wife of Francesco I., and their daughter Anna. Corruption had scarcely touched them, and there they lay fresh in colour as if they had just died—the mother in her red satin, trimmed with lace, her red silk stockings and high-heeled shoes, the ear-rings hanging from her ears, and her blond hair fresh as ever. And so, after centuries had passed, the truth became evident of the rumour that ran through Florence at the time of their death, that they had died of poison. The arsenic which had taken from them their life had preserved their bodies in death. Giovanni delle Bande Nere was also here, his battles all over, his bones scattered and loose within his iron armour, and his rusted helmet with its visor down. And this was all that was left of the great Medici. Is there any lesson sadder than this? These royal persons, once so gay and proud and powerful, some of whom patronised Michel Angelo, and extended to him their gracious favour, and honoured him perhaps with a smile, now so utterly dethroned by death, their names scarcely known, or, if known, not revered, while the poor stern artist they looked down upon sits like a monarch on the throne of fame, and, though dead, rules with his spirit and by his works in the august realm of art. Who has not heard his name? Who has not felt his influence? And ages shall come, and generations shall pass, and he will keep his kingdom.

W. W. STORY.

THE NAVY AND THE COUNTRY.

A SCHOOLBOY was once asked to describe salt, and he said it was the stuff which made things taste nasty if you did not put enough of it into them. Similarly we might describe the British navy as an institution which makes foreign countries desirous of going to war with Great Britain if you do not put enough of it in the water.

It has been said that a powerful British navy is one of the surest guarantees of European peace. This formula has been repeated over and over again by statesmen and politicians belonging to both the great parties in the State; but neither side takes any practical steps for giving effect to the great and important truth which it enunciates. It is repeated as a shibboleth; the repetition of it is supposed to contain some charm; and when a member of the Government for the time being makes this declaration with all the great authority of his office, either in Parliament or out of doors, it has a most comfortable and reassuring effect—an effect which has been humorously described as being similar to the result of soothing syrup on a child. The guileless listeners imagine, of course, that the Minister intends to act upon it immediately; the country feels satisfied and contented, and the wistful foreigner feels, or at any rate ought to feel, that with such sentiments announced by a Minister of the Crown, it is useless for any other nation to dream of disputing with Britannia the empire of the sea. Possibly it had at one time this desirable effect upon foreigners; but the barren repetition of the words is at last beginning to sound hollow. Bob Acres has

been found out; the wistful foreigner has taken the liberty of looking behind the warlike mask, and discovered that there was little or no back to the bluster. The number of our ships, the thickness and extent of their armour, the penetration and range of their guns, the readiness or unreadiness of our reserves, are as well known on the other side of the Channel as they are on this.

Our parliamentary wrangles over the money votes for warlike preparations, the extreme views of some of our economists, and the idiosyncrasies of some of the peace-at-any-price party, are keenly watched by our quick-witted and appreciative neighbours; and they can scarcely fail to mark the effect which these forces are producing upon the naval policy of this country—an effect vastly encouraging to them, in proportion as it bids fair to be disastrous to the commerce of Great Britain, should a maritime war overtake her with her navy in its present condition.

It has been repeatedly pointed out by those who place the interests of their country before the interests of their party, that the custom of subordinating the navy estimates to the interests of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in producing a popular Budget, is inconsistent with the maintenance of a navy sufficient to meet the enormous requirements of this extensive empire. It is almost impossible,—in fact we might say quite impossible,—that the men who, under our present system, frame the navy estimates for the year, can have either the time, the

training, or the knowledge to enable them to approach the subject of our naval requirements from the right point of view, and to treat it in that broad, national, and comprehensive spirit which the interests of the empire demand. And yet all propositions for putting the management of the navy into the hands of those who might reasonably be expected to understand the business, and making them directly responsible for their acts, are met by the assertion that it is *impossible*; and that in this popularly governed country it is absolutely necessary that the chief of the navy must be a parliamentarian, and have a seat in the House of Commons, or at any rate in one of the Houses of Parliament, in order to be able to explain to the Legislature his policy and his intentions, and the means he proposes to adopt for the safety of the country. It is assumed that this direct responsibility is necessary in order to safeguard the nation against professional enthusiasm—a failing which, if a failing, can easily be restrained under the constitution within legitimate channels.

To place the administration of the navy under professional direction may be inconvenient from one point of view; but to say that it is impossible is distinctly opposed to facts, as proved by the practice of other popularly governed countries, and by our own in one of the most critical periods of its career, when it was thought wise to subordinate party to national interests.

If we admit for the sake of argument, as we willingly do, that from one point of view the plan would be inconvenient, we may fairly and without prejudice proceed to point out the inconveniences (to use no stronger term)

which have actually arisen, and are patent to all men, of the government of the navy by a party politician.

Thus, in this year 1888, we find ourselves face to face with a condition of affairs which has thoroughly and most naturally alarmed the country. We find that Great Britain has actually abandoned her traditional naval policy of keeping up a navy double the strength of that of any other Power; and we find that she has allowed herself to drift into this new and dangerous policy at a period of her history when she has the most cogent and pressing reasons for pursuing the older and safer policy; when, in short, her maritime interests have vastly increased; and when, in consequence of having become largely dependent upon an ocean-borne food-supply, it is absolutely vital to her that her naval supremacy should be unquestioned. By her supineness and indifference in this matter, and by failing to watch closely and reply promptly to the development of the war navy of her ancient rival across the Channel, she has encouraged that rival to take steps for disputing with her once more the supremacy of the seas, until we see that it is now possible for experts to institute comparisons between the two navies, and to raise a reasonable doubt as to which is actually the stronger at the present moment in effective ships ready for battle. More than that, it is a fact that if we do not count on the British side ships without guns (and we surely have no right to count such ships), France has an actual superiority over us at the present moment in modern armoured battleships, and a large superiority over us in breech-loading guns of heavy calibre. Our nominal superiority, which is dwelt upon and em-

phased by officials who are endeavouring to defend themselves from the just indignation of the country, is composed of ships very properly designated as "obsolete," and armed with old-fashioned and inferior weapons.

In fast cruisers, also, we are so lamentably deficient that the defenders of our present naval policy have had the startling effrontery to declare that we cannot expect to be able to protect our commerce, but must be content to see it pass under a neutral flag directly war is declared with a maritime Power. This truly humiliating acknowledgment has probably done more than all the preaching of the so-called alarmists to awaken the minds of our merchants and shipowners, and to cause them to ask themselves what this really means to them. The answer is, that it means ruin—ruin not only to them, but to the country at large. It means defeat pure and simple, national humiliation, the loss of empire, and such widespread misery, starvation, and social convulsions, that the mere contemplation of such things ought to be sufficient to cause a free and self-governing country to insist that the Government of the day, regardless of party politics, should take such steps as will put such a terrible national collapse outside the region of reasonable probabilities.

Admiral of the Fleet Sir Geoffrey Hornby recently read a paper before the London Chamber of Commerce, in which he pointed out the duties which our cruisers would be expected to perform in case we were at war with a maritime Power; and he gave the number of ships of a certain speed, which, in his judgment, would be necessary to perform those duties. A few days after-

wards the First Lord of the Admiralty, in the House of Commons, replied to Sir Geoffrey Hornby by saying that he disagreed with him in his views as to how our commerce should be protected, and that the ships he wanted would cost too much money. Let us just consider for one moment the respective authority with which these two men speak. Sir Geoffrey Hornby is an officer who has commanded more fleets and squadrons than any man alive; he has performed successfully bolder manœuvres with ironclad fleets than have ever been attempted before or since; he has spent his whole life at sea; he is admitted on all hands to be a clear-headed and able strategist; and it is not too much to say that he is looked upon, not only in this country, but probably in all Europe, as the greatest living authority on naval subjects. Lord George Hamilton is an able statesman, who, with all his ability and conscientious desire to promote the highest efficiency of the department under him, can scarcely have been able to afford much of his time for the study of naval strategy, or the all-important question of how our commerce should be safeguarded in time of war. Which of these, we ask, should the country listen to on such a subject?

Moreover, is it true to say that the ships asked for by Sir Geoffrey Hornby would cost too much money? Who are the proper judges upon this point? Has the question, with its alternative, ever been put before the country? We are convinced that it never has been properly so put; and when it is, there can be little doubt about the answer. It may well be that Ministers have made up their minds that the country would not face the expenditure necessary

to secure its mercantile marine in case of war; and it may well be that Ministers are mistaken.

Nothing in this life is certain—the element of chance enters into all human calculations as to the future; and it is of course possible that the chances of Great Britain falling into a war with a maritime Power may be so remote as not to be worth the consideration of practical statesmen. This is the political aspect of the case pure and simple, and, as a rule, soldiers and sailors refrain from doing more than glance at it. But when it comes to a calculation of the chances of success or failure, when once war has broken out, they claim to speak with some authority; and they have now declared with an almost unanimous voice, that the chances against us, in the present state of our armaments, would be very great. They have not arrived at this conclusion lightly or hastily, or without a full and deliberate inquiry into the number and potency of the forces at the disposal of Great Britain and her possible enemies respectively. Without eliminating absolutely the personal and moral elements of the problem, or denying that a British seaman is still the finest fellow in existence, they have been constrained to look at it in its unromantic and practical aspect of actual physical, or rather mechanical force—to count heads, in short; and having made due allowance for the superior moral, and perhaps physical, qualities of the British race, they still feel that there is some force and reason in the faith of the Great Napoleon—that heaven will fight for the big battalions. The conclusions which all our best soldiers and sailors have (almost unanimously) come to, and the very plain and simple reasons which have induced them

to come to those conclusions, have been so plainly and so frequently put before the public of late, that it is unnecessary to repeat them here. Suffice it to say that they have been evaded but not contradicted by the politicians, who take the optimistic view of the case; but there are, on the other hand, many honest and patriotic politicians who feel strongly upon the question of the national defences, and only refrain from making the subject one of national agitation lest they might seem to shake the authority or the prestige of the present Government, whose maintenance in office they look upon as essential to the most vital interests of the nation.

These men, if questioned on the subject, would probably admit that they saw great danger in the insufficiency of our national defences, particularly the navy; but they would reply that, as practical men, they felt the obligation of subordinating the less to the greater, the more remote to the more immediate. They would say—“The danger which threatens the country by repeal of the Union is imminent; the forces of dissolution have joined issue with us, they are upon us, in touch, in sight of us; we must defeat them first, and take care not to divide our strength. We admit that the danger to the country, if war with a maritime Power came upon us, would be great; but we do not see any immediate prospect of it. All is quiet at present: we are at peace with all our neighbours, and hope to remain so; it behoves us, therefore, as practical men, to deal first with the more immediate danger. After we have settled that, we will turn our attention to the other matter, and put the defensive forces of the country in a satisfactory condition; but

at present we can do nothing which might shake the prestige of a Government upon whose stability and strength the integrity of the empire depends." Such a reply would be worthy of practical politicians who looked at the real and the possible, and not at the ideal, in the government of a country; but it is founded upon the supposition that a proposal to increase largely, and with all despatch, the war navy of the country, so as to make it equal to our increased responsibilities, would necessarily render the Government unpopular, and deprive it of some considerable sections of its supporters. Such a supposition we believe to be absolutely erroneous, and to be based upon a misleading estimate of the feelings and aspirations of the country. Increase of taxation is certainly not as a rule popular; but there may be, and we believe there still is, enough national spirit and patriotism left in the country to render it a less unpopular act for a Government to raise the necessary funds, than to deliberately expose the country to the national degradation, and the misery and horrors of starvation, which must inevitably ensue should the British navy be found wanting in the day of trial.

Slowly and steadily, and thanks largely to the untiring efforts of the press, and to a few public meetings, a sound and healthy feeling upon this subject is growing amongst the great rank and file in the country. The mercantile classes are waking up to a sense of the insecurity of their commerce; and having been told by those whose duty it is to provide for the protection of that commerce, that it is extremely doubtful whether we should be able to protect it (in case of a war with a maritime Power), they nat-

urally turn with some anxiety to a study of the political situation on the Continent, in order to see what chance there is of such a war; and they must indeed be of a cheerful and optimistic disposition if that study reassures them. On all sides they see gigantic armaments—not only armaments on land upon a scale which the world has never seen before, but armaments which affect Great Britain far more deeply—armaments by sea: great war navies supplied with all the latest inventions and improvements of science, springing into existence on all sides. They see our two jealous rivals, France and Russia, straining every nerve (regardless of their debts) to build war navies which can certainly not be intended for defence, for nobody threatens them. They see them also building numbers of the swiftest armed cruisers, which can certainly not be intended for the protection of commerce, as their ocean trade is insignificant, and nobody threatens it,—vessels, in short, which can only have one meaning—and that is the destruction of the commerce of Great Britain: a commerce which is known to be vital to the existence of the empire.

Naturally they ask, with some concern, what their own rulers are doing to meet these ominous threats; for threats they are, whether we choose to look upon them as such, or only as friendly rivalries. And they are met by the extraordinary assertion, that it is impossible to say beforehand what steps are necessary for the protection of a commerce which covers every sea, and embraces half the carrying trade of the whole world. They are told, also, that extreme caution is necessary in dealing with such a subject (why, does not appear evi-

dent), and that it is not wise or economical to increase the British navy with all possible despatch, to meet the present requirements of the nation; but that we ought rather to do it gradually and continuously, and spread the expense over a number of years. That if we build a number of ships at once, in order to meet those of our rivals, they will rapidly become obsolete; and that it is better, therefore, to go on building at a fixed rate, so as to take advantage of all the latest improvements in science. Of course this theory would be excellent if Great Britain was likely to be the aggressive party, and could choose her own time for attack. But if, on the other hand, it is more likely that the attack, when it does come, will come from the other side, it is too much to expect that our rivals will fail to attack when *they* are ready, and wait quietly until we have had time to develop our piecemeal policy of naval construction.

The evidence recently given by the first Sea Lord of the Admiralty (Admiral Sir A. Hood) before the Committee on the Navy Estimates, will not tend to reassure the country as to the wisdom of the principles upon which our naval policy is founded. In fact it is a fulsome compliment to call them principles at all. The mode of procedure is merely a happy-go-lucky make-shift, founded on no intelligent principles whatever, and in striking and vivid contrast to the "higher policy of defence," as set forth in a most able article in the 'Times' of May 25th,—an article so statesmanlike, so clear, and so comprehensive, that it would be well indeed for the country if the principles it enunciates were adopted without delay, as the foundations of our naval policy.

Here are some of the answers given by Admiral Sir A. Hood to questions addressed to him by members of the Select Committee on the Navy Estimates. They are taken from the report in the 'Times' of June 14, 1888. He said:—

"They knew that they wanted the most efficient navy they could get, but they knew also that it was no use recommending more than the House of Commons would pay for." "It was not his duty to form an opinion as to the requirements of the country." "A certain sum of money was put every year for repairs, and a certain sum for building. No complete scheme was ever laid before the Board by an expert, showing the whole requirements of the country." "Asked whom he would blame if the country suffered a great disaster because the fleet was inadequate, the witness said for that they might look back for ten years. The provision for the defence of the country might or might not have been neglected for a certain period."

If such disclosures as these do not awaken the country to a sense of the rottenness of our present system of naval administration, and to the folly of making national requirements subordinate to party interests, then surely nothing but a terrible national disaster will do so; not the duty of the first Sea Lord of the Admiralty to form an opinion as to the naval requirements of the country!

Sir Arthur Hood need not have confined his retrospect to ten years. He might have gone back further than that. He might have gone back to Mr Childers's Orders in Council of 1869 and 1872, whereby the naval members of the Board of Admiralty were divested of their responsibility, and constituted the mere assistants of a civilian.

We have, in a former article,¹ referred to these works of Mr Childers, and alluded to their pernicious effect upon the navy. When taxed with them, during a recent debate in the House of Commons, that right honourable gentleman excused himself in a manner which will not add to his reputation as a statesman. He said that when he took office as First Lord of the Admiralty he found that the practice already existed; that the naval members did not consider themselves responsible; that they acted only as the assistants and advisers of the First Lord, who for some time past had taken all the responsibility on himself; and that by his orders in Council he only confirmed what he found already existing.

Here then we have the spectacle of a very worthy civilian, assumed for some reasons or other to be a statesman, who finding himself suddenly placed at the head of that great and ancient service, upon which (according to the preamble to the Naval Discipline Act) "the wealth, safety, and strength of the kingdom chiefly depends," discovers that during long years of naval peace a certain practice has crept into the administration of that service, a practice contrary to the spirit and letter of the Act upon which its administration is founded. And what does he do?

Instead of using his influence to correct this error; instead of insisting that the combatant officers of a Board appointed to rule over a combatant and very technical service, shall resume without loss of time that responsibility of which they had gradually been deprived, and which during more urgent times, and under the influence of

wiser councils, the nation had deliberately intrusted to them,—this so-called statesman gets an Order in Council to confirm and make legal this lapse of trained professional government, and puts it all into the hands of a civilian—himself, to wit. And then, by way of accentuating his act, he hoists his flag as Lord High Admiral, and proceeds to sea in command of a fleet, to the amusement of the whole naval service.

Sir Arthur Hood was no doubt technically quite correct in saying that "it was not his duty to form an opinion as to the requirements of the country;" and it is well that his views on the subject have been brought to light; for the country could scarcely have been previously aware of the true state of the case, or have imagined that the Board of Admiralty was not a Board at all, but only a number of assistants to a party politician, who has to trim his sails to catch the popular vote of the hour upon all sorts of irrelevant questions.

We see to-day the present First Lord of the Admiralty (in spite of a very large extra shipbuilding vote asked for by his predecessor) forced to acknowledge that the navy is inadequate for the defence of the country and the protection of its commerce, but resorting to the old, old practice of laying all the blame at the doors of previous Boards of Admiralty, and saying that if the country will only leave him alone, and give him time to carry out his own views as to how a navy should be provided, he will, at some future date not specially mentioned, provide it with a navy worthy of its proud position. Why, we have heard all this before—several times before; and each successive First

¹ "Our Naval Policy," 'Maga,' April 1888.

Lord sings exactly the same song, inclusive of the criticisms of his predecessors, utterly regardless of Bacon's wise advice to "use the memory of thy predecessor fairly and tenderly; for if thou dost not, it is a debt will sure be paid when thou art gone."

But what says his predecessor, Lord Northbrook? Speaking in the House of Lords on the 29th of June, he told the noble Lords and the country that "the present strength of the navy was due, not to the action of the present Board of Admiralty, but rather to the action of previous Boards,"—including, of course, his own. Now the question we are discussing, the question which causes anxiety to the country, is not "the strength of the navy," but its weakness—its absolute weakness, and its relative weakness; and its acknowledged inadequacy to perform the duties which would be required of it in war time. We say acknowledged inadequacy, because it has been acknowledged, not only by all our admirals and captains, but by the present political chief of the navy. Lord George Hamilton has stated publicly on several occasions that he does not consider the navy to be strong enough now; that he never said it was; that it is not the opinion of his colleagues that the navy is strong enough; he does not even mean to say that it will be strong enough in 1890, although it will then be much stronger than it is now; and if the *present* Government are left in office, and not worried by "out-of-doors critics," they will eventually, at some future date not named, make the navy strong enough.

Now, again, what says his predecessor? In the speech alluded to above, Lord Northbrook said,—but here are his words, and we beg our readers' special attention

to them. After drawing some totally misleading comparisons between our own and the French fleets in 1884, making out ours to have been much stronger than it really was, he is still obliged to acknowledge that it was not strong enough, and then proceeds:—

"But the right honourable gentleman [meaning Mr W. H. Smith, his predecessor] began to make good the want that existed, and the Board of Admiralty, over which he himself presided, followed in the same direction, with the result that in the years beginning with 1880 twice as many ships *were being built* in England as in France. The public failing to understand what was going on, there was a scare in the autumn of 1884; and Mr Gladstone's Government, thinking it right to *take advantage of the opportunity thus afforded*, proposed an addition of £3,000,000 to the ship-building estimates of the navy. The result had been most satisfactory," &c.

We have taken the liberty of italicising some of his words for the purpose of drawing attention to them. Thus the term "being built" in England, as applied to that particular period 1880, meant that they were on the stocks, and being built at such a rate of progress as would cause them to be from eight to ten years before they were completed, instead of three years (the necessary time). Now it is not correct to say that the public failed to understand what was going on: it was just because they *did* understand what was going on, but failed to appreciate either the economy or the national expediency of this method of construction, that they got up a scare, and insisted on a more rapid mode of construction, with an immediate increase in certain classes of vessels.

But suppose we take Lord Northbrook at his own word.

How does his action stand? He is First Lord of a Board of Admiralty which has for some years been doing all that is necessary for providing a national navy (if not, it had been culpably negligent); but in 1884, "the public failing to understand what was going on," got scared, and Lord Northbrook and his colleagues in the Cabinet thought it "right to take advantage of the opportunity thus afforded" (of a scare founded on false premisses) to ask for and obtain £3,000,000 in addition to what they considered necessary, and added this in a lump sum to the shipbuilding estimates of the navy. "And the result had been most satisfactory!" What a curious way of providing a State navy, and how droll that a British statesman should describe it as most satisfactory! What part of it are we to consider as satisfactory? Is it satisfactory that just four years afterwards (that being about the time that a wise shipbuilding policy might be expected to show its results) we are told, not only by the whole of our admirals and captains, but by the political chief of the navy himself, that the navy is inadequate to meet the requirements of the country, and that even two years hence it will not be strong enough. Is this satisfactory? So much for the broad principles of the Northbrook administration. And now to descend for one moment into details. One of the items—in fact the principal item—of the so-called Northbrook programme, was the construction of seven armour-belted cruisers; but these ships were designed with such a totally inadequate coal-supply, that on consideration it was seen to be necessary to double it, in order to render them of any use as un-masted cruisers; and the result

has been to send these ships to sea with every atom of their expensive armour under water, where of course it is not only useless but worse than useless, as it is so much dead weight. We only quote this one example as a specimen; but we ask, Is this also to be considered as "most satisfactory"?

It will be seen that we write in no party spirit; but merely in condemnation of a system, and to show our readers how the politicians play battledore and shuttlecock with the most vital interests of the empire, by making the navy subservient to their party politics. We believe that this system would not be allowed to go on for a single year, if the public were once thoroughly enlightened as to the consequences which must inevitably ensue if we found ourselves at war with a maritime Power. Such a war would break it down utterly, and we should have to swop horses crossing the stream; an operation which would put a terrible strain upon our whole social structure, and offer potent weapons to those traitors, and general enemies to society, whom we know to be lurking in our midst. The system works, after a fashion, in peace time. It could not work in war.

Peace may be a blessed and precious gift; but if, whilst we enjoy its blessings, we make all our arrangements as if we expected it to last indefinitely, and as if we had made up our minds that Great Britain will never again find herself engaged in a maritime war, fighting for her national existence,—then, our long era of maritime peace, which has enabled us to grow rich and luxurious, will prove to be a very doubtful and ephemeral blessing—nay, perhaps a delusion and a curse.

We remarked above that the

absence of any intelligent system of naval administration, as disclosed by the evidence of Sir Arthur Hood before the Select Committee on the Navy Estimates, was in striking contrast with "The Higher Policy of Defence," as set forth in a most able article in the 'Times' of May 25, 1888.

That article, contributed by an anonymous correspondent, is founded on, and evidently called forth by, a paper read at the Royal United Service Institution a few days previously by Admiral Colomb, entitled "The Naval Defences of the United Kingdom." Both Admiral Colomb's paper and the anonymous article deal with the same subject (though from a slightly different point of view) in a masterly and comprehensive manner.

Did space permit we should like to quote largely from both; but though this is impossible, we must trouble our readers with one quotation from "The Higher Policy of Defence," as it bears directly on the point for which we are contending, and supports our views in the clearest and most forcible language:—

"On all grounds, therefore, it is desirable to place the demands put forward in relation to the defences of the empire on a fair and intelligible basis. No amount of ingenuity in matters of detail can ever atone for the defects of a scheme of which the fundamental conception is wrong. No tactical skill can avert the evils resulting from a plan of campaign which is strategically faulty. We have on many occasions shown a tendency to approach questions both large and small from the wrong end, and it is not difficult to ascertain the cause. Master-minds are necessarily rare. Able and zealous experts, capable of holding a brief with much show of force, abound. The balance is supposed to be held by a civilian Minister, who of necessity knows

nothing about the matter. The qualities which lead a statesman to Cabinet rank in this country, are tending less and less in the direction which the right government of a great empire demands. Good debating power, mastery of the details of local government or of finance, capacity for work, all these things are not only compatible with a total inability to understand the broad aspects of great military problems, but they may be associated with complete incompetence in the mere administrative work of a War Office or Admiralty. And it is possible to arrive at the head of either even without the possession of one of the attributes enumerated. Pitt could grasp and direct a vast military scheme. Palmerston was naturally gifted with something of a soldier's genius. But of the public men of recent times, how many have aimed at the elementary proposition that the richest empire in the world must needs be strong or perish, and that to weld the scattered members into one great whole, capable of acting as such against a common enemy, is a problem worth the labour of a life? Political distinction being obtainable at an infinitely cheaper rate, involving no slightest study of the relative strength of the great Powers, no thought of the solution of the complex problem of imperial defence, the result is not to be wondered at. Under such conditions it is inevitable that what may well be termed the higher policy of defence has been palpably forgotten."

The above is weighty evidence against our present system of making the navy estimates dance attendance upon party interests. But the worst of it is, that there can be no absolute proof that the system is wrong, unless war and disaster come upon the nation. As long as peace lasts, our optimists can point to facts, and tell us that the system works very well on the whole. They can say that it has ensured us eighty years of maritime peace and prosperity; and they can argue that if our

naval policy was not a wise one, and our navy strong enough to defend the empire, it is certain that we should have been attacked and plundered long ago. This sounds very plausible; but unfortunately history is replete with instances of what we might call deferred punishment. Prestige lasts a long time; and such a glorious prestige as that of the British navy is certain to exercise a potent influence for many years after the victories and triumphs which gave rise to it, more especially as there has not been of late years any maritime warfare of sufficient importance (between any nations) to dim the lustre of our naval renown. The naval glories of England, and the marvellously brilliant campaigns of the great Napoleon, stood for many a year on pinnacles of equal height: they were contemporary. Ulm and Trafalgar were within a day or two of each other. The military glories of Napoleon, though still unique in the peculiar development of martial genius, with which they paralysed and subdued Europe, have had their lustre somewhat dimmed and been relegated to ancient history (to use a popular phrase) by the still more magnificent campaign of the Franco-German war.

This war wiped out the military prestige of France. The French army had been allowed to fall into decay. Corruption and mismanagement were rampant: it had continued to live upon a prestige gained under a more perfect system of organisation; but when the day of trial came, its prestige could not save it, and it collapsed before an army with a more perfect organisation, which produced bigger battalions, better equipped and better supplied, and directed by a staff which, without trusting to

prestige, or leaving anything to luck which human foresight could make certain, had studied deeply, and were prepared to carry out practically, a sound and scientific strategy.

It seems to us that the British navy of to-day, though perhaps not corrupted by actual fraud or malversation, has so fallen under the blighting influence of party politics, and been made the plaything of ambitious politicians seeking renown as economists, that its *raison d'être* has been completely lost sight of, and responsible Ministers are forced to acknowledge that it is not strong enough to defend the empire. We have seen above that prestige the most brilliant will not supply the place of properly organised physical force. Vague phrases and grandiloquent after-dinner speeches must give way to the more prosaic counting of heads and counting of ships; and when this is done, we must sit down quietly and calculate what it is we shall require our navy to do for us in case of war, let us say, with France. This has been done by some of our ablest and most thoughtful seamen—such men as Admirals of the Fleet Sir Thomas Symonds, Sir Geoffrey Hornby, Admirals Sir Spencer Robinson and Colomb, and by others; and it is a fact worth noticing that all these men, who are untrammelled by office and uninfluenced by party considerations, are unanimous in their views as to the dangerous weakness of our navy, and urgent in their appeals to the nation to strengthen it without delay.

A large and influential meeting of merchants, bankers, underwriters, and representative city men of all shades of political opinion, was held at the Cannon Street Hotel on June 5, to consider the

question of our national defences, to listen to addresses on the subject from naval officers, and to pass resolutions for the purpose of strengthening the hands of the Government, and of assuring it of the hearty support of all classes and political shades in the city of London, if it would undertake to set to work without loss of time to allay the feeling of public uneasiness which existed, by taking immediate steps to strengthen the navy. Addresses were delivered by naval officers, and by a distinguished soldier; and the resolutions proposed were carried unanimously (it was an open meeting), but without any of those more immediate and alarming signs of panic with which the promoters of it had been credited. There was, however, one unfortunate incident which threw a dark cloud over the proceedings, and that was the absence, through a severe and sudden illness, of Admiral of the Fleet Sir Geoffrey Hornby, the leader of the movement,—the ablest and most trusted and respected officer in her Majesty's navy,—who was to have been the principal speaker on that occasion. Sir Geoffrey Hornby's address, though printed, was not read at the meeting, but numerous copies were distributed to those who attended. It was comprehensive, concise, and clear, pointing out the first principles of naval warfare for Great Britain, founded upon the teachings of history, modified by the introduction of steam and ironclads. It entered into the details of a blockade of

Toulon, the principal military seaport of France; and showing that such a blockade was essential to our supremacy in the Mediterranean, this very high—nay, highest—naval authority in the country, came to the conclusion that if we took the necessary ships to blockade¹ Toulon, we should have only five left to blockade Brest, where he concluded at least ten French ironclads would be assembled. Thus we should lose the command of the narrow seas around our coasts, and lay the country open to invasion, or starvation by the cutting off of our food-supply, whichever method of reduction the enemy thought proper to apply.

All our best authorities are unanimous in their opinion that if we found ourselves at war with France to-morrow, we should have to make an effort to blockade, or mask, the principal French military ports. There may be differences of opinion as to *how* this is to be done; but there is apparently no difference of opinion that if it is not done, and the French fleet is free to put to sea and roam where it will, the commerce of England must inevitably be destroyed. And in the present condition of the country this means national defeat, for it cannot exist without its commerce. What, then, are we to say of the wisdom of a great, free, self-governing people, who, knowing these facts, are still content to be put off with promises of amendment at some future date? What should we say of the wisdom of an individual who, having satis-

¹ The word "blockade" has given rise to some controversy amongst seamen, as many authorities consider that it would now be impossible to blockade a port under anything approaching to the old conditions; but it is really immaterial whether we use the word "blockade," "observe," or "mask." In any case we mean essentially the same thing—viz., that we must make such arrangements that the force blockaded will not be able to leave its port and put to sea without the extreme probability of having to meet a superior hostile force.

fied himself that his business was inadequately insured, and that there were special dangers of a conflagration, in consequence of inflammable materials lying all about in the neighbourhood, yet declined to take the proper steps to effect a reasonable insurance for fear of being accused of panic and called an alarmist? Should we not say that he was weak-minded, short-sighted, and blind to his own interests, and that he deserved a disaster?

The British nation has been told by all its best and most thoughtful naval officers that the naval forces of the country are inadequate for its defence. They turn, then, to their politicians, and they ask the present parliamentary chief of the navy what his opinion is; and he tells them plainly that he also does not think the navy is strong enough: he, justly we admit, lays the blame of this deficiency at the doors of his predecessors, who mismanaged the Admiralty and the dockyards, and failed to get full value for their money. He says also that under his management this will all be altered, and that under the arrangements which he and his colleagues have made, the navy will in future be worked on sound business principles, and full value received for every penny expended. This would be very cheerful and encouraging news for the British public if it were not for the fact that it is somewhat discounted in the minds of all those whose memories carry them back to exactly similar charges and similar promises which have been made by every political chief of the navy who has been in office for the last thirty years.

It has been shown that seamen and politicians alike are agreed as

to the fact that the navy is not strong enough to meet the requirements of the country. As to how much it ought to be increased, there will probably be considerable divergence of opinion, not only as between the seamen and the politicians, but amongst the seamen themselves; and, indeed, it is only natural that it should be so, seeing that there is a considerable diversity of opinion amongst them as to the respective values of the individual ships in our own and foreign navies; but it is probable that the phrase, "large increase" or "considerable increase," would cover all their views.

We now come to a very important point in the controversy—viz., how soon ought this increase to be effected? Should it be done at once, and without a day's delay? or is it wiser to put it off and do it gradually? We are all, no doubt, agreed with Lord George Hamilton when he says that the expenditure of one day does not mean the efficiency of the next day. But it is equally indisputable that the longer you put off commencing to build a ship, the longer it will be before she is completed. And how are we to reconcile the admission that the navy is not strong enough, with the policy of discharging dockyard men, cutting down the navy estimates, and failing to lay down any more ironclads?

It would seem to ordinary minds that if the navy is admitted to be too weak,—if, moreover, the safety of the country depends upon its being strong enough,—and if the most far-seeing statesman would hesitate to name the year or the month which it might be called upon to put forth its strength and fight for the nation's existence,—that the wise and pro-

per course would be to find out from the best authorities (not politicians, but naval strategists who have studied the question) what increase of strength is absolutely necessary, and then to set about effecting it without a day's delay. But it appears that this is not the view of the Government; they seem to favour a gradual and piecemeal method of increase, which does not take into account what our neighbours may be doing at the same time.

Here are the First Lord of the Admiralty's own words. Returning thanks for the navy at the Royal Academy banquet on May 7, he said:—

“It has been suggested that an immediate and wholesale outlay might be advantageous to her Majesty's navy; but this proposition is put forward on the theory that the expenditure of one day means the efficiency of the next day. (Hear, hear.) Now, if there is one single fact which has been brought home to the mind of every individual who has been in any way associated with the administration of her Majesty's navy during the past three years, it is this, that the resuscitation of a navy under present conditions must be a slow, a gradual, and a laborious process. The mere expenditure of money can no more attain that object than a sick man can be restored to health by wholesale draughts of alcohol. (Laughter.)”

The last sentence is of course the *reductio ad absurdum*, and was only intended to raise a laugh, though it is not very relevant to the subject; but the assertion that the proposition to make an immediate and wholesale outlay on the navy is founded on the theory that the expenditure of one day means the efficiency of the next day, is scarcely a fair representation of the case. On the contrary, the plea for an immediate expenditure of

money in commencing to build several new ironclads, is founded on the theory that if you don't begin to build a ship you will certainly never finish her.

We agree with Lord George Hamilton in assuming that the resuscitation of a navy under present conditions must be a laborious process; but why it should be slow and gradual is not so evident. That would seem to depend upon how soon you wanted the navy to be ready. And it has been proved beyond all question that with iron ships (whatever it may have been with wood) the most rapid construction is the cheapest; it would also be more politic to have a certain ship completed when war broke out, than to have her on the stocks and only half finished. The present Board of Admiralty do not appear to deny this, inasmuch as they admit that the rapid construction of individual ships is economical; but they miss or evade the main point at issue—for the rapid construction of five or six ships will not make up for the deficiency of fifty or sixty which our best admirals tell us, and in fact which it can be proved to demonstrate, at present exists.

The meaning of the term “present conditions” was clearly explained by the First Lord in another speech, wherein he pointed out the indubitable fact that the rapid advances of science, and the improvements and inventions in all warlike materials, rendered ships very quickly obsolete, or comparatively so; or, in other words, that you could to-day build a ship which would be very much more powerful than one which you built ten or twenty years ago. But how this argument can be brought forward to support a “slow and gradual” process of resuscitating

the British navy, we are unable to see. In our judgment it points in exactly the opposite direction, as it puts into the hands of a rich nation, which has admittedly fallen into arrears, the power of making good her position by an immediate and wholesale (though the word is not ours) expenditure of money: the "slow and gradual" argument also assumes that your neighbours intend to sit still with their hands folded whilst you are "slowly" and "laboriously" plodding along with your piecemeal policy,—an assumption which is not justified by their recent course of action.

In proof of our assertion that under our present system of naval government the navy of the country is not maintained in accordance with national requirements, but rather in deference to party and electioneering interests, we would point to the fact that, at the beginning of this session, when, in consequence of the line of procedure taken out by a former colleague (Lord R. Churchill), the Government, thinking they must put in some claim for the character of economists, cut down the navy estimates by £900,000. And the First Lord, when making his statement to the House of Commons, said, in effect,—“What a good boy am I! and yet I will give you more for this reduced sum than my predecessors gave you for the larger sum.” And then, a few months afterwards, when there had been a considerable agitation, possibly started, and certainly accentuated, in consequence of this £900,000 reduction—when popular feeling began to run high—and when Lord Wolseley, Sir E. Hamley, and others began to tell the country some plain but unpleasant truths about the army, the condition of which they considered most unsatisfac-

tory, *in consequence* of the admission that the navy was not strong enough to perform its traditional duty of protecting the country from invasion,—*then* another member of the same Government—to wit, the Prime Minister—asserted, and claimed credit for the fact, that the *increase* of expenditure on the navy had been enormous during the last few years.

Under these circumstances, how is it possible to put in practice “The higher policy of defence”? or, in fact, any high and rational policy for the defence of this great, rich, and scattered empire, whose vast possessions, and comparative monopoly of the carrying trade of the ocean, are the envy of all her neighbours, and yet whose resources are so great, whose powers of producing ships and all maritime war material are so unrivalled, and whose points of vantage on the globe being so obvious, has it well within her power to make her position impregnable, and by so doing, to secure not only her own safety, but in all probability the peace of Europe. This was our contention at the beginning of this article. It may or may not be true that a powerful British navy is one of the surest guarantees of European peace, but it is quite certain that it is one of the surest guarantees for the safety of Great Britain. And this of itself is surely worthy of our consideration.

We have shown that it is admitted on all hands that the British navy is not strong enough; and we submit that we have given reasons why its increase should *not* be “a slow and gradual process,” but that, on the contrary, it should be done with all despatch.

Finally, we would point to the present position of Great Britain in India, with reference to the

steady advance of a great military and undoubtedly aggressive Power to the confines of that empire: and we would submit that no British statesman worthy of the name, can put his hand upon his heart and say that a quarrel with Russia at no distant date is not almost a certainty; unless (and this is the point), *unless* we are content to hold that empire upon Russian sufferance, dependent upon our subservience to her will and pleasure upon all European questions. It would not be difficult to show that such a tenure of possession would be inconsistent and absolutely incompatible with our position as a conquering and governing race in India; but we do not care to enter at present into this branch of the subject. Suffice it to say that a quarrel with Russia is at least probable; and certainly the knowledge abroad, or even the idea that we are not ready for that quarrel, will not make it any the less probable.

It has been demonstrated in former articles in this Magazine,¹ that in view of Russia's enormous military power, and her railway communication with Central Asia, almost up to the borders of Afghanistan, the only effective way in which Great Britain can fight Russia is by attacking her in other places besides the frontiers of the British empire in India; and that in order to do this, she must bring her navy into play. It was shown by the writer of "The Balance of Military Power in Europe," that European alliances were essential to Great Britain for the eventual retention of India; and it was proved also, that in consequence

of her not being a great military Power, she could only hope to secure those alliances by a judicious use of her navy, and by maintaining that navy at a strength consistent with her traditional policy of being undisputed mistress of the seas.

In "The Balance of Power in Europe, its Naval Aspect," we pointed out that we were "unfortunately obliged to come to the conclusion that with France and Russia against us, no matter who else was on our side, or even with Russia against us and France hanging back, we should be unable to supply the two squadrons required" (one in the Baltic and one in the Levant) "without a considerable increase to our present navy." Since the above was published, the opinion therein expressed has been corroborated by our highest naval authority. In his address to the merchants of the city of London, Sir Geoffrey Hornby said:—

"Look at another possible case. Suppose we were at war with Russia. Such a thing is possible, and I am one of those who think that if we fight properly—that is, using the advantages which sea-carriage gives us, and letting her get such advantages as her long distances by land may give her—that she will be beaten again, as she was, by those causes, in the Crimean war.

"But war with Russia means one fleet in the Black Sea and another in the Baltic, say fifteen ships in one and fourteen in the other. But, unless our old ally" (France) "assures us of her complete neutrality, we run frightful risk while she can throw twenty-four ships on either of our fleets."

Sir Geoffrey Hornby continues—

"The more you think of it, the more,

¹ See "Balance of Military Power in Europe," July and November 1887; also "The Balance of Power in Europe, its Naval Aspect," February 1888.

I believe, you will agree with what my old friend and instructor, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Thomas Symonds, has been so long writing to you, —England's policy should be to lay down two ships when France lays down one, and to complete them first."

This policy is entirely consistent with, and in fact is the logical outcome of Richard Cobden's oft-quoted expressions of opinion on the same subject. It is a policy which has been absolutely lost sight of, or systematically abandoned (it matters not which), for many years past. True it is that our sin of omission has not yet found us out. But how much longer can we expect immunity? Was it or was it not a wise policy at the time (1861), when Cobden first lent to it the weight of his great authority? If it was wise then, is it less so now that our responsibilities and our commerce have greatly increased, and the country has become so largely dependent on an ocean-borne food-supply? These are questions of infinite moment to every man who has an interest in the welfare of this great empire. They are far more pertinent, and one would think they ought to be more interesting, than questions of which Government, or which particular Board of Admiralty, passed the greatest amount of armour-clad tonnage into the first-class steam reserve in any one year; or, of who was quickest to take advantage of a scare founded on false premises,—both interesting subjects in their way, but both alike missing the main point at issue—the point of whether the navy is or is not strong enough to protect the vital interests of the country. Cobden said it was essential to the safety of Great Britain that she should maintain a war navy about double the

strength of that of France; and he also said that there had hitherto been a sort of tacit understanding between the two countries that this should be their relative proportions of naval strength, and he added in the most emphatic manner that he should have considered himself a traitor to his country if he had allowed himself to be used to hoodwink and mislead it whilst he was negotiating his famous commercial treaty with France, if the latter country took the opportunity of attempting to disturb those relative proportions. He also stated plainly and bluntly that if he saw any attempt on the part of France to upset those proportions, and an endeavour to approach this country in naval strength, he should immediately expect some sinister design, and should conclude that she was entering upon a policy of war.

This was very plain language from the apostle of peace; but he was not content with simply giving his opinion on the subject—he gave his reasons why he considered it essential that we should maintain a navy double that of France. He said:—

"England has four times at least the amount of mercantile tonnage to protect at sea that France has, and that surely gives us a legitimate pretension to have a larger navy than France. Besides, this country is an island; we cannot communicate with any part of the world except by sea. France, on the other hand, has a frontier upon land, by which she can communicate with the whole world. We have, I think, unfortunately for ourselves, about a hundred times the amount of territories beyond the seas to protect as colonies and dependencies that France has. France has also twice or three times as large an army as England has. All these things give us the right to have a navy somewhat in the proportion to the French navy which we find to

have existed if we look back over the past century."¹

And he then proceeded to make his oft-quoted declaration, that he would vote a hundred millions sterling rather than allow the French navy to approach to an equality with ours.

We commend these views to our readers, merely observing that all Cobden's reasons are as strong to-day, and many of them stronger, than they were twenty-seven years ago, when they were spoken.

The above policy is that which we have ventured to call our traditional naval policy, and there can be no possible doubt of the fact that we have abandoned it: the most extreme of the optimists has never ventured to assert that our navy is double, or anything approaching double, that of France.

To put the matter on the lowest and most selfish grounds; to abolish all sentiment, all honour and glory; to act as if our navy had not inherited brilliant traditions and a world-wide renown; to put it simply as a question of £ s. d., as an ordinary commercial speculation of insurance,—our present policy seems indefensible. To keep up no navy at all, and trust to the preachings of the peace party, would at least be logical; but to go to the expense of keeping up an insufficient navy, is thoroughly inconsistent, and like buying a life-buoy that will not float, a rope

too short to reach, or a coat too small to put on; and to defend or excuse this policy on the ground that ships built to-day will in a few years become obsolete, is again to miss the main issues of the question. It really seems to us an extremely simple problem, which it is unnecessary to mystify with side issues. In order to defend our interests, we require a navy double the strength of that of France. We have the power to produce it, and the money to pay for it; and it is absolutely immaterial whether ships produced to-day become obsolete in two years, ten years, or twenty years. Foreign ships will become obsolete at the same rate, for none of us can discount the future by much; and all we have to do is to take care that at any date at which the conflagration may happen to break out, we shall be able to commission and send to sea with efficient crews double the number of fighting ships that our neighbours can send. At present we are not in a condition to do this, nor do we even approach to that condition; moreover, at our present rate of progress it will be many years before we arrive at that state, even if our neighbours remain idle in the meantime—and they certainly give no indication of doing so.

Our insurance is inadequate. The risks we run are uncertain; but they are undoubtedly great.

¹ Speech of the late R. Cobden at Rochdale, June 26, 1861, to his constituents, after the French Commercial Treaty had been negotiated.

THE SECOND HALF OF THE SESSION.

THE progress of legislative work since the reassembling of Parliament after the Whitsuntide recess can hardly be satisfactory to those who had hopefully expected that the present session would have been prolific in useful legislation. Week has followed week, and the time allotted to "private members" has been again and again curtailed, and yet, in spite of altered rules, ministerial appeals, and the not infrequent application of the "Closure," the parliamentary machine continues to move slowly and heavily, and once more it appears that, in order to enable Ministers to terminate the session within a reasonable time, resort must be had to the unwelcome process of an autumn session; and even so the present year will witness, though in a lesser degree, a repetition of the failure of performance which has disappointed the parliamentary promise of so many sessions in the past. It would be hard indeed if the Government were to be blamed for this untoward position of affairs. It may of course be alleged that they have undertaken more business than could well have been accomplished within the seven months which are usually allotted to the sittings of Parliament; and there will be doubtless urged against them all those charges of mismanagement and miscalculation which it is the natural function of an Opposition to use as legitimate weapons with which to attack their opponents upon the Treasury bench. But those who, sensible of the mischief which alike attends hurried legislation and the neglect of popular wants, endeavour to

form an impartial judgment upon the causes which have produced these results, will be inclined to apportion such blame as may be fairly imputed between the Government and the Opposition, and further to inquire whether, after all, it may not be our system of parliamentary government which is mainly the cause of the continual legislative disappointments which are the subject of our complaints. The real truth is, that we are paying the price of the improved representative system which we enjoy. In old ante-Reform times men were returned to Parliament for various reasons and for different qualifications. In the present day, whatever other qualifications he may possess, a member of the House of Commons must be more or less able to make a speech, and to captivate the ears of the democratic constituencies which return our legislators to Parliament. As most of the latter imagine themselves to be possessed of this particular qualification in a greater rather than a less degree, and as the constituencies expect their representatives to display in Parliament the oratorical gifts which have won their own sweet suffrages, it follows that the number of orators within the House of Commons has become indefinitely multiplied, and the length of speeches and of debates enormously increased. It is not our province to indicate the remedy at the present moment; but it is easy to see that where 670 persons have to transact business, each of whom has a right to speak, if he pleases, every day, and upon every subject, and the greater

number of whom are inclined to avail themselves of this right to a limited but still to an inconvenient extent, it is impossible that business can be transacted with rapidity, or with that careful supervision of details which would be possible if the number of legislators and orators were less. The plan of Grand Committees is still upon its trial, but it may be doubted whether a scheme which permits rediscussion in the body of the House of Commons after the termination of the Grand Committee, will tend to a material curtailment of debate; and it seems probable that, if the parliamentary machine is to work at all, it will ere long be absolutely necessary either to limit the duration of speeches, or to resort to a more frequent application of the Closure, in order to procure the earlier termination of debates in which the arguments on both sides have been fairly stated, and upon which the House is ready to pronounce its decision.

If, however, there is blame to be attached to the Government and to the Opposition for the tardiness of legislative progress during the present session, it would be unfair to omit mention of another cause which has somewhat contributed to this result. It has often been urged against the Conservative party by their opponents that their discipline is so severe that independence is unknown among them, and that the slightest display of such a quality disappears instantly at the crack of the party whip. A charge of this nature can hardly be sustained against the supporters of the Government in the present House of Commons. Not only by speeches out of doors and by letters in the newspapers, but even by action

taken in the House of Commons itself, "Conservative" members of that House have displayed an "independence" of Government and of party ties which must have considerably increased the difficulties of Lord Salisbury's Cabinet and encouraged its opponents. We do not for a moment question the honesty and sincerity of such members, or their fidelity to Conservative and Unionist principles; but we venture nevertheless to doubt the discretion and patriotism of their action in the present position of affairs. It cannot be too often repeated that Lord Salisbury's Government is something more than Conservative; it is a national, Unionist Government, mainly engaged in upholding that union of her Majesty's home dominions which is insidiously threatened by those who, repudiating the term Separatist as applied to themselves, are continuously and actively promoting a policy which leads directly to separation. Thus considered, it is the manifest duty of every Conservative and Unionist member of Parliament to strengthen the Government by every means in his power, and not to afford opportunities to the Opposition to weaken, by attacks and divisions upon side issues, a position too strong to be endangered by direct assault. Whether it be upon questions connected with the Local Government Bill, the Liquor Traffic, Payment of Members of Parliament, or any other question which can be named, it is abundantly evident that Mr Gladstone and his followers are prepared to go into any lobby or adopt any course which may by any possibility place the Government in a minority. It is immaterial to them whether it be disaffected Tories or ultra-Radicals who are their imme-

diate allies; nor does the particular question at all concern men who have shifted and changed their views upon the most important question which has arisen in our days, at the command of the most shifty and changeable political leader of modern times. Utterly unscrupulous as to the means, their sole object is to embarrass, weaken, and damage the Government; and with this knowledge, it behoves Unionist members to beware of playing into their hands by the exercise of an "independence" which, however laudable in itself, ought to be made subservient to the main and vital object for which they were returned to Parliament—namely, the preservation of the unity of the empire. These gentlemen would do well to bear in mind that the Unionist party, strong and united as it is upon the policy which called it into existence, is composed of men who have hitherto differed upon many important political opinions. It is quite true, and it is much to be desired, that the association brought about by their agreement upon the great question of the Union may lead to such an approach to agreement upon other political matters as may ultimately lead to a closer alliance, and even to a complete and formal fusion between men who have already so much in common. It is evident, however, that, whilst the present state of feeling continues, the Government, in their legislative proposals, have to take into account the opinions of the Unionist party generally, and not only those of their Conservative supporters. Concessions must be made on either side, in order to secure the support of each section of Unionists; and if this cannot be secured, the Government will be obliged to content themselves with

such uninteresting and ordinary legislation as may indeed avoid differences among their supporters, but will at the same time place weapons in the hands of their opponents, who will be able to point with some show of justice to the fact that the Unionist party can only agree upon one question, and that their agreement practically stops all legislation upon subjects in which the public are deeply interested. Nothing could inflict greater injury upon the Unionist cause than such a result as that to which we allude; and it is to this that misdirected "independence" may lead us, if unchecked by patriotic considerations. It is right and necessary that Government should be informed of any strong opinion entertained by a section of its supporters upon any political question or legislative proposal, but such information can always be supplied in a friendly manner, outside the walls of Parliament; and if necessary party discipline is to be maintained, and the Unionist majority preserved, differences of opinion upon details, or even discontent with particular measures of the Government, should never find their vent in letters addressed to the public press, or still less in amendments to Government proposals moved from the ranks of their own supporters.

In spite of the difficulties which they have had to encounter, the position of the Government can hardly be said to have been in any degree weakened by the events which have taken place since the Whitsuntide recess. Inside the walls of Parliament they have held their own by fair majorities upon every occasion when their legislative proposals have been challenged; and although the delays of

which we have spoken have imperilled the passing of some of the measures which constituted their political programme at the commencement of the session, there is yet time sufficient to ensure the passage of their most important bills, and to redeem our legislators from the charge of incapacity to legislate.

It would, of course, be folly to ignore the fact that the hopes of the Gladstonian faction and the spirits of the Separatist party generally were enormously raised by the issue of two bye-elections which occurred during the months of May and June. It is notorious that the contest at Southampton was fought upon issues entirely apart from those of Home Rule, and that the Ayr burghs (whose late Conservative member was to a large extent returned on account of his local position and great personal popularity) were unlikely to return another Unionist unconnected with the locality and hailing from the far south. But whatever the explanations to be made, and however valid the excuses put forward, it would be uncandid to deny the importance of the two Gladstonian-Parnellite victories, or to refuse to admit the severity of the blow inflicted upon the Government. This severity, however, has fortunately been mitigated and its effects entirely neutralised by subsequent events.

In the Isle of Thanet a desperate effort was made by the Gladstonians to break the solid phalanx of Kent Unionists. Their candidate was selected with their usual dexterity, and his opponent was handicapped by former Protectionist opinions, which were urged against him with assiduous zeal, whilst his supposed ultra-Toryism was said to be unpalatable to the "moderate" sec-

tion of Unionists. Yet the "local" Liberal candidate, with a united party behind him, was beaten by upwards of 650 votes in a contest fought expressly and avowedly upon the question of Home Rule for Ireland, in which the issues were placed before the electors by innumerable Irish orators who invaded the constituency. Here, then, was some solace for the Government defeats at Southampton and Ayr; and during the very progress of this election, a further consolation was afforded them by the extraordinary course adopted by the Opposition in the House of Commons. Without any apparent occasion for such action at the moment, the Gladstonian section of the Opposition determined to challenge the Irish policy of the Government and their administration of the criminal law in that country. Upon the shoulders of Mr J. Morley was laid the burden of bringing the indictment before the House of Commons, which he did with a power and eloquence worthy of a better cause than that of which he appeared as the champion and defender. Mr Gladstone was, of course, ready to support his lieutenant, and to denounce the "coercion" which, in an aggravated form, he had sanctioned, upheld, and defended, when responsible for the maintenance of law and order in Ireland, 1882-85. But the only result of this ill-advised and unworthy attack, which occupied two days of the busiest part of the session, was to knit more closely together the Unionist majority (which had recently been apparently diminished in divisions upon side issues in connection with other questions in no way affecting the main principles of the party), and to afford to Mr Balfour and the Chancellor of the Ex-

chequer an opportunity of triumphantly vindicating the policy of the Government, and reasserting their resolute determination to uphold the supremacy of the Queen, and to maintain and enforce the authority of the law in Ireland.

This debate, as well as his whole conduct during the session, has had the effect of still further securing the high place which Mr Balfour has obtained for himself in the esteem of all loyal and right-thinking subjects of the Queen. He has been bitterly assaulted, cruelly reviled, and remorselessly abused, both in and out of Parliament; but he has held on his way, firmly and steadily, ignoring abuse, repelling attacks, and unflinchingly discharging the duties of his responsible and arduous office. No statesman in recent years has made his mark so quickly and so forcibly; and the vigour, courage, and endurance which he has displayed have given strength and support to the Government, which have indeed been invaluable to the Unionist cause. It is in vain that the Irish Separatists pour forth their venomous vituperation against Mr Balfour, and endeavour to associate his name with the coercive policy which their own misdoings and evil counsels have inflicted upon their unhappy country. The country cannot be deceived by the wild ravings and extravagant utterances of these Nationalists, who have done their utmost to disgrace the "nationality" of which they claim to be the representatives and champions. It has become clear as daylight that the actions and speeches of these men and their followers have reduced Ireland to a condition in which either the law-abiding and peaceful population must submit to be

coerced by law-breakers and ruffians, or the latter must be detected and restrained by exceptional legislation, such as that which has been enacted by the Imperial Parliament. The paramount necessity of adopting the latter alternative has been recognised by all those whose judgment has not been swayed by political prejudice or blinded by party passion; and the howl of simulated indignation with which the incarceration of any law-breaking Nationalist leader is received by the Gladstonian-Parnellite faction, meets with no response from the loyal and law-abiding British people. It is in vain that Mr Gladstone flits about like an uneasy spirit, and delivers Separatist addresses at the various luncheon, tea, or garden parties, which appear to provide for him more appreciative audiences than he is able to find in the House of Commons. Charm he never so wisely, he cannot charm the British people out of their common-sense, nor persuade them to intrust again to his hands that task of satisfying Ireland in which he has so often and so signally failed. So far as his English and Scotch followers are concerned, it must be frankly and sorrowfully admitted that the events of the present session seem to have bound them more closely than ever to the chariot-wheels of Mr Parnell, and that their divorce from the old and cherished traditions of the Liberal party has become more and more complete. If we have seemed to blame the supporters of her Majesty's Government for indulgence in an occasional display of independence, no such charge can fairly be brought against "her Majesty's Opposition." This cardinal principle of Liberalism has been en-

tirely discarded and abjectly surrendered; and the *ipse dixit* of the statesman who has changed his mind and his policy more frequently and more completely than any other in history, is the sole guide of his infatuated followers. It cannot be too often or too strongly urged upon the British people that since the withdrawal of the two bills upon which Mr Gladstone's Irish policy was wrecked and his party shattered, the "old parliamentary hand" has committed himself to no alteration in those bills, and to no definite scheme, but simply asks the country to give him a "blank cheque," without the slightest security that he will succeed any better than before in producing a measure which would satisfy Ireland or be approved by the British people. He has studiously dealt in generalities ever since the meeting of the Parliament elected in 1886, and has contented himself with finding fault with the action of the Unionist Government, and accusing them of having broken pledges which they never made, and of having forsaken principles which they never avowed. Indeed, it is worthy of remark that whilst Mr Gladstone and his lieutenants allude to the question of Home Rule in their out-of-door speeches, and describe it in general terms as "self-government for Ireland," concession to "the just demands of the Irish people," and suchlike unmeaning phrases, their main object and endeavour, in and out of Parliament, has been to ignore for the moment the question of Home Rule, for the purpose of concentrating their forces in attacks upon the Government with reference to that which they are pleased to call "coercion." Their aim and object is to throw Home Rule into the

background for the moment, and to gibbet the Government before the country as a Government which has demanded and obtained from Parliament exceptional powers of "coercion" under false pretences, and is employing those powers in a harsh and oppressive manner. Thus it is that, at every bye-election, earnest appeals are made to the generosity of the British people, and their natural sympathy with a people subjected to coercive legislation, the all-important facts being carefully kept out of sight,—first, that coercion only affects those who deliberately break the law; and secondly, that the very men who now denounce it have been themselves the authors and administrators of similar and even much more severe legislation, adopted by them and by their leader (as is abundantly shown in the 'Life of W. E. Forster' recently published by Mr Wemyss Reid), after grave and careful deliberation. In view of such dishonest and discreditable action on the part of the Gladstonians, the discussion introduced by the Duke of Argyll in the House of Lords upon the 12th of July served the useful purpose of placing the true issues of this question before the eyes of the public. No words could better define the truth than those employed by the Duke, who affirmed that "her Majesty's Government deserves the support of Parliament in securing for the subjects of the Queen in Ireland the full enjoyment of personal freedom in all their lawful transactions, and in protecting them from the coercion of unlawful combinations." This simple description of the actual position and action of the Government cuts the ground at once from beneath the feet of the Gladstonian falla-

cies, and exposes the misrepresentations which they have been endeavouring to palm off upon the British public.

It may, indeed, be urged that such a declaration by the House of Lords was scarcely necessary to assure the world that, at least in that assembly, the Government might rely upon general and loyal support in their endeavours to uphold the supremacy of the law. But the course taken by the Duke of Argyll finds ample justification in the determined and continuous attempts of the Separatist party to mislead the people and to conceal the real issues which are at stake. There is, moreover, a more serious danger against which the Unionist party has to guard the cause which they defend. The inhabitants of Great Britain are emphatically a business-like people, who habitually set about their daily avocations with an energy which engrosses their attention to the exclusion of those extraneous considerations of social problems and political theories which are constantly present to the mind of more speculative and less industrious nations. The natural tendency of men so much engrossed and absorbed in their own concerns is to cast aside as troublesome and uninteresting whatever interferes with the ordinary management of those concerns, and, for the sake of peace and quiet, to consent to much which they do not actually approve, but which they cannot afford the time to condemn. Thence it is that there arises the danger lest, wearied by the persistent reiteration of the demand for Home Rule, and, above all things, anxious to escape from the agitation which so greatly interrupts their usual habits of life, a large number of our fellow-

countrymen may be induced to listen to the repeated assurances of the Gladstonians that they are "as much for the Union" as their opponents, and may be tempted to consent to the experiment whether Home Rule does or does not imply a step in the direction of separation. It is useless to ignore the existence of such a danger; and the best and only way to encounter it is to keep continually before the eyes of the country the truth, and the whole truth, upon the question, and the gravity of the consequences which would undoubtedly follow the granting of the Home Rule demand. For such a purpose the resolution of the Duke of Argyll was doubtless introduced; and every debate, in either House of Parliament, which has such an effect, is an undoubted gain to the cause of patriotism and loyalty. But whatever might have been the result of a debate upon this resolution, the course taken by the Separatist party in the House of Lords secured to the Government a greater triumph than their most sanguine supporters could have anticipated. In a thoughtful and well-reasoned speech, the Duke of Argyll placed his case before the House of Lords, and supported the indictment which he brought against the Gladstonians and their policy. Moreover, he pointed out in a clear and unanswerable manner, the inconsistencies of which the leaders of the Gladstonian-Parnellite party had been guilty, their perversions of historical truth, their misrepresentations of their opponents, and the fallacies with which they had endeavoured to mislead the country. He directly attacked several of those who occupied the front Opposition bench—notably Lord Spencer—whose

action in Ireland he showed to have been identical with that for which the noble Earl and his colleagues now denounce the Government, and whose inaccuracy and inconsistency he thoroughly exposed. And yet, in the face of an indictment so grave and so important, the leaders of the Opposition sat resolutely dumb. Lords Granville, Kimberley, Spencer, Herschell, Ripon, and Rosebery were all present, but by mutual assent all remained silent under the charges which were brought against them. They allowed judgment to go by default, and the resolution of the Duke of Argyll to be adopted *nemine contradicente* by the august assembly for whose adoption it had been proposed. The House was full of peers who had assembled for the expected debate; the gallery was crammed with peeresses; the space reserved for members of the House of Commons was thronged; and around the throne peers' eldest sons and Privy Councillors were crowded together in unusual numbers. Among the latter stood Sir George Trevelyan, who had the pleasure of hearing himself oratorically flayed by the Duke of Argyll for his participation in the abuse of Mr Balfour for his alleged treatment of the Irish members with a contempt which Sir George himself had, at least on one occasion, displayed in a degree far exceeding that of his successor. Within a few days came an opportunity for the valiant Sir George to declare that he "would have given a hundred pounds to have been able to reply to the Duke then and there;" and doubtless the ardent Gladstonian sympathisers around him believed and applauded to the echo. But during the speech of the Duke of

Argyll the front Opposition bench was filled with the late colleagues of Sir George Trevelyan, who, without the pecuniary sacrifice which that doughty champion professed himself so willing to have made, could have risen in their places and defended him and themselves if there had been any defence to make. Sir George Trevelyan may settle with those colleagues the implied censure which he casts upon them in his empty profession of anxiety to have given that answer to the Duke of Argyll which they declined to give. The public will judge after its own fashion of the unworthy and unprecedented course adopted by the Gladstonian leaders in the House of Lords. It is more than probable that they imagined that they were in some inscrutable manner casting a slight upon the mover of the resolution, by treating it with silent disregard. If so, never was a more fatal mistake committed by a political party. The character and position of the Duke of Argyll are too high and too secure to be affected by such puerile tactics; and the Opposition leaders have simply placed themselves in the position of men who are unable to reply to charges deliberately brought against them, and supported by arguments which, if answerable at all, they were bound in honour, and in justice to their followers as well as to themselves, to have answered fully and at once. Such, however, was not the policy of those who are guided by the advice, and who imitate the tactics, of the "old parliamentary hand." Upon the principle that "least said is soonest mended," they maintained a silence which, but for their subsequent denial, would have been universally considered

as preconcerted; and their organs in the press supported their course by the silly and ridiculous allegation that there was "very little to answer" in the speech of the Duke of Argyll. And yet that speech had two things about it which, to most men, would have appeared to require that the Opposition leaders should have shown that they were something better than dumb dogs. In the first place, it directly charged them with the utterances of inaccuracies and misrepresentations throughout the country; and in the second place, it asked for a formal approval and endorsement by the House of Lords of the policy which they themselves have been assiduously denouncing from John o' Groat's House to the Land's End. When men are accused of misrepresentations and inaccuracies, their silence can only be taken as an admission of the truth of the charge; and the future harangues of the Gladstonian leaders throughout the country will be discounted and discredited by the knowledge that they have made this admission, advisedly and deliberately, in a place wherein they had every opportunity of denial and defence. It is no excuse to allege that they would have been left in a hopeless minority if they had opposed the resolution. This might have been an excellent excuse for not putting the House of Lords to the trouble of a division, but was no excuse at all for refusing to reply to an accusation under which they would never have remained silent, but for the knowledge that they had no reply to make, and no explanation to offer, which would pass muster either with the House of Lords or with the British people. There can be little doubt that this incident was little less damaging

to the Separatist party than their defeat upon Mr J. Morley's proposed vote of censure upon the Government. The one united the Unionist majority in the House of Commons, the other exposed the weakness and want of courage of the Separatist minority in the House of Lords. Both events must have been highly satisfactory to the Government, who may be grateful to their opponents for a course of tactics in both Houses which has done much to destroy any casual ill effects caused by the bye-elections in the earlier part of the session, and to reconsolidate and strengthen the Unionist party.

It will be doubted by many whether that cause will be eventually strengthened by the course of events consequent upon the trial of the suit "*O'Donnell v. Walter*," the proceedings connected with which have caused another interruption to the legitimate business of the session. It is not our province nor our intention to offer any opinion upon the merits of a case still *sub judice*, or indeed to refer to it further than as a historical episode out of which has been created a precedent which may not improbably result in future inconvenience. Stripped of all gloss and of the colouring with which party imagination can clothe a simple matter, it is evident that "the leading journal" has published respecting certain individuals that which, if untrue, constitutes a gross libel. The parties so libelled desired an inquiry before a select Committee of the House of Commons, of which some of them were members. To this there appeared to be two objections, each conclusive against such an inquiry. First, the alleged libel did not affect these parties

specially as members of the House of Commons, or deal with any speech or act of theirs spoken or done in such capacity. To grant a Committee, therefore, even if there were no other reason against it, would have afforded a precedent which would have immensely increased the future labours of the House of Commons, and would have practically substituted that body for the ordinary law courts of the country. Secondly, these regular tribunals were open to those who had alleged that they had been libelled, and there seemed no reason why they should in this particular case be less efficient and less trustworthy than in all similar matters. Against this view of the case it has been urged, on the other hand—first, that the expense of instituting an action against the ‘Times’ would have been enormous; and, secondly, that there may be good reasons, wholly apart from the merits of the case in question, which render it inconvenient for the parties to go into the witness-box. These contentions, however, admit of a ready reply. Those who complain of “libels” are men who are supported by a powerful organisation, well supplied with funds from another country. So vital is it to this organisation to prove that the “libels” are really “libels,” that to no purpose more important to its welfare, or indeed to its very existence, could its funds be applied; and moreover, if successful, the damages which would probably be given must be taken into account in any estimate of cost. With regard to the second contention, it may be perfectly true that reasons may exist, wholly apart from this particular case, which may cause a strong disinclination on the part of Mr Parnell and

his friends to enter the witness-box, and that such disinclination is quite compatible with their entire innocence of any charge contained in the alleged libel. But surely this is a case in which the person who complains of having been libelled must elect between the inconvenience of subjecting himself to cross-examination and the probability of the charges against him being believed, if he refuses to submit to that inconvenience. It is probable that a very large number of both plaintiffs and defendants in the cases tried before our law courts would infinitely prefer to keep out of the witness-box; but, so far as we are aware, this is the first case in which there has been a special interference in their behalf, and we must frankly say that we cannot recognise any claim of Mr Parnell or his friends to that interference. The proposed creation of a special tribunal in this case has apparently so far satisfied neither Mr Parnell nor his opponents, and will probably be productive of no satisfactory result. The Parnellites will claim it as a tacit acknowledgment that the ordinary tribunals of the country cannot be trusted to try this case, and that they are therefore justified in their refusal to invoke these tribunals. However eminent the persons selected to try the issues which will be before the new court, their words and actions will be severely criticised, and their decision will leave opinion divided as it is now upon the merits of those issues. It is doubtless out of a generous desire to see justice done that the Government have taken action; but it is to be feared that their departure from the beaten track will expose them to much hostile criticism, and will obtain but little gratitude from those on

whose behalf it has been taken. It would no doubt have been very disagreeable to Mr Parnell and his associates to remain under the imputations cast upon them by the 'Times'; but from the very first it has rested with themselves whether they would do so or not, and there is something opposed to common-sense and common justice in an interference on their behalf which no other persons in a similar position have ever either expected or obtained. The country would have supported the Government in a resolute determination to leave to the ordinary tribunals of the country issues which could be brought before them if the aggrieved persons desired, and not to remove from the latter the responsibility of neglecting that reasonable remedy which the Constitution has provided. The grounds upon which the Government refused a Select Committee last year would have fully justified them in declining to step out of the beaten track upon the present occasion; and in doing so, with however good an intention, it is to be feared that they have weakened the impregnable position which they had hitherto occupied, without the slightest chance of satisfying their irreconcilable opponents.

The session has of course been hampered, from time to time, by questions arising from the action of those silly but mischievous men who constitute themselves the special "champions" of the people, and in that capacity encourage their misguided clients to come into contact, on every possible occasion, with those guardians of the public peace who are the servants of "the people," and never do their masters better service than when they prevent the assem-

bling of disorderly mobs which represent no persons save the idle and dissolute, and no principle save disorder and confusion. In this free country no one wishes to hinder or prevent the right of public meeting and of free speech, but it is to the interests of "the people" themselves that both should be held under due and proper control. "Free" speech, which excites to disobedience to the law, is not necessary to liberty or advantageous to the general community, and public meetings which disturb the free passage of the public from place to place, and interrupt the ordinary commercial avocations of our commercial population, are not only disadvantageous, but a distinct nuisance to the public. The Cunninghame-Grahams, Conybeares, and other nobodies who try to force themselves into notoriety by the enunciation of extravagant doctrines, by constant abuse of the police, and worse than useless occupation of the time of the House of Commons by their conceited and frivolous harangues, doubtless have their reward, chuckle with gratified vanity as they see their names in the newspapers, and glow with pride as they reflect upon the glorious triumph they have achieved in making themselves a nuisance to the House and to the Ministers. Such persons must be tolerated as part of the price which we pay for our advance in democracy; and it is fortunate that neither in elocutionary nor intellectual power can they be considered dangerous enemies to the Constitution. Still it must be owned that we live in strange times when members of Parliament hold "conversaciones" in Trafalgar Square on Saturdays, and interrupt business on Mondays, in order to impugn the con-

duet of the police in regulating such irregular entertainments. Everything, indeed, is now carried to the hustings and to the platform; and at proper times, and in convenient places, there can be no reason why garrulous members of Parliament should not expend upon public meetings some of those verbose utterances which are so little appreciated in the House of Commons. But that they should go through this performance in the thoroughfares of this crowded city, and at a time when Parliament is sitting, and when every real grievance can be ventilated therein, is a little too much for sensible men to be called upon to endure, and is calculated to bring not only the performers themselves (which would be a trivial matter), but Parliament itself into contempt. One of these "champions of the people," indeed, has shown his total want of appreciation of his duty as a member of the House of Commons by a course of proceeding which has subjected him to condign punishment at the hands of the outraged House. If there is one rule beyond all others which is necessary for the preservation of the dignity and character of the House of Commons, it is that which enjoins that implicit obedience and respect should be paid to the authority of the Speaker, which is, in fact, the delegated authority of the House itself. The letter of Mr Conybeare, which appeared in the columns of a new Radical paper called the 'Star,' upon the 20th of July, set this rule wholly at defiance, and contained reflections upon the Speaker of which the House was bound to take immediate and peremptory notice. We do not desire to dwell upon the incident, or to attach any import-

ance to the actions of so very unimportant a person as Mr Conybeare. It may be remarked, however, that in the whole course of our parliamentary history such a letter has probably never been written by a member of Parliament, or such a flagrant offence alike against good taste and against the order of the House of Commons been committed by one of its members. A month's suspension is by no means too severe a penalty to have been inflicted upon the culprit, and it is satisfactory to find that the House of Commons will not permit such an infringement of its most cherished rules to pass without instant punishment.

As long, however, as we have persons of this calibre returned by enlightened constituencies to Parliament, evils of this kind must be expected; and we can only rejoice in the wisdom of the House of Commons in having modified the action of such men within its walls by the judicious adoption and application of the closure. This remedy, which had long been foreseen as inevitable by those who had watched the deterioration of the House of Commons as a business-like assembly, has, during the present session, rendered inestimable service to Parliament and the country. Mr Gladstone, indeed, who never loses an opportunity of administering palatable doses of "blarney" to the Irish contingent of his followers, informed the latter at one of his latest post-prandial utterances, that it was largely owing to their forbearance and good behaviour in refraining from "urging the claims of their country," and placing "impediments" in the way of legislation, that progress had been made with the Local Government Bill and other legislative business, and that a

"debt of gratitude" was owing to them for this "singular forbearance." But, putting aside this doubtless judicious but rather ridiculous flattery, it is not to be disputed that the exercise of the power of closure, and probably also the salutary fear of that exercise, have operated in no small degree in the prevention of obstructive tactics and the furtherance of legislation. The good sense, firmness, and discretion of Mr Courtney, the Chairman of Committees, have also proved most serviceable to the progress of business, and have greatly raised the position of that gentleman in the estimation of his brother members of the House of Commons, and in the general opinion of his countrymen. The exercise of those qualities on the part of the chairman, and the sensible and conciliatory tone of Mr Ritchie in his conduct of the measure, have secured the passage of the Local Government Bill through the House of Commons, and thus enabled Lord Salisbury's Government to fulfil the larger part of their legislative promises at the commencement of the session. It will probably be doubted by those who are most conversant with the management of county business, whether the handing over of responsibilities and powers in this respect of even a larger amount than those hitherto exercised by the magisterial body to a representative council will be attended by that increased efficiency and economy which are fondly expected by the more ardent advocates of the change. It is, indeed, somewhat remarkable that the county magistrates have been almost universally approved and lauded for their management in the past, and especial care seems to have been taken to make it

known that no *laches* or shortcomings on their part have created the necessity for change. That necessity, however, seems to be generally recognised; and whether it be on account of that intangible and indescribable cause of action which is commonly described as "the spirit of the age," or whether any more rational and coherent cause can be found, certain it is that both political parties have agreed that the change had to be made, and the only work of Parliament has been to effect it in the best and most acceptable manner. Time alone can show whether this task has been satisfactorily accomplished, but both Government and Opposition (with a few notable exceptions among the latter) may be congratulated upon the absence of party spirit and the desire to improve the measure which have upon the whole characterised the debates upon a subject of such great importance to the country. It is creditable to all parties that the Local Government Bill has been carried to a stage which renders its passing during the present session a matter of certainty; but the chief praise must of course be given to the Government, which has steadily pressed it forward even at the risk of the loss of other important measures. It is, moreover, satisfactory to reflect that this is not the only bill of importance which will have been passed by Lord Salisbury's Government this year. There is every prospect that the measures which have been considered by the Grand Committees upon Law and Trade will receive the sanction of Parliament; and although members of both Houses will regret the necessity of an autumn session, they will be rewarded for such a sacrifice of

personal convenience by the reflection that they have placed upon the statute-book Acts of Parliament upon subjects which have been long and anxiously considered by the country, and which, after having been played with and dawdled over by successive Liberal Governments, have found their solution by means of the ability and perseverance of a Tory Ministry. When we take into account, apart from and beyond the measures to which we have alluded, the financial proposals of Mr Goschen and the salutary reforms in the procedure of the House of Commons, we may congratulate ourselves upon the fact that, in spite of the necessary abandonment of bills which we have had as usual to deplore, yet, even if the performance has fallen

somewhat short of the promise, an amount of good legislative work has been achieved which puts to shame the performance of many a past session which has commenced under more favourable auspices than that which we chronicle to-day. It is a wise proverb which tells us not to "whistle" till we are "out of the wood"; but the period of the year at which we have now arrived, and the general aspect of political affairs, entitle us to consider the Unionist Government as beyond the reach of parliamentary disaster for the rest of the session, and the Unionist majority as compact and united as at any previous time since the lapse of Mr Gladstone into the Home Rule heresies which have destroyed his prestige and shattered his party.

THE DEATH OF MR GLEIG.

LAST month this Magazine lost one of the stoutest and stanchest of its friends. Men now getting old were unborn when he began to write in it, and his contributions lie thick in its pages up to the present year. During that long period, in which many a writer both began and ended his career in 'Blackwood,' Mr Gleig remained one to whom its successive editors looked as a personal friend, and, when counsel was needed, a trusty counsellor.

His father was the Right Reverend George Gleig, Bishop of Brechin, and primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church, who was ordained a priest one hundred and fifteen years ago, and consecrated a bishop eighty years ago. When he died in 1840, aged eighty-seven, he had long been eminent as a scholar and theologian, and his 'Papers on Morals and Metaphysics' were held in high esteem. He transmitted to his son, in increased measure, both his bodily and mental energy.

That son was born in 1796, and at fifteen was entered at Balliol College, Oxford. Robust, active, full of spirit and vitality, he was one of the youth of that time who felt most keenly the influence of the martial atmosphere which then pervaded the world. The prodigious career of Napoleon had filled the minds of the rising generation in England with ideas of war, not in its squalid aspect of ruin and devastation, as seen by the populations of invaded territories, but lit by a blaze of glory. And while that insatiate conqueror was led by his evil star into the stupendous campaign of Moscow, draining for it the manhood of Europe, which he squandered in the snows of Russia, our own general had by such steps as the Douro and Salamanca risen in the confidence of his countrymen, till his decisive victory at Vittoria destroyed the hopes of the French generals in Spain, and showed him as the commander who could be trusted to stem the devastating course of their master. Men of these days cannot realise the steady and ardent enthusiasm which was felt by the young men of the time for Wellington, the champion of liberty against the great military tyranny which sought to overshadow the world. Gleig's abilities would have assured his success at Oxford; but no peaceful triumph was then so alluring to youths of his stamp as the prospect of serving under the English commander, and in 1813 he joined the army of Wellington in Spain as a subaltern in the 85th Regiment. Twelve years later, when the world had sunk into a period of long and deep repose, he wrote, in a country parsonage, the record of his own experiences of war under the great Duke. The book, under the title of 'The Subaltern,' first appeared in this Magazine in 1825, and obtained immediate and great celebrity; and one who reads it now will see that it was an excellent picture of war from the point of view of the subordinate actor, and, as such, remained perhaps unrivalled till Erckmann-Chatrion produced their remarkable studies of the wars of the Republic and the Empire.

Gleig's experience of actual conflict began very soon after he landed in Spain with the assault and capture of St Sebastian. A few days afterwards he beheld, for the first time, riding near him, the commander who continued to be for him, throughout his life, almost an

object of worship. Shortly afterwards he took part in the forcing of the passages of the Bidassoa against Soult, and in the subsequent operations (being twice wounded in the course of them) which, by dint of skill of movement and hard fighting, thrust the French leader through the Pyrenees. Gleig was with the force that invested Bayonne, while Lord Wellington followed Soult to Orthez and Toulouse, when all further operations ceased with the close of the war.

The 'Subaltern' well deserved its reputation. In its pages the author appears as combining all the ardour and enterprise of the fighting soldier with the grasp of plan and operations that mark the capable officer, and the whole narrative shows a power of representing the picturesque scenes and events through which he passed, such as was at that time certainly very uncommon. It is no wonder, then, that the book brought him immediate fame. It was dedicated to the Duke, by "his obedient servant and follower in a few bloody fields, the Subaltern." No doubt it justly formed a passport to that great man's esteem, and Gleig had constant opportunities, at Strathfieldsaye and elsewhere, of being one of the group around the chief whom he so venerated.

But the peace with France brought no repose to Gleig. His regiment marched from Bayonne to the Garonne, and there embarked for America, and among the best of his writings is the description of that march, which forms the preamble to his narrative of the campaigns of Washington and New Orleans. He was with Ross at Bladensburg and the subsequent entry into Washington, and played his part in the attempt upon Baltimore, where he was again wounded, and the attack upon New Orleans, with which his military career ended.

There being no prospect of further active service, he returned to Oxford, completed his course there, and took orders. He became first, curate of Ash in Kent, then rector of Iychurch in the same county. There he wrote, in 1829, the 'Chelsea Pensioners,' a series of sketches and tales in three volumes, and in 1830 another, the 'Country Curate.' In 1834 he became Chaplain of Chelsea Hospital. It was probably to the friendship of the great Duke that he owed his most congenial and fitting appointment in 1846 of Chaplain-General to the Forces, which he continued to fill till 1875. This gave him of course frequent opportunities of doing what he enjoyed, and excelled in, beyond any other form of pastoral address—namely, preaching to soldiers. Nothing could be better than his style of addressing them: it was simple, weighty, genial, and not without touches of the whilom campaigner. We heard him once preach in a military riding-school to a congregation of soldiers ranged around in ranks, his pulpit of three drums covered by a flag, his clerk a corporal in uniform; and it seemed as if the choicest audience, in the most imposing of cathedrals, could not have pleased him better. He had an uncommon gift of extempore speaking: when about to preach, he would take a turn or two in the garden, and was then ready. Nothing could be less of the conventional type than his style and matter—picturesque and full of interest, they always commanded attention.

It has always seemed to the present writer that Mr Gleig would have made an excellent bishop. His dignity, his courtesy, his activity and interest in his work, and his power of language, would have graced a

diocese. However that might have been, in 1875, after a serious illness he retired from his office. Leaving London entirely, he lived for many years at Deane House, a picturesque old place near Basingstoke. The first fruit of his leisure there was a volume called 'The Great Problem.' It was intended to be an appeal to those who had become perplexed by the sceptical tendencies of the philosophy of the time. Its counsel to doubters was not to attach overmuch importance to confutations of the stories of the Old Testament, or even of the miracles of the New: it confessed that no system of philosophy could ever establish the claim of man to immortality; but it affirmed that nevertheless this *was* established by revelation, and that the doubter, after all that he might have to relinquish, would find firm footing in the main truths of Christianity. In the style and argument of this book there is no trace of age.

Here he might perhaps have ended his days, but for a circumstance which occurred when he had been a few years at Deane. There had long subsisted a friendship between the second Duke of Wellington and Mr Gleig. The Duke used to come over for a visit to Deane, and Mr Gleig would go to Strathfieldsaye, to their mutual satisfaction. There is on the Duke's property, about a mile from his house, a comfortable villa, which had for long been inhabited by the family of an officer who had been a follower of the first Duke. The last of this family died, and it occurred to the late Duke that it would be very agreeable for both if Mr Gleig would become the tenant of Bylands. The transfer accordingly took place, with the best results. The Duke came to look on Bylands almost as a daily resort. To his entertaining qualities justice never has been done. He had the well-known Wellington physiognomy, only greatly softened and genialised, but no trace of the strong and peculiar character which so distinguished the Iron Duke. The son took life easily, and might almost be said to saunter through it. He was exceedingly good-natured, fond of pleasant companionship, with a good tincture of general literature, and a memory which made his reading serviceable; but his speciality was the number and excellence of his stories, and his skill in narrating them. He had necessarily been much in contact with very celebrated and important persons, and of these he related innumerable anecdotes, which always had point, and were always to the purpose. Having no engrossing pursuits, he was always ready to improve the passing hour with good-fellowship, and was thus invaluable as a country neighbour—and daily intercourse with this pearl of landlords must have well repaid Mr Gleig for coming to Bylands. Their intimacy, which was more than friendly—it was affectionate—continued up to the Duke's death in 1884. The Duchess, who shared in this regard, then left Strathfieldsaye; but their successors did all that neighbourly kindness could suggest to prevent him from feeling too keenly the loss of his true and constant friends.

The Loddon flows through the meadows and the park of Strathfieldsaye, and its valley is a grassy and flowery expanse of truly English landscape; the park is spacious and beautifully timbered; the bordering high ground of Heckfield Heath, with its groups of splendid firs rising from the fern, and its glimpses of a far horizon, is one of the most picturesque of English commons; and the last years of Mr Gleig's long life were thus passed amidst the benign influences of pleasant scenery. His home, too, was a bright one. He had married early in

life, and since the loss of his partner a few years ago at an advanced age, his house had been made cheerful and pleasant by the care of his daughters and granddaughter, who lived with him; while his sons, of whom three survive, were near enough to pay him constant visits. And as his powers of mind and his interest in life remained absolutely undiminished to the end, it is impossible that old age could ever appear in a more agreeable and genial aspect than in him. He was eminently social, enjoying to the utmost the company and conversation of his many friends, in whose interests he took a warm and constant solicitude, as the present writer is rejoiced to testify with all the feeling which so steady and lasting a friendship must evoke. His life of more than ninety-two years was certainly a happier one than falls to the common lot, and it ended peacefully on the 9th July, at Bylands, in the presence of his sons and daughters. He was buried in the churchyard of Strathfield-saye, within a few hundred yards of the house where the successive illustrious owners had so often made him welcome.

Besides the volumes named already, he published some novels which never attained any great success, and other books which were popular: 'The Lives of Military Commanders,' 'History of India,' 'History of the Bible,' 'Story of Waterloo,' Lives of Lord Clive, Sir Thomas Munro, and his idol the Great Duke. In addition to the multitude of his contributions to this Magazine, he wrote for the Quarterlies, and during many years for 'Fraser.' In connection with that magazine he appears along with many very well-known and some illustrious authors—Lockhart, Maginn, Coleridge, Thackeray, Carlyle, and others, in the group by Maclise called "The Fraserians,"—and also in the well-known Maclise Literary Characters, with a humorous memoir by Maginn. Last year he wrote two articles in 'Blackwood,' on those military subjects in which he took so lasting an interest, and this year a third. These have as much freshness and vigour as the writings of his youth, and are probably unequalled as the work of an author considerably past ninety. They formed a characteristic close to a literary life of immense work, though it could scarcely be said of great labour, for such occupation was to him rather a necessity and a pleasure than an effort, and added a zest and charm to a life otherwise one of distinction and beneficence.

E. B. H.

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A STIFF-NECKED GENERATION.

CHAPTER XXII.—“IT MAKES ME MAD WITH ROSAMUND.”

“Artful concealment ill becomes the brave.”
—*Odyssey*.

LET not my readers be misled by the interview recorded in the last chapter.

It had been, we may as well say at once, fully as natural and spontaneous as had appeared. Nothing had been further from Rosamund's thoughts than that she should be thus taxed for doing her lover injustice,—nothing more foreign to Hartland's nature than thus to tax her.

But as he had shown, there was no one else to bell the cat.

He had sounded his aunt, and to his astonishment even that peaceable, rotund little spinster had bristled all over at the very idea of Major Gilbert's not having every reason to be proud, and thankful, and content. The young man, Lady Julia had averred, had got what he wanted—a footing in their family. Furthermore, he had

selected and obtained the flower of the flock, the pick of the bunch. Pray, what more could he desire? What was there left to desire? For her part at least she could see nothing. Her poor dear sister no longer there, no one there to oppose nor obstruct his wishes in any way, he had made good his position as prospective son-in-law and brother-in-law, in a way that she must own fairly took away her breath. He had carried all before him in the hitherto impregnable fortress of King's Common; Rosamund was one with him, Mr Lisnard deferred to him, the children abetted him, the servants obeyed him. He seemed to pervade all, and govern all. He was ill to please indeed if he were not satisfied. For herself, she wished to hear no more of the subject. Major Gilbert's very name was distaste-

ful to her, the whole affair was distasteful to her; and though she was obliged to be outwardly polite, and restrain herself before her niece, Hartland, who knew how unhappy and disappointed she had been made by it all, might spare her the discussion of so odious a topic.

Subsequently she had chid herself for being peevish and out of humour, but still he had seen that no good could come of pressing her further.

Could he indeed have said—"Save Rosamund; speak to Rosamund for her own sake," he would have obtained an immediate hearing. But this was just what he could not do. Truth was a native inhabitant of his bosom, and truth at this juncture forbade diplomacy. Honestly he thought his cousin ought to suffer whatever evil consequences should be the result of her own rash act,—as honestly he felt that Gilbert was an innocent man wronged.

To have gone then either to herself or to Lady Julia saying other than he had said, was impossible.

Failing the relation most natural and best beloved, he had, before appealing to Rosamund, made one other effort—he had spoken to Mr Liscard. But he had been obliged to be so vague, he had seen such staring, hopeless incredulity on the other side of enlightenment, and there had been such an obvious internal "Good heavens!—what *can* the fellow mean?" that he had hastily given up the attempt, and had never tried a second.

This had happened only a few hours before he had met his cousin in the twilight, and his mind running on her affairs, he had been lost in meditation, and had only just arrived at the conclusion that whosever business it was to interfere, it was certainly

not his, when he found himself launched headlong into the very thick of a hand-to-hand combat with Rosamund herself.

The fight once begun, Hartland had, as we know, struck out boldly, neither mincing his meaning, nor smoothing down his implications.

She had been no less ready with retort and defiance, and, as he had anticipated, had roundly asserted her ability to manage her own affairs.

Then he had called her "dear Rosamund," and her parted lips had forgotten to speak, and her eyes had met his for one long, burning moment.

He had gone with that word and look; but he had not himself been fully aware that he had done so, because he durst not trust himself to speak another, nor to meet that gaze again.

Oh, why, why, why had he never so felt, so shuddered and glowed before?

He had had his chance, the fairest chance man ever had,—and he had beheld it come and go with an indifference which seemed now incredible. He had not even been awakened to a sense of danger by pangs of incipient jealousy when Gilbert's star had first appeared on the horizon. On the contrary, he had been interested, aroused, nay, after a fashion amused by the affair in its earliest stages, while afterwards Lady Caroline's foolish and arbitrary attempts to stamp it out, had excited in his heart a degree of opposition, which had sharpened into fervour after the rescue in the mill-dam.

By that time, it is true, a new admiration and sympathy had begun to stir his spirit when he thought of Rosamund; but these feelings had not struck sufficiently deep to prevent his experiencing a

genuine, if somewhat self-torturing pride and pleasure in what he considered the nobility of her nature, who could thus exalt and distinguish what was great, and shut her eyes to what were, after all, but trifling blemishes in her lover.

Thenceforth she had taken a new stand not only in his opinion, but in his imagination. She had been constantly in his mind; and without envying Gilbert, he had found himself, he knew not why, disposed to stifle a sigh as he thought of the fortunate man.

But it had not been until repeated shocks had rudely shaken aside the veil, and revealed, beyond a shade of doubt, the naked, wretched truth with regard to his unhappy cousin, that he had learned all that was in his own heart.

Then, indeed, he had been petrified with horror and amazement to find himself instinct with a life of which he had never dreamed, and which insulted him and her alike by now throbbing and surging within. Permit it, encourage it, let it appear on the surface? Never. His first impulse had been to flee the place, and see neither one nor other of the betrothed pair again until after wedlock had made them one; and this, had he thought only of himself, he would at once have carried into effect.

But such a course would, after all, only have healed his own wound—had it done as much,—and would in no wise have bettered either Gilbert's or Rosamund's condition.

His absence or presence was a matter of no consequence to them, but their mutual attitudes towards each other were charged with an importance impossible to be overrated, and how either was to be warned or saved, was the great—

ought at least to be the great—consideration.

This sounds cold enough.

Hartland told himself he was as cool as a cucumber, and as impassive as a judge, while reasoning it all out.

For himself he and his feelings were nowhere—or, at any rate, were well in the background: he was smarting for his folly, and deserved to do so, and would get over it as he had done before; but he did not like to think of Gilbert.

Whenever he thought of Gilbert it gave him a turn. Whenever he saw Rosamund and her lover in each other's company, he cried out that the poor fellow was being befooled and betrayed.

Then he had set snares for his cousin, and she had fallen into them.

He had found out that she tossed her head and bit her lip at certain allusions. That she had no desire to pursue certain subjects. That she would have a sharp retort ready wherewith to parry certain questions.

If she were expected to be cognisant of any of the circumstances of Major Gilbert's life (she had known all about them at one time), she would now be as coldly ignorant as Lady Caroline herself could have been; and if appealed to on the subject of his tastes and pursuits, she knew no more of these than of the others. The very mention of his name would bring to her face the same look that it had begun to assume at the sound of his voice.

The only wonder, then, was, as Hartland had himself said, that every one had not seen as clearly as he. He had been genuinely incensed by the absence of all control, the indecency, the inhumanity with which, to his mind, his fickle cousin had allowed the change in her

affections to be manifest; and dwelling on this sense of irritation and indignation, and losing sight of his own emotions for the nonce, he had fired off at her the sudden charge which had led to the scene above narrated. Lost in thought and retrospection, he now hurried along, aware that darkness was gathering, or rather had already gathered around but for the silvery light of a crescent rising moon; and so engrossing were his reflections that a loud "Holloa!" from behind was suffered twice to pass unresponded to.

The third repetition of the summons, however, was not to be ignored either consciously or unconsciously, and turning his head, he beheld the person from whom it had proceeded—namely, the young rector, his friend Stoneby, who had emerged from some wayside cottage in time to catch a glimpse of and recognise the pedestrian on in front, but not to overtake him.

Truth to tell, Lord Hartland would at that precise moment have preferred to be alone.

Jack Stoneby was a good fellow, the best of fellows, his own particular parson, his right-hand cricketer, his nearest neighbour; but he did not want Jack just then, he did not want anybody just then. And though Stoneby would neither interrogate him nor irritate him, though he was a man who could hold his peace and be content with dumb fellowship as few had the gift of being, still Jack was somebody, and nobody would have been welcome at the moment; even a grasshopper would have been a burden. Involuntarily the young peer dropped an exclamation, and his brow contracted.

All through the coming evening he would have to talk to Lady Julia, and listen to her—all through the long, long evening!

And he did want to think over what had passed, and ponder on this phrase and that, and puzzle out the meaning of the whole. He did think he might have had this short half-hour for remembrance and conjecture. What ill luck had set Stoneby stirring at that time of night? He should have been snug within his four walls, beside his study fire, or partaking of his well-earned dinner. He should not be meandering out on a November evening, at nearly seven o'clock.

"Holloa, you, I say!" began he, when the two were near enough for speech, "what are you doing out along the road at this time of night? You will be as hoarse as a crow on Sunday, Mr Parson, and then it will be the worse for us who have to come and hear you."

"That's all *you* think about, naturally," retorted Stoneby, joining him. "But it ought to console you to reflect that this being only Monday, if I have to submit to a mustard-plaster on my throat all to-night, I have the rest of the week in which to get well. You have been at King's Common, I suppose?"

"Yes."

Nothing further, and the two stepped along, each unaware of what might be passing in the other's breast.

"What about your football on Saturday, Hartland?"

"It is to come off. The ground is all right."

"Not too wet?"

"A little wet, but this wind will dry it. We like a soft ground, so long as it is not under water."

"How about the team?"

"Oh, we shall do. No great things."

"Marks can play, can he?"

"Yes."

"Jenkinson?"

"Can't give a definite answer yet."

"And you have Jones, and Burrell, and Penridding. You ought to do pretty well."

"I think so."

If it had been the response of any one else, its lukewarmness, not to say dispiritedness, would have created some distrust in the hearer; but Stoneby, who took nearly as keen an interest in the subject as Hartland himself, knew his man, and rating his "I think so" at its true value, wondered at the indifference by which it was accompanied. Lord Hartland would not have said more had the event been an absolute certainty, and two days before Lord Hartland had been all anxiety and animation on the subject.

He now let it drop with an air of weariness, and the next instant began about something totally different. "They say that boy Gilbert saved has never been quite right since," he said. "Is it true?"

"He is in bed again to-day," replied Stoneby. "I was that way this afternoon, and looked in. He keeps ailing from one thing and another, and they think it is a matter of time his getting quite over it."

"Have they had a doctor?"

"Makin's assistant has been once or twice."

"Not Makin himself?"

"He is very busy, and has a lot on his hands just now."

"And they think there is nothing much amiss," said Hartland, absently. He scarcely knew what he was talking about, but had a vague idea that talk was better than silence, and that Billy Barley was a safe topic.

"Oh no. The little fellow will grow out of it; he is young and

hearty," said Stoneby, and another full stop ensued.

"Lady Julia quite well?" he inquired presently, when another three minutes had passed.

"Yes. Thanks."

"I saw your omnibus at the station, meeting the London train."

"She was not in it, though. It had been sent to meet some people."

"I am glad I did not stop the coachman, then. I wanted to see Lady Julia; but any day will do. I will walk over to-morrow or next day."

"She is sure to be in at luncheon-time to-morrow."

"But she will be engaged with your visitors. Another day will do."

"The visitors were not for us," said Hartland; "they were for my cousin Rosamund. Our omnibus went because one of her horses is lame."

"Oh!"

"You will see them when you go to King's Common," proceeded Hartland; "it is Major Gilbert's sisters who have come to be introduced to the family, and make the acquaintance of their future sister-in-law."

"Have they? Oh, they will stop some time then, I suppose?"

"I suppose so."

"Are they—are they—what do they seem like? I mean, are they likely to be acquisitions to your circle?"

"Come, say out what you mean, Jack Stoneby," said Hartland, shaking his arm good-humouredly. "No need to put on fine phrases for me. You mean how will Rosamund get on with these Gilberts? I tell you frankly, I don't know; and I don't look forward ever to knowing; she will never tell." There was no mistaking the change in his air and tone. He was now

aroused, interested, alert. He was going to pursue the subject.

"I did not see these new-comers," proceeded he, after a moment's pause, "but I shall to-morrow. So will you, if you come, as you said you would. Come, and bring your sister. My aunt has asked the party from King's Common over."

"But your aunt may prefer having them by themselves?"

"I can answer for her that she will not. You will allow that I know Lady Julia? Well, come, —she will be more than pleased, she will be *relieved* to have you."

"Is that it?" said Stoneby, comprehending. "Then you may depend on us. I rather gathered that Lady Julia was not—that Major Gilbert was not a favourite with her. But you—you like him, don't you?"

"Like Gilbert?"

"I say, you like Gilbert, don't you?"

"I—I—I don't know, I am sure."

"My dear fellow, what is the matter?" cried Stoneby, laughing, "What makes you look at me in that way? I ask you a very simple question, and you look as perturbed as though I had propounded a problem of Euclid! At the same time, of course, I can understand, that as Gilbert is going to be a member of your family, perhaps you would rather not——"

——"Oh, rot!" said Hartland.

"I could surely say to you what I think of a fellow, though he is going to marry my third cousin, once or twice removed. But the fact is, I—the question itself was a poser—I had never really put it to myself. Come to think of it, I suppose I do like Gilbert. Certainly I admire him—or, at least, a great deal about him. He does not shine in small things; he is

rather a nuisance in a house; but he is a good fellow, a very good fellow, in the main. Oh, of course I must like *him*, though I may not exactly care for his society."

"I should think he is well-principled and conscientious."

"Oh, I should think so, certainly."

"And a good commanding officer."

"And likely to rise in the service."

"Clever."

"And popular."

"And good-tempered, and easy to live with," summed up Stoneby.

"For those who like his good-temper and ease," rejoined Hartland. "Now you do, Jack; you know you do; so it is no use your hanging back, and looking up and down like that. Gilbert is just the sort of man to take your fancy, and you ought to stand by him and own it. Come now, don't be shabby; speak out."

Still Jack was silent.

"It's deuced hard on that poor fellow that *nobody* hereabouts likes him," said Hartland, plaintively. "Why shouldn't we like him, you and I? Why shouldn't we like him, I say? It is no his fault. He does his best all round; and I am sure there is nothing he would not do to please. The trouble he has taken for me in several ways makes me quite ashamed, when I think of what a busy man he is, and what an idle fool I am; but the fact is, he could do the things, and I couldn't. And he makes so light of the trouble, and is so cheerful over it, that I hardly know which way to look when I have to thank him, I feel so beastly cold and ungrateful. And I am sure, Jack, he always speaks most kindly of you. Only the other day he was sounding your praises; and he went ever so far out of his way with a parcel

for your sister last night, though it was wet and cold, because he thought it was something she wanted particularly. I was there and saw it all. And there's Lady Julia, too," proceeded the speaker, "she who likes everybody, and who, I never thought, knew one from another—she has not a good word for him! When I bring him to the Abbey, she draws herself up, and is so laboriously polite, that it is quite oppressive. He is the only person with whom I have ever seen her in the least like—like poor Lady Caroline."

"Does he see it?"

"Not in the least. He told me the other day, with a wink, that he could always come round the old ladies. She had just been particularly bad to him."

"But Lady Julia's 'badness'——" began Stoneby, laughing.

"Oh, we know what it is, of course. I don't blame his want of perception *there*," said Hartland, emphatically. To the surprise of his friend he was now frowning and biting his lip, while something evidently lay behind.

"After all," said Mr Stoneby, quietly, "none of this really signifies much, does it? It cannot be of any real importance to Major Gilbert that he is not altogether popular among us. We have our own ways and habits. He has his, and his, I believe, serve him in very good stead among his brother officers and in society generally."

"Society? Hum!"

"His society. The society he habitually moves in. Soldiers are at home everywhere, you know——"

——"You telling me about soldiers! You are in a hole, my friend, and you are only blundering further and further in. I understand you perfectly.

Gilbert's class is not ours, and that we have both found out."

"His true worth must outweigh that in the long-run, Hartland."

"I have told myself so a hundred times," said Hartland, vehemently; "it is what I have consoled myself with over and over again. But, Stoneby, if—if it should not?"

"If it should not?"

"If—if—did it ever strike you, Jack, that it might be awkward for a man if his wife did not—eh?"

"His wife, Hartland? We were not speaking of a wife."

"I am now. Suppose the glamour were to wear off, and the wife—we'll say my cousin—supposing she did happen to feel about Gilbert as we do——"

"My dear Hartland, why suppose such a thing? In that case, what reason could she have had for accepting him?"

"True—very true; as you say, what reason? At the same time—by heaven!" exclaimed Hartland, suddenly, "Lady Caroline had only herself to thank that it came to what it did. Any person of sense could have seen with half a glance that it was a tug-of-war between mother and daughter, and Rosamund—poor Rosamund—won." His accents, which had begun by ringing out harsh and sharp, sank and faltered at the close. There was reality, passion, grief in every note. "I say, don't speak of this," he went on hurriedly, "don't you ever remember that I said it—unless—unless things should be different. But it's God's truth, Stoneby, that's what it is. That poor girl is entangled in a net woven by her own hands, and she will never, left to herself, cut her way out of it. What's worse, he is blind, and stupid, and deaf, and drugged to sleep by the intoxication of his own happiness. He can't see.

He has no eyes to see. They have got themselves so completely caught—no, it is not *‘they’*—’tis she alone who has played the fool. That’s why I stand by Gilbert, d’ye see? I don’t like him; I don’t take to him; I shirk him; I get out of his way whenever I can,—but I am ashamed to look him in the face. He is a frank, straightforward, honourable fellow; and yet because he does not understand the tittle-tattle of the drawing-room and has—yes, he has a beast of a laugh—I somehow never care to remain in the same room with him. And Rosamund——” he stopped short.

Stoncby said nothing.

“It is all very well for you,” pursued the speaker,—“you have only to tell yourself that this is no business of yours, and have done with it; but I have to go over there day after day and see it going on——”

“Why do you go often?”

“Why—why—why? Of course I go. I always have gone. It would seem very odd if I did not go. Why shouldn’t I go?”

“Only if it pains you——”

“‘Pains’ me! Whosaysit ‘pains’ me? It disgusts and irritates me. It makes me mad with Rosamund, and unjust towards poor Gilbert. But that’s my affair. I had rather be there and see it all, than stop away and know it’s going on. That is what I can’t do. I cannot keep out of the way and let this interloper have the run of the place. To see him strolling about now with his hands in his pockets and his hat stuck on the back of his head,—and to remember that less than two months ago he was but just admitted to make a formal call, and that had Lady Caroline lived, even this engagement would hardly have procured him intimacy—it is altogether too much. If he is to go about saying and doing all sorts of objectionable things, I must be there too——”

“Do you do any good?”

“Good? None whatever. Rather harm, I should say.”

“Then again, why go?”

“Because—as I say—because—well, because I can’t help it. I am a fool.”

CHAPTER XXIII.—GILBERT UNDOES IT ALL.

“Quit, quit, for shame! this will not move,
This cannot take her;
If of herself she will not love,
Nothing can make her.
The devil take her.”

—SIR JOHN SUCKLING.

“Did you hear that about the Abbey?” whispered Henrietta Gilbert to her sister, as soon as she conveniently could that evening. “We are to go over there to-morrow and take luncheon, and see the place; so it must have been all nonsense about Lord Hartland.”

“Sh,” frowned Emily, glancing round in apprehension, for Etta’s asides were by no means always

inaudible. They were, however, at a safe distance from the rest of the party, having gone off together to inspect an old cabinet, and, under cover of so doing, exchange confidences. “Don’t let them see us talking,” further counselled she. “Etta, your waistband is hanging down. I saw it directly you came into the dining-room; stand still, and let me tuck it up. How well Rosamund looks in black!” tuck-

ing vigorously. "I don't believe she could look better in colours; it must be Frederick's fancy, because he never likes anything doleful."

"Did you notice how prettily the skirt was hung?" murmured Etta back; "those large bunches falling so softly? That is the new fashion. I wish we had seen it before we got these," somewhat ruefully. "I never did like the drapery of these, and mine is so dreadfully tight too. I can scarcely breathe."

"You will do yourself no good by wriggling about; you should have had it seen to before you left. There; the band is all right now, at any rate; but do remember to fasten it another time."

"What shall we wear for to-morrow's luncheon, Em?"

"Our bests, of course."

"The new plush skirts?" said Etta, in a tone of awe.

"Of course. When could we have a better occasion for them?"

"And if we are asked to walk about, and it comes on to rain?"

"Nonsense. We got them to wear, not to lie in the cupboard. Frederick will expect us to look our best."

"Is Frederick going?"

"Ask him now," as Frederick approached. He had detained his betrothed, alleging that she had done nothing but run away from him ever since he came, and had had his complaint allowed, and all his demands granted;—furthermore, the pretty diamond fly which had waited for an opportunity to emerge from his waistcoat-pocket and settle on her fair neck, had been gratefully and timidly received, while the eyes that sank beneath his were to his certain knowledge suffused with moisture.

He had excused her following him into the room thereafter, and

now made his way towards his sisters alone, and supremely happy.

"Eh! what—what mischief are you two hatching?" said he; "whenever I see you two together, I know there's mischief in the wind. Am I 'going'? 'Going' where? One at a time—one at a time. Oh, to the Abbey, is it? I have heard nothing of it. Whose idea is it? Your own, or Rosamund's?"

"Lady Julia Verelst's," replied Emily, with unction. "Lady Julia has invited us all."

"For to-morrow, eh? To what? Dinner?"

"Luncheon. Luncheon at two o'clock."

"Luncheon? That's a pity. I doubt whether I can get over to luncheon. When did the invitation come? Just now?"

"I don't know when it came; but Rosamund told us—or rather told me just now," said Henrietta. "She said it in a sort of off-hand way—'My aunt hopes to see us there at luncheon to-morrow,' and I saw the note lying about afterwards. It was lying open, and I saw 'Do not be later than two,' for some reason or other. There it is now——"

"Well, well, never mind. I say you mustn't look into notes and things, you know."

"It was wide open, Frederick."

"Was it? I daresay. All right. But about my going, I am not so sure. I am glad you are to go. Old Julia always does the right thing. She is a rare jolly old bird, is Julia; and you will like seeing the Abbey, too. There is armour, and pictures, and things. Take care what you say about 'em all: people are touchy on family concerns, you know."

"You like Lady Julia? She is not like—the other one?" whispered Emily, somewhat anxiously.

“Not a scrap. No, indeed. Julia’s the best of creatures. We are tremendous friends, Julia and I. I call on her whenever I am that way. She likes the attention, and, by Jove! she is the only one of all the women in this confounded neighbourhood that I care to pay it to. They are the most capricious lot. There’s Mrs Waterfield for one. She seemed uncommonly nice and friendly to me the first time I went to her house, and she is barely civil now,—as to making you free of her house, she wouldn’t think of such a thing. I don’t know whether my taking up in this quarter, instead of in hers, may not have had something to do with it, mind you: a woman with six daughters who don’t go off, ought to be forgiven a good deal,—and from the very first, every one knew who it was I was bitten with. Well, but there are others besides her; not people you know anything of. This is a stiffish bit of country to work. Even that long-backed parson Stoneby buttons up his coat when he meets you, as much as to say ‘I keep myself to myself;’—the Stonebys are supposed to belong to a good family,—be hanged if I know who doesn’t belong to a good family hereabouts!—we shall have to belong to a good family ourselves, next.”

“So we shall, very soon,” said Etta, archly.

“That is not ‘belonging,’ you goose. Never mind, it’s all humbug; one family is as good as another, I say. And the Stonebys aren’t half bad when you get to know them, neither. I say, Rosamund,” as she re-entered, “the girls must call on the Stonebys.”

“I will take them wherever they would like to go,” replied

she, with that new-born gentleness still pervading her demeanour; “we have but few neighbours, but they will all be very glad, I am sure,” and she looked courteously round.

“There are the Waterfields,” said Gilbert, thus encouraged. “What Waterfields are there now at home?”

Could Rosamund but have answered “None!” she would have given much, very much at the moment, to have known and announced that her old friends were still absent; but as it was, she was but too unfortunately well aware that all, even to Diana, had returned with their mother on the previous day.

Her aunt Julia she had scarcely cared about, and the Stonebys were nothing to her, but she did for a moment shrink from presenting Em and Etta to the eyes of the fastidious Waterfields. In old days the Waterfields had been wont themselves to experience anxiety in bringing this or that stranger beneath the range of Lady Caroline’s survey,—they had confided to herself their doubts and tremors, and had awaited the verdict from her sympathising lips;—if it had been haughty disdain, she had softened it down,—if cold approbation, she had warmed it up;—but all had by common consent submitted after a fashion their judgment to that of the omnipotent dame. Of course Rosamund had pouted and flouted; of course she had tossed up her head, and given utterance to lordly protest and disbelief,—but with it all, there had been a secret sense of superiority; and that sense—strangely old and worn out as it seemed all at once to have become—embittered the present reversal of everything. In a moment she beheld her

future sisters-in-law with Mrs Waterfield's eyes, and her own dropped on the floor.

"That will be another 'out' for you," said Gilbert, reckoning up. "I should say the Waterfields are good for a tea, or a luncheon—if not a dinner. No; not a dinner of course. No; of course no one is dining out from this house at present. But they might go to tea, Rosamund? What do you say? Another tea, and musical afternoon, like the first, eh? What should you say to that? Ah! you two," turning to his sisters again, "you know nothing about that sort of thing yet. Oh dear, no! demure as two church mice. You wait a bit. We'll give you our experience by-and-by."

"Bestow a little of it upon us now, sir," petitioned Henrietta, saucily,—“that is, if Rosamund does not mind,” for Rosamund had averted her head; “What about that first afternoon? What happened then? Was it then you fell in—you know what?” nodding delightedly.

“There now, if she has not hit the nail on the head, the monkey!” cried the fond brother, in an ecstasy; “Who told you that, you little pug-nosed thing?” pinching the said feature. “I suppose you think yourself too clever to live now.”

“Let me go—ha! ha! ha!—let me go!” screeched Etta. “Get away, you nasty thing—”

“Etta, Etta,” whispered Emily.

“He has made my nose red for the evening.”

“Which it was before, and shining,” retorted he.

“It was not,” emphatically. “Was it, Em?”

“Sh, 'sh, don't be so rough,” was Em's rejoinder. “Can't you see Rosamund is not laughing?”

in a low voice, as Rosamund moved away. “Do, Etta—do, Frederick—not set each other on. Do remember it is our first evening,” admonished she, glancing apprehensively round. “Don't let us be herding together; and do, Etta, take care what you say. Talking about your nose! What will Rosamund think if you begin like that?”

She need not have feared. Rosamund had not heard a word. Gilbert's opening appeal, with its allusion, had been enough for her, and had sent back her thoughts and memory to the past with a new pang, so fresh and startling, that she herself recoiled from it.

Lord Hartland's denunciations had been like wine to her flagging energies. They had poured new life into her veins, and braced and strengthened every feeble nerve that had been drooping before. To impress him with a sense of her intention and fitness to carry out her own purposes, she had been ready to think no sacrifice too great,—but her lover was now every moment undoing all that another had done for him.

There he stood, and she could not but own him unchanged, unaltered—all that he had ever been. He had developed no vices, bared no hidden depths, sprung upon her no unsuspected and detestable traits of character. So far from this, she had not even learned any trifling inclinations, nor become familiar with any opinions or feelings which had not been boldly proclaimed at the outset. All with him had been open as the day: in her alone had been the change.

Heretofore she had been blind—now she saw.

The mist had cleared away, and in the terrible new-found daylight, all that had before been but

dimly viewed, stood out unblenching.

Could she ever own it? Could her pride ever stoop to make so humbling an admission? Could her justice ever offer so hideous an insult?

Her lip trembled as at the moment came a peal of merry laughter from across the hearth, and it was a sob that she swallowed in her throat, when they thought she coldly turned away.

Gilbert, with an arm around each fondling sister, by turns whispering in the one ear and the other, felt as if he had allowed his old pets to usurp him too completely, as he also marked the retreating figure; and by no means ill pleased that his fair betrothed should seem to think the same, he now shook the others gaily off, and advanced to make his peace.

"They want me to tell tales," he cried, "but I know better. We can keep our own counsel, can't we, Rosamund? It is nothing to them whether or no it was a case of love at first sight, is it?"

She smiled faintly.

"I shall never forget how you looked when you came in that day," proceeded he, sliding his arm round her waist, despite a shrinking effort to evade it. "You fairly bowled me over then and there, as I have told you a hundred times since, haven't I? How those dull, sheep-faced Waterfield girls had not the sense to see what was up, I can't think. They would go on talking and singing to me. I tell you, Rosamund, I should never have taken up with one of them if there had not been another woman in the world."

"You don't suppose that they——" she stopped.

"Oh, we'll give 'em the benefit of the doubt. Only, you know, there are such a lot of them; and

they do stand so deplorably in each other's light. However, Parson Stoneby might do for one, and I'll see if I can't do something among our fellows for another. As they are your friends——"

"Which you seem to forget," said Rosamund, struggling with her feelings. "I think, Frederick, you might choose other subjects for your sarcasm than the oldest—almost the only friends I have."

"My sarcasm! Good gracious! my dear girl, I meant no sarcasm; be hanged if I did! I was in grim earnest, I assure you. I told them all at the barracks what nice girls the Waterfields were, and one or two went over and liked them awfully; and it was only the fact of there being six of them,—come now, you know what I mean. I thought we had always agreed about the Waterfields: but you do turn round upon one so," deprecatingly. "We had not met each other three times when you confided to me how those girls bored you; and now——" and he rubbed his chin, and looked at her as much as to say, "and now, how is a poor fellow to know where the wind will shift to next?"

"Whatever I may say," replied Rosamund, unable to repress herself, "*you* have no right,—you ought to remember that in *you* it is a liberty. Pshaw! don't look like that," for his eyes had opened roundly. "I am grandiloquent, I suppose," forcing a laugh: "excuse it, please; it is an old trick of mine to stand up for the absent. Pray, let us say no more,—and pray, let me go," she added in an undertone, which had the immediate and desired effect.

("Hang it all! I wish the girls would not keep watching us, and pretending not to see," muttered

the repulsed lover, aware that the twitch of a restive shoulder had emphasised the peremptory demand. "They will not understand that it is only her way. When I can get 'em alone for a good long talk, I must drop 'em a hint, once for all.")

It appeared that he could not accompany the party to the Abbey.

Two o'clock? No, he was certain he could not possibly manage it, as he had an appointment soon after three, and well he knew what two o'clock luncheons meant. If the hour had been one, he might have had a try for it, and got off by half-past two; but after all, there would have been no depending even on a one o'clock luncheon at the Abbey. Aunt Julia, he supposed, hardly knew that such a virtue as punctuality existed; and as there was no saying when they might sit down, so there was no saying when they might get up again—and so on, and so on,—considering which, he thought it best to give up the whole thing, since there was no sense in a scramble and a bother.

For the sake of the resolution at the end, Rosamund forgave him all that had gone before.

She had grown to mind even having Aunt Julia's little well-known foibles commented upon. It awoke resentment even to hear so much as a peccadillo noted in those whom she was fast learning to rank as her own people, with whom Major Gilbert had nothing to do, and of whom he had no business to speak: and the easy manner in which he on his part adopted all relationships, and in especial the familiar intonation of his "Aunt Julia," was something in itself sufficient to provoke a most perplexing and unfortunate fit of the sulks. On such occa-

sions he could not for the life of him think what he had done.

As often—more often than not, it would be something entirely to the good lady's credit which had been dropped, and yet he would see his mistress's brow grow black as night, and her eyes beneath gleam blue and threatening.

"She is so infernally sensitive, that is the only fault I have to find with her—and after all, that's breeding," he would console himself. "There's no judging a thorough-bred by ordinary rules. I know that at bottom she is my own dear, jolly, little girl; and it will be no bad thing for the other fellows to find that Mrs Frederick Gilbert means to keep 'em in their places. Dale's wife and Jekyll's wife won't be quite as thick with Lady Caroline's daughter as they suppose," and such a reflection was sufficient to restore immediate serenity.

He would even chuckle in anticipation of having a wife whose spirit would do for him what he had never been able to do for himself.

It had been one of the sources of his popularity that he could not give the cold shoulder to the tiresome and objectionable; and that, though a sufficiently strict regimental major, and thoroughly capable of maintaining military order and discipline when within barracks—at other times and in other places he was in no respects formidable; and he was secretly aware that it would add to his dignity to be more reserved, important, and exclusive.

His marriage would do this for him. A married man, aided and abetted by his wife, could take a new departure; and when, added to this, there was the having wedded a daughter of the family held in first repute in the neigh-

bourhood, every one would see that he had a right to a step in the social scale. Had Rosamund been the heedless, flighty young girl he had at first found her, she might indeed have charmed, but she could never have awed; whereas now!—and he felt that now she could awe even himself. Unfortunately, as we know, the forbearance engendered by these agreeable ruminations was thrown away upon its object.

Rosamund would now scarce make an effort to conceal displeasure or annoyance; and thus, on the present occasion, when it was a question of his going or not going to the Abbey, whereas he himself debated the *pros* and *cons* with all imaginable earnestness, his sisters meantime hanging on every breath, as if on the event depended all their promised pleasure—the one who should, who ought to have been at least as, if not more, deeply interested than any, yawned almost in her lover's face, hummed a tune under her breath, and the moment the conclusion was arrived at, introduced another topic without a syllable of regret.

The good effects of the garden scene were fast passing away.

Why should she regret, forsooth? She had never asked him to go. He had never been invited. Who was to say that Lady Julia even wished for his company?

As a matter of fact she knew very well that Lady Julia wished for nothing of the kind; and on Miss Gilbert's eager presentation of her brother's apology on the following day, this was allowed to be tolerably apparent.

"My brother bade me say how extremely sorry he was to be prevented coming with us," began Miss Emily, to whom the message had been intrusted, and who had undertaken to deliver it, nothing

doubting. "He has a very important engagement at three o'clock, and as he could not be sure of getting back to Longminster by that time, he felt it would be wise to give up coming at all. He hoped you would be so kind as to excuse him, Lady Julia."

Lady Julia looked at the speaker. If she had given utterance to what was in her heart, she would have said, "And who are you to inform me of all this? Had any apology been required—which was not the case, since I never asked, nor meant your brother to come—it was not your place to make it."

As, however, this must be for herself alone, she could outwardly only take refuge as her niece before her had done, in a look of satisfaction, almost too obvious to escape notice.

She had scarcely dared to hope that Major Gilbert would not come. He would certainly not hesitate about a welcome. He had shown that he knew his privileges and meant to claim them too often already, for any bashfulness to arise at this period.

More than once during the past weeks he had put in an appearance just when she was sitting down to table at two o'clock, and had eaten a partridge and a couple of roast apples—her favourite luncheon—with the appetite of a healthy, and the appreciation of a hungry man. Sometimes ere she could get out in the morning, he would be tapping at the pane of her boudoir window with his walking-stick, asking for a message for King's Common, or a companion on his walk thither. The Abbey lay between Longminster and King's Common, therefore it was scarce a ten minutes' loss to run up to the house and back; and as he had told his sisters, he fancied Lady Julia liked the attention. As a

fact it worried her beyond everything. She never felt safe from him. She would find him on her return from her afternoon drive comfortably ensconced in an easy-chair over the drawing-room fire, perusing the newspaper. He would sometimes dash in later still, quite late, on his way back, after dining with the Liscards, for no reason, as it appeared, whatever. He liked to think he was at home at the Abbey—that was the real truth; and as he had never fully awakened to the fact that he was not, he imagined that it only needed perseverance to make him so. "I am looked upon quite as one of the family already," had been an early boast, but he still felt the necessity of making it good on every possible occasion. On the present one, his regrets had been doubled, since they were not only for his own and Rosamund's benefit, but for that of his sisters also; and in the delivery they lost none of their importance, not even the slightness of Lady Julia's "Indeed?" nor her serene dismissal of the subject being sufficient to overturn it.

"My brother said he knew you would understand. His time is not his own. He is not his own master," proceeded the deputy, volubly; "at least that is what he told me to say, for of course there is at present no one over him at the garrison. He has been in command there for some months. But the gentleman who has made the appointment is coming from London, and my brother has to meet him at a certain time——"

"No doubt. I quite understand." Even the tender-hearted Lady Julia was obliged to exert herself. "Rosamund, my love!" turning to her niece—but having got so far, the good lady suddenly found she had nothing to go on with.

She had felt absolutely obliged to put an end to Miss Gilbert, but not being versed in incivility, the attempt had almost ended in a dead lock. "You walked, I suppose?" came at length in a somewhat lame conclusion.

There was no doubt about their having walked; their boots and skirts were mud-stained, and their cheeks—all but Rosamund's—were rosy and blooming. The contrast appeared suddenly to strike Lady Julia.

"You look quite tired, dear child," she added, tenderly. "You have not been walking much of late. Still, the distance is not great," and again she glanced uneasily at the slight figure, which drooped wearily into a chair, while the hat fell back from a forehead paler than its wont, round which the dark, moist rings of hair bestrewed themselves.

"I think I am a little tired, Aunt Julia."

"And—and warm," said her aunt, leaning over her. "Yet the day is not very warm. Your hands are so hot——"

"Oh, never mind them."

"And—and——"

"Leave me alone; there's a darling!" whispered Rosamund. "I—I don't think I am quite well to-day."

"Not well? Cold? Sore throat? Headache, my love? There is a great deal of illness about, and Dr Makin has several cases of scarlet fever in the village. He told me so yesterday. Oh, my dear child, I do trust you have not taken scarlet fever. You might easily have caught the infection, either at church or school——"

——"Would God I had!"

So low and anguished was the cry, that it escaped every ear but that on the strain to catch it;

but the effect on Lady Julia was all that might have been expected.

She saw,—she saw at last.

The shuddering accents, the exceeding bitter moan, with its accompaniment of averted eye and trembling lip,—oh, what else could it mean than the one thing—misery of heart and mind, not of the mere body?

And then, in an instant, all that Hartland had ever said or pointed at, rushed back upon her amazed and awakened recollection, sharp and distinct, now that the lightning-flash of revelation had struck it.

He had *hinted* that Gilbert was not appreciated, not beloved as he ought to be; and such must indeed be the case.

But—not beloved? That meant as much to her—or so she fancied—as to the unhappy wretch himself. It meant—it meant—oh, what did it not mean?"

And she could do nothing, say nothing, and learn no more at this most unfortunate moment—a moment which, under other auspices, might have been laden with meaning and result! Rosamund's convulsive brow, her despairing whisper and in-drawn breath must have been the outcome of a great internal convulsion, not to be altogether repressed; and who could tell what might not have been allowed or betrayed had she but been permitted to have had the opportunity to herself? Could she but have held her darling to her heart, and pleaded for a confidence! Of late, confidence had been withheld—and that for the first time in Rosamund's young life. Was it now to be restored and renewed, or—— She started forward and welcomed Clementina Stoneby by kissing her on both cheeks; and it was by the merest chance that she just missed kissing Miss Stoneby's brother also.

CHAPTER XXIV.—TO-DAY SHE CARED FOR NO ONE.

"It is hard to personate and act a part long; for where truth is not at the bottom, nature will always be endeavouring to return, and will peep out and betray herself one time or other."
—TILLOTSON.

Lady Julia had, as we have said, been rendered so insensible to the outward scene by her own internal emotions, that she narrowly escaped outraging all propriety by saluting her parish priest on the spot with the kiss of charity; and even, had he taken advantage of her bewilderment, and presented his close-shaven cheek for the embrace, she would not only have bestowed it without hesitation, but would have been completely oblivious of having done so then and thereafter.

The very ground she trod on seemed to shake beneath her.

She had been to the full as

much rejoiced as Hartland had known she would be, to hear that he had secured the Stonebys' support for the occasion; yet she beheld them enter not only without any token of joy, but with a dazed and stupefied air, as though wondering what chance had sent them her way that morning—and presented them to the Miss Gilberts, and watched the readjustment of the circle as though it concerned anybody rather than herself.

Her heart—if not her eye—was for that listless form in the background,—that wreck of what had once been her bright, bold Rosa-

mund. What havoc had here in a few brief weeks been wrought! Oh, how strange that it had been suffered to pass un-marked and un-acknowledged before! Oh, how cruelly neglectful had she been!

Yet had the fond creature paused to weigh the matter, and cast her eye backwards in the new light thus shed upon the past, she might have found wherewith to excuse herself. Rosamund, indifferent to what all others thought, had made an effort, faint enough in truth, but still an effort towards keeping up appearances when in the presence of her aunt—and had succeeded only too well. Only to-day, and only as it were at this eleventh hour, was the mask dropped. To-day the unhappy girl cared for no one.

The sociability of the rest of the party, however, came to the aid of Lady Julia; Miss Gilbert was being attended to by Mr Stoneby, Henrietta by his sister; all looked well satisfied, and in no need of their hostess. She had time to collect herself, to remember that for the present she had a part to play, and to endeavour to thrust into a corner the tumultuous tide of inquiry and research which had burst in upon her with such sudden and overwhelming force.

How placid the rest of the party looked! How easy and informal was the group! It had not occurred to either Rosamund or Clementina to change their usual morning frocks; and indeed the neat, grey homespun, and the plain, black merino, were alike suited to the weather, the roads, and Lady Julia herself. Lady Julia was likewise in her everyday gown, her "paramatta," with its crape somewhat too deep to please her maid, who loved to be in the fashion.

There was no one, therefore, to interfere with the glories of Emily and Henrietta, who, resplendent in claret velvet and plush, with smartly twisted hats, a vast amount of neckerchief and handkerchief, and perfectly spotless gloves, were happily conscious of being by far the finest folks in the room.

It must be owned that those gloves gave one person present a pang. Clementina had by mistake caught up a very old pair, worn at the tips and short of buttons; but she had comforted herself with the certainty that Rosamund would not be able to cast a stone at her in this respect. Rosamund was so much in the habit of running over to the Abbey at all times and seasons, that as it was merely going from one little woodland path to another for a short mile, no addition was required to her garden toilet; and she had begun to disdain gloves as soon as she disdained Miss Penrose.

True to herself, she sat hatless and gloveless now.

But on the other hand, the spruce, suburban young ladies were a treat to behold, from the neat gold bands round each daintily ruffled throat, to the shining heels on each delicately-pointed patent-leather boot.

The heels indeed shone in adversity—as lanterns in the dark. They had been cruelly used, those poor boots; they had been forced through miry, briery ways; and soft and moist, scarcely showed to the advantage they should have done beneath costumes so elegant.

"What can Rosamund have been thinking of?" was the first and very natural thought which occurred to the country parson's sensible little sister, with a glance at her own stout and serviceable foot gear. "She has allowed

these poor girls to trick themselves out as if for a lounge in a London park, and has then trotted them through the short cut here, though it is one long sop! And only to lunch with Lady Julia, too! Lady Julia, who wears her old clothes longer than any other woman in the parish! And Rosamund has not taken a bit of pains with herself. She looks tumbled, dishevelled, and—oh dear!—how cross and unhappy! I think she has not looked happy at all of late. I wonder——” but then she had to attend and reply to Henrietta, who had put forth a sentiment, and further wonder and conjecture had to be adjourned. Henrietta was next to her, and, truth to tell, it was a pity that the chairs were so close together, and that both were in the full light of the largest window. Miss Stoneby's gloves looked simply disgraceful. She smuggled one hand under the cover of a small table near, and took out her handkerchief and held it crushed up in the other, and so did her best. If she could have but taken them off, like Rosamund! But she was not in a relation's house, and Clementina needed no one to teach her to behave nicely. “Quite a little gentlewoman,” had been Lady Julia's speedy verdict after the preliminary interview; and even Lady Caroline had not demurred to the phrase, but had only hoped in private that Hartland did not think so likewise.

If Hartland had ever thought about it at all, her laborious efforts to satisfy her curiosity would in all probability have produced their natural fruits; but beginning by being indifferent, he had remained so. He had on this occasion only waited for the Stonebys' coming to present himself, and would have allowed as much if any one had

asked him, for sister and brother had an artificial importance at the moment very different to any Lady Caroline had ever dreaded. What she had once longed for, plotted for, and well-nigh despaired of, had actually, and within the briefest of periods, come to pass—Rosamund, and Rosamund only, now occupied Hartland's thoughts. He had parted from his cousin on the previous evening in such fashion as made it impossible that they could meet again without some confusion, some consciousness; and she, on her part, had felt almost certain that he would not risk a meeting at all. All through the long, weary, hot, and feverish hours of the past night, when either dozing and dreaming fitfully, or lying with eyes wide open, gazing into the moonlight of a cloudless sky, the scene she had gone through—that strange scene within the dim shades of hedge and laurel, with all its bitters and its one sweet—had been ever present to her. She had in fancy heard herself speaking as she had never spoken—had only longed and burned to speak,—delivering the scornful defiance, the crushing sarcasm, the flat denial which would have so utterly put him to rout—if only, only she could have uttered it.

All the words she might have said, and had not said, or had not been able to say, had crowded in all too late upon her; how came it that she had been so slow, so stupid, so cowardly at the time? How had she not silenced her accuser at the outset with one of those swift and sharp tit-for-tats which had ever been handy on her tongue? She had let him say things which she could never forget. His whole bearing she could never forget. It had made a breach between them which could

never be healed. And all the time, and far beneath this boiling, bubbling current of wrath, there had rung two notes of the sweetest music; and "dear Rosamund" had atoned for all.

A deep flush mounted to her brow, as Hartland now entered, and presently approached her.

Taught by Lady Julia, he had already made his bow to the strangers, lingered a moment by Clementina Stoneby, and nodded and smiled to her brother; and then—when he could no longer avoid doing so—he made his way slowly up the room, to where Rosamund sat apart.

The two hands met, but neither looked at the other. Stoneby, who had happened to turn his head that way, felt a curious sensation at the moment.

He had thought, until within a few hours ago, that he knew Lord Hartland as himself. By putting two and two together, he had been perfectly cognisant of the family arrangement, which, if it had been carried out, would have secured an ample fortune and a fair bride to his friend, and while he had perhaps secretly marvelled at Hartland's rejection of both, he had respected his disinterestedness.

It was strange, it was passing strange that he, that any one could resist that bewitching creature,—alas! poor Jack—and many a time and oft had the gentle scholar mused over the ways and dealings of that mysterious overruling Providence which would at times seem to mock with its gifts, by offering them to those who value them not, while others eager and longing, behold them only afar off. But now it seemed on a sudden, that the end had not been yet come at.

That there was a shadow, an embarrassment in the meeting be-

tween the cousins, he felt instinctively; and for it, Hartland's confessed antipathy to Gilbert scarcely accounted.

What Hartland had said of Rosamund herself flashed through his mind. At the time he had not given it serious consideration; he had thought it wild talk; and had told himself that the speaker, misled by his own feelings, had been carried too far. But in spite of himself, he now experienced a cold misgiving. He thought he must make a venture, in order to lay it to sleep. Gilbert (no doubt incited thereto by his betrothed) had that morning sent him a handsome cheque for the relief of a poor family in the parish upon whom great distress had fallen.

He would go up to Miss Liscard now, and speak handsomely of the liberal-minded donor.

It might be that the benevolent action had merely proceeded from a desire to stand well with the Liscards, whose tenants the sufferers were,—it might be that the money was the mere overplus of a full purse, to be scattered lavishly by a prosperous lover in his hour of triumph,—it might, on the other hand, proceed from a higher motive; but from whatever source sprung, the gift was a valuable and generous one, and it would be only seemly that he should speak of it and speak with gratitude.

"I suspect I have to thank you for the great pleasure I received this morning," he accordingly began, drawing near, when it had become plain that his host was standing mutely aside, and that nothing more was going to be said or done for the nonce. "I never was more surprised, and it is really too kind of Major Gilbert."

"What is too kind?" said Rosamund, scarcely lifting her eyes.

She would have answered more civilly if he had introduced any other name.

"His handsome donation. No doubt you were the kind promoter——"

"I have heard of no donation," interrupted she, as cold as ice.

"Indeed! Oh, I certainly thought I could not be mistaken as to whom I was indebted."

No answer.

"He did not even tell you he was going to send it?"

"No. Why should he? I don't know what you mean. What has Major Gilbert?" — (it appeared as if the very name came out with an effort)—"been doing?"

"All that is kind and praiseworthy, I assure you. But," reflecting, "I hope I am not breaking confidence. Perhaps I should not have spoken"—as a sudden remembrance of a rapid scrawl in postscript, "Oblige me by not mentioning this," dawned upon him. Could it have been really meant to be acted upon? To tell the truth, it had never once occurred to him that the writer had so meant it.

Now Gilbert had. In matters of business he was strictly business-like, and to underline, emphasise, and repeat was not his way. In simply adding the above brief clause, he had thought he had done sufficient to ensure the wish being attended to. "Dear me!" said Jack, feeling rather ashamed of himself, "it really did not occur to me that he had intended I should keep it from you."

At last he had succeeded, and her curiosity was piqued.

"When you *have* told me, Mr Stoneby," quoth Rosamund, with a flash of her old vivacity, "it will be time enough to decide whether you ought to have done it or not.

Pray, then, let us hear this wonderful secret."

"Will you stand between me and Major Gilbert if I reveal it?"

At that moment she looked as if she would not have stood between anybody and Major Gilbert—as if his very presence would have sent her from him, driven her forth, it mattered not where.

"This is absurd," said she, starting to her feet; and Lady Julia's "Luncheon, my dear," and her tender drawing of her niece's hand within her arm the next moment, seemed as the shelter to which the impetuous girl had sprung.

"You want your luncheon, don't you, love?" whispered the kind aunt, giving the aforesaid hand a little pressure; "not very bright to-day, I can see, darling." Then lower still, "I will try to like them, Rosamund—I will really try; and they are very nice, I am sure, are they not?" added she, scarce knowing what she said, in a vague desire to comfort and cheer.

Rosamund gave a little laugh. As if anything now could do any good! What were poor Em and Etta to her? They were but small parts, fractions of the hopeless, miserable whole.

They were now on in front, reluctantly leading the way, or, to speak more correctly, being herded onwards by those behind, whom they in vain attempted to let pass.

Little Clemmy Stoneby, stumping sturdily alongside, being quite aware that she and they were in their right order of precedence, marvelled much at their uncertain, wavering movements and wistful countenances; but she could not impart to them any of her own composure.

Like their brother, they were thrown out by anything new and un-familiar; and as they had never before seen so stately an affair

conducted so simply, it was not until all were seated, and the blinds had been drawn down because the sun had come out and was in Henrietta's eyes, that they severally began to recover.

One was on each side of the host; Mr Stoneby sat on Lady Julia's right hand, Rosamund opposite to him, and next her was Clementina, pulling off her shabby little gloves as fast as she could, and with her round, good-humoured face restored to its wonted serenity by the process. Her mind was now at rest, and perhaps as much could not have been said of any one else present.

The Miss Gilberts were, however, in a state of alternate anxiety and elation, divided betwixt astonishment at their present exceeding good luck and their desire to comport themselves creditably under it. They had not of themselves selected these favoured seats; and having merely obeyed by instinct the authoritative glance of the old major-domo, and the footman's significant drawing back of the chairs in question, they had no qualms of conscience on that head.

The only thing was, they did hope that Rosamund knew how it had been done, knew that they had not been to blame, that they had not encircled Lord Hartland thus of their own free will. They had begun to stand in considerable awe of their future sister-in-law, and had found that every hour increased rather than diminished the feeling. If she had frowned and looked indignant at this crisis, it would have been unfortunate indeed.

But they could not catch her eye at all; she was dreamily gazing through the great bay-window, and they came to the conclusion finally that they had nothing to fear. Their spirits rose; and with

a young man, and a nice young man, and a peer of the realm, to talk to, they could talk against anybody. Henrietta, as usual, led the way.

"What a lovely country this is, Lord Hartland; and what a lovely place King's Common is! Such lovely gardens,—and such a lovely park,—and that lovely old avenue,—and—oh, it is all so lovely!"

"You are not seeing it at its best," replied he, good-humouredly. "It is kind of you to be so charitable. We think it looks a little dreary just at this time."

"Indeed, I cannot believe it could ever look dreary," cried she, "nor this lovely Abbey neither. Emily and I said so to each other ever so often to-day, did we not, Emily? Rosamund said she thought it dull."

"Did she?" he stole a long, furtive glance up the board, but Miss Henrietta was helping herself to potatoes, and did not see it.

"Only King's Common of course. Oh, not the Abbey,—not *your* place," explained she, swiftly; "but I am sure it is because Rosamund is not very well this autumn. My brother thinks the shock upset her; so naturally she takes a gloomy view of things."

"Yes."

"We don't think it dull; we never saw anything prettier than those trees we passed under to-day. They were perfectly red all over; and that lovely view from the white gate."

"Oh, you came that way. You must have found it wet under foot."

"It was, rather; but then it was so lovely. Emily, where did Rosamund say that lovely path led to? All the way to some place three miles off—what was it?"

"I daresay Lord Hartland can

tell you, considering the path leads through his own woods, and belongs to himself," observed Emily, severely. ("Just like her, the stupid thing!") "How charming it must be," turning affectedly to him, "to be able to walk on and on for ever in your own woods! Rosamund says you can walk about all day and never go outside them, and never re-cross the path."

"They are nice enough in summer,—I should have preferred the road myself to-day."

"We did get torn and dirty rather. The bramble-branches were so long, and stuck to us."

"Followers, you know," tittered Etta, growing coquettish. Could she have known what a vision the little word recalled! Hartland, who was pouring himself out a glass of water, raised his eyes, dropped them again, and then behind the tumbler which he held to his lips, took a second long, stolen, earnest look at his cousin. That old, old scene of the "follower"! That pleasant walk! That merry talk! That time when he might—oh, he had let it all pass; and now the "follower" held on, and he could not tear him off, as he could once have done,—as he *had* done,—as——. For full a minute the present scene was lost in the past.

Before the meal was over, he had looked at Rosamund many times. He could not tell what to think about her.

At one time the soft, curved, pear-shaped cheek next him would be suffused in deepest crimson, at another pale as death,—one moment she would be talking fast and eagerly, at another lost in reverie,—but two things she never did; she neither tasted a morsel of the food before her, nor did she once turn her head his way.

"She will never forgive me," was his conclusion.

Emily Gilbert had now turned to Clementina, and was doing her best to talk of parish matters, and betraying a large share of kindly ignorance on the subject.

There were but few really poor people round her own home, she averred, most of the people were well-to-do small tradespeople and artisans, a good many of whom had employment in divers large works near.

They had no cottagers, no labourers: oh no, they lived far too near London for that: in fact they called themselves Londoners; ten minutes took them to a London station.

For her part she loved the country. How delightful it must be to live in such a pretty neighbourhood as this, for instance!

"And what a sweetly pretty church! Would Miss Stoneby take them over it some day? Oh, any day would do. Next week, perhaps. They were not going away just yet. And the cottages! Those low, thatched roofs, so curiously close down over the windows and doors, how cosy, how comfortable they looked, and so picturesque!"

"More picturesque than comfortable," replied downright Clementina. "Unless those thatched cottages are kept in thorough repair—which is constantly being needed, and very expensive to have done—they are not weather-proof. Lord Hartland's cottages are always well looked after," she added, with a smile to him, for it was by Lady Julia's peremptory desire that everything about the Abbey was now 'Lord Hartland's'; "but I cannot say the same for our other landlords. We have a sad case in point. A portion of a roof fell in the other night, in the midst

of that hurricane of rain and wind, and it broke the furniture all in pieces, and the poor man who was in bed in the next room, too ill to move, had to lie there hour after hour, expecting that every blast would bring down the remainder of the roof upon his own head."

"Was there no one to move him? Why, I would not have let him lie still there," cried Miss Gilbert, who was energetic like her brother, and was quite equal to having carried forth the invalid in her own arms, and would, moreover, certainly have done so, had she been by.

"There was no one in the house but two small children. His wife died some time ago, and the person who looked after him had chosen to take herself off that night."

"The wretch! Surely, Miss Stoneby, you won't let her go back?"

"No, indeed," said Clementina, pleased with the interest her little tale had aroused, for now all the table was listening. "We have taken means to prevent that. And some one else, Miss Gilbert, has done more than any of us. Your brother——"

"I declare I was thinking of Frederick. I was wishing he could hear you. He would be sure to give you something. You catch him, and tell him what you have told us, Miss Stoneby, and you see if he does not give you something."

"I don't need to wait for that,"

quoth the pleased and amiable Clemmy, looking round with a glow of anticipated triumph in her forthcoming announcement. "You have shown how well you know your brother, and how correctly you judged what he would do. He sent Jack a ten-pound note for the poor man this morning."

There was a general murmur of applause.

"There now, that was Frederick all over," observed Henrietta, when the hum had died out. "He never waits to be asked twice, does he, Em? We think a good many times before we try to get anything out of him, Em and I, just because he is so good-natured. And when it's for any charity or collection, though he teases ever so much first, he always gives us something good at last."

"And he never says a word about it," added Emily; "he will never tell us a word about this ten-pound note, will he, Etta?"

("Dear me!" reflected Jack Stoneby, all parson at the moment, "how I wish I had known of this worthy gentleman's proclivities before! I must certainly—yes, I certainly must make up for lost time now, however.")

("Another in the eye for me," reflected Lord Hartland at the same instant. "But if I have got to like Gilbert, I vow Jack has got to like him too. And as for Rosamund—Rosamund shall *not* marry him.")

CHAPTER XXV.—A MISERABLE HOUR.

"Nought is there under Heaven's wide hollowness
That moves more deare compassion of the mind
Than beauty brought t' unworthie wretchednesse
Through envie's snares or fortune's freaks unkind."

—SPENSER.

Rosamund did not indeed look a bride for any one the next minute.

She had been absently paring a russet apple on her plate, having

taken no part in the foregoing discussion, when on a sudden the fruit-knife dropped from between her fingers, her cheek crimsoned with a deep wide-spread stain, and an exclamation of surprise—almost of anger—escaped her.

Others at the same moment turned their heads, for there in the doorway, which a footman had just thrown open, stood Major Gilbert himself, all eagerness and happy explanations. His appointment had been put off to another day; he had received the telegram postponing it an hour before, on the arrival of which he had at once ordered his trap and driven over at the best rate he could, knowing he should be late, but feeling confident of catching up the party at some point of the luncheon, and being able to make up speedily for lost time. To suppose for an instant that he had by any chance not done the right thing, was the very last idea that would have occurred to him: he had counted on the joy his tardy appearance would occasion, all the way as he came along.

"Anything will do," he said heartily; "but I did not think you would have got on so far," looking round on the blue-and-gold dessert-plates. "Are you not rather exceptionally punctual to-day?" to his hostess. "To tell the truth, Lady Julia, I was shabby enough to confide in my sisters yesterday that the Abbey was not of all places the one most noted for punctuality. I had been reckoning on that, I am afraid. Well, Rosamund, so here you are," patting her shoulder as he passed to his chair from shaking hands all round the table. "And so you all got here safe and sound? Dirty work walking to-day, eh? Or did you drive?"

"We walked."

"But you will not walk back, my love," interposed Lady Julia, beginning to recover herself. She, in common with all present, had experienced a certain shock at the unlooked-for interruption. The shock—of pleasure to his two sisters—of mingled pain and curiosity to the rest, had been succeeded by a suspension of everything, a numbness,—and it was well that Gilbert himself was so ready and able to cover this. Lady Julia, as we have said, was the first to recover, and even she recovered slowly and reluctantly. She felt as if she could never forgive the intrusion, and yet she knew she must forgive it, must at least seem not to see, nor to consider it as such,—it was, it must be looked upon but as the prelude to many more. As for Rosamund, the kind creature would not look at her darling, so sure she felt that they were once more in sympathy, as they had ever been. It was terrible—terrible.

"You will not walk back, my love," said she, lightly; "you can have any carriage from here that you like, you know, in case you forgot to order one from home."

"Thank you, dear auntie,"—always gentle and soft to *her*,—"but I did order one: I told them to send the pony-chaise."

"But the pony-chaise only holds two?"

"It will hold Emily and Henrietta. I would not drive at any rate; I have not had walking enough lately, as you all tell me."

"For that very reason you must not overdo it: no, no, we will see about that"—("and I shall have her to myself," thought Lady Julia, exultingly, "and perhaps, who knows——?")

"——Not much seeing needed,"

cried Major Gilbert's lusty, jovial tones. "I thought that was going to be the way of it, and so I prepared a little surprise for that young lady, if she will deign to accept it. What do you think I have got here, Rosamund? Can you guess? Oh, I think you can. What but my own bonny bays again!" in evident expectation of creating a sensation. "Going as sweetly as ever. So we'll trundle the girls out of the way in the pony-chaise, and then you will mount to your own perch on the dogcart, and we'll have a scamper. You have no idea how she likes driving tandem, Lady Julia. You tell her, Rosamund," nodding across the table. "You did not know what luck was in store for you. No more did I, till this morning. I thought that fore-leg would not have been right for some days yet."

"You are surely not thinking of driving my niece in a high tandem dogcart to-day?" demanded Lady Julia, with displeasure.

"Why not?" said Gilbert, with his mouth full and his fork midway. He was eating fast, to make up for lost time, and it is difficult to eat fast and talk fast at the same time.

"She is not fit," protested Lady Julia, still frowning. "She——"

"I am quite fit," said Rosamund, perversely.

"My dear, you are not. You have not been well lately, and you owed to me when you came in that you were tired."

"The air is all she wants," interposed Gilbert; "air is the very thing for her. That was why I was so jolly glad about the horses. I mean to drive her every day I can, now that the dark bay is all right again. You tell your aunt, Rosamund, that it is the best thing in the world for you."

"Young people do not always know what is best," said Lady Julia, stiffly. "If Rosamund had been as strong as usual, it would have been different; but——"

"Let her speak for herself. Let her say what she likes," cried Gilbert, not meaning to be rude, but anxious to have the matter settled. "I brought the pair on purpose; but it's no matter. One of the girls can go with me, if she's not up to it; only I thought that Rosamund——" and he looked wistfully into her face. She was always the first with him, be the other who it might; and a pang shot through the heart of one present who marked and understood the poor fellow's earnest gaze. Hartland smothered an exclamation, when the cold rejoinder came at last.

"I should certainly prefer the dogcart to the pony-chaise if it be a choice of evils," said Rosamund, sullenly; "so if it is decreed that I am to drive, let me drive in the dogcart. But why I may not do as I choose, I cannot see. I said I preferred walking. I am sure walking would be far better for me. You all make out I am to do what is best for me, and yet I am not to be allowed to do the very thing that is!"

"All right; then we'll walk," cried Gilbert, giving in at once, with the utmost kindness. "I'll send the cart on to King's Common—David can take it—and I will escort you back. There, will that do?" and he looked as if he had cut the knot cleverly, and pleased every one.

If he had, he was not permitted to think so long.

"Surely I need not be such a bugbear to you all! Surely this need not be made such a fuss about, and such a business of!" cried Rosamund, in a high, sharp

voice. "It is perfectly ridiculous for us all to be planning and discussing a mere nothing, as if it were a matter of life and death"—drumming impatiently upon the table. "Why may I not do as I always used to do, and trouble nobody? I never needed any 'escort' home from here; why should I begin all at once to be so particular? Do, Aunt Julia, let us come," still more impatiently; "we cannot be required to stay on here for ever. Here are Hartland and Mr Stoneby to watch Major Gilbert eating his luncheon, and it seems years since we had ours!"

"My dear child!"

Even Lady Julia was shocked.

"Dear Rosamund, you— you forget yourself," she murmured, for Rosamund had already pushed back her chair. "My dear child—dear love, do remember." Then louder, "No, Major Gilbert, pray don't hurry—pray do not think you are keeping us here. Indeed none of us wish to go in the least; it is only that dear Rosamund feels the heat of the room a little, is it not, love? The room is very hot, certainly. The sun has been on it all day, and the day is too mild for that large fire. The fire is quite too large. I feel it myself; and the weather is unseasonable, altogether unseasonable for November."

"I have been wanting particularly to see you, Gilbert," added Hartland, doing his part next. "I am making some alterations in the stables, and the builder is to be over this afternoon; so it is quite a piece of luck your being here at the same time. I had almost written asking you to meet him, but I let the post-time slip by."

"And I too should have writ-

ten," put in Jack Stoneby, who had only waited till the others had done, and who, as he was sitting next the major, could say his say without being obtrusive. "I received your note this morning, and I cannot tell how to thank you enough. Your generosity——"

Gilbert kicked his foot beneath the table. He did not know that his generosity had been already proclaimed.

All who could had now done their best towards atoning for Rosamund's insolent assault, and her heart swelled with resentment against each one.

Why should she not say what she chose, be unfeeling, ungrateful, and rude, if she pleased, towards her lover? Gilbert was hers—not theirs. Surely she might do as she would with her own; and all that she had done and suffered on his behalf rose up as usual to justify her. She now longed to break away from the scene, the hateful room, and the hateful company, to rush forth to solitude and passion, unrestraint and misery.

Strange to say, the three Gilberts were the ones with whom she was in her heart least at war. On her aunt and Hartland and the Stonebys—all of whom she perceived to be watchful and anxious, and beginning to interpret aright—on these she could pour the full vials of her wrath. The poor Gilberts—they were as harmless as doves—they alone did not molest her; they only were satisfied and unsuspecting, and, in consequence, to be borne; but she saw that Lady Julia was aroused, she fancied the Stonebys on the alert, and she knew that Hartland knew: they were one and all intolerable.

The dogcart, the pony-chaise, anything would be better than that solemn, round table, surrounded by

those many pairs of curious eyes, which were now turned on her, now on her lover, and now on the plates before them. It needed that she clasped her hot, trembling hands closely on her lap, that she held her breath and set her teeth tight within her closed lips, to prevent further exposure and defeat. That she could not bear.

It seemed now as if the hostess would never rise; and as, indeed, Lady Julia would have sat on till midnight to undo her niece's misdemeanour, she was now glued to her chair, thankful as she would have been—almost as thankful as any one—to quit it. Wild with vexation, the author of her own discomfiture had accordingly to endure a prolonged punishment; while Gilbert, who had been unable to help feeling hurt, and had gently enough charged her with unreasonableness in his own mind, was being comforted and solaced.

Under such treatment he could not but recover, and though he had just sufficient feeling on the point to cut short his meal, and refuse cheese and biscuits, and some young, crisp, and juicy celery, of which vegetable he was particularly fond, he was himself again by the time he had finished.

“She should not have snubbed me so before them all,” he reflected; “but, poor girl, she has so much spirit, I must not be too hard upon her.”

It did not occur to him to wonder why she should have been inclined to “snub.”

Hartland was rummaging for cigars when the ladies at last left the room. “I have lots in the billiard-room,” he said, “but it is such a way off. I brought some here. I know I put them down here”—overturning papers, and peering behind mantelpiece

ornaments—“on purpose to be handy; for I expect that builder fellow has come, and we may as well go out at once.”

“First say what you think of these,” said Major Gilbert, producing the handsome silver cigar-case wherewith Rosamund had endowed him in the early and palmy days of their engagement. They were moving towards the door as he spoke, and he looked at it for a moment tenderly, and, as he thought, unperceived. “I have some rather good ones here,” and he handed the case to each.

“I know them,” said Hartland, joyfully accepting one; “if these are the same brand as the last, they are perfectly delicious.”

“Do allow me to make you a present of a box, Lord Hartland. They are the same. I never smoke any other, and I shall be greatly honoured if you will accept some.”

“You may be quite sure I shan't *refuse* them. I say, how good of you! I shall look forward every hour till that box arrives. Thanks awfully.” (Then he turned away with almost a groan. All on the surface so smooth and fair, but beneath—what next?—what next?) . . .

Poor Rosamund, whom to blame or pity most we know not, but whose state of mind did not certainly render her the most agreeable companion in the world at this period, did not long enjoy the relief afforded by a general discovery of this fact.

For a brief half-hour she was indeed left in peace, while Lady Julia explained the mysteries of some new kind of needlework to Emily Gilbert, and Clementina piloted Henrietta through an illustrated manual; and during that time she could lie back in the depths of her chair, speechless and

weary, caring about nothing but to be let alone, conscious of nothing but the luxury of being un-observed and un-watched. Gradually, under the influence of the quiet room, whose distant murmurs only soothed her ear, and further refreshed by a cup of hot and fragrant coffee—Lady Julia's institution, which had never been adopted at King's Common, though greatly appreciated by the young ones whenever they came to the Abbey,—under these combined narcotics her breathings became gentler and gentler, her eyelids closed, and the heavings of her troubled bosom resembled the slow swell of the ocean after the tumult of the storm has subsided,—thought was all but suspended, pain quite, she had nearly sunk into a slumber, peaceful and sweet as an infant's, from sheer exhaustion of mind and body—when, and as it seemed with a deafening and odious clamour, an incomprehensible, cruel uproar, she was all in a moment recalled to the present scene, and to the entrance of Eleanour, Violet, and Amy Waterfield, who were walking up the room.

Waterfields, now! Waterfields at this most unfortunate, most miserable juncture!

No words can depict the feelings of the unhappy Rosamund. She had dreaded their return, and wished the first meeting well over, and had wound herself up to carry it off bravely; but that they should have her thus at vantage was unfair indeed.

She had known very well how they felt about her engagement; the letters had been exactly what she had expected. They had hoped she would "be very happy," and had been sure Major Gilbert "was very fortunate," and she had tossed the epistles scornfully aside, and

had responded in set terms, which had been understood with equal distinctness by them on their part. This formality accomplished, there had been a lull, with an ever-increasing repugnance towards breaking it. To have it broken thus! To have this added to all that had gone before!

Not only to have her little comforting nap rudely interrupted at its sweetest moment, just when senses and sounds were fading away into the soft, seductive confusion of dreamland—not only to be recalled to thinking, and talking, and ceremony, and Lady Julia's drawing-room, when she would so fain have been anywhere, anywhere else in the kingdom—but to be called upon with her present enfeebled powers to encounter the friends whose opinion she feared the most in the whole world, and discuss the subject she would of all others have avoided!

If anything more had been needed to fill the cup of bitterness, the presence of Emily and Henrietta Gilbert supplied it.

This must now be their introduction to the polite, composed, critical companions of Rosamund's youth, whose society even Lady Caroline had cultivated, and whose approbation even she, in her heart, had considered worth obtaining.

At no more luckless moment could Em and Etta have been subjected to first view.

Perhaps nobody looks to advantage during the torpid, digestive hour immediately succeeding a heavy mid-day meal, especially if the room be warm, the windows shut, and the conversation languid. There is a general air of plethora about a party so situated. Eyes grow dull, cheeks pale, expressions inanimate; while even the dress would seem to partake of the same

reaction, and is apt to look negligent and disarranged.

Thus with our spick-and-span young ladies, who had stepped in so briskly, all tied up, curled up, and pinned up two hours before; they were now limp and sodden; Emily's hat had crept down over one eye, and Etta's neckcloth had contrariwise crept up; while the smart pin which had heretofore kept it jauntily in its place, had by some means or other worked itself loose, and hung forlornly over on one side.

The neat gloves, Clementina's envy, were no longer there to hide rather large, red, and ill-shapen hands; and the unsuitability of the patent-leather boots was more than ever apparent, now that the mud had dried upon them.

No one else had suffered to the like extent: true, Lady Julia's cap had slipped slightly awry, but otherwise she looked much as usual; Clemmy Stoneby would always be Clemmy Stoneby, and from having at no time any looks to lose, found her advantage at a moment like the present; but the Gilberts, who were not without pretensions to beauty of a certain order and under certain conditions, were, it must be allowed, hardly dealt with, in being thus caught and held up to the light; and the pang of mortification experienced by Rosamund in recognising the truth of this, brought her to herself sooner than anything else could have done.

"It only needed this!" she said to herself. "Well, after all, nothing matters much now. I have got to go through with it all; and one thing more or less—still it *is* hard. I had meant to be so careful about when and where the Waterfields saw them.

These odious frocks and hats—and they themselves—I declare Emily hardly looks handsome at all, and Henrietta positively ugly. Oh, why—why—why——" and with the "why, why, why," and a long and weary sigh, she had to rise, feign a wan smile, and drag herself to the front.

The Waterfields, on their part, considered it rather a happy idea to get over this awkward meeting when at the Abbey, and under Lady Julia's wing. They had not anticipated it over readily themselves, but they had seen that, could it be come at haphazard, as it were, it might be shorn of half its disagreeables; and accordingly, on hearing at King's Common, where they had stopped half-way, that Miss Liscard and her guests were to be found at her aunt's, they had joyfully followed her thither. A spice of lively curiosity had been added to other feelings when the young ladies had been spontaneously informed who were Rosamund's guests, and further, that Major Gilbert's sisters had only arrived on the previous evening. They had not lifted so much as an eyelash indeed, in the presence of their informant; but no sooner had King's Common been left behind, than congratulations had passed, and steps had quickened. There had not been two opinions as to the advisability of proceeding to the Abbey, the advantages of so doing had been too obvious.

"The more the merrier, certainly," Eleanour had said. "With so many others present, of course nothing of consequence can be said; and even about poor Lady Caroline it would be difficult to find just the right thing to say, if we had Rosamund all to ourselves."

They were, we thus see, jubilant and strong; while she was weak, worn, and already spent by contest: everything was on their side, nothing on hers.

Dejected, querulous, apprehensive, and suspicious, with an aching sense of her own folly and guilt overshadowing every outlook, can it be wondered at that poor Rosamund was in no case to hold her own, far less to shield her friends? *Her* friends? Yes, in that light must Gilbert and his family now be one and all regarded. She had brought them there. She had brought them into notice at all. But for her—but oh, she must not, durst not think of this now.

Sick at heart, she exchanged the unmeaning kiss all round.

How gay and heartless sounded the voices of the new-comers! How fresh and insulting the bloom upon their countenances! She and hers all in shadow—these all

in sunshine! Then they sat down, and she heard the lively buzz begin, and marked the quiet inspecting glance, and felt and knew what was being thought, and told herself she did not care, and almost laughed when Etta said something more glaringly inappropriate than usual, and laughed again when Emily's scarlet top-knot lurched rakishly over, nearly brushing Violet Waterfield's cheek,—and, reckless, told herself it was all very amusing, and would make an excellent scene for her old friends to jest over when they returned home, and—aud—what was that?

The door opening, the gentlemen coming in, Gilbert's loud full-toned voice dominant in the doorway, Gilbert's laugh noisily echoing up the room—

“—I—I—oh, hold me, Eleanor!” cried Rosamund, and fell fainting on the floor.

ON ST HERBERT'S ISLAND, DERWENTWATER.

By the late Miss E. J. HASELL.

Basil. Thanks for steering the boat so well; I see my friend the Hermit is coming to meet us.

Theodora. I feel curious to see this modern St Herbert. But I will not intrude on your first meeting. Go forward while I sit and sketch here for a few minutes. I will join you when I have done.

Bas. (*advancing to where Herbert stands irresolute*). Welcome back to England, my dear friend! I am glad to see your tent pitched on this hallowed spot amid these clear blue waters. I have often thought of its many wanderings. Your last letter to me was dated Damascus. The post-card which brought me here to-day filled me with hope. You summon me to counsel and to criticise. That means that your first volume of poems is to be followed by another, and that, as I surely believe, its ample promise is not to remain unperformed. And you have come to seek inspiration on English ground and from the cell of your patron saint.

Herbert. Ah! but shall I find it, here or anywhere else? You are good enough to see promise in those early efforts of mine. But even if there is, I am not the man who gave it. As one also of your Lake poets has said, so that no man can say it better:—

“Verse, a breeze 'mid blossoms straying,

Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—
Both were mine! Life went a-Maying
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,

When I was young!

When I was young?—Ah, woful when!
Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and
Then.”

Bas. You speak as I might, but do not. I am old, if you like, though I do not always feel so. You are yet in the prime of life.

Her. Ah, my friend! your old age is of the right sort. I am prepared, after all these years that have come and gone since I first knew you, to read, as Carlyle did in another's, in your “eyes and features something of a serene sadness, as if evening and star-crowned night were coming on, and the hot noises of the day growing unexpectedly insignificant to one.” But the sadness is not serene when the sun grows dark at noonday. That means either storm or eclipse.

Bas. Yet both are soon over: the eclipse, although the rarer and the more portentous, the sooner of the two. With you the sun will shine out before long and the birds sing again.

Her. I doubt it. You know, though the world does not—nor shall if I can help it—that I have had serious wounds in the battle of life, wounds that maim a man ever after. Aspatia speaks the truth in the “Maid's Tragedy”:—
“Those have most power to hurt us,
that we love;
We lay our sleeping lives within their
arms.”

A man is never quite the same after a stab of that sort. Then, too, you may have forgotten your just reprehension of one of my poems (it is omitted in the second edition), and of the state of mind and mode of life that produced it, but I have not; and in my desponding moods it seems to me as though the penalty for it and for

them were being exacted and would go on being claimed by—

“The gods,
Who ever follow those they go not
with.”

Bas. Nay, if you quote Ben Jonson, remember another line in the same play:—

“Bad men excuse their faults, good men will leave them.”

You have done so, and by so doing, ranged yourself on the side on which the gods fight—to use pagan language. Now, expect victory and fight cheerfully.

Her. You have come at the right moment, for I need cheering dreadfully. My powers—such as they were—seem failing. When I came here a fortnight ago, on a lovely June evening, I felt hopeful. As the train swept past the grand ravines of Saddleback—as I caught a glimpse of Nature's mimic castle in lovely St John's Vale—as we crossed and recrossed the Greta, sparkling amid the fresh green foliage and the wild roses that she likes to play with,—old founts of feeling, deep sources of thought, seemed reopening in my mind. I walked up Castle-Head and saw beams of the sinking sun play on the beautifully notched outline of Glara-Mara and the top of Scaw-Fell Pike, while Borrowdale and Lodore slumbered in the shadow below them. The colour—you know how these mountains vary in hue—of the Buttermere hills above the Vale of Newlands was an exquisite purple. Skiddaw looked grand as I turned to survey him, with Bassenthwaite at his foot. What a lake it must have been when the expanse of water was unbroken from Armathwaite Hill to the Jaws of Borrowdale—a longer stretch than that of Ulleswater! The islands looked loving-

ly on the still waters, which most faithfully mirrored their every rock and tree, and seemed to beckon me to them like islands of the blest—above all, this fair and uninhabited island, on which that tent which has accompanied me on so many journeys was by that time pitched; and when I embarked and rowed gently towards it, I felt as though somehow a new life awaited me on its shore. My Persian epic seemed shaping itself. A straight path appeared to disclose itself through its tangled thickets. Jemshid and Rustem with their fair spouses, Kai-Khosroo and his paladins, began to stand out clear to my mind's eye, as do the groups in the 'Iliad.' I thought I was finding a thread which should give unity of interest to all my varied episodes. But chaos came again next day, and I begin to despair of seeing my way clearly.

Bas. You used to love mountain-climbing. Have you tried what a few hours' steady walking can do towards marshalling one's ideas?

Her. Yes; I have tried Carlyle's receipt of “no company but the rustle of the grass under foot, the tinkling of the brook, or the voice of innocent primeval things.” But neither the pretty pastoral walk past Watendlath down to Rothwaite, nor the sight of my old favourite Thirlmere looking so fair and innocent—awaiting in her unconscious beauty the cruel hand of the Manchester spoiler—not the glorious sunrise which I enjoyed from Scaw-Fell Pike's summit, nor yet the sight of mists which had just left the top of Great Gable as I reached it melting away beneath me and disclosing that grand view of lakes and sea, headlands and mountains, which you know so well, all re-

joining under a blue sky with white fleecy clouds which cast momentary shadows and then went on their way as happy pilgrims of the air,—not any or all these fair sights did for me what I wished. I remain undecided. Doubts beset me. Can I do what I purpose? Even if I can, will it be worth doing?

Bas. Try, and you will find out. But if a friend's opinion can be of any use to you, state your case to me and you shall have it.

Her. Do you know the 'Shah Nameh' of Firdusi?

Bas. No. I have somewhere in my library Mr Atkinson's English abridgment of it, which I see has been lately republished in the Chandos Classics, but I never read much of it. Last winter I and a pupil of mine hunted vainly for the book, in order to see the source of Matthew Arnold's "Sohrab and Rustum," a poem to which she, greatly to my advantage, had introduced me.

Her. Yes, I am forestalled there. It is one of Firdusi's finest episodes, and I dare not compete with Arnold. But I am glad that your knowledge of the tales of the 'Shah Nameh' goes no further. I studied them in the East, and now I want to know how they strike an unprepared and unprejudiced Western mind. Would they befittingly decorate a long poem should I see my way to sing Kai-Khosroo's vengeance for his father in epic strains? or would they at least, as 'Pictures from the Persian Book of Kings,' form a volume of idyls which brave men and fair women might take real pleasure in?

Bas. In short, you mean to ask, good workmanship being taken for granted, are these tales a strong enough foundation for the lofty superstructure which you

have it in your mind to raise on them? We will try and help you to decide that. This young lady [presenting Theodora, who has just left her sketching-place and come towards them] does me the honour to read the classics with me in winter, and to accept me as her guide amid our mountains in summer. She shall represent the general public, and I the reserved force of critics.

Her. Then take seats on these mossy stones—all that remain of my holy predecessor and namesake's cell—and imagine yourselves,—as the heat may help you to do,—seated in a kiosk round which blow the rich-tinted Persian roses, while the bulbul warbles amid them unseen. Moonlight glitters on the lake, of which we catch glimpses at the end of the garden-alleys; sounds of revelry come from the royal banquet-hall, where the king's guests are quaffing wine from goblets made rich by the ruby and the sapphire. The humble story-teller sits at the feet of a sultana—whose cheeks have the rich colour of the ripe pomegranate, whose dark musk-scented tresses exhale the sweetest odours, whose glorious eyes bewilder his brain—and begins to tell the fortunes of Gushtasp. The train of attendant maidens hush their whispers and cease to pelt each other with roses, or to strike the strings of the guitar, while he says:—

"A mighty king of Persia had four sons, the two younger of whom only were the children of his queen, and it was one of these latter whom he designed to succeed him. Gushtasp, his eldest son, born before his father's accession to the throne, grew moody and sad at the thought of his younger brother being preferred before him. Rather than run the

risk of serving in the realm over which he should have ruled, he forsook his home and country, and wandering westward, crossed after a time the boundary of an adjoining kingdom and betook himself to its chief city. When the prince reached it, however, his purse was empty, his jewels had been exchanged one after the other for food and lodging, and he had begun to make acquaintance with Want. Pressed by that stern taskmistress, he went to the royal palace and asked if the king would employ him as a scribe, since he had great skill in writing. But there were scribes in plenty in the royal service, and the stranger found no admission. Driven by hunger, he next humbled his pride so far as to offer himself as a camel-driver. But the master of the drivers said that their number, too, was full. 'It will be strange indeed,' thought Gushtasp, 'if this right arm, which is stronger than those of ten natives of this land, cannot at least gain bread for me,'—and he offered to work for a blacksmith. But when he raised the hammer, his first stroke shivered the anvil to pieces. He had put forth too much strength, and its excess was more ruinous to him than its defect could have been. Showering a tempest of angry words on the stranger's head, the blacksmith drove him from his forge.

"Then Gushtasp's heart sank within him. A prince in Persia—a beggar in this far country—he walked sadly onward, till at last, faint with hunger and distress, he sat down on the edge of a corn-field and began to weep. Now this field chanced to belong to a man whose ancestry was Persian—for he was descended from the great Feridûn—but who, notwithstanding his royal descent,

was himself so poor that he was obliged to cultivate it with his own hands. Mabrin—so he was called—was at work there, as it chanced, that day. Drawing near at the sound of lamentation, he stood a while silent, admiring the stranger's deep chest, strong muscular arms, and noble face; then, pitying his distress, he invited him to his own humble house. The prince exchanged confidences with his generous host, swore friendship with him and his younger brother Alhrûn, and abode for many days as their guest and as the helper of their toil.

"A year elapsed, and when spring came round again the brothers departed early one morning on an excursion to the distant city, while Gushtasp guarded the house for them. Both returned in the evening so deeply dejected that the prince insisted on knowing the cause. 'You are our friend,' said Mabrin; 'from you we wish to hide nothing. Know, then, that on the road betwixt here and the great town there is a high-walled garden, which belongs to the king, to which his daughters resort in the spring-time to gather flowers. One of its gates stood open as we passed, and we entered, meaning no harm. Fresh and cool were the waters of its sparkling fountains as they flashed beneath the dark cypress-trees—from which came, sweet and full, the song of the hidden nightingales; rich was the carpet of lilies, hyacinths, and roses spread round those delicious waters; and proud the step of peacock and golden pheasant on the lawns beneath the trees, whose blossoms bent to the perfumed breeze. But all these things seemed to us shortly as nothing; for two damsels, each

fair and stately as the moon when she walks in her brightness, came towards us, and so smote our eyes with their beauty that they could behold nothing else. Their hands were full of flowers, and they were so intent on gathering them that at first they did not see us. Ah! would that I could paint to you eyes soft and sweet as the narcissus, with lashes jet-black as the raven's plume, framed meetly by brows curved like unto the archer's bow; cheeks softer than the peach; forms graceful as those of the young antelope! My brother and I threw ourselves on our knees, as though to adore their beauty. At last I stammered forth, directing my eyes to the lovelier of the two—a moon if her sister is a star, a sun if her sister is a moon—"Who are ye, who thus make us to be in Paradise before our time?" And she blushed and answered, "We are twin-sisters, Tamineh and Manijeh, the daughters of the king." I could say nothing—surprise and fear took away my speech; and, as many attendants came forward, Ahrûn and I rose, bowed, then prostrated ourselves and departed. How we got out of the garden I know not; but one thing I know, that though I saw no thorns there, a sharp one has pierced my breast. I love Tamineh, and she is as far beyond my reach as that star that now glitters in the evening sky.' 'Even so do I love Manijeh,' said Ahrûn, 'who surpasses her sister as does the rose the other flowers of spring; and as the king would scorn such a son-in-law, I must die.'

"Gushtasp tried to cheer his friends by reminding them that they too were of royal descent; but he knew in his heart that there was no visible ground of hope for them.

"Then Mabrîn told him of a proclamation which they had heard while they were in the city, of how on the morrow there was to be a splendid feast in honour of the king's eldest daughter Selima, to which all the youths of native royal descent were invited, in order that, according to ancient custom, she might select one from among them to be her husband. 'Happy is he to whom she will hand the bunch of roses,—the signal of her choice. Next year the same feast will be held for the damsels whom we adore. Alas! we shall not be invited, for Feridûn was not king of this land; and even if he had been, how should any beauteous princess lay her soft white palm in brown and toil-hardened hands like ours?'

"Next day the three friends went sadly to their daily labour, but on the following morning curiosity drew them to the city. There they heard surprising things. Selima had sat unmoved on her balcony as all the flower of the land passed beneath it, and held her nosegay fast, nor deigned to bestow it on any of the numerous princely scions who sought her approval. Men whispered that there was a cause for her indifference. A Persian had appeared to her in a dream, who looked stronger and handsomer by far than any of her waking wooers, and an inward voice had proclaimed him to her as her predestined husband. While they talked of these things the heralds appeared with a fresh summons, caused by a second dream of Selima's, who, falling asleep after her disappointment, had again seen the same Persian youth, and in her vision given to him the much-coveted bouquet, and received in return a branch on which grew roses of surpassing sweetness.

Therefore she had taken it upon her to send out invitations for a second banquet, and to bid to it all youths of royal descent, not merely native but foreign. 'Go,' said Mabrin and Ahrin to Gushtasp. 'Who knows but you may win the prize!' He went accordingly, and bore with patience the sneers of his gaily dressed competitors and their attendants at his homely apparel. Meantime more discerning eyes than theirs were noticing with approval his stalwart form and manly beauty. The damsel who acted as porter let him knock a while in vain, that her mistress in the gallery above might have time to peruse his features. But a moment was enough for Selima. She recognised at once in Gushtasp the reality of the vision which had disturbed her slumbers, and exclaiming to her handmaids, 'There stands the man ordained by fate to be my husband!' came down with haste and gave into his hand the longed-for cluster of roses. The prince looked at her as a man might gaze who should of a sudden see one of the blessed ones stand before him. But without a word Selima reascended the stair, and, needing to see no other of her invited guests, retired into the seclusion of her apartments.

"Great was the disturbance which followed,—loud were the complaints of the numerous disappointed suitors, as they cried that their moon of beauty had suffered a disgraceful eclipse, and that their king would be put to shame by his daughter's union with a beggar. The officers of state, who had each cherished ambitious hopes for his son or nephew, murmured loudly that the princess must have been the victim of a sorcerer's spell.

"But what was their wrath to

the king's? 'I had thought,' he cried, 'that a daughter of mine might be trusted to make a befitting choice. Selima shall not live to wed the nameless stranger who has ensnared her roving fancy. Bring her before me. Bring likewise the sword which has hitherto tasted no blood save that of this land's enemies, and let the people who are waiting outside the palace to see the procession of the bride and bridegroom, witness instead this stern act of justice.'

"The king's orders were obeyed. There was a long and terrible pause, during which each man scarcely dared to look at the face of his neighbour, and then arose a sound as of the wailing of women—at first distant, then nearer—and, guarded by the king's chamberlains, Selima appeared in the midst of her handmaids. Each of these had enshrouded herself in a black veil, as a sign of mourning for her dear mistress. The princess alone, proud and beautiful as ever, was arrayed in virgin white, and so stood prepared, as the king might please, either for her bridal or her burial. She had laid aside her jewels; her white feet were bare, as became a suppliant; while her long, black, glossy hair, floating in perfumed ringlets to her feet, partly replaced the veil which her angry father had snatched from her face with the words, 'Let me look for the last time on the daughter who has so disgraced her royal parentage.' Mute and pale, Selima glanced once over the sea of heads that filled the square in front of the palace, and not seeing Gushtasp in the crowd, turned to her father with a look at once of relief and disappointment, and bowed her beautiful head to receive the fatal stroke.

"It was then that there arose a clamour such as that ancient city

had never heard since first its foundations were laid,—the voice of the multitude interceding with the king for his daughter's life; beseeching him at the least to hear her defence, lest haply he might find, and that too late, that he had been impiously opposing a decree of heaven. The king gave ear to their entreaties, and at the request of the elders of the city, listened while Selima related her twice-repeated dream. Gushtasp, too—summoned by the news of his bride's peril from the house where he had gone, suspecting no evil, to communicate his good fortune to his two friends—was permitted to approach and declare his true name and his father's rank.

“When he had finished, the crowd applauded loudly, and said that no fitter bridegroom could be found for their monarch's eldest daughter than a prince of Persia.

“Not so, however, thought their sovereign. ‘A prince!’ he cried, with scorn; ‘if so, where is thy retinue? Where the gifts of gold and jewels which a man of thy rank should offer to his bride? What art thou but a base impostor? Take Selima, if thou wilt, but without a dower. I renounce her from henceforth. She is my child no longer; but, for aught I care, may starve or work for her living.’ Gushtasp made his obeisance, and said, ‘Verily, he that hath the priceless diamond is a wealthy man, whether it be contained in a casket of pewter or of gold.’

“Then the king turned to his daughter for the last time, and inquired of her, ‘Wilt thou indeed wed this beggar and share his wretchedness?’ ‘Yea,’ was her unshaken answer; ‘forasmuch as heaven has created us for one another.’

“So the pair were wedded, and

then driven with insults from the palace; nor dared any man offer them a lodging, or show them any kindness. They found a wretched home in a cave, beside the great river which flowed between the cultivated land near the city and an enormous forest, in which Gushtasp, fearless of the wild beasts which haunted it, went continually to pursue game for his own and his wife's subsistence.

“A year went by, and found them happy still in each other's society. And now the king began to think of his twin-daughters' marriage; but fearing lest their choice might displease him like Selima's, he prepared no feast and summoned no suitors, but proclaimed instead that Taminch's hand should be the reward of the man who could slay a monstrous wolf—the size of an elephant—that infested the forest; and Manijeh's the prize of the killer of a fearful dragon which inhabited a neighbouring mountain.

“Mabrín and Ahrún had frequently revisited the lovely garden during the past twelve months, and had received not wholly displeased glances on several occasions from the eyes which swayed their hearts. Each, therefore, felt anxious to undertake the proposed labour, yet each secretly owned to himself that it was beyond his power. ‘Where, where is Gushtasp? To what distant realm has he wandered to avoid the king's anger? they each exclaimed, as they bent their steps, resolved but not hopeful, towards the forest. They reached the river, and told the ferryman, before entering his boat, of their errand. ‘You will certainly lose your lives,’ he said, ‘and to no purpose. If the strong and valiant youth who constantly crosses here, and often pays me with half an elk, were to help you,

you might succeed.' The brothers guessed that he spoke of Gushtasp, and were overjoyed to find, when they reached the cave, that it was even so. Their friend readily undertook the work for Mabrîn—transfixed the wolf with two arrows first, then cut it in twain with his sharp sword, and then withdrew, leaving the lover to lay claim to the reward. The king could scarcely believe that the monster was dead, and came to the forest to see. But beholding the work accomplished, he made glad the heart of Mabrîn by giving him Tamineh to wife. Not many days after, Gushtasp repaired to the dreaded mountain, holding a dagger set round with a number of sharp knives, which Ahrûn had had manufactured for him. Poison dropped from the dragon's jaws, flames issued from its nostrils, so that to come to close quarters with him would have been inevitable destruction. But the young hero skilfully eluded his onslaught, while stinging him to madness by well-directed arrow after arrow, till, seeing his adversary weakened by loss of blood, he came near enough to drive the knife-beclustered dagger, fixed at the end of a long spear, into his mouth; then, seizing an enormous stone, he beat out the dragon's brains, and gave Ahrûn its two largest teeth to carry to the king.

"There is a second wedding-feast at the palace; but while Ahrûn sits in the place of honour with his lovely bride at his side, his heart smites him, and having secured a promise of pardon, he owns that it was not his own hand that slew the dragon. Mabrîn makes the same confession with regard to the wolf. 'My heart told me,' said the king, 'that there could not be two men at one time in my dominions capable

of such great exploits. Where then, and who then, is he who has done these marvellous things?' 'Gushtasp, thy disgraced son-in-law,' is the reply. The amazed king, convinced by these tokens that the account, before disbelieved by him, is true, sends at once for Selima, who appears bearing in her arms an infant lovely as the morning star—Isfendiyar, the future king of Persia—and installs her and Gushtasp in splendid apartments of his palace. Nor is it long before the fame of the great victories won by Gushtasp, as general of the army, reaches Persia, and occasions his recall to receive his father's resignation of that kingdom into his hands."

So ends the first of my proposed tales in verse. Now, fair lady, your verdict first. Will the general public, which is honoured by having you for its representative, accept this story with favour, provided I contrive to set it forth distinctly, passionately, and harmoniously?

Theo. Assuredly. It has delighted me in plain prose. I long to hear it as a poem. It seems to have two faults; but those are not yours but Firdusi's,—is not that the Persian author's name? The climax comes too soon. Selima's after-fortunes are interesting, but they are as nothing to the critical moment when she braves her father's anger rather than be faithless to the man whom heaven has ordained to be her husband. That scene charmed me. No doubt the princess feels a deep interest in the handsome stranger, but she is not following her feelings alone: her reason and judgment are supported by her knowledge of the divine decree, and her life is well risked in the endeavour to obey it.

Her. I am glad you see that.

It is a point which I shall try to emphasise. I shall throw the fullest light of my picture on this great scene; the fights with the two loathly beasts shall not take very long in telling, and the interest of the conclusion shall be mainly Selima's justification in the sight of her father and his court. Your second objection I anticipate. It is my hero's want of truth in abetting his two friends' deception, is it not?

Theo. Yes: although Ahrûn's tardy frankness atones for his own share in it, yet I wish that Gushasp had been free from falsehood.

Her. All nations have pardoned stratagems in love and in war. But I own that Firdusi's moral standard is not high. His heroes deceive, nay poison, without scruple. The poets of Christendom, even when the practice which surrounds them was of the worst, upheld a better theory than these Eastern singers. More is to be learned from the Bible than from the Korân.

Bas. Your Persian tale is wonderfully like a medieval romance. When did Firdusi live?

Her. He was born about A.D. 950.

Bas. Then we must have borrowed from him, not he from us. His stories must have travelled *viâ* Bagdad, Cordova, and Toulouse, till they reached Paris and London. The writer of the romance of 'Sir Eglamour of Artoys' most likely never heard of Firdusi; but when he makes fair Crystabelle's father promise his daughter's hand to the hero of his tale, on condition of his killing, first, "Sir Maroke the giaunte; secondly, ye wilde boare that wastes ye lande of Satyne; and, last of all, ye dragoun that lurkes beneath ye walles of Rome," he is giving us an improved version

of the latter part of Gushtasp's story. Later on, in 'Ye Historie of Syr Eglamour,' his infant son is carried away by a griffin. Is there not a similar incident in one of your Persian legends?

Her. Zal, Rustem's father, is cast out in infancy, and nourished by a griffin.

Bas. Then the personation of one knight by another is a familiar occurrence in our romances; but the tragic story of Brynhild is as likely a source for it as the Persian. Indeed the more widely one's reading extends, the greater is the difficulty of saying concerning any striking performance, This is new.

Theo. It is vexatious to think of such voluntary and involuntary borrowings and cross-borrowings, such dressing up of stolen children in pilfered garments, and of the dearth of imagination which it implies.

Bas. Yet, after all, though I would be the last to detract from the merit of the first inventor of an ingenious story, the poet who gets all the beauty latent in it to reveal itself, who paints its characters to the life for us, in their fullest fire of passion or pathetic force, does it a greater service than its originator. Many a wandering bard sang of Troy before Homer; neither Æschylus nor Sophocles first framed the tales of Agamemnon or of Ædipus; our own Shakespeare no more devised the first outline of Hamlet, Lear, or Othello, than he improvised our English kings. Man is greater than his circumstances; and a poet's highest triumph is, the circumstances being given, to show us his hero as a real living man, acting on, and acted on, by them. Nay, it seems to me that the greater the poet, the more likely he is to avail himself of what

he thinks to be historic truth. Shakespeare probably believed Cymbeline, Macbeth, &c., to be as real as Julius Cæsar—as the foundation of his cloud-capped towers. They then seem to him to stand on God's earth, and to deserve and repay the laborious workmanship that he bestows upon them.

Her. So speaking, you, the representative of the higher criticism, have condemned my undertaking, for I certainly do not believe in Gushtasp. And even more severe is the sentence of the fair lady who honours the general public by speaking in its name; for I have not invented my Persian stories, although I may have ventured to improve on them here and there.

Theo. My lament was rather for the narrow circle that confines man's wit. It is no disgrace to the individual poet to do what Tennyson, Chaucer, and Shakespeare have done before him.

Bas. My speech was begun in your defence; only, like some ingenious advocates, I was carried away by my own eloquence, and ended by proving too much. But though I cannot give a decided vote against your Persian pictures until I have seen more of them, I own that I am, as yet, inclined to wish you had chosen a different theme, one more congenial to the high pure thoughts which the historic memories of this lake, no less than the grandly shaped hills which lift up their heads to heaven around it, tend to inspire.

Her. You mean thoughts of self-sacrifice, of loss of lands and life, willingly incurred in the effort to prop a falling cause—in short, the story of the desolate island behind us, the fate of the last Lord Derwentwater and his heroic wife?

Bas. I was not thinking of them when I spoke, although I consider

them worth scores of your gentlemen and ladies with the outlandish names. But the men I mean lived at a much more remote date, and though commemorated, one of them at least, in admirable prose, are yet waiting for the poet who shall pay the debt that we, the inheritors of their spiritual riches, owe them. You perhaps attended divine service at Crosthwaite Church last Sunday?

Her. Yes; and joined in a prayer seldom offered at Keswick—the prayer for rain. I could judge of its rarity by the fact that a buxom dame who sat near me, after searching for it vainly in her Prayer-book, evidently made up her mind that it was the rector's own composition, for as soon as we got out of church, I heard her criticising it freely to her acquaintance, something as follows: "Whatever did t' priest mean by praying for 'moderate rain and showers'? Man! they'd do nowt for us. 'A should ha' prayed for a good blash."

Bas. Well, when it comes—and Keswick has seldom long to wait for it—when Lodore once more thunders out his deep bass, and all the little tinkling rivulets on the hillsides that are now mute join in the chorus, then bethink you of Crosthwaite's memories: how Kentigern—otherwise called Mungo (or "much beloved"), a name preserved by Mungrisedale, the valley between Saddleback and Carrock—toiled to convert our heathen forefathers; how he stood in the clearing which let light into the thick forest that clothed the base of Skiddaw, beside the cross which he had erected (that is what Crosthwaite means), and preached Christ to the rude mountain men. Call to mind Herbert quitting the isle you now inhabit, in what was in Bede's time "the great lake out

of which Derwent flows"—much shrunk in size since then—to hold spiritual converse with Cuthbert; mourning to hear of his dear friend and master's approaching death, and comforted by the promise, obtained from heaven by prayers and tears, that he too should depart on the self-same 20th of March. Then you will find yourself timing your steps *per aspera ad astra*—i.e., up Great End to Scaw-Fell Pike—to the music of St Herbert's matin and vesper hymns; and not impossibly defer finishing your Persian princes to a more convenient season, when you can sit and think about them in some trim garden in the Midlands.

Theo. The general public insists on their being finished somewhere. It will not readily resign the hope of enjoying their warmth and colour. Still it is not unworthy of

“The fine severity of perfect light”

in those higher regions to which you bid us aspire, where dwell holy hermits and saintly workers. There is a subject akin to those now recommended, which I long to hear in verse.

Her. Name it, lady.

Theo. It is from the life of St Thomas Aquinas. Not very long before he died, after saying early Mass, he announced to a friend that a vision of divine truth had just been vouchsafed to him, by which he was at once enraptured and confounded. He should write no more. His great work on theology must remain unfinished; for he now knew that no human words can describe the things of which that heavenly science treats. And he kept this resolution. Now, could you use your great powers better than in depicting to us the joy of the eager searcher after truth, as he finds himself of a

sudden, after a long and weary climb, on the summit? Should we not feel, as we do when we read the last canto of Dante's “Paradise,” when under your guidance we beheld the amazed delight of that holy soul as it left the twilight for the full noonday?

Her. Why not try and write it yourself? You look as if you could. And when it is finished, pray for me that I may be enabled to complete some day my “Vision of Germanicus.”

Bas. What is that?

Her. A bold attempt—one too bold, I fear—to do what every thoughtful reader of the ‘Annals’ of Tacitus wishes for,—namely, to let a ray penetrate their unrelieved gloom from that great contemporary Life of which neither the tyrant nor his victims ever heard.

Theo. Yes: as one reads of all those plots and poisonings, that envy, perfidy, and cruelty, one's only comfort is to note the years of the Christian era on the margin up to the sacred 33d of Christ set opposite to the 19th of Tiberius.

Bas. Tell us your design.

Her. Germanicus alone speaks. The listeners are, at first, those devoted friends who watched beside his premature deathbed at Antioch; afterwards, no one but his brave and high-spirited wife, Agrippina, who receives his latest sigh. The prince, who feels himself dying beside the Orontes, looks wistfully back to the Tiber and the great city near it, which he knows he had it in him to make happy—preserving its liberty, honouring its worthy citizens, and driving from its walls the odious tribe of flatterers and informers who are impelling Tiberius from one vile deed to another. He foresees death, or things worse than death, as the probable fate of

the wife and children whom he loves so tenderly; while his own fate seems a hard one, to waste away, instead of falling gloriously in battle—the victim of the machinations of a woman. The dream which, according to Tacitus, once seemed to him of good augury—the exchange of his blood-stained robe for a fair one, handed to him by the empress—has now received a sinister interpretation, for his new apparel must be that of the dead. The friends who stand round this last and dearest of the “*breves et infaustos Populi Romani amores*,” listen with passionate sorrow to his cry for vengeance, and pledge their word to obey, when he says, “Even men who never knew me will find tears with which to bewail my fate; you—if indeed it was myself and not my fortune that you loved—will find means to avenge it.” Then, murmuring the names of Rome and Agrippina, he sinks into an unquiet sleep. In that slumber he sees the vision—a gift from the same hand which sent the dream to Pilate’s wife—and bestowed in mercy on one who in evil times strove honestly to do his duty.

The gay city by Orontes has vanished, and is replaced by a poor village in the hill-country of Galilee. In a carpenter’s shop at Nazareth stands One whose austere purity of mien delights the manly Roman, whose look of inexpressible love and compassion soothes the sick and wounded heart. The cloudless “Syrian blue” above seems to open to untold heights, and a voice from them reaches the dying ear: “He shall put that straight which you are forced to leave crooked.”

This is what I meditate on, when the sun has set, and Skiddaw, no longer dappled as he now

is by shade and brightness, lifts his dark head into the golden sky, and star after star comes out to converse with him and his brother-watchers round the lonely lake.

Bas. Go on with it and prosper.

Theo. Will you not read us at least a few lines of it?

Her. It may be a superstition of mine, which tells me that if I do so, the work will remain unfinished, or prove a failure. Anyhow, I dare not. Its being a failure is, alas! only too probable.

Theo. I shall pray fervently for your success. If you fail, you fail with honour.

Bas. We have got to a theme at last worthy of this hallowed spot. And its secular part has this great advantage, that it will require no explanatory notes—at least not for educated people. Do you, in any of your Persian pictures, contrive an outlook—not so wide, of course, as this—but still an outlook from the seen to the unseen? That, I take it, is the highest function of poetry.

Her. In several of them, I hope; for the East is more naturally religious than the West.

Theo. Witness that delectable poem, “The Light of Asia.”

Her. What does our friend here say to it?

Bas. That I only hope it is no less true than pleasing. If so, what a new and lovely page it turns for us of God’s dealings with His redeemed creatures—showing how His Spirit can visit and move hearts to which His knowledge has not come!

Theo. I think, in justice to Firdusi, you should tell us one of those more thoughtful tales. We have just time to hear another.

Her. When a solitary recluse begins to talk, he finds it hard to stop. I shall tire you, and you will be too polite to interrupt me.

Then you will never come and see me again, and so the loss will fall on me.

Theo. On the contrary, my pride will bring me back, if not my pleasure. Is it a light thing to be admitted to a poet's council? or a privilege that a woman of any sense would forfeit if she could help it? Besides, I enjoyed your first story extremely. Why should your second give me no pleasure?

Her. Hear, then, the tale of Kai-Khosroo, the great Cyrus, as the singer of Ghizni saw his form looming through the mists of the long-past centuries:—

“Saiawush, the son of Kai-Kaus, king of Persia, was driven from his house by the machinations of a stepmother more evil than Phædra herself. Vainly did he prove his innocence of the crimes laid to his charge, by riding unharmed in his white mantle through an enormous fire which burned beneath the palace terrace. He could only escape the snares set for him by the cruel Sudabeh (afterwards put to death by Rustem, in requital for her misdeeds) by a flight into Tartary. There he had to seek the protection of his father's hereditary enemy, King Afrasiyâb, who received him with the utmost pleasure. Gold and incense are showered on his head at his public entry into the capital; Ferangîs, the princess royal, is given him to wife, and his father-in-law bestows on him the kingdom of Khotên (Chinese Tartary), where he goes to reside with his beautiful consort. Their home is a fairy-like palace, built and adorned from the prince's own designs. It stands on a mountain fanned by gales such as blow in Paradise. The gardens which surround it, vast in extent, vocal with the song of birds, and kept green and flowery by ever-flowing rivulets, he causes

to be yet further decorated by temples and arcades frescoed with representations of the kings of Tartary and Persia, surrounded by all their chivalry. Before these latter pictures the exiled prince often stood with tears in his eyes, as he looked on his brave friends, with Rustem, his trainer in all manly exercises, conspicuous in their midst, and pined for the dear Persian home which he was never to see again. Only the soft caresses of Ferangîs at times beguiled her lord into a temporary oblivion of his sorrow.

“That natural sorrow, alas! finds malicious interpretation. The Tartar prince, Gersiwaz, jealous of the exaltation of a foreigner, persuades his brother, Afrasiyâb, that his son-in-law is preparing to revolt against him, and pave the way to his own return to Persia, by seizing upon Tartary. He contrives that appearances should give every colour of truth to his groundless accusations, and at last convinces the suspicious monarch that he must destroy the dangerous intruder. Soon the newly built palace is surrounded by a hostile force—the soft turf and beautiful flowers of its pleasant lawns trampled down by horses' hoofs. Saiawush vainly attempts to fly. He is captured and brought back. Vain are all the passionate pleadings of Ferangîs for her husband's life. He is murdered, while his dying lips are uttering the prayer that his wife's expected infant may prove a son, and that Kai-Khosroo (the name he had chosen beforehand for the babe) may grow up to avenge his father's death. As he expires, a terrible storm shakes the stately mansion to its foundations, while a darkness overspreads the surrounding country, so great that men cannot see each other's faces. But from

a few drops of the innocent victim's blood springs a tree, long after revered for its miraculous powers.

"The life of Ferangis,—doomed to die by her unnatural father,—is saved by the intercession of Pirân, the wisest and best of his tributary chieftains. Her son is born in a remote district—to which he has conveyed her—and guarded from the persecutions of his cruel grandsire, to grow up a noble prince, skilled in all manly exercises.

"Meantime the news of his son's cruel fate has reached Kai-Kaus in Persia, who sends an army to avenge it. But many years elapse before tidings of the invasion reach Ferangis in her far-distant province. While it was being slowly prepared, and during the many ebbs and flows of its very checkered course, Kai-Khosroo has become a man.

"Gih, Rustem's valiant brother-in-law, makes his way through trackless deserts and strange perils to offer to escort him to Persia; while Afrasiyâb, on his side, marches with a strong detachment to seize the man whom a foreboding, born of guilt, points out to him as his future destroyer.

"Before they leave Khotên, Ferangis and her son pay a last visit to the once sumptuous palace. It is now in ruins, its fountains dried, its rose-trees withered, the frescoes in its roofless arcades half effaced by sun and rain. One tree alone flourishes amid the general desolation—the tree which Kai-Khosroo and his mother water with their tears, for it marks the spot where the blood which cries to them for vengeance was spilt. But it is not safe for them to linger. The swift Tartar horses which Ferangis has selected from among the king's herd can scarce-

ly bear them away fast enough in their race for life. Their brave Persian protector routs single-handed many formidable battalions which endeavour to intercept them, sparing the life of Pirân, whom he finds at the head of one of them, in requital of his benefits to the princess and her son. At last the three fugitives seem in desperate case. Behind them, with a far larger force than they have yet encountered, rides King Afrasiyâb, himself eager to take their lives; while in front rolls the mighty Jihûn, not to be crossed save by boat, and the ferrymen refuse to take them to the other side, having received command to stay them. But Ferangis prefers to intrust herself and her son to the mercy of the waters rather than to that of her merciless sire. She makes her horse swim the stream, and, to the amazement of the Tartar host, not one of whom dares to follow, reaches the opposite shore, followed by Gih and Kai-Khosroo.

"A lull in the war follows their arrival at the Persian Court. During this breathing-space Kai-Kaus, who has received his grandson with much affection, desires to atone for the wrong he did his father, by proclaiming him his successor, and resigning the crown into his hands. But a powerful faction of the nobles support the claims of his uncle, Friburz. Unwilling to pronounce decidedly for his grandson against his own son, the aged king promises the sovereignty to whichever of the two can subdue a demon-guarded fortress called Bahmen, which is the terror of one of his frontiers, and allows Friburz to make the first attempt. His efforts, however, prove a failure; for the scorching flames that issue from the castle consume his soldiers,

and he is unable either to extinguish them or to find any entrance. Kai-Khosroo succeeds to the enterprise. A dream tells him how to subdue the awful fire, which he sees from afar reddening earth and heaven. He writes the name of God on a scroll, which he binds on the point of a javelin, and when it touches the wall the unholy flames vanish, for the magician's spell which kindled them has lost its force. Then he bids his troops discharge their arrows, and ten thousand bows are immediately levelled at the enchanted tower. Its demon garrison fall or flee, and as the murky mist that shrouds their flight rolls away, the returning sunlight shows its strong walls deserted and its prodigious portal undefended. Khosroo makes himself master of its vast treasures, erects a lofty temple as a thanksgiving offering, and returning to the capital, is crowned king of Persia amid general acclamations. He rules the land with the most perfect justice and munificence; the only drawback on its perfect happiness being the bloody war which his duty to his murdered father obliged him to renew with Tartary.

"It rages long and fiercely, with alternations of defeat and success. The three greatest sovereigns of Farther Asia come to the aid of the Tartar king. Rustem towers above the other Persian heroes, like Orlando among the paladins of Charlemain, and, like him, is sometimes withdrawn at critical moments for the general interest, by private adventures of his own."

Bas. Do you consider Boiardo and Ariosto to have been much influenced by Firdusi? The staple of their poems is very similar to what you have just described.

Her. Yes; the 'Shah Nauch' is one of the not very remote pro-

genitors of the 'Orlando Innamorato' and 'Furioso.' They are composed with greater art than it, but with less sincerity and seriousness. Their authors perhaps never heard Firdusi named, but they felt his power, nevertheless, reaching them from the far East through Cyprus and Sicily.

Theo. Please do not digress. I want to hear the rest of your story.

Her. Willingly I proceed:—

"At last, after many years have been spent, Kai-Khosroo attains his object. The three mighty monarchs who oppose him perish, although the third, Kámús, was so powerful that, in the poet's hyperbolic language, when he frowned there was winter, when he smiled spring began to laugh around him with her hyacinths and roses. Magic has interposed in vain; not men alone, but demons, have been defeated; the ever-victorious Rustem, though harder pressed at times than in any other war, and once or twice all but vanquished, has, riding his great war-horse Ruksh, trampled down every obstacle: the two sons of Afrasiyáb first, and then that guilty monarch himself, and his yet more wicked brother Gersiwaz, fall victims to the manes of the deeply wronged Saiawush. Kai-Khosroo has avenged his father.

"Undisputed monarch of Asia, there are now no bounds to his magnificence and his might. And having all earthly wealth and pleasure at his command, he finds out their emptiness. He begins to sigh for something better, to withdraw from secular business, and to give himself up wholly to prayer and contemplation. His counsellors tremble for the result. It is rumoured that he thinks of resigning the crown and ending his life in a hermitage.

"In vain his great men urge him to give at least a few hours daily to the affairs of his kingdom. Khosroo tells them that since he has felt the attraction of the world to come, the passing things of time no longer seem to him worthy of attention. They send to distant Seistan for the now aged Rustem, in hopes that his words may prevail with the king. The instructor of his father's youth, the bulwark of his own throne, implores Khosroo not lightly to cast away the gifts won for him so hardly in so many well-fought fields. 'I am weary of the troubles of this life,' is the reply. 'Yet it is dreadful to die,' says Rustem. 'Nay, rather,' rejoins the king, 'is it dreadful to live in a world where men continually deceive and are deceived, slay and are slain. I have verily avenged my father; but while I did so, his son, my own half-brother, Pirân, my kind guardian, and many a faithful servant of mine, lost their lives. As I thought on these things last night, there seemed to wave before me a branch from the mystic tree that sprang from my father's blood, and a voice — surely his — whispered to me, "The time of thy departure draws near. Seek the fountain in the high upland valley; there shalt thou lay down thy burden, thence pass to see Him who made thee." Tomorrow I appoint my successor, reward thee and my other brave friends with fresh dominions and honours, and begin to give a seven days' feast to all my subjects. When that week is ended, I depart on my lonesome road.'

"All was done as Khosroo said. His noblest warriors accompanied him the first stage of his journey. When his tents were struck next morning, he bade them all farewell; and with tears and bitter

sorrow in their hearts they turned back, leaving their king and his attendants to pursue the track which led to the mysterious fountain. All left him but Rustem and four more. 'Go back also,' said Khosroo to these. 'By this time to-morrow ye may wish to return and not be able.' 'Not so, my king,' answers Rustem; and while he speaks, tears are seen to fall from those fierce eyes, which have dismayed, not warriors only, but the demon host. 'Four kings of Persia have I served faithfully before thee, and I will not desert the fifth. Neither shall Ruksh and I seek a new master in our old age. It may likewise be that when thou shalt meet thy parents, in that self-same hour shall I see again Sohrâb my son — whom I slew, not knowing what I did — and his mother, my beautiful bride of a day, whom, as fate willed, I saw not again, only heard that she had pined to death at his loss.' So the six ride on together.

"The fountain is reached at last. Kai-Khosroo, sated with human grandeur, every earthly wish attained, puts off his royal robes, and plunges into the waters which promise to him things that earth cannot give. In those waters he is lost to sight: no corpse is left floating on them, not even a bubble rises to show his passage through them; but thenceforward men behold him no more. Weary and mournful, his friends sit lamenting him by the fountain-side. While so engaged, sleep surprises them; and as they sleep, snow whirls down on them from the sky, drifts down on them from the mountains, and under its white sheet the good horse Ruksh, his noble rider, and his four brave friends sleep the sleep of death."

Theo. What a grand conclusion! It is finer than the passing of

Arthur. It even reminds me of the splendid disappearance of *Cædipus*. Your epic will, at any rate, end magnificently.

Her. You advise me to write it then? Twelve Books, about the length of the '*Æneid*,' would not dismay you? and you promise to read the whole?

Theo. Faithfully.

Her. One such reader would make it worth a man's while. The general public remains unpledged, though.

Theo. It will buy the book because it is *yours*, and read a line here and there. You cannot expect more in this busy age.

Her. I assure you my expectations are very moderate. I am even prepared to release you from your promise.

Theo. I shall never ask you to do so. And now, give me an idea of the structure of your poem.

Her. It will begin at the moment when Ferangís and her son stand beside the fateful tree in the court of the ruined palace. She will there tell him his father's story, and receive the vow to revenge him, which will give the poem its name and its subject. Episodes like the story of Gush-tasp—whose nationality must be changed to find him a place among Khosroo's contemporaries—can be narrated round a camp-fire at some pause in the main action, which will of course be the war waged by Rustem and Khosroo's other mighty warriors against the Tartar king, whose death will form the decisive act of the poem, as those of Turnus and Hector do in the '*Æneid*' and the '*Iliad*.' Then, when the tumult of war is over, and the great object attained, comes the last Book, answering to the burial of Hector in the '*Iliad*,'—Khosroo's mysterious departure, and that of his bravest champions.

Theo. You have sketched a splendid poem. I suppose the critics will call it irregular in one respect. It will take years instead of weeks or months for its action, and spread itself over Khosroo's life from youth to age, instead of concentrating itself on one critical period in it, as is the rule in the classics.

Her. Yes; in that respect it will more resemble the Italian romantic poems. But Khosroo need not attain old age.

Theo. You have no heroine-in-chief, I think?

Her. No; Ferangís and Sohráb's mother can neither of them play a leading part in the main action. But fair ladies will abound in the episodes; witness the specimen with which I began.

Bas. I have no doubt at all that if you carry out your plan you will produce a very interesting poem, with many fine passages in it. But still it is not an undertaking which I can advise.

Theo. I think I have heard that no great poem would ever have been produced if the critics had been consulted beforehand. Is it not "nothing venture nothing have" in these matters?

Bas. Very likely; and if Herbert, strong in his own inspiration, rejects my advice, it may be the first proof—only, you know, others must follow—that he is right to do so. But my reasons for that advice are these: Short poems have a far better chance of survival than long ones. Detached "Persian Pictures" would find readers, where the great epic of "Khosroo's Vengeance" would remain unopened. These are utilitarian considerations, you will say. Let us come to higher ones. Each of the stories you have told us would shape itself in your hands into a poem well worth reading. You

would put forth your wealth of description and your great skill in narrative for the first; the second would call out the pathos of which I know you are no mean master, and embody much deep thought. But how about the less interesting portions of your story? Does your wing feel strong enough for the flight over many level and barren spaces? Would so remote a subject kindle and keep burning a poetic fire, which would be required to remain long unextinguished, and to cast out steadily bright flames? Great epics are usually national in their subject: an Englishman cannot feel related to a Persian hero as a Greek did to Achilles, or a Roman to Æneas. They imply a concern in the reader for their result, natural to a European listening to the defeat of the invading hordes of Asia—which is Ariosto's theme—to a Christian when Tasso sings to him of a successful crusade, or to a Greek pondering all that is implied by the conquest of Troy; but not easily to be aroused in either writer or reader by a wholly unhistorical recital of events said to have taken place in distant Persia.

Her. Then your advice is——?

Bas. To finish first and foremost "The Vision of Germanicus," an admirable subject, from which I expect much. Then to write "The Departure of Kai-Khosroo," bringing in sufficient glimpses of his earlier days in the discourse of his warriors, as they try to dissuade him from his resolution. Then, if you feel that subject unexhausted, "The Mystic Tree," or some such title, to serve as the introduction to the later poem; and then, if need be, Gushtasp and another tale or two from the 'Shah Namah,' to complete your Persian picture-gallery. You would risk far less by this plan. Suppose one of these

shorter poems was a failure, yet another might be a success.

Her. I am disposed to agree with you, in spite of the inspiring and flattering counsel which I have received from your fair companion. I have of a surety cause to distrust my strength of wing for long flights. Will it indeed prove sufficient for a short one? As I told you, even since I came to this dear isle, I have many a time experienced the despondency that besets us—

"When, rising from the turf where
youth reposed,
We find but deserts in the far-sought
shore;
When the huge book of Faëry-land
lies closed,
And those strong brazen clasps will
yield no more."

Theo. They are opening beneath your hand. Press them just a little harder, and the book will reveal a new page,—not Chaucer's, but something which he would have heard with approval—not Spenser's, but something to remind us of his

"Forest and enchantment drear,
Where more is meant than meets the
ear."

Her. Ah, lady! if *you* were always at hand to cheer me to the attempt, who knows what might come of it! or what seemingly dead germs might

"Start and flourish under your feet"!

But alas! I fear old Fletcher is right when he says—

"Violets plucked, the sweetest rain
Makes not fresh nor grow again."

Bas. We must leave you. Will you cross the mountains some day and tell me of your progress?

Her. If I have any to report.

Will you—both of you—return here this day fortnight in case I do not visit you sooner?

Theo. Yes; only, if you have not at least *one* of these projected poems ready to read to us, promise to set up a black flag, and we will turn the boat's head round.

Her. I will. But do not hope to see it. Well or ill, I shall finish *something* rather than incur such a heavy penalty. How can I thank you both enough for coming! You leave me acquainting myself again, after a long lapse of time, with the pleasures of Hope.

Theo. It is only just, since you have helped us so richly to the pleasures of the Imagination.

Bas. The pleasures of Memory must last till our return. To increase them, you should hear my pupil sing. The song you sang me yesterday, please.

Theo. (*sings in answer to Herbert's supplicating gesture*)—

I.

Some day, but not yet,
Somewhere, but not here,
God by thee shall set
Joys from each past year.

II.

Every bower that shaded
Shall again bloom fair,
Each sweet flower that faded
Once more scent the air.

III.

Light shall on the mountains
Clear shine after rain,
And the long-dried fountains
Well forth bright again,

IV.

Old companions' voices
Greet thee as before,
While thy heart rejoices
That ye part no more.

V.

All things true and tender
Shall thine eyes behold,
In the new Light's splendour
Fairer than of old,

VI.

And thy soul forget
Grief, remorse, and fear,
Some day, but not yet,
Somewhere, but not here.

Her. Is not that very like the benediction with which Medea dismisses her infant sons from this life—*Εὐδαίμονοιτρον! ἀλλ' ἐκέει?*

Bas. Yes; only we have better grounds for the expectation than she had.

Her. Would it could be "here" and "now"! But as you, lady, have just sung to me, even so sweetly sang the voices from Paradise that beckoned Kai-Khosroo to the fountain of peace. Farewell! May you and I drink of its waters some day! I have had a foretaste of them in your company.

MY TREASURE.

CHAPTER I.—MY COUSIN PHILIP.

I AM a very ill-used woman, and the worst of it is that I cannot indulge in a good fit of ill-temper, because I have professed to be delighted, and moreover, in one way I *am* delighted. Yet now that the excitement is over, I have a distinct feeling that I have been ill-used, not by any one in particular, but by circumstances. I think it might relieve my feelings to write the story of my woes. "Mary, give me my blotting-pad, please"—there I go again. No Mary answers me, nor will answer me any more. Well, I can reach my writing things, as it happens, so I shall set to work at once.

I am a middle-aged woman (on the wrong side of middle age, so to speak) and a writer of novels. Once for all, let me say, a successful writer. Ten years ago I met with an accident which crippled me for life. I was alone in the world, and when I had recovered as completely as I ever shall, I had to consider what I should do to make my life tolerable. Hitherto I had gone a good deal into society, but that was over now. I ought to say that although I am not poor, I am not very well off, and I write in order to add to my income. I began to think that I would set up a secretary or companion. I have always been a scrupulously careful writer, never describing a place without visiting and examining it. I wanted my companion to do this for me now, therefore she must not be a mere girl. She must be musical. She must read well. She must have an angelic temper, because I have no such thing. In fact, she must be a treasure!

And rather than have any one who did not seem likely to prove a treasure, I would get on alone as best I could.

I was hard at work embodying these wants in the form of an advertisement, when a knock at the street-door made me hastily conceal my paper: it was not to *every* visitor that I would give so good an opportunity of laughing at me.

"Will you see Mr Mauleverer, ma'am?" inquired my parlour-maid, and in a moment more he was in the room.

My cousin Philip—the Honourable Philip Mauleverer, to give him his full distinction—was the only son of my first cousin, Lord Mauleverer. In his early days he had been one of the most delightful young men you can imagine. Gay, kindly, bright, and clever—very clever, they told me. I forget the record of his Oxford successes, but it was a good one. He was also a first-rate cricketer, and a splendid horseman, as befitted his name. He was particularly proud of his driving, and many a time have I suffered a small martyrdom perched up beside him in a high, sketchy-looking vehicle, while he made his two frisky Irish horses spin along—driving tandem, too, a thing which I think ought only to be lawful in very quiet country places. That was—let me see—ten years or so before my accident. Philip was making holiday then, having left college, and not yet having got the appointment in the diplomatic service of which his father's services and his own promise had secured him an offer.

He was a splendid-looking fellow

in those days. Not handsome, for his features were by no means regular, but he had such a winning look and such an irresistible smile—as full of glee and mirth as most laughs. He was very tall, and there was a look of easy strength about him that to look at him was quite refreshing.

I was very fond of Philip, and only that morning I had been thinking of those old days; and I suppose this made the change in him strike me more than usual. He looked as strong as ever, and as kind, yet he was changed so utterly that it was hard to believe that he was the same man. It was hard to say in what the change consisted. Something was gone, that had made the brightness of his face; something was added, that made his smile as sad as once it had been gay. His eyes had a patient look in them, and his voice had quite lost the old glad ring, and was level, gentle, and somewhat monotonous.

“Well, Frances?” he said, “how goes the world with you? What! have you betaken yourself to your pen already? You are certainly a brave woman!”

“I must write, you know, or leave this house and live in a very different way. Besides, I should miss the occupation. But I am only drawing up an advertisement now; I want a companion.”

He took the half-written paper from under my pad, and read it: the shadow of his old smile passed over his face as he laid it down.

“Fan, why not say simply, ‘I want something between an angel and a blue-stocking’?—it would save trouble.”

“I know it is absurd; but if I cannot get something like what I ask for, I shall rub on as best I can alone. I knew you would laugh at me, and you’re dying to

say, like some one I have heard of, ‘If I find what you want, I shall make her *my* wife, not your companion.’”

As I said the word wife, I knew what had been the trial that had changed Philip—his face betrayed him. Only his face—he answered in his usual tone.

“Remember, you are to write me an account of the interviews between you and those who are bold enough to reply to that challenge. I shall be very curious to hear of them.”

“You are returning to Vienna, then?”

“Yes; my leave is over.” And he sighed slightly.

“You think your father quite well? all at home well?” said I, rather anxiously.

“My father? he is surely the most wonderful man in England. To see him ride to hounds—he has not his equal in the field, even yet.”

“But at his age, he ought to know better,” said I, laughing. “It is surely too much for him. But your father is more of a boy than you are, Philip.”

“Yes; there is not much of the boy left in me, is there? But then, I am two-and-thirty—and a diplomatist, at your service.”

“True; yet I could wish to see something of the bright young cousin who led me such a life when he first discovered my scribbling propensities, and that I wished them to remain secret for a time.”

“What fun we had!” he said, in the same indescribably level way. “Do you remember the morning when I persisted in reading a chapter of your first novel at the breakfast-table? and my father thought I had gone crazy?”

“And said, ‘I should not have thought that sentimental stuff would have suited you, Philip.’”

"And you nearly betrayed yourself in your wrath at the 'sentimental.' Those were happy days," he concluded, absently.

"Yet, even then, do you know what I thought of you, Philip?"

"Of me? that I was a good model for the 'bold, bad man,' with the sinewy arms, muscular legs, and columnar neck, I suppose."

"No; I thought that you had a secret, and that one day in the music-room, when I had been singing for you, you were very near telling your faithful friend and cousin all about it. You even said that I might help you, but Edith came in, and you said no more. Next day you left us. Phil, it seems to me that if you wanted help then, you want it more now, and you know——"

"Stop, Frances; no one can help me. You have guessed so much that I may as well be frank. I cannot speak of it—the grief that has clouded my life; but I can say this much, neither you nor any one else can help me. I must 'dree my weird.'"

"O Philip! at your age?"

"Life may be practically over at two-and-twenty," he said; "it was so with me."

I could not help crying, for I was weak from much suffering, and I am very fond of him.

"Dear Fan, how kind you are! Some day, when I am so old that the wound has ceased to throb, I will tell you all about it. Till then, let me be silent; that is the only kindness you can show me."

I dried my eyes and began to speak of other things, and he followed my lead with his usual gentle indifference. We talked of his younger sister's marriage, of his own profession and prospects.

"You used to have plenty of healthy ambition," said I; "how

comes it that you have not yet made your mark?"

"I have none now—no ambition, I mean. I am very well as I am. Now I must say good-bye, dear Fan. I wish I left you as active as when I went to Vienna first; but that's a foolish speech, for these things do not come upon us by accident. Give me a kiss for old affection's sake, and mind you tell me how your advertisement speeds."

When I was alone, I cried again very heartily. I was full of pity and of wonder (you can call it curiosity if you like), for it was plain that Philip had a story, and a sad one; and I knew that not one of his own people suspected it. Presently I went back to my writing, pruned and altered, wrote and rewrote, sending finally a much shorter paper than my first, yet long enough to cost me a mint of money.

In a day or so answers began to pour in. I had desired the writers either to state their age or to send a recently done photograph. Well, I got thirty-eight letters in two days. Eight stated that the writer was "under twenty," ten that she was no longer in her first youth, while the rest sent photographs.

I ranged the twenty photographs before me, and—did not see my treasure. Some were manifestly done years ago—the dress told me that. In fact there were but three of my unknown correspondents whom I wished to see. So I wrote my thirty-eight letters, and stopped the appearance of my advertisement, which, however, did not save me from both visits and letters. I began to wish I had never advertised. Of the three ladies I had asked to come to speak to me, one was at least seventy, and as deaf as a

post; another informed me that she was herself a novelist, though, owing to the jealousy and unfairness of people whom she would not name—not until we had become real *friends*—she had never yet published anything. The third, who said she was “under twenty,” might with equal truth have said “under fifteen”: a mere school-girl, who presently admitted that “Pa and Ma” knew nothing of her visit to me. But she was so tired of taking care of the children! To this aspirant I administered a long lecture, reducing her to tears; then I had to give her tea and cake to console her; and finally I sent her home in a very proper frame of mind. If it lasted, her mother had reason to bless my name.

Three weeks passed. I began to think there were no treasures to be found. Friends began to send me their “former governesses,” but I would *not* have a governess. I did not want to be set right every time I opened my mouth. One lady even recommended her own maid, who was “quite a marvel of intelligence,” though unfortunately too delicate for her place.

“I’ll do without a companion, Essie,” said I to my servant, “for really I am plagued to death about it, and not one of these people would suit me.”

“Really, mem?” replied Essie—and I changed my mind at once. I could not live without some more congenial companion than—“Really, mem.”

CHAPTER II.—MARY SMITH.

The next day I was lying on my sofa thinking whether a new and less ambitious description of the wished-for treasure might not be more successful in luring her into my net—such really superior people are perhaps modest—when Essie appeared, saying—

“A lady down-stairs, mem, wishes to know if you will see her. About the advertisement, mem: and her name is Smith.”

“I’ve seen four Smiths already. Essie, *do* use your senses for once; is there any use in my seeing her.”

“Well, really, mem, I could not take upon me to say. Only—I wish you would see her, mem.”

“Ah, well—bring her up,” said I: and lay grumbling to myself that these interviews would be the death of me. For though I do not care to dwell on it, it was hard to meet so many pairs of anxious eyes, only to disappoint them.

“Miss Smith, mem,” said Essie,

and a lady came up the room. It is a long room, and I lay by the fire, at the end furthest from the door. I was struck by the grace of her movements—and then I saw, in spite of a painfully shabby jacket, that she had a figure so perfect that she could not have been awkward if she tried. An old, poor, black silk dress—but very neat; a summer cloth jacket, and there was snow on the ground!

I observed all this as she came slowly towards me: she stopped at a little distance from my sofa, and said—

“Miss Mauleverer, I believe?”

The most delicious voice! so soft, so clear; a very young voice too, and I looked up eagerly in her face. I fairly started. Anything so thin, so pinched and wan, I had never seen; and her hair, which was very thick and wavy, was perfectly white.

"Won't you sit down?" said I. "Take that low chair. It is a bitter day."

"I have called because I saw your advertisement, Miss Mauleverer. But it is only fair to tell you that I have no recommendations. I can give no references."

Her beautiful voice trembled a little; she looked over at me, and found me gazing searchingly at her. Without a word she quietly took off her bonnet, and sat in silence while I gazed—puzzled, and a little nervous, if the truth must be told.

The silence was beginning to be awkward, when she spoke again.

"I will tell you what I can about myself, madam. I have worked for many years for one of the great outfitting houses in the city. I have earned barely enough—for I had my father to support, and he was in bad health. For him it was better for me to remain where I was, because I had more liberty; but he is dead, and the life is killing me. I am a well-educated woman. I was at school in Germany, and afterwards in France; and as a child I lived in Naples. I am,—or was, I ought to say, for it is years since I played or sang,—a really good musician. I read well, and write a good hand. I should like to—serve you, Miss Mauleverer; I have read most of your books. I would try to be gentle and faithful. But, as I said, I can give no references."

"Surely the firm which has employed you would recommend you?"

"I think so; but I shall not ask them to do so. They know me by my real name, which I mean henceforth to forget. Mary Smith is not really my name."

"You must be aware," said I,

"that this is a most extraordinary avowal."

"I am indeed. I am sure my employers would, if I asked them, recommend me as Mary Smith, for they know me very well, and would understand. But I have not asked them. If you think that the objection is insuperable, I can stay where I am. But I will not begin by deceiving you."

A rather long pause ensued: then I said with a laugh—

"I wonder what people would say if I did so wild a thing?"

"No one need ever know about it."

"Now, Miss Smith—since so it pleases you to be called—what put it into your head that I could possibly agree to your proposal?"

In a moment she coloured crimson, and when she coloured she looked quite young. After some hesitation she said—

"It was partly your books. You seem to have a great sympathy with your less fortunate sisters, and it seemed to me possible that you might be able to understand that a woman may wish to lose her old self, without being to blame in the matter. And—long ago—I knew some one who knew you. So I made up my mind to try."

"Do you know French?" I asked.

"Yes, and German, and Italian was the language of my childhood. And I used to sketch very fairly."

"Landscape?"

"Yes," she answered.

"A woman like you must be very miserable among the people employed by—oh, by the way, I don't know by whom."

"There are some that I could have liked; but I have been obliged to keep aloof. Oh, madam, my life has been one long penance since I grew to womanhood."

It was her voice that did it. If she had spoken in tones less crystal pure, if she had once said "idear," or if she had begun to cry over her woes, I should have frozen at once. But to have that delicious voice to speak to me—that quiet presence ever with me—it was a great temptation. And I suppose her reference to my books had insensibly softened me.

"Will you go to the piano and let me hear you play?" said I.

"It is ten years since I last played," she answered. But she rose and opened the instrument, playing some simple airs with the most wonderful feeling. Then she began a brilliant mazurka, but broke down, and said, "I have forgotten that;" and almost as if unconsciously, she began to sing. It was a very simple little ballad—but as to the exquisite beauty of her voice, I can find no words to describe it.

I was conquered! but I did not care to tell her so at once. I said—

"Now, do you think you could go to any place I want to mention in my writing, sketch the most remarkable features, and describe it all to me?"

"It would be delightful work!" she exclaimed, her eyes brightening.

Still, I was anxious not to appear like a fool. So I said—

"I will consider the matter. Could you call again before the end of the week?"

"Not until Sunday. I could not ask for leave to go out again, and we are working very late. Miss Mauleverer, will you promise me not to tell what I have told you to any one?"

"I promise, on condition that you answer me one question. In your past, which you wish to forget, is there *anything* that ought to stand between you and me?"

She looked at me and said—

"I do not quite understand?"

"You wish to abandon your name. Forgive me—but this looks as if—Miss Smith, is there any stain upon that name?—you must understand me now."

Again she crimoned, exclaiming, "Oh no—none, none. My troubles have been many, but . . . it was my father . . . nothing of that kind."

She was silent for a few moments, and then said quietly—

"On my life there is no stain. I swear it solemnly. On my name there is—but it was not of my making."

"Well—will you call on me on Sunday, then? Oblige me by ringing the bell—I am quite helpless, you see. We will have some tea before you go."

Essie brought tea, and I asked my visitor to pour it out. As I watched her quiet, graceful, noiseless movements, I said to myself, "I must and will risk it!"

"Miss Smith, suppose you come to me, shall you be in no danger of meeting people who know you?"

"No one—not even—no one living would recognise me," she answered; "besides, I did not at any time move in your circle."

"In what circle, then?" said I; "for I am very sure that you did not acquire your accent and manner in any—but I beg your pardon. I forget myself strangely. Very likely your circle was rather above than below mine;" and I felt myself blush like a girl at my awkward blunder.

"By birth," she answered, "I belong to the mercantile class. But my mother was an Italian, and of good birth: and I spent much of my childhood with her family."

"Will you have another cup of tea?" I asked. I was watching her very closely. Every movement

was ladylike, and she seemed completely at her ease: her manner could not possibly be assumed for the occasion. Having finished her second cup of tea, she rose.

“I think, Miss Mauleverer, that I have some sketches of mine among my few possessions. May I send them to you, that you may see whether I can do what you want in that line? And may I call on Sunday?”

“Yes,” I said. “At four, if that will suit you.”

“It does. Good morning, Miss Mauleverer.”

Yet she lingered for a moment, as if there was something that she longed to say. But she did not speak: with a little sigh, which expressed as much patience as anxiety, she turned away—and in a moment I was alone. I shivered—it seemed so cruel to let her go from my warm cosy room out into the bitter wind. In that jacket, too!

I pretended to myself that I meant to consult some of my friends during the interval between Miss Smith’s visit and the following Sunday. But I never consulted any one. I amused myself by imagining what this or that person would say if I told my story. Mrs Chichester, formerly Edith Mauleverer, and Philip’s sister, would say, “You’d be murdered in your bed, Fanny! robbed and murdered. For mercy’s sake, don’t do anything so rash!” Lady N— would declare that “the poor soul had escaped from some lunatic asylum,” and entreat me not even to see her again. Every one would declare, and with great justice, that to engage a companion on her own recommendation, without even a reference as to character,—a woman of whom I knew nothing except that the name by which she called herself was not her own,

—was a mad, rash act: and yet I knew in my heart that this was exactly what I meant to do.

The drawings were left at my door late the next evening by Miss Smith herself. They were uncommonly good. I knew the places where some of them were done, and knew that they were correct, as well as spirited and pretty. Some were done in sepia, others were coloured, but there was nothing finished about them, and it seemed to me that they were leaves from a small sketch-book, newly torn out.

Sunday came: four o’clock came, and, punctual to a minute, Miss Smith came. She was far less calm than on her first appearance—she seemed half afraid to look at me, and her hands trembled as she filled the cups with tea; for I ordered tea at once, seeing how very cold she was. When Essie left us, I said at once—

“Miss Smith, if you will assure me of one thing, you will oblige me. I know it is a strange question to ask, but forgive me. Have you ever been in . . . a lunatic asylum?”

I blurted this out all in a breath. She started—looked at me, and then laughed; and her laugh answered me. No one whose mind has ever been affected laughs like that.

“Oh, no,” she said, “never, indeed. Do I look like it?—well, I knew I was very much changed. I—hardly can venture to ask you, for somehow, since I was here last, my hope that you might engage me has come to seem very wild and presumptuous—but yet I must ask—have you made up your mind about me, Miss Mauleverer?”

“You positively can give me no reference?” said I.

“None. The fact is, that unless

I can get employment that I can like, on my own terms, I prefer to remain where I am."

"On your own terms, as to your name, &c., you mean—for the question of salary has never been mentioned yet between us."

"I should leave that to you altogether. I have no one to think of—but myself."

I remained silent, half unwilling to commit myself finally; but I happened to look at her in a few moments. Her great soft eyes were fixed on my face, her lips were pressed firmly together, her hands clasped. She was in an agony of hope and fear, though she sat still and silent. It was

cruel to delay—particularly as my mind was made up.

"Miss Smith," said I, "you must never tell any one what a silly thing I am doing. My friends, I expect, would begin to inquire about a lunatic asylum for me! I am going to engage you—on the strength of your candid eyes and pleasant voice!" She suddenly covered her face with her hands, and began to sob in a strange tearless way.

"Oh, do forgive me. I cannot help it. I shall be myself again in a moment. Miss Mauleverer—with God's help—you shall never regret this."

And I must admit I never did.

CHAPTER III.—FIVE QUIET YEARS.

How strange it is now to look back to those early days when Mary Smith came to me a stranger, and I watched her every action with a small degree of suspicion, which, I suppose, was unavoidable under the circumstances! It was very characteristic of Mary that she never seemed aware of my watching, nor in the least degree put out by it. And I never discovered anything that was not pure and sweet and good. Just at first I was a little distressed, because she went out every morning before breakfast, and never said anything about it; but when I found that she only went to the early daily service at St M——'s, I said to myself that it was no sin, though very amazing. I soon became aware that she was deeply and truly religious; and I am not ashamed to confess that I learned much from her. Not that she ever directly tried to "do me good," a process which I should have resented at once, and for which she was far too humble-

minded. But one could not live with Mary—*my* Mary, as I used to call her—without being the better for it.

Edith Chichester, and a number of other friends, saw my new acquisition for the first time on the Monday after her arrival. Every Monday I was "at home," and dispensed tea and cake and talk to all and sundry, from four to seven. Very crowded my room was, and is; for, really, people are very kind to me, and they know I cannot go to them. If there is one thing of which I am proud, it is this, that, with the exception of a few who have left London, or ceased to come up for the season, or—alas!—"gone over to the majority," my visitors are the same as the visitors of that time. I have never lost a friend, except by death. Girls and boys, who were children then, are grown up now, and come with their mothers; dear me! they do flirt audaciously, some of them. But to return to my first Monday.

Mary had come to me on Saturday, and my first glance at her relieved me from an embarrassment which had been annoying me a good deal during the interval between the day on which I engaged her, and this on which she came to me. I somehow felt that she was not a person with whom one could take a liberty, and yet truly her dress was lamentably shabby. I need not have vexed myself; Mary appeared in new attire, tasteful and elegant, though rather plain. I never saw her unsuitably or unbecomingly dressed, and really, in spite of her white hair and her worn look, she was very beautiful; at least I thought so, for I remember Edith Chichester asked me if I meant to study anatomy, that I had set up a ready-made skeleton. But this was the only fault Edith found; on the whole she approved, and said that it was the skeleton of a perfect lady, which was a great comfort.

But before Mary had been with me a year, there was no doubt at all about her beauty. As the hollows in her poor face filled up, and a soft pink stole into her cheeks, she began to look so much younger, that one day I said to her—

“Mary, you are a most deceitful woman!”

“I think not,” she answered, smiling. “What have I done?”

“Well, that snowy day that first saw you in this house, I fancied that you were a woman of three or four and forty, at the least. Now I see that you are nothing of the kind. Pray, madam, how old are you, if it is fair to ask?”

“Twenty-eight,” she answered; “quite elderly, don’t you think? When I was seventeen, I considered a woman of twenty-eight quite old, I remember.”

“But I am not seventeen—far otherwise,” said I, “and I consider twenty-eight ridiculously and scandalously young. If it were not for your hair, you would not look your age. What was the colour of your hair, Mary?”

“*My* hair?” she said, slowly. “Oh, white—it was always white. There was a girl long ago who had golden-brown hair, but she’s dead, poor thing—and buried—at least I hope so;” and rising, she went over to a mirror and looked at herself rather anxiously. “Oh, quite dead, quite!” she said; “there is no danger that any one will think of that girl when they see—Mary Smith.”

I had written to Philip, telling him that I had found my treasure, and he had answered my letter. From that time we kept up a kind of correspondence, exchanging letters perhaps three times in the year. But when Mary had been about five years with me, Philip came home for a few days. He was leaving Vienna, and going to a new place in a higher position—in fact, he had begun to “make his mark,” and his career seemed to lie before him fair and prosperous. Yet he was in miserable spirits, and could hardly rouse himself to take his usual kindly interest in my affairs, though he laughed at me a little when I sang the praises of Mary Smith, who was in Scotland taking some sketches and notes for me.

“Well, if you had seen her, you would not wonder at my affection for her,” said I. “But she thought that when I should have you with me, it was a good time for her to go to F—; and she is such a desperately tidy creature, that she has put away every sketch and every note-book. I have made the servants search, but not a scrap can they find. I wanted to show

you her sketches, for you could appreciate them—half the people who see them say, ‘How unfinished!’ Do you ever sketch now, Phil?”

“Never. Gave it up, with other youthful follies, long ago. Well, dear Frances, good-bye. I shall not have a moment to myself to-morrow, for I am to be with the chief all the morning. I am so glad to find you so cheery. Miss Smith has my very best thanks for making your life so tolerable. Tell her so—will you?”

“Certainly. Must you really go, Philip? Well, it has been delightful to see you again; but—may I say it, dear?—has the time not come for telling me the story you promised me? Do you remember?”

“I remember. No; not yet, Fan. I came home this time full of a—well, I suppose I may call it a hope. I had heard something. But I have failed again. I think I shall always fail.”

“Dear Philip, don’t be angry! but why do you allow your life to be so overshadowed by a—by what is past and gone? You are still a young man. I want to see you a *happy* man.”

“I’m not unhappy, you know.”

“I want you to marry,” said I, boldly; “to have a home and forget—and have an interest in life once more.”

“Sometimes,” he said, simply, “I wish I could. If I even knew that she was happy, cared for—at rest anyhow—I think I could do it; but not as things are. Frances,

you are a kind creature, and some day I shall tell you all.”

My poor, brave Philip! what business have men with such tender hearts? One comfort is, not many men are so troubled.

When Mary came home, I gave her his message, thus—

“By the way, Mary, my cousin Philip left a message for you.”

Mary started so violently that she upset the china basket she was filling with flowers, breaking its twisted handle, and making a perfect mess on the table-cover. Of all this she seemed quite unconscious; and though usually so neat-handed and so quick to repair any little misfortune, she now let the water meander about the table and run off into her own lap, spoiling her dress completely.

“A message!” she cried, her eyes fixed on me anxiously.

“Well, you *are* nervous to-day, Mary! I shall send you to bed early—you are overtired. It was only to thank you for making my life so happy—tolerable, he said. I say happy. Now, ring for Essie, and go and change your dress; you are all wet. Oh, Mary, you’ve cut your hand with the china. Come here, dear.”

“China—what china?” she said.

“Oh, my hand is bleeding.”

And without more ado she fainted away—she never could bear the sight of blood—leaving me to shout and scream for Essie until I wonder the policeman outside did not walk in. Mary went off to bed with a headache. Ah me! how blind I was!

CHAPTER IV.—“YOU KNOW THIS NAME?”

As time went by, I believe I forgot that there was any mystery about Mary Smith, or that the golden-haired girl who was “dead

and buried” had borne another name, to me unknown. Mary accommodated herself to my needs, likings, and even fancies, so com-

pletely, that it seemed impossible that a few years ago she was to me a perfect stranger—nay, that in some sense she was a stranger still. For except the chance conversation that I have recorded, she never talked of her youth, nor of anything that had happened to her before she came to me.

I got very, very fond of her : she was to me as a dear younger sister, and I sometimes found myself expecting her to remember things that had happened when I was a girl at home in my father's rectory, just as if she had been little sunny-haired Lily, who died while quite a child.

Well, the months grew to years, and we were quietly happy together. When she had been with me ten years, there came a change that pleased me greatly. I heard from Philip, who had been offered a very fine appointment in the Foreign Office, and meant to accept it, perhaps get into Parliament, and in any case live in London.

This story is about my dear Mary ; but though I hate speaking of my own sufferings, I must say here that they had of late been worse than at any time since I first got a little better after my accident. I had been very ill, and Mary had nursed me night and day. I hated having strangers about me. We had the pleasant prospect, too, of a recurrence of this illness ; for the bone which I had so thoroughly smashed was beginning to make itself troublesome, after taking nine years to think about it !

"Mary," said I, "give me my writing-case ; I'll answer this myself. I *am* so pleased. My cousin Philip—by the way, you have not met him yet—is coming to London—for good, as the phrase goes—to live, at all events. He

thinks he would like a small house better than chambers. What does he want with a house ? Perhaps he means to take my advice, and get married."

"Married ?" echoed Mary. "Does he say so ?"

"No ; but what does a single man want with a house ? I must admit that he says 'a *very* small one,' so I suppose it is only that he likes quiet."

I wrote my letter, and then looked round for Mary, fancying that she might have left the room. There she was, however, and employed in the most unexpected manner. She was standing before a tall mirror which filled the space between two windows, and was gazing into it earnestly. Her beautiful eyes were somewhat short-sighted, and she had bent forward until the tip of her nose almost touched the glass.

"What's the matter, Mary ?" said I. "Have you got something in your eye ? Come here ; I shall get it out better than you can."

"There is nothing, thank you. Have you finished your letter ? You are very fond of your cousin ; why do you not ask him to live with you ?"

"Why, even if it would be convenient, I have not room, you know."

"Oh, but then you would not want me," she said, rather unsteadily.

"My dear girl, don't be silly ! Philip is to be chief-something-or-other in the Foreign Office, and in the House presently. I shall consider myself very lucky if I see him once a-month ; and I never heard that he was much of a sick-nurse. Mary, dear, don't talk as if you and I could part—I *never* feel as if we could. You have made me quite uncomfortable."

Mary kissed me. She was very silent and absent all that evening. Before we separated she said to me—

“Do you know, I believe you are right about saving my eyes. I am getting . . . at least I feel them sometimes. I think I will have advice about them.”

“Indeed I wish you would, if you have *any* strange feel in them,” said I; “and I see that the lids are red, now that I look at you. You shall go to-morrow.”

And she did go, returning the happy possessor of a pair of smoke-coloured spectacles, with the most enormous glasses, which she said she was to wear when she felt inclined.

“When you feel any weakness in your eyes, you mean,” said I. “Well, you don’t look a bit like yourself, Mary!—and what, pray, is this new way of doing your hair?”

For her very abundant hair, instead of being swept loosely back and coiled up at the back of her head, was dressed high up on her head, and was, moreover, so thoroughly combed up, that not a wilful little ripple showed itself. As to the dear, wee, white rings that used to come peeping round her pretty ears, they had vanished.

“As I was out,” she said, “I thought I would go to D——’s and learn some new way of putting up my hair. I’ve never changed it since I was a girl. The fashion now is for every one to wear caps, and I have bought some. I think they will suit my venerable locks,—don’t you? Well, have you anything ready to be written?”

I did not like her nearly so well in her caps, with all the natural waviness banished from her hair; but for once she was obstinate, saying that as she had bought the

caps she was bound to wear them. As to the spectacles, they made her look so comical that I always laughed at her when she wore them, and they generally remained in the pretty case which she wore at her side. Why is it that some people look so absurd in spectacles?

Philip came to London in due time, and soon wrote a line to say he would be with me in the evening. Mary, who was always very careful not to be in the way, said she would take the opportunity to go to some lecture that she wished to hear; and she went, and did not come home again until Philip had gone. The same thing happened several times, until Philip remarked gravely that he began to think that Fanny’s treasure had no real existence, and ought rather to be called Mrs Harris than Miss Smith.

“Well, she really runs away on purpose,” I said. “She has a perfect horror of being in the way, and she says that you and I must have much to say to each other. Come on Monday—she is always here when I have visitors. But I just wish you had seen her before she altered her way of dressing her hair. Her old way was far more becoming to her.”

Whether he really had a curiosity to see my treasure, or whether it was purely accidental, I know not; but one Monday he appeared with his sister Edith. I was, as usual, lying on my couch near the fire—it was April, and chilly enough still,—and when Philip and Edith came up to my end of the room, I did not for some time remark that Mary had left her post at the little tea-table and was nowhere to be seen. But when I wanted tea for Edith, I missed the tea-maker. Hardly had I noticed her absence when she came back. I perceived that she had gone for

a thick knitted shawl, in which she had wrapped herself up as if very cold. And indeed she looked chilled and pale; moreover, she had put on the grey glasses. Edith turned and whispered to me: "Philip will have a laugh at me; for I told him that Miss Smith was very good-looking, and to-day she is simply a fright. She must be getting a cold, I think."

She went to the tea-table, stood talking a little to Mary, and then came back.

"Yes, indeed,—a sudden chill. The poor soul is shivering like a leaf, and cannot speak above her breath."

"It is really enough to frighten one," I replied; "and so sudden, too,—but I will see to her presently. Take no more notice of it now, Edith, for she is very shy—it would only make her worse to make any fuss now."

Then I turned to talk to Philip, who was standing towering over me, with his eyes fixed upon Miss Smith in a puzzled stare which I knew would reduce her to misery if she became aware of it. It was so unlike Philip too, to stare so.

"Sit down, Philip," said I. "I really cannot make you hear me up there! Are you wondering where the good looks have hid themselves?"

He sat down, but seemed so stupid and unlike himself that for a moment I felt vaguely uneasy. Presently Edith took him away, stopping at the tea-table to introduce him to Mary. Both bowed—Mary stiffly, like a person with a bad headache, and Philip slowly, like a person in a dream. Then they were gone, and soon Mary and I were left alone together. She looked very ill, and trembled without ceasing; but she got better after a while, and seemed quite herself the next day.

To my great amazement Philip appeared next Monday—this time without Edith. He sat beside me for a few minutes, very silent and very absent. It seemed to me as if the numbers present depressed him; and yet if this were the case, why did he come? And once he would have been the life and soul of the party. Far otherwise now. A complete wet blanket! And, fond as I am of him, I was glad when he went away—which he did somewhat suddenly, forgetting to take leave of me. He walked up to Mary and held out his hand, saying—

"Good evening, Miss Smith."

Mary did not seem to see his hand. She bowed, and said "Good evening," in a low voice. I did wish her spectacles were in the fire! It was provoking to have talked to a man of a person's beauty, and for her to be all grey spectacles whenever he looked at her. However, he departed.

That evening Mary was singing for me, I lying lazily enjoying myself. I never heard the door open, but I saw her start slightly, and then her voice broke down and she stopped singing. There was a looking-glass over the piano, and thus I saw that she hurriedly put on those abominable spectacles; and then I became aware that there was a man in the room.

"Who is that?" I cried. "Why, Philip! you at this hour! I thought you were to dine at Lord M——'s to-night."

"I forgot," he said; and then he went up to the piano, and said something. I could not catch the words. Mary rose, faced round, and said icily—

"What did you say, sir?"

Her manner surprised me; it was out of the question that Philip could have said anything that ought to have offended her, and

yet her manner was distinctly defensive.

"You are — you know that name?" he said.

"I do not understand you in the least," she answered, coldly.

"Frances," he said, appealingly, "you know this name?"

"What name, Philip?" I asked, and wondered if he were suddenly going mad!

"Una Varian; surely you know this name?"

"Una — no, Philip, I don't. Varian sounds familiar, though I cannot remember why. Philip, what on earth do you mean? You are making us both quite nervous."

"You don't know the name!" he said; and as to getting him to explain or even to understand that I was getting thoroughly frightened, I might as well have tried to move the heart of a wooden post! — he simply paid no attention to a word I said.

"This is very strange!" he muttered. "I must think — I must —"

He sank into an easy-chair, and covered his face with his hands. I beckoned Mary over to me.

"Is he ill? What on earth is it, Mary?" I whispered. To my utter astonishment, her answer was —

"Perhaps I had better leave you?"

"Oh no, for mercy's sake! I am really frightened, Mary."

"Don't let her go," said Philip, suddenly, "and you need not be frightened, Frances. I have made a mistake — that's all; you forgive me, Miss Smith? I am very sorry, and if you will allow me I will explain my error."

"Oh no," she said, hurriedly; "there is no need for that. I will think no more about it."

"But yet, allow me to explain," he said, in rather a decided tone. "And Frances, I am going to tell you, the story I once promised to tell you. The time has come for it."

"I had better leave you," said Mary, gathering up her work, over which she had seemed very busy for the last few minutes. I cried in great haste —

"Oh no, Mary — *please* stay!" and Philip said —

"My story and my explanation are one and the same. I want you to hear it, Miss Smith."

"I — have nothing to do with it," she said.

"Mary, you really *must* stay," said I. Mary looked at me, sat down, and took up her knitting — at which she began to work as if for her daily bread.

CHAPTER V. — UNA VARIAN.

I may as well confess that I was beside myself with fright. Philip had been decidedly odd the last two or three times that I had seen him, but this evening he was more than odd; and what might not happen if the poor dear fellow were getting some awful fever — delirious — violent — and not a man, no, not so much as a page-boy in the house! The only thing I could

do, I did; and I felt that it was not much. I contrived to possess myself of a little bell, which I sometimes used for summoning Mary if she were in the other room. I knew that the sound did not ordinarily reach the kitchen; but then I determined to ring in no ordinary manner if it became necessary to ring at all; and so the bell was a very little comfort

to me. Had I been less absurdly frightened I should have perceived that Mary, though agitated, was *not* frightened, whereas usually I am far less timid than she. Philip's demeanour, and even his first words when at last he broke the silence, were not such as to set my mind at rest. First he pushed his chair back, so that his was in shadow; then he covered his eyes with his hand, so that I could not tell whether he was looking at me or at Mary, and although he addressed himself to me, I had an odd conviction that what he said was meant for her. As for Mary, she knitted away with a kind of fell energy—a jerky, restless energy most unnatural to behold.

"Frances, do you remember," began Philip, abruptly, "how fond I was of driving tandem long ago?"

"Oh yes," said I, with painful alacrity, "I do *indeed*." I would not have let him see how terrified I was for all the world. I wished that Mary would lay aside her knitting, the click, click of her pins was maddening.

"Well, I was driving one day, when I met with an adventure which has coloured my whole life. I had taken you, Frances, to Richmond, and brought you back to my father's house, where you were staying. I was driving through Q—Square when I fell in with a crowd of carriages and cabs—there was evidently a stoppage of some kind. I drew up near a crossing, on which I soon perceived the cause of the impediment—a beautiful white Persian kitten, evidently too much terrified to get out of the way. In trying to avoid the little creature, the coachman of a very nice turnout had contrived to lock his carriage-wheels with those of a handsome cab. The horses were restive, and the occupants of the carriage

frightened. No vehicle could pass; and I was wondering how it would end, when the gate of the square opened and a girl came out. She ran forward, picked up the kitten, and retreated a few steps. Her eyes were fixed upon the two vehicles, and a considerable crowd had gathered by this time round them. The girl stood just in front of my leader, but plainly she did not know this, for she never glanced round; her whole mind was fixed upon what was going on in the roadway. You remember Brian Dhu, the black horse I drove as leader? He kept stretching out his nose and nearly touching her hat, and I was really afraid that she would get a fright if he succeeded in reaching her, though he wouldn't have hurt her, poor old fellow, for the world. The girl had such a beautiful figure; she looked so unconscious and so pretty as she stood waiting for her path to be cleared, that I got quite a longing to see the face belonging to that figure. Well, at last the carriages were free and the crowd began to disperse. In a moment more she would have passed on, when Brian Dhu—I was greatly obliged to him—suddenly saw the kitten and gave a loud snort. She turned her head, saw me and my horses, looked startled for a moment, and then smiled, becoming aware, I think, that she had kept me standing there for some time. She said, 'I beg your pardon,' walked on, and knocked at the door of a house opposite."

By this time I was getting interested, and, though I still fondly cherished my bell, I began to get over my nervousness. I said—

"And was she pretty, Philip?"

"No," said he, half indignantly, "she was—lovely!"

He was silent for a few minutes.

"I didn't see her again for some time, but I found out who she was. She was—the only child of a great merchant, one of the merchant-princes of that day, Redvers Varian."

"What?" I cried; "no wonder I thought I knew the name. Oh, my poor Philip! I can guess the rest."

"No, no! let me tell it. I succeeded in getting an invitation to a party where Mr Varian and his daughter were expected. I was introduced to her, and to her father. You know, Fan, I was rather a pleasant fellow in those days."

"Truly you were, Phil!"

"And Mr Varian took a fancy to me, and I to him. Yes, I did. I was in love with her, but I truly and honestly liked him; and so did all who knew him. And he was very, very kind to me. Yes, I know all about him, Frances; you need not say a word—don't say a word. But I can never forget his kindness, never."

"Well—go on, Philip; did you—did she——?"

"Oh, we were very happy," he said, quietly. "My Una! my lovely, sweet, bright Una! We were very happy, she and I. I told Mr Varian that my father might object, but he did not seem to fear that the objection would last when he knew Una. Still, I thought I would say nothing till I got the appointment I was expecting; for, if my father's consent was a rather unwilling one, I felt it would be more pleasant for Una to leave England for a time as soon as we were married. It was during this time that I was once very near confiding in you. Do you remember, Frances?"

"Yes, I remember. I suppose the Varian crash came in time to prevent your marriage?"

"It would not have prevented it if I had had my own way. But Una—she was only eighteen, but she was not like other girls of that age—she had very strict ideas of right and wrong. She—wrote to me—said that now Lord Mauleverer could never consent; that our marriage would injure me; and she said good-bye—she would see me no more. I hurried to the house in Q— Square. Miss Varian had left it that morning, and no one there knew where she meant to go. But I did not give her up. My little princess! to leave her to poverty and—to—— I did all I could to find her. When all else failed, I went to the prison and saw Mr Varian—tried to see him, I mean, for he refused to admit me. I was at the trial, but Una was not there. I knew that she had not a relation left in the world—the aunt in Naples with whom she used to live was dead. Of all her father's riches not a penny remained—the claims against him swallowed them all. I was—half mad. At last I succeeded in seeing Mr Varian before he was removed from London. He told me he had done his utmost to persuade Una to let him tell me where to find her, and that she had solemnly declared that she would disappear even from him unless he kept her secret."

"Philip, the girl cannot have loved you," said I.

"It was her love that gave her strength to be cruel," he answered. "I knew that; I never doubted it. She loved me, and she loves me; I *know* it. Well, I searched still; but though sometimes I got a clue, she baffled me completely. Then I got my appointment, and next day came a letter from her begging me to accept it and go away; that I would forget her, and that she was ill from the fear

of being found by me. She said her father, when released, would have none but her—in fact, she made it my duty to go, and I went.”

“You went to Vienna,” I put in, as he seemed to forget to go on.

“Yes. After getting that letter I felt that I could do nothing until—as long as Mr Varian lived. I heard that he was released in consequence of his health having failed, and then I heard that he was dead. That was ten years ago. If you remember, I came home then, but I failed to find her.”

“And you have failed always, I suppose?” said I.

“Five years ago Charles Peronet came to see me, and in the course of conversation he let me know that he had seen Una at Messrs Cassell & Pyne’s shop, where she was working at that time. It was some years since he saw her, and he knew nothing more of her; but I came home. But Cassell & Pyne had entirely lost sight of her. Not long after her father’s death she left them. I fancied that there was some reticence in Mr Cassell’s manner, but he declared he knew nothing more. If you remember, Frances, Miss Smith was in Scotland or Wales, on a sketching expedition, when I came here to see you?”

“Yes; I remember the time very well,” said I. But though I spoke in an everyday fashion, I was beginning to wonder what all this might mean. I looked at Mary; she was still knitting feverishly.

“But,” said I, “what I want to know is, why you have told me all this, Philip? You said that some day, when it was no longer a painful subject, you would tell me all; but I fear that you are very far from having forgotten this girl, who, mind you, can be a girl no

longer, nor even a very young woman. Perhaps she married when she left these people—Cassell, or whatever you call them.”

“If I knew that she is married, I should never wish to see her. If she has outlived the memory of me and our one happy year, twenty years ago, then I will say no more. But unless I failed to understand Una—and I loved her too well for that—she would not change nor forget. And I speak to-night, and I begged Miss Smith to be present, because I have no doubt that she can tell me where Una Varian is, and I want Una to understand how things now are. She can no longer fear that she can injure my career. I am too high in my profession to be injured in that way. She cannot say now that I shall repent having estranged myself from society for her sake, because society and I have been estranged these twenty years. I have been a lonely man, though I have never learned to love loneliness. I have longed for a home, a companion, a wife—*my* wife, for none but Una could I think of in that way. I am no longer a very young man. If Una chooses, she can make me happy even now; if she won’t, no one else shall. I must get on as best I can, finding life dreary work, as I have found it for twenty years—very nearly half my life. And, finally, listen to this note from my dear old father, written after hearing my story for the first time, this very day:—

‘MY DEAR MISS VARIAN,—Make my boy happy. I am very old, and I should like to see Philip happy before I die.

‘MAULEVERER.’

There. I have said my say—I can do no more.”

I understood matters now. I

held my breath and looked at Mary. I whispered, "Mary, speak—you cannot—you must not—refuse!"

Mary had dropped her knitting, and was bent forward with her face hidden in her hands.

"What can I say? what ought I to do?" she said, wildly.

Philip got up and walked over to her: he took her two hands and gently raised her till she stood before him. Then he pulled off the shawl she was wrapped in, and quietly removed the hideous spectacles. Finally, he took off her cap, and all these "goods and chattels" he flung recklessly into a corner.

"Did you think these things could hide you from *me*, Una?" he asked. "I knew your hands, dear, the moment I saw them, as you sat over there making tea."

"I am so changed, Philip."

"But you are still the one woman in the world for me," he answered. "At last, Una!"

For she had flung her arms round him—and for some time I had the comfortable assurance that my presence was entirely forgotten. Of course I at once wanted to cough, but I choked myself gallantly. Not for worlds would I have reminded them that I was there, and, alas! could not steal away.

Philip had told his story so fully that there was very little left for Mary—I shall never be able to call her anything else—to explain to me. She assured me, when next morning we had a long talk, that but for the state of my health she would have left me when Philip returned to England. But she felt certain that he would not recognise her, she was so altered.

"And I thought, too, that he probably no longer cared to find

me," she went on; "but somehow, the moment I saw him, I knew that he did care. And it seemed to me such a pity. I looked round the room at so many bright young faces, and I said to myself, "He might marry one of these girls, and yet his heart is so true and so full of pity that he would think himself bound to me, even now. I wonder—ought I to have gone away then? I wonder if I am doing right now?"

"If you are doing wrong, Mary, I must really insist upon your persevering in the ways of error. I think I see myself facing Philip with the news that you have again disappeared. My dear, you are one of those women who have a morbid love of self-sacrifice; but I have none, and I decline to be demolished by Philip in his despair. I shall keep a sharp look-out, and on the first suspicion, Essie shall lock you up in your room. You don't escape until you are safely transformed into Mrs Philip Maul-ever—as you ought to have been twenty years ago."

"You don't really think that," said Mary.

"Well—ten years ago, then. When you came to me. You were free then."

"What would his father have said? Philip was then quite young, and you remember what I looked like. And with my dear father's sin and disgrace still a thing of yesterday? No; the kindest thing I could do was to keep out of his way. It is different now—I see that. Even his father sees it. As nothing else will satisfy him— Ah, I hope I shall be able to make him happy!"

"Of his happiness I have no doubt," said I. "The person to be pitied is, I think, my poor old cross-grained self."

"Will you do one thing for

me?" said Mary, kneeling down beside me and kissing me tenderly. "Do not get any one in my place till we come home. Philip told me he means to be married quietly, at once, and then his heart is set on taking me to Vienna that he may show me the places where he used to—make a fool of himself, I'm afraid. Then, when we come home, will you ask us to stay here with you for a while, and then we'll see about my successor?"

To all this I consented; and I must say that Philip lost no time in carrying out *his* part of the programme. In one poor fortnight from the evening on which he frightened me half out of my wits, they were married by special licence here in my drawing-room,

Lord Mauleverer and myself being the only witnesses, except Essie, who wept in the background. And they are no doubt in Vienna now.

Well—I will not be selfish! But I do feel very lonely, and no one will ever be to me what Mary was. No one gets such a treasure twice. And a treasure you were to me, Mary Smith—a sister and a friend. Una Varian belongs to Philip, but Mary Smith is all my own.

I do not find myself much the better for having written this account of my woes; and I shall lay it by, that I may add an account of Mary's successor. For I cannot do without some one—that is the worst of it. And how I shall detest that poor "some one."

CHAPTER VI.—THE READING OF THE MANUSCRIPT.

Six months later.

"Frances, what is this manuscript, all in your own writing? And I see our names in it."

"Oh, I know what it is; my safety-valve. I wrote it while you and Philip were abroad."

"May I look at it? Why, it's a regular history of ourselves, I can see that. I shall get Philip to read it to us this evening; so, now, if you have been saying anything nasty of either of us, you'll be put to shame."

"Very good," said I.

Una kept her word, and as we sat cosily by the fire—I lay, but that did not destroy the cosiness—Philip was informed that I had been "turning him into a novel." And the manuscript being produced, he set to work to read it. When he had finished the first chapter, he remarked—

"Was I really such a wet blanket as you have depicted, Fan?"

"Oh, I declare I don't think I have exaggerated, Philip?"

"Dear me!" said he, thoughtfully; "and all about—um—well, well!"

Mary laughed, and said—

"Go on, Philip; I want to hear more about Mary Smith."

Philip went on—but how he did laugh at the idea of my asking Mary if she had just escaped from a lunatic asylum—which was his version of the question I put to her.

"And in all sincerity, Frances, what a rash woman you were! I declare you proved yourself fit for an asylum yourself! Well, all's well that ends well, but this story ought to conclude with the discovery of a plot on the part of Miss Smith to let in her friends the burglars to rob the house and murder you."

"Instead of which she 'very foolishly married the barber,'"

said I; "but go on reading, if you wish to finish this thrilling tale, for I cannot sit up all night."

He took up the manuscript, and this time he finished it. Una cried more when the scene between Philip and herself was thus brought back to her mind, than she did at the time. Philip was intensely diverted to find that I had been in such a fright.

But when the story was finished, Mary came over to me and took my hand.

"So you really thought," she said, "that after all your kindness—making me like your sister, and loving me when I so sorely needed love—that Philip and I were going to leave you to a stranger?"

"Frances, I protest solemnly I was not in the plot," said Philip. "I did *not* make up my mind to quarter myself and my wife upon you. Nay, as you know, I honestly searched for a suitable house when we first came home, and in my guilelessness could not imagine why Una was so hard to please. She is a very designing woman, Fan. I have little doubt that

from the first she intended to live here."

"I intended to see if it would answer," said Una, boldly; "and it did, and does, and will. We are very happy together, and I have plenty of time for all that Frances wants done—except the sketching; and, Philip, do you know she is growing quite unprincipled? She actually took the description of a place in France out of the great encyclopedia this very morning, and worked it up until I fancied I had gone there and seen it all!"

"This comes of having an unprincipled companion," remarked Philip.

Ah, well! I did not lose my treasure after all! I hope it was not selfish of me to accept her offer—but I was so utterly lonely. I have never once been allowed to feel myself one too many. And Mary is one of those who will and must be sacrificing their comfort for some one; so it may as well be for me, who love her so dearly and need her so much.

THE ROMANCE OF STATE - MAPPING.

ON a former occasion¹ there was given in the columns of 'Maga' an account of the National Survey of this country, treating of its history, some of its operations, its progress to the present time, and its outlook in the future. In that article, however, it was not attempted, nor was it possible in the restricted space, to do more than touch the bare outlines of the subject, the aim being to convey to the reader a general comprehensive idea of this great public work as a whole.² I propose to discuss now the more personal and picturesque aspects of the subject; to interpolate, so to speak, between the lines of the previous narrative; and, by bringing out into stronger relief the figures of a few of the principal actors in the business, to throw into the picture more of warmth and colour and life than a mere *résumé* of the main events could supply.

It has been said of all history that its interest is drawn less from the recital of its facts, than from its portraiture of men and women. So it is with the more limited stage it is my present purpose to attempt to light up. The human "items" of the British Survey, if I can only adequately force them into the focus of the reader's attention, will probably be the most attractive in the story; and the portrayal of their doings, *entourage*, and manner of life, will perhaps better than anything else illustrate the romance of

State-mapping, or, in effect, what was practically the making of British geography.

In the previous notice of the Survey, it may be remembered that the figure of General William Roy, who may be justly named the father of the Ordnance Survey, came into special prominence. What was then said of him pretty nearly, so far as our present subject-matter is concerned, exhausted the record. It may be noted, however, that Roy was a Scotsman, and has been claimed as a Lanarkshire man. We saw that he had a large share in the making of the first great State map of the Highlands of his native country, the "Duke of Cumberland's map," as it was called; and this chart, which was on a large scale, was afterwards reduced and engraved, under the title of "the King's map." A further intermediate glimpse is obtained of Lieutenant-Colonel Roy in 1774, during which year he spent the summer climbing the Scotch hills and making barometrical observations of their heights; the results of that season's work being given to the Royal Society in 1777. Roy was already a Fellow of that Society; and for his admirable and at that time unprecedented scientific labour, the measurement of the Hounslow base-line, as well as his exhaustive paper describing the operation, the gold medal of this distinguished institution was conferred upon him.

¹ Blackwood's Magazine, September 1886.

² The volume subsequently published, of which the article was in some sort an abridgment, is entitled 'The Ordnance Survey of the United Kingdom.'—See Advertiser sheet herein.

But geodesy and topography were not the sole extra-military pursuits of this energetic officer. In its more immediate relation to his profession as a soldier, archæology became also a special study with him; and his researches in this direction during his perambulations in the land of his birth have been long known to the initiated under the title of 'Roy's Military Antiquities of the Romans in Britain.' The book is an imposing folio volume, and contains a very fine set of maps, with illustrations of supposed Roman camps and other antiquities of allied character in Scotland. It was published by the Society of Antiquaries in 1793. The material is elaborated with all the soldierly precision, labour, and thoroughness characteristic of the man. For the time of its appearance, allowing for the pseudo-classical proclivities of the day, when every vestige of antiquity in the British Islands which imagination could twist into Roman shape was credited to our quondam Italian conquerors, and when to suggest a native origin for the ancient rings and earthworks which strew the country was deemed a relegation of them to obscure barbarism—Roy's fine work was undoubtedly a standard one of its kind. And though it is probable his educational bias and professional instincts may have inclined him to the archæological fashion of the day, so that we have to accept the author's historical disquisitions *cum grano*, the plates, as delineating a century back the then condition and appearance of the objects described in the book, will always have a special value and interest.

Near the end of 1786, while he was urging on Ramsden to finish

his instrumental masterpiece, the huge 36-inch theodolite that was destined to do the State good and constant service uninjured for a matter of seventy years, Roy, now a general officer, was appointed colonel of the 30th Foot. But he was not to enjoy the honour long. The arduous work of the next two years, and the constant exposure to all weathers, told heavily upon him, no longer a young man, and by the autumn of 1789 he was so ill that the doctors sent him off to Lisbon for change of air. He was back in England by April of the following year, and died two or three months later, having just lived to correct the proofs (the last three sheets excepted) of the account of his final scientific achievement carried through just one hundred years ago,—the accurate geographical connection of the two great rival kingdoms divided by the "silver streak."

Such, then, are the few remaining links which sum up the career of this originator and first director of the National Survey, soldier and state-mapper, a chief pioneer in the advancement of British geography. Active, untiring, and unsparing of pains to secure good work, he was in many respects a model of what an engineer officer should be, whether in times when the temple of Janus is open or when it may be closed. And, without doubt, General Roy will ever take first rank among those whose function it is to span the terrestrial globe with line and measure, and to mete out the bounds thereof.

The next two men to whom the conduct of the British Survey fell were both officers of that distinguished and historic regiment, the Royal Artillery. The intimate

association of the two sister corps, which at that time and for long thereafter took their orders from the Master-General of the Ordnance, made it an indifferent matter from which branch the chief of the Survey should be drawn, provided the necessary scientific qualifications were united in the individual selected for so important a post. Edward Williams, lieutenant-colonel of artillery, of whom mention was made in our former article, occupied the position for some seven or eight years following Roy's death, during which the highly interesting geodetic work we glanced at was carried out. William Mudge was colleague and assistant to Williams, and shared personally in the astronomical and other outdoor work at the trigonometrical stations. Both conjointly edited the detailed accounts of the operations, and both were Fellows of the Royal Society, to which these accounts, afterwards published in separate form, were communicated.

On the death of Williams in 1798, the presidency of the National Survey passed into the hands of Mudge: and for the general reader, at all events, some of the most attractive and picturesque incidents connected with the history of State map-making are to be found within the two-and-twenty years while this distinguished officer of the "gunners" held the reins. It is true the work was then on a far smaller scale in respect of funds and numbers employed than in the later days of the department. But, looking to the personal aspects of the case, there are brought into view at this time some of the

leading lights of the Survey, prominent among them being the figure of Colby. But this is to anticipate.

Mudge appears to have joined the Woolwich Military Academy as a cadet in 1777. While there he had a visit from the great lexicographer, Samuel Johnson, who was his godfather, and who presented young Mudge with a guinea and a book. In 1779 Mudge was commissioned in the Artillery, and ten years later joined the Ordnance Survey. Admittance to the corps of Engineers was apparently not very easy at the beginning of the century; for, writing to his friend Rosdew in 1805, he remarks, "it is far more easy to get a company in the Guards than a commission in the Engineers." In 1809, in addition to his duties as chief of the National Survey, Mudge was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the Royal Military Academy, which office he held for some years. It would seem that the interest of the poet Wordsworth was aroused in the doings of Mudge and his observing party when they were at work on the summit of Black Comb Hill in Cumberland, sufficiently to make him pen some lines about them in 1813.¹ Nor, indeed, to such a nature-lover as the bard of Grassmere, could there have been found many spots with more of the element of solitude, or better adapted for a comprehensive survey of landscape, than the lofty eminences selected for our great trigonometrical stations.

Small as was the expenditure of the British Survey in its earlier years, Mudge, during his directorship, was not without fears of hav-

¹ *Memoirs of the Mudge Family.* Flint. 1883.

ing it overhauled; and when, in 1811, a military commission did inquire into the cost and working of the department, animadversion was expected. But the apprehension proved groundless. A more serious subject of criticism threatened the Survey for a while, and gave Mudge much anxiety. This was an attack by various writers, about 1813, on the accuracy of the sector observations for latitude, which had been taken in 1800-1802 along the Dunnose-Clifton arc of meridian. The attack was led by one Rodriguez, an able Spanish expert, who had been associated with Arago and Biot in the prolongation of the Dunkerque-Barcelona arc to Formentera in the Balearic Islands, and had gained considerable geodetical experience. The matter was discussed in a leading Review of the day in an article attributed to Professor John Playfair, and the Spaniard appeared to have made out a good case, based upon the published records of the British Survey. There was undoubtedly an apparent error unaccounted for, of some two seconds of latitude, representing over a couple of hundred feet of lineal measure; and the conclusion Rodriguez came to was, that this error must be the result of faultiness either in the observing instrument or in the taking of the observations—not an unnatural *prima facie* inference. So the matter rested in obscurity till after the lapse of many years. The same observations were retaken at Dunnose, and some other places where similar discrepancies had arisen from a like cause, with an improved sector designed by Airy. Then out came the solution of the mystery. Local attraction had disturbed the plummet-line, the very hinge and basis of sector-work

when you are looking up into the zenith of the heavens. Every building in the locality shared the error, the walls and all things supposed to be upright being in effect two angular seconds out of the true vertical. Thus it was that Colonel Mudge was ultimately vindicated, and the accuracy of his original work done with Ramsden's admirable sector verified by Airy's instrument; the difference at Dunnose, as tested between the two sets of observations, amounting to no more than seven-hundredths of a second of latitude.

Such was the satisfactory termination of a matter which had caused no small polemical discussion and heat among scientific men, and had also much exercised and perplexed the minds of those who were jealous above all things of the reputation of the Trigonometrical Survey of Great Britain.

It now becomes necessary to introduce to the reader the personality of the Engineer officer, who of all others, to my thinking, stands out as the central figure in the history of the National Survey,—the man, at all events, longer and more closely identified with every branch of its working details than any other, Thomas Frederic Colby. He was born on the first day of September 1784, at the very time when the founder of the State institution he was to serve so well was putting the finishing touches to his splendid piece of mensuration at Hounslow. He was commissioned second lieutenant in the Royal Engineers at the end of the first year of the present century, and was almost immediately posted to the Ordnance Survey. A few months more saw him promoted to a first-lieutenancy, and soon after that came about the lamentable acci-

dent that was very nearly bringing the young subaltern's career to an untimely end. Colby was on a duty visit to Cornwall, and by some mischance an old pistol barrel he was handling burst, shattered his left hand so badly that it had to be amputated, and caused such severe injury to his head as to be almost fatal.¹ This was in 1803; and to any one of less indomitable energy of character, a check like this at the threshold of a man's professional life might have turned it aside into another channel, or have been a practical shelving of him altogether. But, as we shall see, the mishap seemed to make no appreciable difference to the remarkable bodily as well as mental activity and vigorous powers of work which distinguished this officer throughout, nor to the excellence of the results he achieved.

During the first score or so of years of Colby's survey doings, it must be borne in mind that the commissioned officers of the Ordnance corps were mainly taken up with the instrumental operations proper, trigonometrical and astronomical, at the great station points. The topographical mapping was a separate branch of work, the details of which were left more in the hands of the gentlemen who formed the corps of military surveyors and draughtsmen, of which the two Gardeners were distinguished examples. Unfortunately, the system adopted for a length of time was to allow these topographers, in addition to their military pay as warrant-officers, a certain contract rate at

so much per square mile for the superficial content of the work they purported to turn out. And it is mainly to this cause that we must trace the errors which crept into some of the older maps of the National Survey, and which have done such yeoman service in the hands of hostile critics of the State-mapping.

In all the principal station observations, then, Colby was an active personal participator. He was in truth coadjutor and right-hand man "all round" to Mudge. South of the Tweed, associated with his chief at Dunnose, Clifton Beacon, Arbury Hill, Delamere Forest, Burleigh Moor, and in North Britain in company with James Gardner, at Kellie Law, at Cowhythe, where the greatest of all the disturbances of the plumb-line was afterwards found to exist, and at the *Ultima Thule* of the Shetlands, Balta Island, Colby the one-handed toiled away, sighting the stars night after night for his latitudes. Like General Roy's French colleague Méchain, Colby exhibited a remarkable skill as an instrumental observer, which evoked the admiration of foreigners, and was admitted by his own officers to be nothing short of first-rate.

I shall now take the reader with me to a few of the Survey camps in Scotland: and in following the proceedings of Colby and Mudge, we shall make acquaintance with some other notables, and endeavour to get an idea of what manner of life and work fell to the lot of those whose time was

¹ Portlock's Memoir of General Colby, 1869, from which many of the particulars respecting Colby passed under review in these pages have been derived.

An excellent bust of the General in the Survey Library at Southampton shows very distinctly a long scar and deep indent across the forehead, left as a permanent mark by this accident.

passed on the great British "trig" in its earlier days.

The Scotch triangulation did not begin till 1809, and it was more than once suspended for economical reasons. In 1815, Colby (who had meanwhile passed through the grade of second captain of Engineers and been promoted to first captain) was out with his tents and instruments on the breezy moorlands of Kirkcudbrightshire and Ayrshire, starting with Bengairn Hill, and finishing the season with the Black Carrick. It was a season, we are told, of exceptionally bad weather in the west of Scotland, and many of us, from well-remembered personal experience, can thoroughly realise the variations of "soft," "blaw," and "whiles snaw" this must have meant for our State mountaineers camped out on these bare hilltops. One of the incidents of this year, memorable for the more eventful tempest elsewhere, which rose and burst so suddenly upon the nations of Europe, was "the very violent storm" (writes Colby) "which destroyed the tents and put an early period to our summer's operations," but which happily occasioned no injury to the great theodolite. The result of this season's work was to complete the trigonometrical connection between Cumberland, the Isle of Man, a bit of the Irish coast, and the south-west of Scotland as far as Ayr.

One of the advantages of the Survey at this time and for long thereafter to the officers who conducted it, was the way in which it brought them into contact with the ablest literary and scientific men of the day. The select and distinguished coterie of *savants*, who in the earlier years of this century raised the academical reputation of

the "Modern Athens" to a pitch almost as unrivalled as is the situation of that beautiful city for picturesqueness, were in the most friendly communication with Mudge and Colby, and afterwards with Drummond. Nor may it be without interest to any specially acquainted with the northern metropolis to know that in the same letter (written in 1815, and addressed either to Playfair or Leslie) from which I have just quoted describing the storm, Colby was emphatic in pointing out the great benefit to science the erection of an observatory at Edinburgh would secure, and in urging that for such an object an eminently suitable site would be the Calton Hill. Thus we have to-day upon that rocky mount a memento of the advice given betimes by this far-seeing officer of Engineers.

But it was not alone in this country that the British Survey had begun to command the attention of the world of science. In 1816, Heinrich Schumacher, the eminent Danish astronomer, notwithstanding that he was fully aware of the then unexplained discrepancies in our sector observations for the latitude of Dunnose, writes to Colonel Mudge, on behalf of the King of Denmark, asking for the loan of the instrument which had done the work. With remarkable foresight, Schumacher had rightly divined the real crux of the discrepancies Don Rodriguez had animadverted on, which, as we have seen, was ultimately placed beyond a doubt. The instrument could not be spared at the time it was applied for, but was sent over to Denmark in 1819, and set up at Lauenburg, a geodetic survey of his native country having already begun under the direction of this distinguished Holsteiner.

Again, we have about this time the far-famed François Arago in correspondence with Mudge, proposing at Laplace's instance that Yarmouth should be made a European sector station, and form the northern terminal of the grand combined Anglo-French arc of meridian. And in the year following (1817), the great Laplace himself writes to the director of our National Survey to the effect that the then contemplated latitude-station in the far-off Shetlands would, of course, supersede Yarmouth.

But this was not all. And here we have to make acquaintance with a Frenchman who for a time came into association with the Scotch Survey, and whose relations with us might have been much more intimate but for untoward circumstances. Jean Baptiste Biot was a distinguished scientist. He had unusually early in life been elected member of the French Academy, and been made before the fall of Napoleon Chevalier of the Legion of Honour. Enjoying the friendship of Laplace, and an adept as well in astronomical geodesy as in physics, but more especially devoted in after-life to the study of optics, Biot had been a colleague of Arago and Rodriguez on the grand arc, and was altogether a personage of no small note. Now, in 1817, he was sent to this country by the "Bureau des Longitudes" of Paris as their commissioner, with the object of taking a series of important pendulum observations at certain places in connection with the ascertainment of latitude along the great arc. Captain Richard Mudge, an officer of the British Survey and son of its chief, was told off to assist Biot in the observations to be taken in Scotland, which were

to begin at Leith Fort, Colonel Mudge being in too delicate a state of health at this time to cooperate in person. While at Leith, we may note, the Frenchman seems to have been received with much courtesy and hospitality by Sir Howard Elphinstone, the commanding officer of Engineers there.

From Leith Biot went on to Aberdeen, where he met Colby for the first time: and there the three, accompanied by Gregory, who had joined the party, embarked for the Shetland Isles. Owing, however, to some misunderstanding, perhaps on both sides, but which seems never to have been satisfactorily cleared up, Colby and Biot from the very first did not take to one another. And this unfortunate want of *rapprochement* between them coloured the whole of their official intercourse, besides thwarting that anticipated plan of combined operations, which might have led to a most valuable comparison of results, especially with reference to the three different kinds of instrument employed in this expedition. On arrival of the party at Unst they separated, Colby going his way and setting up his tents and zenith sector independently in the little rocky islet of Balta, while his French colleague betook himself to his pendulums and repeating-circle at Unst.

That M. Biot knew his business, and worked uncommonly hard while at this remote island-station, seems clear from Portlock's account. Richard Mudge, as ill luck would have it, got out of sorts while here, and had to leave Biot to himself, who, with creditable readiness of resource, then succeeded in training a young Unst carpenter to take some of the readings of the repeating-

circle for him. Altogether the French commissioner appears to have been much impressed with the Shetlanders of Unst by reason of their kindness and warm-hearted primitive hospitality. On the other hand, I have been told by one who some years ago had officially to visit this boreal group of islands, that to this day the people of the northern Shetlands cherish a sort of traditional recollection of this distinguished foreigner which is highly favourable to him. There were those—aged people—who could speak within living memory of Colby and Biot; and the general impression that had been handed down to those insular folk was of the Englishman having isolated himself at Balta in cold seclusion, while the Frenchman had established himself in the other island very much *en évidence*, and had passed as the real “Great Eltchi” of the whole business. In short, Colby was nobody in particular, Biot everything. The one, individually and of his nationality inclined to reserve, nor willing to trumpet his own doings, was of little account; the other, facile and communicative, by a liberal process of, let us say, *complimenting* the simple people, succeeded in winning golden opinions and securing for himself an enduring memorial. This, at all events, from what he could gather on the spot, was pretty much the conclusion of my informant.

During the next year (1818), Mudge and Colby were summoned over to France upon another piece of binational work, taking the Ramsden's sector with them to Dunkerque. The intention on this occasion was to have a series of observations mutually taken for the latitude of that place by the

representatives of the two nationalities, with, and as a comparative test of, the two rival descriptions of instrument, the English sector and the French repeating-circle. MM. Arago and Biot were to be associated in the proceedings with the British officers. Our sector was set up in Dunkerque arsenal. A reciprocal communication of the respective *original* observations, taken with both the instruments, was arranged for; but, although Mudge sent the French a copy of our sector observations, the arrangement does not appear to have been carried out on their side. So that again, as in Shetland, the opportunity for a much desiderated test fell through. Our officers had, however, the satisfaction of learning afterwards that their results coincided accurately with Delambre's previously obtained latitude of the station, for he told Schumacher so, and Schumacher told Zach. On the other hand, some comments adverse to the French proceedings, passed on this occasion by the two last-named notabilities, appear to have given considerable umbrage to Biot and his colleague.

Although an experimental trial here and there had been made of the repeating-circle (*cercle répétiteur*) in this country, that master-optician Edward Troughton, discussing its merits in 1821 before the Royal Society, had not much to say to its credit. It was unsightly; it was top-heavy, requiring a counterpoise to keep it in position; and its telescopes were generally of inferior size and power. Its one recommendation—the principle of the *repetition* of any number of observations of the same angle round and round the circle and then finding out the angle by a simple division sum

without the necessity for intermediate readings—was undoubtedly a beautiful principle as far as it went, but in its application it was designed simply to counteract faulty graduation of the circle. Yet it was apparently the ingenious neatness of this principle which had so fascinated the foreigners, and brought this construction of instrument into such favour with them. But Troughton insisted that this was the “little all” of advantage it could properly lay claim to possess over an altitude and azimuth instrument of English style.

For the last two or three years of General Mudge’s connection with the National Survey, his health, which had suffered from exposure and hard personal exertion, became very indifferent, and upon Colby, therefore, devolved at this time the charge of the bulk of the work of the Department.

In May 1819 two young lieutenants of Engineers, Dawson and Robe, joined the Ordnance Survey, and with a party of artillerymen, selected from his Majesty’s Royal Regiment, set out forthwith for Scotland to begin the season’s work on the northern spurs of the Grampians. Of the former I shall have something more to say hereafter; but meantime we will glance at an interesting diary¹ he kept, describing the camp-life and goings-on during this year of himself and his comrades on the “great trig” in the wilds of the Scotch Highlands. A whiff of the mountain air, a peep at the little encampment high up in the mists and snow among the blue haes and ptarmigan, and a tramp across country with Colby and his officers of the sort these state-toilers

were wont to take day after day over glen, flood, and fell, in those times of the Survey, will probably not be unwelcome features for the reader’s contemplation in this our review.

I have spoken of Colby’s remarkable activity and working power, notwithstanding the way in which the severe accident he sustained in early life had so handicapped him for his duties. It may be added that he was not less conspicuous for endurance of fatigue and exposure, as well as hardness, and a kind of Spartan frugality when necessary—all invaluable accompaniments to his untiring industry. Of this we shall have illustration.

In June 1819, Colby started from London to join the “trig” camp on Corriehabbie, a lofty offshoot of the Banffshire Grampians, overlooking the Duke of Gordon’s Glenfiddich deer-forest. We can picture him in the long journey by mail-coach from the metropolis to Huntly, by way of Aberdeen, on an outside seat; the march of the surveying-party up Glenfiddich, shoving or dragging up their baggage-waggons with the aid of guy-ropes to the highest point accessible to anything on wheels; and thence the loads, laboriously carried up the rest of the way, partly on horse- or pony-back, pannier-fashion, partly on the backs of the men, over plashy peat-hags or rugged boulder-strewn acclivities. Then the setting out of the camp at the summit of the mountain: sites for the dwelling tents, the watch tent, the cooking caboose in as sheltered a nook as practicable, the temporary observatory where the great and precious instrument, with its appa-

¹ Published in Portlock’s Memoir of Colby.

tus of revolving plates, telescope, and micrometers, was to be securely fixed in position.

Colby was generally the presiding genius of these encampments. His custom was to be up at sunrise, and stick to his work till sunset,—ready to take the instrument the moment the clouds cleared off the surrounding peaks, and between times teaching the assistant officers its adjustments, how to register the observations, the methods of computation, and so on, besides noting the names and situation of the distant stations within sighting range. Here was no make-believe superintendent, ruling from an arm-chair in a remote office, but one ever present when it was practicable, in the thick of the hardships and toils of a laborious duty, a master-workman among his subordinates. No wonder the men of the Survey detachments, and “his boys,” as he familiarly named the officers employed under him, were devoted to this leader among them, whose example was better than any amount of precept!

Nor had chance visitors to Colby's look-out stations any reason to complain of want of affability on his part towards them. During his surveys in the North of Scotland, people would walk ten or fifteen miles to his camps to see his “glasses,” which he was always delighted to let them look through.

Midsummer on the top of a Scotch mountain is not to be depended upon for any inconvenient amount of heat. At the Corriehabbie encampment, on the 28th of June 1819, the thermometer, we are told, went down to 45 degrees at noon, when a tremendous hailstorm came on, strewing the ground with hailstones several

inches deep in a few minutes, and continuing an hour. Then for another hour snow, and then sleet and rain. “We were forced,” writes Dawson, “to be out shovelling the hail and snow from the tents while the storm lasted; and when gone, the men set to snowballing one another as a means of warming themselves—a rather unusual amusement at the latter end of June.” The average night temperature in camp at this time was but four or five degrees above freezing-point. The day after this storm, Colby, Robe, and a small party started off on a long “station-hunting” exploration along the east coasts of Inverness-shire, Ross-shire, Caithness, and on to the mainland of Orkney, returning to camp on the 21st July, having tramped 513 miles in the twenty-three days, or about three-and-twenty miles a day,—good stiff walking to keep up, but capped by still better, as we shall presently see.

Two days only to rest, and then off again goes Colby, this time with Dawson, and a fresh batch of soldiers, north-west towards Grantown. Away they went, starting off at top speed, down the mountain-side, regular steeplechase-fashion, across picturesque valleys, as Glenavon and the whisky-famed Glenlivet, wading water-courses, climbing ridges, and so on, to Grantown, doing 24 miles in 5½ hours. There they dined, and then on again to Aviemore, along the Spey valley route, familiar enough now to tourists, but then all undreamt of for railroad or telegraph line. This day they covered their 39 miles. No marvel that Dawson was “dreadfully stiff and tired” on the morrow; and even with the scented heather-bells and charming wooded slopes of Rothie-

murchus to beautify the walk for him, he felt hardly fit to get over the first thirteen miles of another such stretch. Nevertheless, pressed to it by Colby, he managed to hold on, and eventually they trudged forty miles that day, reaching their destination—Garviemore, beyond Cluny Castle—by a most circuitous route and climb half an hour before midnight. Day after day were these tremendous marches continued to the highest and ruggedest mountain-tops in this region, Loch Laggan to Fort Augustus, thence to Loch Duich, the majestic Scour Ouran, and elsewhere, the party erecting huge piles of stones on the principal summits visited to serve as future signal-points.

Some of my readers may have, doubtless, at one time or another, set eyes on the dark serrated outline of the Coolin range in the Isle of Skye,—that stupendous mountain-mass of volcanic rock all torn and broken into hummocky pinnacles, gigantic chasms, and profound carries, into which the sun can scarce penetrate. But even on those rare occasions when the mist-shroud is lifted, few, I imagine, have climbed to the summit, and crept, as I have had to do after several hours of hard toil, along the sort of ragged knife-edge it presents to the pedestrian. At intervals your advance changes to a slide among loose crumbling *débris*, or to a scramble along the side of precipices, affording hardly foothold for a goat, but yet where one *must* go if progress is to be made: and now and again even this progress is barred by some horrific and impassable gully of awesome depth. Those who have had the experience—and those who

have not must supply the gap with the aid of a lively imagination—will comprehend how it was that when Colby and his detachment got to Skye, the Coolins at first baffled them. On the 29th of July they “made an attempt to reach the summit of the Coolin Hills, but were completely foiled in the attempt, and that was probably the only instance in which Captain Colby was ever so foiled.” Ultimately, however, they succeeded (on 31st July) in climbing Scour-na-Madaidh (the Dog’s Scour),¹ and built a cairn on it. On the previous day when balked, they had managed to reach a ridge of rock so narrow that they “were obliged to sit astride upon it,” and this on the edge of a cliff some 2000 feet sheer drop below them.

From Skye they crossed over to Jeantown on Loch Carron. We have all heard, *ad nauseam*, the stock anecdote about the Scotch prohibition of “whistlin’ on the Sabbath.” Dawson vouches for an instance of it at Jeantown on this first August Sunday of 1819. Inadvertently he began “whistling some light air. Captain Colby very properly checked me in so doing, explaining to me the deep sense of veneration with which the people of that country regard the observance of the Sabbath; and the next day I was informed, while on the march, by one of our men, that he had been urged by the landlord to come to me and beg me to cease whistling, dreading lest some judgment should otherwise fall upon his house.” And, adds the narrator, with commendable magnanimity, “there can be no doubt that I was wrong and that Captain Colby and the

¹ Dawson spells the name “Marich,” but “Scour-na-Madaidh” was no doubt meant.

landlord were right." How many "Southron" tourists of to-day would one find apologising in a like spirit!

Onward to Loch Maree, queen of Scottish lakes, as it has been called, and to Gairloch, where Sir Hector Mackenzie, the big laird of the district, took the officers in for a few days, with true Highland hospitality—the landlord of the local inn where they first went having on the party's arrival (how unlike the modern hotel-keeper!) sent word to Sir Hector, "intimating that we ought to be the laird's guests and not his." I can, however, myself call to mind something like the same treatment in the course of many duty tours through the Scottish Highlands, notably in one instance not far away from this particular part of the country. At Loch Fannich, the laird, who was staying at the roadside inn where they put up for a night, told them "that, in the previous season, some sportsmen from England, to whom he had granted permission to shoot, killed at the rate of fifty brace of birds to each gun *per diem*, and left the birds *where they fell upon the ground!*" Verily, these were not the days of costly shootings, railways, and sealed pattern game-boxes.

On the 14th August the exploring party returned to camp at Corriehabbie, "having walked," says Dawson, "586 miles in twenty-two days, including Sundays," and days of bad weather. If I were to tell this to some people without chapter and verse for it, they might charge me with mendacity in a style of language which, alas! I fear, can no longer be called *unparliamentary*. Truly this adjutant of General Mudge's, his "boys," and his staff, must have been men

of good wind and fibre; and one would think by the time this tramp was concluded their legs must have been nearly as hard as the tripods of their theodolites. Talk of deer-stalking! but "trig"-station stalking after this fashion, kept up for three weeks on end, would knock many an old sporting hand, whether footing it as otter-hunter, follower of beagles, or circumventor of the stag, out of time.

One characteristic story of Colby before we take leave of this bleak mountain-top in the Grampians. It came to me from a gentleman, whose grandfather, still alive and some ninety years of age, told him the particulars. On one occasion when a young man, Mr A—— was crossing Corriehabbie, and got lost in the mist and darkness which came on. Groping along, he was suddenly tripped up by one of Colby's tent-ropes, and, while floundering among them, was challenged by the camp sentry. The sentry, getting no answer to his challenge, fired over the stranger's head. When the state of the case transpired, Colby took Mr A—— in, gave him a good supper, and a corner of his tent to sleep in till next morning.

Towards the end of August, a fall of temperature of 30 degrees at the camp between noon and noon of two consecutive days is recorded. By 3d September, the party of State-surveyors had moved to the great bare lumpy ridge of Ben Wyvis, and the weather turned cold and foggy. Eight days later, three of the tents of the Ben Wyvis camp were blown down in a storm. In another week, Colby's men had erected an observatory on Beinn Cheilt, 1200 feet high, near Latheron, in Caithness, Wyvis being seen thence in the distance covered with snow. Three or four days

sufficed for the necessary observations here, and then, having packed the observing instrument in its waggon, back went the operators to Golspie, thence on to "Beinn loch Eas na Cairoch" near that place, and from there instrument and camping paraphernalia were sent off to Tarbat Ness station. Here the work of observing ran a week or ten days into October, the weather daily becoming wetter and stormier, and the surrounding hills taking on their first winter mantle of snow. Nothing remained but to declare the "trig" field-season of 1819 to be at an end: and for officers and men to eat the festive farewell camp-dinner together, and drink with a hearty goodwill "Success to the Trig," after the accustomed manner of these breaking-up occasions.

"Such," writes Colonel Dawson, "had been Colby's course of life for many years before I joined the Survey." Nor, if any method had been sought wherewithal to train Colby and his military comrades for the possible work of active campaigning of another sort that might any day devolve upon them, could there have been devised, in the whole range of peace duties, a better schooling to that end than a life like this on the great National Survey.

When, in the summer of the year following that in which took place the stirring incidents we have just glanced at, the death of General Mudge deprived the Survey at once of its chief and of a distinguished scientific officer, the reins fell for the moment into Colby's hands, pending the selection by the authorities of a new director. The selection lay with the Master-General of the Ordnance, who at this time was the illustrious soldier-Duke, and who,

with characteristic sagacity, took time to consult some of the leaders of science—among them Professor Hutton, of mathematical celebrity—before coming to a decision. Colby, meanwhile, wisely forbore from any kind of attempt to make interest in the matter; but on receiving, in due course, the official announcement that the appointment had been conferred upon him, thus made reply to the Great Duke. "I beg leave," he writes from the Ordnance Map Office at the Tower of London, under date 14th July 1820, "most respectfully to express my best thanks for the very high honour your Grace has been pleased to confer on me by the appointment to the superintendence of the Trigonometrical Survey. I am fully aware of the heavy public responsibility which attaches to that situation; and I feel most keenly the disadvantage under which I labour from my character being unknown to your Grace, and the little confidence I can expect at the commencement of my very arduous task. However, I trust the continuance of my best exertions will produce such results as may hereafter prove me not altogether unworthy of the honourable situation with which I have been favoured." He then proceeds to ask for two additional Engineer officers as assistants—"As your Grace will perceive the absolute necessity of the assistants being officers of Engineers, on whom I can place the most complete reliance, from my personal knowledge of their mathematical and other attainments, and their capability and willingness to go through the laborious computations and other fatigues and hardships incident to the diligent performance of their duties. . . ." It was like the man to write

in this modest manner of himself.

Next year (1821) Major Colby was again summoned to France on an important scientific undertaking with Henry Kater, naval captain, of pendulum fame, as colleague. The French Academy and the "Bureau des Longitudes" had moved the Royal Society of London for another binational commission, like that of 1787, the representatives of the two countries to repeat mutually those operations for connecting the Paris and Greenwich meridians, which had then been carried out. The delegates from Paris were Arago and Matthieu. Every assistance was given to the expedition by the Duke of Wellington, who furnished from the Board of Ordnance a party of the Royal Artillery, camp equipage, &c. Colby took with him his henchman James Gardner, of the corps of military surveyors, and to good purpose; for the latter, we are told, did his work admirably. Kater contributed to the Royal Society, in 1828, an interesting account of the proceedings of the British party. "The signals," he writes, "used for connecting the stations upon the coasts of England and France were lamps with compound lenses, constructed under the direction of M. Fresnel. It will be sufficient here to mention that the lens, composed of numerous pieces, was three feet in diameter; and that the light far exceeded that of any of our lighthouses, appearing at the distance of forty-eight miles like a star of the first magnitude. Having selected convenient stations upon Fairlight Down and near Folkestone turnpike, and placed the lamps there with steady men to attend them, the party crossed the Channel on

24th September 1821, and proceeded to Cape Blancenez. Here we found an old guard-house, the roof of which was partially destroyed; but of which we nevertheless took possession, as it promised a less comfortless abode than our tents at that season would have afforded. At Blancenez we experienced very tempestuous weather; and on the night of the 4th October it blew so violently that the men's tents were carried away, and we were obliged to take down the theodolite to preserve it from injury." The party then proceeded to Montlambert, near Boulogne, and while at work there were delayed "in consequence of the lamp at Fairlight not being lighted, and M. Matthieu and Gardner were despatched to know the cause of the omission. On their arrival at Calais, finding no packet ready to depart, their anxiety led them to cross in an open boat at night, in weather so tempestuous that they were nearly lost. They found that the glass chimneys of the lamps at Fairlight were all broken," and had to repair them. "By the evening of 13th October the light was seen all right. . . . On the 17th October we recrossed the Channel. . . . The observations were completed on 27th October; and with great regret we now bade adieu to our much-esteemed companion M. Arago, who left us for Paris."

By a curious coincidence, almost to a day do the start and finish of the transmarine portion of these operations synchronise with General Roy's, conducted four-and-thirty years before, the second series being also almost a duplication of the first. And, as we saw in our previous narrative, the work was destined to be triplicated two-score years thereafter, so that sci-

ence did its best in the way of reiteration to secure trustworthy results. The longitudes of this expedition worked out to a result which appears to have differed very slightly—about a quarter of a second only—from what Herschel had previously determined by means of intermediate fire-signals simultaneously seen.

The year 1822 was another very interesting one in the trigonometrical work of the British Survey. Besides the Scotch stations commenced by Colby in person at the Mull of Oe in Isla, and finished by Vetch and Dawson, R.E., the Colby-Kater Commission's work was carried on through a round of Kentish points, from the coastwise ones inland to Severndroog Castle, and on to Shooter's Hill and Chingford. From Severndroog the very same difficulty was experienced in sighting the signal on Hanger Hill Tower as Roy had encountered in his early trials of triangulation across London in

1783—the difficulty of to-day—the smoke and fog of the great city. Colby, ever resourceful, overcame it by devising a rough-and-ready signal-staff with a number of tin plates fastened to it at all sorts of angles, one above another, so as to catch and reflect the sun's rays in succession as the great luminary sped along his wonted path. This automatic heliostat answered admirably. The solar image, like the dazzling sun-glints one oftentimes sees light up a row of windows in a distant town one after another, flashed out like a fixed star "through a smoke so thick that even the hill was invisible."

The part that Colby played in connection with the Irish Survey from 1824 onwards, the summing up of his subsequent career, and some other sketches of prominent State-mappers, must be reserved for another article.

T. PILKINGTON WHITE.

THE MINSTREL'S CURSE.

BY LUDWIG UHLAND.

THERE stood a castle long ago, that lordly was to view,
 Full far across the wold it gleamed unto the ocean blue,
 Around it like a garland gay fair fragrant gardens run,
 Where cooling fountains, leaping high, make rainbows in the sun.

There rich in land, in conquest rich, a haughty king did dwell,
 Death-pale upon his throne he sat, his look was fierce and fell;
 For angry fire was in his eye, grim terror in his mood,
 His every word like lashes stings, and what he writes is blood.

Unto this castle once drew nigh a noble minstrel pair,
 With flowing locks of gold was one, and one with grizzled hair;
 The old man with his harp upon a dainty jennet rode,
 And by his side in blooming youth his comrade blithely strode.

The old man to the springald said, "Be ready now, my boy,
 Call up our lays that deepest thrill, your fullest tones employ;
 Sing of life's joys, its sorrows too, and with your rarest art—
 To-day our aim must be to touch the king's dead stony heart!"

Anon in the high-pillared hall these minstrels twain were seen,
 There sat the king upon the throne, and by his side the queen:
 The king, in splendour awful, like the northern lights blood-red,
 The queen, sweet, gentle, there as though the moon's soft light were
 shed.

The old man swept the strings, he swept them wondrously and well,
 Till richer on the ear their tones and ever richer swell;
 Then heavenly clear the young man's voice gushed in a stream of
 song,
 The old man's faintly heard between, like the hum of an angel
 throng.

They sing of spring and happy love, of the blessed golden time,
 Of freedom, manly worth, of truth, and a holy faith sublime;
 They sing of all sweet things, that thrill man's breast with pure
 delight,
 They sing of all high things, that raise man's heart to noblest
 height.

The throng of courtiers standing round forget to scoff and jeer,
 The king's bluff burly warriors bend a reverential ear,
 The queen, dissolved in sadness blent with sweetness, plucks a rose
 From off her breast, and down the flower unto the minstrels
 throws.

"My people you've debauched, my queen your fool, too, would you make?"

The king cries out with anger mad—and his every limb did shake;
He hurled his sword, that flashing through the young man's bosom
sped,

Where now not golden lays sprang up, but jets of gore instead.

As though by tempest scattered, the throng fled all aghast,
Enfolded in his master's arms the young man breathed his last;
He swathes his mantle round him, he sets him on his steed,
Fast binds him there, and turns away from those grim halls with
speed.

But at the outer gate awhile he halts, that minstrel grey,
And there he grasps his harp, the harp no other rival may,
Against a marble pillar then he shatters it, and wide
Through castle and through garden rang his voice, as thus he cried:

"Woe, woe to you, proud halls! May ne'er again sweet music
ring

Throughout your chambers vast and high of song nor yet of string!
No! only sighs and groans, the tread of slaves that crawl in fear,
Till vengeful heaven shall hurl you down in dust and ruin drear!

"Woe, woe to you, sweet gardens, bright with sunny May, woe,
woe!

To you the face, so altered now, of this dead youth I show,
That you may wither at the sight, your fountains all run dry,
So in the days to come that you a stony desert lie!

"Woe, murderer vile, to thee! Thou curse of minstrel-craft, thou
shame!

Vain, vain be all thy toils henceforth for wreaths of bloody fame!
Thy name, be it forgotten, whelmed in everlasting night,
And fade into the empty air, like breath of dying wight!"

Up went the cry of the old man, heaven heard the cry, I ween:
The walls are levelled to the dust, the halls no more are seen;
Still doth one lofty pillar tell of splendours passed away,
But even this, rent through its length, is crumbling to decay.

All round is only barren heath, where fragrant gardens strayed,
No fountain pierces now the sand, no tree diffuses shade;
Of that king's name tells neither lay, nor storied legend old,
Forgot as though he ne'er had been! The Minstrel's Curse has told!

THEODORE MARTIN.

UNDER CANVAS IN A PROCLAIMED DISTRICT.

ONE hears a good deal from time to time of persons who spend a holiday under canvas: young gentlemen who undergo a series of misfortunes, including incipient matrimony with a village maid; greenhorns who obviously never camped before, and as certainly should never again be trusted away from the tender care of cook and housemaid. But of the other sort of camper, for whom the life, though retaining all the charm of freedom and freshness, has lost its feeling of adventure, little, so far as I know, has been written. Possibly the annals of such an encampment may have interest for the uninitiated; so, as the weather is quite too bad for sketching, I shall set down a few notes of the experiences undergone here, in the wilds of Donegal, by my friend M'Skian and myself.

In a lonely spot like this, the very memories of 'bus and *underground* and crowded street seem fantastic and impossible. No state of being could well be better calculated to produce rank crops of ignorance than is solitude like ours; and yet it has its interests. With a few good books and a friend who can think and talk of them—who loves all that is most worthy and wise in life and literature, and who is capable of intelligently pulling one's verses to pieces and referring each fragment to its original source,—what pleasant hours may be passed on a stormy night even under canvas, or high among the hills upon the sunny seventh day! Then in a tent there is little, in thought and fact, between one and the stars. The feverishness of life dies unechoed in the placid vastnesses of sky and

woodland. The rooks and jackdaws sit around us as we feed, and filch the scrapings from the porridge-pot. The chaffinches take shelter in our storage-tent at night, and earn an easy livelihood. The rabbits that swarm about the place are soon accustomed to the harmless sight of us, and no longer seek the warren when we appear upon the scene. The rats, too, are wondrous plentiful and friendly, sharing freely our potatoes and our bread.

Then there are our nearer relatives of the *genus homo*—ignorant, like ourselves, of current politics; behind the time with information, and bringing us odd scraps of news after a visit to the little town below.

One night last summer, my friend and I were sitting by the fire and smoking an after-dinner pipe, when we were joined by the local man of handiwork; and he, greetings over, took up his position among the midge-vexing smoke of our log-fire, and began:—

“An' so we're a' proclaimed now!”

“Proclaimed!” said I, looking up from the tin plates which I had been laying aside. “How do you mean?”

“Oh, *proclaimed!* under the Crimes Act. The whole o' the country—a' but a bit or two about Belfast there—is proclaimed.”

“Is the Crimes Bill passed then?”

“God bless you!—yes; and in full swing!”

“How long has that been?” said M'Skian.

“Oh, I don't know! It must be a good while now.”

And indeed it was a “good

while" for two would-be intelligent persons, camping in one of the districts most strongly affected by the measure, to remain in ignorance of its enactment. But then the artistic mind is not usually trammelled by excessive exactness; and, as I have said, the intellectual environment of life in a tent, eight miles from nowhere, offers perhaps the best possible assurance against the disturbance of a ruminant propensity. In such a place one soon becomes as narrow and self-centred as a weather-cock, and half mistrusts the existence of any question weightier than that daily one of—Will there be letters by the post? Weather in Donegal, so far as I know it, furnishes but poor opportunity for speculation. One takes it for granted that it is going to rain: and to debate the point of whether the clouds will arrive from the south-west as usual, would be to descend to the very dregs of triviality. Thought is to the mind what blood is to the tissues. Stop its flow and decomposition soon sets in: so it is fortunate for us here that we have the interests of work to maintain the mental circulation.

Work, and not the mere Saxon love of roughing it, has tempted us thus far, to reside under a nine-foot canopy in one of the most inclement climates. During a tour made in the autumn of last year, I was struck by the wealth—unusual both in quantity and kind—of picture-matter in the wind-wrecked grounds of Ards. The big house itself is uninhabited, and stands, gaunt, silent, and imperfect, as it was deserted thirteen years ago by the workmen who had been rebuilding it. The grounds, which are of very great extent, occupy a rocky isthmus beaten by perpetual hurricane and deluge into a series of crevices and ridges, and boldly

indented along the margin by bays and branches of the long shallow fiord. The conformation of the neighbourhood suggests the idea that here is a handful of scraps—odd valleys and spare uplands—that would fit in nowhere else, and so have just been thrown out among the sand-hills, as carters shoot rubbish over a sea-wall. Mr Stevenson has truly spoken of artists as men "who know the name of nothing;" so I may admit that I have never ascertained the geological formation of the district. But it produces excellent picturesque results—which is all that an artist need care about in the matter—and supplies, for a great stretch of the woodland which northern Ireland lacks so sadly, a roothold whose meagreness is manifested by the number of fallen trunks. These lie as they have gone down before successive cyclones, in sheaves and lanes and palisades, tossed hither and thither, snapped, twisted, and up-torn like your favourite tulips beneath the snout of a marauding pig. Thousands are down—and some of those the finest in the place; but many thousands still remain, and make a fitting foreground for the bends of the sand-barred tideway and the highlands among which it hides its head. This, however, is sheer geography; so let us have no more of it.

I noted it, nevertheless, during my hurried visit a year ago; and obtained a promise of permission to pitch my tent within the grounds. So, when the Jubilation had been duly undergone; when I had swelled the mob, and *vice versa* in the plural; when, in short, London was beginning to look played out, I sent back my piano to the dealer; packed my portmanteau; and, having picked up my friend M'Skian and the camping kit *en*

route by Scotland, arrived duly at our destination. Let us say *duly*. It is not worth arguing about at this time. Those Irish mail-cars! Did you ever travel on one of them, and wonder how the Jehu contrives to balance himself upon the pile of mail-bags which the blue-eyed, bare-legged colleens hand up to him, with a mouthful of Irish and smiles, at every hamlet by the way? Did you ever sit bodkin between the pretty girl, who, you feel, would help you to while away the time, and her mother, who lodges [a basket on your knees, and reposes the end of her veritable gingham in your eye? Do you know what it is to travel half a day with the oscillations of a pile of baggage restricted only by rhythmic contact with your spinal processes? And then, those so-called "vans"! "Van," I suppose, is a contraction for "waggon"; and some visionary etymologists have sought to ascribe the origin of the latter word to the wagging motion of the vehicle. If they be in the right, by all means let the public conveyance so called remain a *van*.

For those of my readers who have never ridden in one, I would describe an Irish van as a very much elongated side-car, with the driver's seat so elevated as to give him a power of veto on the leader's stumblings. The fact that the two long seats face outward has a double advantage. In the first place, the lover of scenery is, by this arrangement, enabled to see the country without an inharmoonious foreground of commercial gent; and, in the second, it is thus made possible for a wearied traveller to slip off and walk at will. Between the two rows of passengers is a so-called "well," which supports a high embankment of heterogeneous baggage;

and underneath is the "boot"—in which, by the way, the better of our two tents was left when we arrived at the little inn where we were to stay the night; and so, ere we were afoot next morning, was carried back to the railway terminus.

Awake we had been—or, at least, I had been—nearly all night, by reason of the maudlin recitative in which the watch-dog redundantly addressed the moon. It was much the same as I remember it to have been last year; and, so far as I could judge, the same curs as then now echoed his emotions, and wafted his hymn of praise in dwindling enharmonic cadences across the country-side.

The moon declined. The dog-watch was at an end; and, had the cocks been but a little later, I should have missed the finish of the programme. But, true to their appointment, this other set of worshippers took up the strain, and proclaimed the morn in a periphrastic harangue quite out of keeping with the small practical advantage of their announcement. I was by these means afforded every opportunity of listening to the pounding of the rain, which had come thus opportunely after a six weeks' pledge of drought.

Now we had definitely laid our plans. We were to cart our properties out to Aids, and pitch our tents on that day, Saturday; and so reserve Sunday for settling down and getting our sketching apparatus into order. We readily detected, in the coincidence of this sudden downpour and the losing of our tent, a special and malicious departure from the natural order of things; and we accordingly determined to adhere to our resolution, and defy at once the unpropitious coach-driver and the hostile

sky. We issued a contract for a cart; and, during the three hours necessary for the preparation of that vehicle, I sallied out to secure the goodwill of the storekeeper's daughter, and to procure a mandate to the caretaker of the house of Ards. And when everything had been ready for some time, and we had stood about the door and glared defiance at the plethoric heavens, the cart put in a leisurely and woe-begone appearance. With a sigh for the missing waterproof tent, we saw the other packages piled on one another; commended the whisky-bottle (under seal) to the tender and reverential care of the carter; and, setting our teeth, splashed out of the village along the streaming road.

We had been told that it was five miles to Ards; but indeed we forgot that the miles were Irish ones. I was informed last year that the milestones were originally distributed throughout Donegal by setting them up at the points where they fell off a well-piled cart at the gallop. The intervals between them in that case give the horses of the past but a feeble character for action; and, at all events, we have since walked those five miles between Ards and Dunfanaghy at good pace, but could not get our time much lower than two hours.

As soon as we were well upon our way, we began to perceive what an important part our vague suspicion of a malignant dispensation had played in inducing us to start. We were drenched to the skin in a minute or two; but I am glad we did not put back to port, for a little tragedy occurred at the inn that night, and our unfortunate fat friend and landlord was next morning found dead in his room.

We were now righteously indignant with the weather; and as

each bend of the avenue showed us yet another bend to be unwound, our spirits got lower, ever lower, like the drops that trickled down our necks. How different did everything look from the appearance it presented on that sunny day when I drove through Ards a year ago! The moss-grown quartzite cliffs and granite boulders, the silver birches and the grey and crimson pines were lightless, colourless, bedraggled. The rhododendrons that encroached in such romantic wise upon the carriage-drive—that had brushed my knees with their blossoms as the side-car pressed between them—disseminated nothing now but chill and spiteful showers if we so much as touched them. The very bunnies—where were they, that darted then by hundreds into every covert? It must indeed be raining, thought I, if the rabbits stay at home.

And yet grey clouds and "weeping skies" seemed somehow the proper attributes for such a scene of desolation. There were many nooks and tangles, any one of which the most unbending realist might have taken, as it stood, to typify the jungle of the sleeping beauty. And verily the house seemed like the vanishing palace in the Arabian Nights.

Another bend! Yet another, and another!

"*Ards longa victual brevis est,*" I half exclaimed; and M'Skian gave a bitter laugh.

Just then we spied a roof of shining slates; and, with the grunt of sulky men who have had enough of this nonsense, we started forward at full pace. At one end of the building were the raw walls and columns of an added wing, which, having never been completed, gave the whole an air of ruin and decay. Architecture, however, must, like geography, be

eschewed: still, let me say that there were many chimneys, and that one of them was smoking.

Simultaneously in both our minds awoke the thought—"Why not capture the position by a *coup de main*, murder or incarcerate the care-taker, receive our baggage blandly when the cart arrives, and live here till the rain goes off?" On one point we were determined—that nothing short of force, and that of a violent kind, should drive us prematurely from the shelter of the walls and roof. It was with tragic resolution that we rang the bell; and after a silence and a lapse of time suggestive of palatial vastness, steps echoed on the flags of the uncarpeted hall, and a variety of fastenings were withdrawn.

The door opened; and lo! the success of our dark plot was in our hands. Before us stood a little old lady, the care-taker, who looked altogether as if she had taken too many of them, and they had not agreed with her. Here was an easy victim! and we strode into the hall.

But both M'Skian and myself have tender hearts and unindurated to crime; and the hectic flush of evil purpose gave place to a more genial glow of affable content when we found that our letter of introduction procured for us not only shelter, but service, which assassination must of necessity have lost to us. We who were ready to sleep on table, couch, or floor, if we might but have a roof above our heads and maintain our hands in pristine stainlessness, found two rooms promptly placed at our disposal. This put us in the best of humours; and we accompanied the old lady through the larger rooms of the house, and admired them to the top of our vocabulary.

In the drawing-room there was, besides the piles of shrouded furniture, a handsome Broadwood, which, save during the periodical visits of the tuner, had been locked, said our guide, since the house was deserted a baker's dozen of years ago. I had been exhilarated by the sight of so companionable an article of furniture, and my face fell when locks and keys were spoken of; but cheerfulness was restored by our informant's adding that there was another piano, open, in the sitting-room that we were to occupy.

"Let us go and see it," said I.

But M'Skian interposed with, "Bother the piano!" Then, turning to the old lady, he asked, with a sleek smile, "Is the dining-room as fine as this? Might we see it also?"

I glared at his back as he moved towards the door. He is always interfering in this way; and, because he can't sing any more than a heron can, he loves to trammel me in my refined enjoyment. It has always been an artistic peculiarity of mine to sing or whistle when performing any of the less serious offices of life; and the proficiency I have thus attained so irritates M'Skian that he sticks at nothing that will discompose me in the exercise of my powers. Of course it would not do to yield to such captious opposition; but it is difficult to retain the full dramatic colouring of such a work as "Marble Halls" when an unfriendly companion is assuming every appearance of distress, and indulging in language entirely at variance with the composer's motive. There is some hidden charm about the song just mentioned; and it has of late taken so strong a hold upon me that I sing the first stave or so very much oftener than I have any wish to. At the same time, it is

merely childish in M'Skian to say I sing it out of tune; and his insisting on our viewing the uninteresting dining-room was carrying the thing too far.

It was a large and perhaps a handsome apartment with a lofty fireplace, and, piled against the walls, a number of great pictures. One canvas, representing Susanna and the Elders, was fixed high up above the chimneypiece; and this our guide—whose diacritic knowledge of anatomy and scriptural tableaux was amazingly at fault—pointed out to us with more enthusiasm than discrimination.

"It is said to be very valuable. It is Abraham sacrificing Isaac." What she made of the two other Elders we did not ask.

By-and-by our properties arrived; and having despatched emissaries to intercept our wandering home, we trundled our boxes into the sitting-room. I opened the piano; and M'Skian even consented to sing a Gaelic song—several times in succession as it seemed to me; but he, like Wilkie Collins, says No.

This unforeseen hospitality on the part of the housekeeper somewhat upset the calculations of the supernal water-trust. The rain very soon hauled off; and when we stole, candle in hand, through the long passages to our bedroom, we could see, through open doors, the starlight resting weirdly upon piles of dust-clothed mystery. Now here we were in a great, deserted house, with every proper setting for a ghost-story; and nothing would dissuade me from making one but the certainty that it would not be believed. A door banged in the night, the wind moaned through the long corridors, and a rat shrieked in terror when she felt my counterpane stir beneath her scurrying

feet. So much you may believe; though in truth I slept too soundly to hear such sounds. Or perhaps I should rather say M'Skian slept too soundly for anything else to be audible.

Next morning the weather was improved—being merely what the Highlanders call "shoory, wi' rain between whiles"; and though it doubtless was the Sabbath, a great temptation was held out to us in the arrival of the missing tent. This overcame our scruples; and we, being unwilling to reside longer than we were compelled to as stowaways in another man's house, resolved to build our own.

No landscapist who has drawn back before he has learned the few dodges for making a tent comfortable, can estimate the convenience it is to live in a house which he can set up as near as he pleases to his "subject," and whose *ménage* binds him to no special hours for his coming in or going out. But, be it understood, an apprenticeship must be served; and no mere townsman need start out into the wilderness and expect to find comfort in the possession of a tent and an outfit, however elaborate. The more simple the outfit the better, but it must be used with intelligence; and chiefly, must be acquired a certain intimacy with the processes of camp cookery. It costs a great deal of time, moreover, to gratify, by one's own labour, a love of cleanliness in camp; and scrubbing greasy frying-pans and plates is an occupation for which, be it confessed, I have never been able to overcome a strong repugnance. I know that to some persons dish-washing *al fresco* has a charm all its own; but an expert is apt to regard a saucepan cleansed by one in such a state of exaltation as a thing to be subsequently looked into.

A scullion is born, not made, any more than a poet is; and though the presence of hired labour is a drawback, it saves many a bright half-hour—which is valuable to working artists. So we enlisted the supplementary services of the resident housemaid, and at once set out to fix the site of our encampment.

In choosing the ground for a tent, there are several points to be borne in mind. The earth under foot must be dry and hard, and as nearly as possible bare of grass. Such ground will generally be found under large beech-trees. But the beeches must not be so low as to exclude the sunlight or obstruct the passage of the air. Grass is no doubt sweet and pretty during the first week; but after that it is neither: and, at the best of times, it is retentive of moisture and shirt-studs. You must be near a sufficient water-supply, and not too far from the residence of your bed-maker, who will probably act also as receiver of your stores. These practical considerations are more important than a picturesque seclusion; and they decided us in our selection of a spot somewhat nearer the house than we could otherwise have wished. Our immediate vicinity is rather badly infested by rats, nettles, and other vermin, animal and vegetable; but when these are hidden by the darkness of night, our camp itself and its surrounding beeches look wonderfully picturesque in the light of our crackling fire. The trees, which are six in number, and of giant size, stand at almost regular intervals, and form an oval arena, at the upper end of which there is just the right space for our two tents. Here we pitched them side by side; so that the right-hand cur-

tain-pegs of the one serve also for the left-hand guy-ropes of the other, and *vice versa*; and though each of our tents is nine feet square, and by itself occupies, with guys extended, more than twice that space, side by side they together make a frontage of only some thirty-three feet.

Then, though the ground was like a rock, we knew that a narrow trench all round each tent was indispensable. Well did we both remember how, two years before, a sudden storm caught us in the act of pitching our tent in a lonely Highland glen; and how a streamlet for three days coursed across the floor, drenching our properties and creating a perfect epidemic of humors and rheumatism—and all because we had had no time to dig a moat. No doubt, in the highlands of Ireland, as in those of Scotland, the rain may be said to have acquired a right of way over every piece of ground; but the genteel attractions of a made thoroughfare prove, in both lands, irresistible to the barbarous element.

Then, after much searching among deserted stables, decadent boat-house, and forsaken forge, we found ourselves in possession of a large old door, on which to make our couch, and of as many gratings as would have enabled us to fire a perfect school of cookery. Each of us in alternation lugged forth a most seductive chimney-pot, or revealed at once a pile of piping, and a fantastic scheme for putting it to use. In truth, a person of resource might have furnished, from the *débris* that was strewn about, a hamlet of moderate size. It went to our hearts to relinquish, for want of a high-pressure boiler, our purpose of heating the camp by pipes; and it was in vain that we strove to find employment for rotten ladders and rusty baths. I am

not yet satisfied that one large, boot-shaped example of the latter species might not be converted to the completion of the hot-pipe scheme; and I can see, from the 'introverted look that comes into M'Skian's eyes, as we pass a certain spot, that he still upholds the feasibility of opening meat-tins with a lawn-mower that lurks there.

This rivalry of ingenuity and its concomitant bigotry of opposition were, however, productive of so much heart-burning, that we agreed to adhere in our living to the primary principles of convenience. We sank, as far as human creatures can, all yearnings after the debarred development of our still-born conceptions; and we wreathed our parent sympathies about one common offspring of our fancy—a fireplace, the design of which we cherish as a secret of great price. I succeeded, however, in trapping my friend into helping me to transport a great wooden box, which, though it has kept our firewood dry through weeks of rain, is still, I know, regarded by him as a very poor affair. And when he saw that I really had a use for it, he drew forth, with a look of fatuous triumph, a large curved tile, which he had smuggled down under his coat, and which, I may now admit, has done excellent service as a wind-screen for the oil-stove. *Carte blanche* was reciprocally granted for the use of bricks; and when we had, by handling them, worn from our palms the blisters raised by the use of the peg-mallet—when we had revelled to satiety in structural contrivance, and had got as many twists as there were joints in our respective vertebral columns, we closed the doors; and, with many a furtive backward glance of tenderness, hobbled to the house

and took our last sleep on a civilised four-poster.

Next morning the milk-cart, which daily brought supplies and a letter-wallet, delivered the bed-sacks stuffed to bursting with unnecessarily fragrant hay. (Straw was not to be had at the farm; but—never mind! It means only a few more bruised sensations in the morning.) We carried them down and placed them in position. We transported our wardrobe, and arranged our stores. We carpeted our residential tent with pack-sheet from about the blankets; and we relegated easel, colour-box, and camp-stool to the "out-house."

Here a word of practical advice! Never take any but a square wooden trunk into camp. Lay it on its back with the top to the front, so that the lid, when opened, rests upon the ground. The front—which is now the top—is thus available as a rest for articles which need not be disturbed each time the box is opened.

But the previous day's work had left us but little to do; so, as the weather was brilliant, we made an expedition in search of "subjects" for our art. Of these there was no lack. Foot had scarcely trod—and scarcely could—through the jungle that had sprung up among the fallen trunks. Oh, what a wealth of brier-stranded rock and fern-fringed cliff! What silvery ash-stems shining in the coolness of moss-muffled shades! What depths of fir-wood, with black shafts soft-silhouetted against lurking gleams! What purple uplands, with the islet-fretted sea-way stretching to the north! What fleeting light and shade, wandering in and out of sight among the rolling sand-hills east and west, as a gull dips and rises on a ground-swell! What light-

ning-blasted pines rearing their wan limbs in foresight of the moon! What flowers! what pathways, cushioned dykes, and sand-girt bays! Such places make a painter feel a fool indeed.

We laid us down among the heather, and, for a time, with basking eyelids yielded all our senses, as must a fiddle in the sun, to warmth and gentle sound. Soon our attention was claimed by that incessant movement of the insect world. What lover of the woodland has not viewed the ant's labours and learned to shun his haunts? What follower of Wordsworth does not recognise the fairy note of the mosquito's horn, and go elsewhere—as we did back to camp?

Then, after dinner, we started for the nearest shop, three miles away, to supply ourselves with butter and a bucket. The road was unknown to us; and we were glad to meet, on her way from chapel, our lady-help, who gave us our bearings. This handy, obliging maid-of-all-work has, I understand, a story of her own; and has suffered at the hands of law for spirit displayed during a brief engagement, non-matrimonial, with sundry members of "the force." A friend of the evicted is likely to befriend the exile; and we, in the latter category, have found her faultless.

When we left the cover of the trees, we saw, against the clean-blown livid yellow of the western sky, great ragged clouds come staggering up towards the zenith; and in a minute the rain was splashing in our faces. We had no overcoats, so up went our collars.

"They've cotched us this time," said M'Skian.

But we meant to have that bucket and that butter, and some

tobacco into the bargain; so we broke into a trot.

We found the storekeeper seated on a sack in his little shop, and conversing with the customers who were being served by the dame behind the counter. But, on our entry, business and conversation ceased together. Every eye was turned upon us, every ear was bent to catch the vulgar Saxon twang; and it was difficult to retain one's self-possession under such an ordeal of scrutiny.

We came through it, however, without syncope; and at length we issued with our bucket, half filled with stores and slung on a stick between us. The moon was up; and, down below us, the last of the ebbing tide was stealing out in streams of molten silver between the bars of purple sand, rippling over the shallows with a diamond on every wave, and threading its gurgling way among the mazes where the salmon had been leaping a few hours before. Somehow, it made me think of pearls and diamonds, sapphires and onyxes flowing in wanton love of splendour from between the dark, half-parted fingers of a negro princess. Neither of us could do more than groan; and as soon as we had deposited our burden at the tents, we wandered down to the point, and gazed till we were perfectly wretched with the humiliation of an artist's impotence. The moon was higher by this time; and, far away, the hills were sleeping in its spell, with something on them of that inscrutable, pathetic blessedness that trembles about the lips of a dreaming child. Past the rock on which we stood, the tide was slipping in noiseless, glassy swirls, that sought in vain—for all the world, like one of us poor daubers—to carry away, from the wavering re-

flection on the surface, a single spark of the pure light. Black indeed must their night have seemed when that last touch of splendour was withdrawn from them!

Then back we came to camp, to creep into our blanket-bags, and I to lie and listen to the moaning of the breakers on the bar far down the inlet; to the whimpering and wailing of the wild-fowl, as they changed their feeding-ground from time to time before the returning tide; and to other more emphatically slumbrous strains discoursed by my rapt companion.

I told M'Skian next morning that I thought he should see a doctor about his strongly marked stertorous diathesis; and he replied, with characteristic irritability—

"Don't try to be funny. I never snored in my life."

I could not but laugh at this, and he broke forth—

"Well, I at least confine myself within my compass, and don't go squalling after impossible notes that would be out of place even if they weren't out of tune."

Poor M'Skian! His ideas of music are limited by the possibilities of a stand of bagpipes; and with these in his arms, he will prance up and down our enclosure of an evening, or stand and beat the ground with one foot as he blows himself black in the face. Then, when thoroughly exhausted, he lays the implement aside, and, seating himself on the edge of the bed, renews the foot-stamping to the accompaniment of a monotonous "oho-o-o! ohum! oho-o-o! ohum-m!" These sounds he pretends to find indicated in the sheet of music which he holds in his hands and thumps upon the back with his long fingers to exercise the joints.

But enough of him and his nasty sounds!

It was raining hard while our little discussion was in progress; and the day was one of perpetual downpour. But we had come to Donegal to sketch, and of course we were going to do so.

Out we went in waterproofs, and pitched umbrellas before our chosen subjects. Donegal weather does not usually take umbrellas into its calculations; and the fact that we were enabled, by their help, to accomplish a fair day's work—the adjective relates to the latter noun—showed that something further must be done to beat us. A gale of light calibre was accordingly brought into action on the succeeding morning. It made a sketching umbrella on the end of its long stem a thing of no effect; but again we obtained the requisite cover, by unscrewing the stem and thrusting the end of the upper joint down inside our respective waistcoats till the *parapluie* spread close above head and sketching-block. On Thursday the treatment was changed to fine rain, sifted in under the shelter by sudden squalls that made the brass ferrule on the umbrella-shank a bosom-companion of greater animation than amenity. A slight arrangement of capes, however, enabled us to sustain some show of perseverance and progression; so on Friday a perfect hurricane was launched against us. Such tactics cannot be met except with management. First, you must carefully extend the guy-cords of your umbrella, creep in under it, and having buttoned waistcoat, jacket, and waterproof about the stem, raise yourself circumspectly on to the camp-stool. Still, the oscillations of the ferrule and the consequent abrasion of one's ribs are severe in such a tempest; and I, at all events, was almost glad

when, before many hours had passed, the weather completely lost its temper,—began tearing up trees and things; and at last burst, with a clap of thunder, into such a torrent of tears as would have out-drowned the Deluge. I am not going to talk of bucketfuls and tubfuls. No words could give the least idea of the dense mass of water that made all the surface of the land turn white with driving spray.

This was a painful exhibition of passion at which I felt it was better that I should not be longer present. I paddled with dignity back to camp; and when I saw the little delta, with its miniature stems and boulders, that had already been created at the escape-ment of our trench, I realised that, after all, one trick was ours.

When darkness fell, the sky cleared and once more the moon shone out among the stars. Here let me say, in tribute to the good taste displayed by the orbs of day and night, that they have throughout maintained a neutral attitude, and held entirely aloof from participation in our contest with the elements. What, after all, was—

“The battle to the moon, that all the while
High out of hearing passes with her smile”?

She, at all events, gave us a sitting, and supplied the light that enabled us to steal a march upon the enemy and secure a sketch apiece. But because she refused to boycott us, the clouds soon locked her up again.

On Saturday we awoke to find the sunlight shining through our tent, in dancing gleams and shadows from the beech-leaves overhead. But a little experience teaches mistrust of such gay coquetry at early hours. There is a peculiar kind of brilliant morning

glare that puts the wily paintist on his guard; and we, recognising it here, declined, in spite of all this ostentation of goodwill, to dispense with macintosh and gingham.

Thus were we enabled to frustrate the weather's *dernier ressort* of ruse and stratagem. In vain did the clouds part and allow the sun to beat upon us with untempered rays. That merely prevented our laying aside the parasol; so that when the next shower came, it found us ready, and did nothing but confirm us in our unresponsiveness. A full day's work was thus achieved—owing in part to the primitive character of the methods employed by our opponents; and in the evening we were allowed without molestation to make a sketch of the foam-girt sand-hills that ran out in a blaze of sunset orange across the dark background of purple hills. But verily, if the weather in Donegal treats all painters as it has treated us, it is little wonder that one sees so few pictures of the many splendid scenes.

Sunday, of course, was gorgeous and exceeding hot. In the forenoon, we, book in pocket, strolled along to our favourite diving-place; and having bathed, we read or wrote, and swam again, and basked upon the sand—and got ourselves well sun-burnt for our pains.

My friend M'Skian is much given to superfluous bathing at unfitting hours. Doubtless, on a day like that second Sunday, his enthusiasm is a positive convenience—saving one from the trouble of making up one's mind, and compelling one, after some factitious opposition, to gratify, with every appearance of good-nature and self-abnegation, an inwardly clamant desire for coolness. But

when one has just returned, chilled and weary, from a hard day's study of a distant cliff, between which and the camp the heavy knapsack has been carried over rocks and heather through a drizzling cloud; when, late dinner being finished, and heavy rain falling with the night, everything is wrapped in horrid sloughing darkness,—it is at such a moment that the frenzy sometimes seizes him. I see a wan light in the wistful, furtive eye. The pipe hangs limply from the lips, as do the hands across the nerveless knees. Those are the symptoms; and I, recognising them, rise from the log where I have been warming myself beside the fire, steal away into the tent, and throw myself in simulated sleep upon the bed. But by-and-by I hear a sigh of resolution from without; and then the step, remorseless as the "impartial foot" of Death, draws nigh the door. The curtain is pushed aside; and, borne on a chill draught of the discouraging atmosphere from without, come the dreaded tones—

"I say, come on and have a swim."

The cold sweat breaks out upon my brow. I cling in prayerful agony to the tent-sack, stuffed with hay, which serves me for a pillow. And I answer not a word.

But the fever is upon him; and he speaks again in tones that show he means to have an answer.

"I say, look here, come on and have a swim."

"A swim!" I shriek "Great" —, but I check myself in time; for a no-swearing game is in progress, by the laws of which we play each other for sixpenny points.

"On a night like this!" I proceed. "I'll see me—ahem! Are you mad?"

"I'm not mad at all," says he, in a pitiful wheedling tone. "Come on, man."

"I *will* not. I will *not* do it. So you may go and be hanged."

"I'll trouble you for saxpence," says M'Skian; and when I have paid, I turn towards the wall.

He stands for some time without a word, coughing and turning in his toes and peering through the doorway, as if completely at a loss to understand my objections. In the interval I hear the big drops from the beech-leaves beating an irregular tattoo upon the tent; but to M'Skian they are but as the trumpet to the charger. . . . To make a long story short, I am, after a fierce altercation, compelled to save myself from violent coercion, by accompanying him as towel-bearer.

He leaves the larger portion of his clothing at the tent—verily there is little likelihood of meeting folk abroad—and sets out for the shore in waterproof and kilt and tennis-shoes. These I am to hold over my arm while I stand under the shelter of a sketching umbrella and attempt to thrust away my misgivings about the sanity of poor M'Skian as he "plouters" about. In the meantime he has made a circuit of the creek; and, coming back to the diving-place, clutches the edge, and attempts, in spasmodic falsetto, to persuade me that the water is warm, and that this really is a chance I may not have again in a hurry.

"I hope not," I reply. "Look here, if you don't come out of that, I'll throw your clothes in after you." So M'Skian climbs up the rocks; and a pretty idiotic figure he makes dancing on one leg to get the water out of his ear.

But a dive and a rush through breakers sparkling beneath a mid-

day sun—that is another matter altogether, as even M'Skian admitted on the occasion of this our first great bathe.

We came back ravenous to camp, and lo! the solitude was gone. The lawn about the house was dotted with groups of curious country-folk; and when we dived through the intervening strip of trees and came upon the tents, we were greeted by the gaze of about fifteen natives, who, with open mouths, awaited our arrival.

Now I must state that M'Skian and myself have by long experience learned that the kilt is the dress *par excellence* for roughing it. A man who wears the kilt may wade through a stream, and suffer no evil from the moisture, which evaporates in about half an hour. A man who wears the kilt can come on parade in the morning in about two-thirds of the time occupied in dressing by a man who does not—or perhaps I should rather say, by a man who wears something else: and, for the sake of these great practical advantages, we submit to a certain amount of good-humoured ridicule which we incur by wearing it. People who are unaccustomed to the “garb of old Gaul” are apt to regard its wearers as belonging to a species of barbarian; and our visitors on that and subsequent Sundays most clearly looked upon us as not quite civilised. Our reputation had evidently spread, for, during the afternoon, folk from over the water—having no doubt heard strange rumours of tents, kilts, pictures, and other attributes of insanity—arrived in boats and coracles. Much did they wonder at the “strange houses,” as they called them; and great was their seeming reverence for the climbing powers that had enabled us to reeve a flag-halliard round a branch high

up in the Gothic nave of our most unscalable beeches. In reality, it was placed there by the simple method of fastening it to a good throwable stone. But of course we did not tell them so.

After a time we retired within the tent to get some letters written; and many and amusing were the comments we heard from fresh arrivals at the show. On subsequent Sundays this Buffalo-Bill-arisiation of our camp became such a nuisance that we were put to serious inconvenience in having to fence off our little arena with rope, and to reduce the attractions of the establishment by discarding the kilt for the day.

During the week we scarcely ever see a soul besides Frederick Gowler, the man of handiwork who has already appeared for a moment at the beginning of the paper; Paddy the post-boy; and the three inhabitants of the big house, to whom he daily brings, as I have said, the stores and a letter-bag.

He also does errands for us in a way.

“Paddy, our salt is done; bring us a packet from Andy Baird's tomorrow morning,” I cried, as he was departing one day.

“I will, sorr,” he replied; and next morning, when he handed me a tiny parcel, I asked—

“What is this?”

“Salt, sorr,” said he.

“About enough for one boiling of potatoes!” said I.

I tore the outer cover, and burst into a roar of laughter when I read upon a label:—

“BEST REFINED EPSOM SALTS,
2 oz.”

“Here, Paddy,” said I, “here's a present for you.” But he was gone like the wind.

The poor, however, we have al-

ways with us, in the form of multitudinous spiders, earwigs, and other less perceptible but equally grievous insects; and though at all times willing, I hope, to share our substance with the needy, we do not therefore undertake to batten such visitors upon the substance of our limbs. Earwigs, especially, have a peculiar habit of biting close in the neighbourhood of some unoffending moth upon one's neck, and getting away in time to have the whole blame and abolishment descend upon the unprotesting scapegoat.

A swarm of ants visited us at another period, and we were obliged to wire for a quantity of a certain pulverine insect-destroyer. This is contained in a small cylinder, much like a cocoa-tin, save that it has a perforated top, through which the substance is dusted about the eyes of offenders, who are then pinned to the tent-pole as a warning to their fellows.

One morning I entered the tent to get something that I required for breakfast, and there I found M'Skian fiercely humming a battle-song, to which he beat time with his hand far down in the depths of his sleeping-bag.

"What in the world are you doing?" said I.

"What am I doing! I'm powdering that chap that bit me last night. He'll tell you what I'm doing."

I looked about in vain for that which I had come to fetch, and was on the point of asking him about it when I heard him snarl—

"There, my boy! How do you like that?" and turning round, he placed upon the shelf beside me the desired cocoa-tin. Poor dear M'Skian! Thoughtless of such a beverage as cocoa, he had been industriously powdering his tormentor with a fortunately unper-

forated tin of the best Van Houten.

One day he was sorely tempted by a cool couple, who, uninvited, seated themselves upon our logs, and endeavoured to coerce us into purchasing a gallon of poteen (produced at a certain illicit still whose locality I am not supposed to know). When we had been sufficiently sounded as to the probable strictness of our views upon the excise question, one of the pair retired into the obscurity of the trees from which they had come, and, on a signal, was presently joined by the other.

We saw them moving to and fro, stooping always, turning over heaps of leaves, and scrutinising the surface of the ground; and much bewildered were we by those antics. Presently the mystery was explained. They had buried a sample bottle of their tippie, and could not recognise the place. So, at least, they asserted; but my opinion throughout was that the whole performance was a species of incantation intended to weave a romantic spell about the hoped-for order. At all events, the bottle, when it was produced, bore anything but a posthumous appearance.

Of course we consented to taste the stuff; and each of us was supplied with a little in the bottom of a pannikin. It was so clear that the white enamel of the cup shone through it almost colourless. Its sparkle was attractive, its bouquet irreproachable; when we tasted it we opened our eyes, and, like stout Cortez and all his men,

"Looked at each other with a wild surmise,
Silent——"

save for an irresistible smack of approval from M'Skian, and an equally uncontrollable gasp of suffo-

cation from myself. I have the misfortune of not appreciating spirituous liquors, and find them peculiarly discomposing when they are seventeen above proof, as this preparation purported to be. Yet the stuff was quaint—something like a blend of eau-de-Cologne and gin—and, but that I knew I should disgrace myself by a second cough, I should have liked to try it again. M'Skian plays the pipes, and can, of course, toss off a glass of absolute alcohol without a tear; so he was willing to trade. But the firm before us did business on wholesale principles only. They would sell us any quantity above a gallon, but none below it; so, as neither M'Skian nor myself has yet reached that stage of chronic insobriety which is said to hang like an hereditary disease above a Scotsman's head, the negotiation came to a close.

On another day our residence was visited by a picnic party, some of whom, being known to us, brought a whole troop of ladies to inspect. M'Skian was still at large; and as I stepped forward to greet this welcome addition to the camp adornments, I could clearly read on all their faces the same mistrust of our domestication that had betrayed itself in the regard of our Sunday visitors. (Nay, my good friends, you must not deny it.) The matron of the party laughingly began to apologise for the supposed intrusion; and I, assuming, as far as I could, the air of a squire of dames, replied—

"Indeed, madam, you supply all that our encampment lacks"—which being true in a way, and the only "good thing" I ever got off at the right moment, I hope my readers will forgive me for recording it.

This little piece of ganderism put my gay visitant into excellent

good-humour; and she began to rally me on various points of our equipment. I pointed to the fireplace and the stick-box, with, I think, pardonable pride; and, M'Skian not being present, the stove-tile was fortunately allowed to rest in fit obscurity. I was, however, in the act of expatiating upon the merits of a piece of brickwork, when Mrs D., who did not seem to understand structural science, caught sight of a large cubical mass of the yellow substance known as "soap."

"And, I see, you wash yourselves!" she cried.

I was embarrassed, but stammered out—

"Why, yes—that is—you see, we don't mean to revert altogether to the original type."

A ripple of general laughter completed my confusion, and Mrs D. explained:—

"I mean, you wash your clothes yourselves."

"Well, no," I said; "we draw the line at clothes." I racked my brain for something smart about drawing a clothes-line, but was paralysed by the consciousness of having disgraced myself as a Scotsman, who ought to have known quite well what "washing yourself" meant. For, in the Highlands, a stranger may frequently be startled by the information that "the flesher kills himself on Mondays and Thursdays;" and this, though it sounds like most determined suicide, means merely that the local butcher on those days converts his backyard into a shambles for the purposes of his private trade.

When M'Skian came in I told him about my neat speech, but forgot about the soap.

"Confound it!" said he, "you always have the luck."

"'Confound' is a swear," said I,

holding out my hand. In a moment of vexation, M'Skian here made it a shilling's-worth; and he had to clap his hand upon his mouth, or verily I believe every penny he possessed would have slipped from between his lips.

But the visitor who chiefly interests us is the man of handiwork, called by us Frederick Gowler—not because that is his name, nor because we have any reason to believe him a mariner of the sea, but because of his rolling walk and various other little assonant ways, said, in the 'Bab Ballads,' to have provoked the mimicry of the natives in Canoodledum.

The first time that this good-natured chap presented himself to me, I happened to be in anything but an amiable temper, and very much upon my dignity; but his complete, simple heartiness, the kindly shrewdness of his eye, and the utter *abandon* of his laughter, fairly took me by storm. Many were the anecdotes he told us of his travels in America and elsewhere. Many were the times when he nearly cast himself into the fire in the ecstatic wriggle of his joy. And many, many were the sixpences I might have won from him if he would but have played our moral game. I never in my life saw a man so thoroughly enjoy a laugh. It was at once a rapture and an agony to look at him. Rapture, because of the sympathetic thrill such merriment awakes; and agony, because of the real anxiety lest he should dislocate something. With a sudden shout he would thrust his hands almost smack through the bottom of his pockets, and convert his face into one yawning gap, which he mercifully hid by throwing his head back till all that

could be seen of that useful appendage was his swelling throat and wagging beard. At the same moment he would tie his legs up in a convulsive hitch, with right instep hugging deliriously and deliciously the back of the left calf; and then, with a single twist of marvellous complexity, he would set each particular vertebra and muscle jiggling on its own account. During one moment our hearts stood still, then it was over and we breathed again.

As soon as he had made our acquaintance, he declared that he must put a floor into our tent. That was evidently settled in his mind; and as I saw his eye roaming around for something else to build to, I stated at once that if any platforms, stairs, flagstuffs, or other fabrics were put up, during our tenancy, on the piece of ground bounded by those six beeches there, we should consider their construction as a breach of contract, and immediately go home. This harangue overwhelmed poor Gowler, and in the evening he brought us down a modest tin bath, which we charitably allowed him to leave, but conscientiously returned, under cover of darkness, to the stables, as belonging to that class of articles mutually foresworn as provocative of device. Next morning we arose to find our log-pile heaped with pitch-pine firewood, which he had brought us from the home workshop; and when, in the afternoon, we refused him permission to substitute, for the door on which we slept, an iron bedstead (which, as he explained, could be placed in position by sinking its legs a foot or so into the ground), he shoved his cap back off his brows, and scratched his head as he remarked—

"Weel, you seem to like punishment, you yins."

Next day, while I was rubbing up a canvas at the tent door, he arrived with a regular garden-seat upon his shoulder; and when I looked up, he broke forth—

“Noo, hold your tongue. Don’t you say a word. I’m *goin’ to give you a seat.*”

I saw there was no use in resisting; and when he was leaving, I called out, “By the way, the baccy you ordered yesterday at Dunfanaghy has come all right. Thanks for seeing about it.”

“What?” snapped he.

“Thank you for seeing about the baccy.”

“Oh, d——!” said he, in a tone of despair, as much as to say—“You’ve spoiled everything now. “If I could *do* something, I would,” he went on; and then, turning on his heel and leaving me with scorn, “Oh, d—— it!”

He swears a little; but not more, I believe, than is good for a man of his energy. He is, moreover a truthful man—a virtue perhaps acquired during his stay in the United States,—and makes no exceptional endeavour to thrust the completely incredible upon his hearers. Indeed, one tale which he related seemed quite within the bounds of possibility. He said that a man who used to live near Kilmacrenan watched, for three days, a fierce but indecisive duel between a weasel and a rat, who daily met at the same spot, and fought till the sun went down. On the fourth day, the weasel was on the scene of action much before his time, and at once proceeded to dig, underneath a neighbouring fence, a hole just wide enough to afford a passage to his long lithe body. The work was completed before the rat arrived; and, soon after the renewal of the combat, the weasel, spent by his labours, showed signs of failing. Suddenly

he bolted for his tunnel. The rat pursued, and with difficulty lugged himself some way into the hole; but, to the spectator’s astonishment, the weasel bounced out at the opposite end, came back between the bars of the fence, and re-entering the burrow, finished his adversary from behind. There is now, unfortunately, no means of obtaining any voucher for the truth of these statements; for the man at Kilmacrenan died shortly after he had related the anecdote to Gowler,—which, after all, is not to be wondered at.

But, supreme amongst Frederick Gowler’s many good qualities is his energy,—a characteristic productive, nathless, of a certain ruthless utilitarianism, which pains one by the way it dashes aside all speculative or subjective questionings, and seizes with unphilosophical directness the crude practical aspect of a difficulty. Industrious within limits, he has yet been frequently moved to expostulation by our never-ceasing labours.

“You don’t spare yourselves, you yins,” said he one evening, when he found us rushing off, after a hurried five-o’clock dinner, to secure a note of some sunset effect. “It’s too long hours. It’s no good for the work.” And so protesting, he was left, we bolting away ahead of him to gain the last of the light.

But he marked our route, and as the dusk was falling, he came past, perhaps to see whether we were really as industrious as appeared. I confess that, as he approached, I dreaded lest he might stand and attempt a conversation at that critical stage; but I misjudged my man.

“Still at it, you see,” I remarked, not to be too crusty.

“Ay, —— ——! you’re busy the now. Never mind the now;”

and with a wave of the stick in his hand, he sauntered past.

M'Skian told me, as we returned to camp, with a "sunset" and a "moonlight" each, that he had stopped Gowler to ask the name of a certain point.

"Oh! it's called Pol-na-Bocken," said he.

"And what does that mean?" said my Gaelic-loving friend.

"Oh! ——— me! I don't know what it means."

"How is it spelt then?"

"Oh! ——— my soul! it's easy enough spelt. P O L, Pol; na; B O C K I N, Bocken;" and feeling that *that* matter was satisfactorily settled, he knocked the head off a thistle and strode away.

But do not suppose that he is made up entirely of strong language and loud laughter—of oaths, and merriment, and shrewdness. The merriest of laughers are often those whose faces most suddenly return to gravity—who have been taught most cruelly how merciful a safeguard merriment supplies. The man or woman who is touched most keenly by a joke, will thrill with greatest pathos at the sufferings of others, or the loss of friends; and, for myself, I should as soon trust Mephistopheles as put any faith in the generosity of a bad laugher. The lines that lend themselves best to the formation of a smile, often have been traced about the lips and brow by bitter grief; and Gowler's eyes, when in repose, most constantly reminded me of the fact. It was

therefore only half a surprise that, when he had one day related to me the tale of some wild prank of long ago, he added, as his face grew hard—

"Ay, but the fun's all out o' me the last five years. I don't believe I've even whistled a tune the last five years. I don't know what done it. Maybe it was the loss o' the son. He died in New York, you know, and I only got there in time to bury him. Maybe it was that. I don't know; but ony way" —and he changed the subject.

Fare thee well, honest Gowler! We grieve to part with thee; and if the weather were as good-tempered as thou art, what could man ask better than to live here till the winter comes and turns the stoat's fur white among the ruddy bracken? But it is not so, friend Frederick, it is not so; and we can wait no longer for a change of mood. Soon will the tents come flapping to the ground—the poles disjointed, and the guys up-rolled. Soon will the silence gather all around; nor "Marble Halls" dispel it as of old. Soon will the bagpipes, in a far-off land, scream reel and pibroch till the reed is rent; and mad M'Skian by his native strand, will dive and flounder to his heart's content. Then, dearest Gowler, thou wilt take the bench thou gav'st so brusquely, and thy grief confess, moistening with tears the square deserted trench. Yet—may thy manly laughter ne'er grow less!

F. NOEL PATON.

THE OLD SALOON.

It is strange to think that the period of time usually called summer has come and gone since last we assembled in the Old Saloon. Usually it is true this hall of our fathers is most seductive under the influences of a blazing fire, which dances on the storied wall, and calls out in gleams of rising and of fading light the faces of our predecessors—the demigods of our early annals, who seem to keep a watchful eye upon us, lest we carry their standard with a faltering hand. In their glorious days August carried Christopher forth upon his ‘Recreations’ to wade the stream and stride the moor. But in an unhappy season in which the moor is as wet as the river, only not so free, what are his degenerate successors to do but steal back to the shelter of the four walls, and light a clandestine fire, and look forward well pleased to the approaching moment in which that indulgence shall be legitimate, and all the wandering world of holiday-makers shall have strayed home again—which is, as everybody will allow, the most joyful journey of all. It is perhaps not a bad moment in which to bring into the Old Saloon an armful of books which, in their way, are redolent of travel—not all of the holiday kind, but of that, less cheerful, though scarcely nowadays less usual, which carries the wayfarer forth when winter is beginning, in search of sunshine and fine weather. It is not always a successful search. Frost and snow go with the voyager beyond the peaks once so soft and sunlit (or else we deceive ourselves) of the Esterel. They linger on his steps as far as Vesuvius; they blow shrill upon him in the

icy winds of Spain. This is one of the many things which have changed since the days when we all were young. At that time the South was the sunny South, the sun shone day after day; and as for rain and snow, there was nothing in those ecstatic skies which could produce them. It is different nowadays. The snows of the Pyrenees creep down to the resplendent Coteaux of Pau. Blasts of rain rattle like musketry upon the windows of Biarritz. The olive-covered hills upon the Riviera shake their soft greyness timidly out of the whiteness that beat them down. The sky is like lead, and the sea like dirty water, in other places than England. The pilgrims of the sun wander southwards all the same by overpowering habit, though very often they find no sun, nor any softness there.

Our souvenirs of travel are not travel-books, nor guide-books, nor any of the endless store of information without which a Briton never travels. They are books which suggest many consolations, many hours stolen from disappointment, and weariness forgotten. For they are nothing more than a bundle of novels, relics of the road, companions which our successors in next season’s wanderings may choose among if they will, and find always ready. No doubt there will be a new crop before the coming winter sends a new wave of invasion southward. But criticism cannot be expected to travel with the speed of fiction. And now that Baron Tauchnitz, our beloved guide of so many years, proves faithless to our trust in him—now that the new volumes of that library which has done so much for the invalid and

the wanderer have lost hold of any better literature than that which is supplied by Miss Marryat and her kind—necessity makes it more and more expedient that we should take what we can from the ample provision made by our neighbours across the Channel: in which there is a great variety, and much which the simple-minded reader will wisely reject without question: but much also which it will be worth his while to know.

It is very difficult to understand the intellectual preference which it is still the fashion to accord to the French novel over all our own schools of art. It was rational at one time, when a very great, and, in their way, noble school of French writers were pouring forth their genius in this department of literature, with what was then indeed a reckless impartiality in their choice of subjects, and a freedom never taken since the days of Fielding in the treatment of all the incidents of life, on this side of the Channel. But these days have gone, and the French novel has greatly changed, like other things. The impartiality has disappeared with much of the genius, and now it is an understood thing that vice is the commonplace of life, and virtue no more than a pretence; that the realist is the literary *chiffonnier* always grubbing in the dust-holes; and that the writers who hold a better ideal are feeble romancists, unable to bear the fierce light of every day. The first position was very comprehensible—for to take the mingled thread of existence as it comes, good and bad together, is always a tenable theory of art, and on the face of it the most honest one, whatever objections may be taken as to the means of carrying it out:—but the second is not tenable; it is a mere inhuman fashion, born of

corruption and tending towards it. We do not believe that even in the most corrupt society that ever existed, vice was the leading principle of life. It exists in more flagrant manifestation here and there—it pervades more largely an unhappy age—it comes, like every other scum, to the top in a more visible foulness,—but no race can go on living which is thoroughly polluted, and France is probably as sound at the core as other nations, though it has become the hideous fashion of its literature to make it out a sink of iniquity. But still the prejudice endures; and whereas the English novel is generally supposed to be more or less a weak indulgence for the cultured classes, the French novel, playing upon one string of human nature, in utter disregard of all those other more healthful tones which make up the gamut of humanity, is supposed to be always seductive by its wit, its grace, its power, its superior delicacy of perception, as well as boldness of view. Yet what a difference between Balzac, for instance, with his wide and sombre range of human passion—his awful portraiture of those evils which are not of the flesh but the spirit—his tragic expositions of the love of gold and the love of fame; or Victor Hugo, with that supreme sense of the beauty of goodness and the sacredness of innocence, which no man in all the range of literature has more magnificently celebrated,—and the present exponents of monotonous and stupid immorality. The domestic ideal is often dull among ourselves (where, by the way, it is dying out); but it is not so dull as those complications of intrigue, the nasty situations, the disgusting details, to which the wildest imagination cannot bring variety. The celebration

of the French novel is a survival, according to the slang of science, of the most remarkable kind. We admire because we once admired, we praise because we have acquired a habit of praising.

It is very well before beginning to discuss even such gleanings of fiction as it is possible to discuss, to meet with the sane, simple, and healthful book in which one of the authors of this fiction presents himself to the public. Perhaps it may be thought that it is a little too soon for M. Daudet¹ to tell his own story. But this is not the opinion among our neighbours—as who can say it is the opinion nowadays among ourselves, when the press has been groaning under huge volumes containing the reminiscences of one middle-aged person after another, none of them, unfortunately, with anything particular to say? In France a man of letters is supposed to live a sort of public life, and to let himself be looked at as much as anybody pleases. Many efforts have been made to extend this custom among ourselves, and the “celebrities” who have permitted themselves to be interviewed “at home” are many. But as yet, except the old gentlemen who have a right to be as garrulous as they please, it is only actors who have thought it necessary to solace our curiosity by particulars about themselves. M. Daudet’s book, however, is very acceptable, and an admirable instance of what we have said, that, whatever horrible things they may choose to say of men and women in fiction, the French race, like all others, remains at its heart respectable, and by no means illustrates in its personal disclosures the vicious folly which it pretends to take for life.

M. Daudet tells his tale with great simplicity and kindness, and apparent truth. It is the story of a youth of poverty and struggle, of ingenuous self-confidence and shyness, of innocent idealism and *gaucherie*, and boyish mistakes and heroisms. The young man who starts in life (one should rather say boy—for he was but sixteen) with half-a-crown in his pocket, and a volume of poetry in the rude little box which forms all his baggage, is a rare figure among ourselves. We prefer to send such a simple hero to sweep a merchant’s office, where he becomes in time the master, and a millionaire.

But the poet-adventurer is more common in France, though such a one as the author of the ‘Nabob’ is not very common anywhere. He makes a modest success by the poesies, then finds out a more characteristic vein, and marries young, and lives in the utmost decency and quietness, according to all that is indicated in his career. No fatal influence of a Sappho appears in the honest cheerful life. Why such a man should go out of his way to invent a Sappho, who can tell? It is, we suppose, an atrocious fashion which he has not been able to resist: and Sappho does not come within the range of his revelations, which terminate about ten years ago, as appears, and which contain the record only of a few of the works which have made his name so well known. A minute record certainly, and one that cannot fail to have its interest even for those who agree little with either theory or practice. M. Daudet is avowedly a painter from the life. He does not even leave us to divine, as everybody

¹ *Trente ans de Paris.* Par Alphonse Daudet.

has done, that his Duke is So-and-so, his Nabob another well-known figure, and all his lesser characters portraits. The work which he specially analyses is 'Jack,' a book so sad, so heartrending, and in many of its scenes so full of the stamp not only of truth but of fact, that it needs little demonstration of authenticity. That he should have been seized and dominated by the melancholy story of his Raoul, the original of Jack, is not difficult to imagine. The profound misery of a being so wronged by life, a pure sensitive tender heart flung into a world where he has no family, no friends, no place—the son of a courtesan, stained from his birth, yet with the most pathetic adoration for the mother who is his shame—is something almost too poignant for romance; yet as a means of sounding the depths of these *Mœurs Parisiennes* which are M. Daudet's study, it is impossible not to perceive its cruel attractions. The romancist would scarcely seem to have heightened the tragedy of the unfortunate *déclassé*, the poor child brought up in feverish luxury, then pitched into excessive labour, for which his frail constitution made him quite unfit, abandoned, forgotten, cut off from every succour. Of all the victims of vice, there can be none so pitiful as such an innocent sufferer, especially when what seems the caprice of nature has endowed him with a tender heart, and that instinctive turn towards virtue and goodness which is to be found where no one would look for it, and so often is not to be found where every law of nature seems to make it sure. The odiousness of poor Jack's surroundings and origin may throw a prejudice over the book to many English readers, and the depth of the tra-

gedy may frighten others: but its pathos and power are undoubted. It is one of those which have most stamped upon M. Daudet the character of an imitator of Dickens. Even now, when we have it from his own lips that he had never read or heard of 'David Copperfield' before he wrote the 'Petit Chose' and 'Jack,' and knew nothing of the doll's dressmaker when he invented Desirée Delobelle, the fact seems almost incredible. "There are certain relationships of mind for which no one is responsible," he says; and no doubt this is an explanation against which no objection can be made. But the resemblance is very extraordinary, and ought to silence many a lighter accusation. It may be instructive to the reader to know a little about M. Daudet's system, since we are upon this subject.

"As painters preserve with care their sketch-books full of drawings, in which profiles, attitudes, a foreshortened figure, a movement of the arm, have been noted from the life, I have collected for thirty years a multitude of note-books, in which remarks and thoughts, sometimes only of a few words, serve to recall a gesture, an intonation, to be afterwards developed for the enrichment of an important work. In Paris, in the country, and even when I travel, these books get filled without intention, without even a thought of the work to come, for which they are to serve. Even proper names are sometimes to be found there, which I use without change, finding a physiognomy in the names, a something resembling the persons who bear them. After the publication of certain of my books there has been a cry of scandal, people have talked of novels with keys (*romans à clefs*), keys have been published even, with lists of celebrated persons—nobody reflecting that in my other works real persons have also sat for their portraits, persons unknown, lost in the crowd, where no one has thought of

looking them out. Is not this the true fashion of writing novels?—that is to say, the history of those who will never have a history.”

We are disposed to answer No, even to the experienced and successful novelist. Such an invasion of all the sanctities of private life is not a legitimate use of the opportunities which every human being has of observing his neighbours. “Sidonie exists,” he adds—not perceiving, apparently, what an overwhelming evidence this is against his own methods—“she and the narrow home of her parents, and her mother’s little jewel-box in a corner of the old cabinet, the sole luxury for a long time of the Chebe family. Only the true Sidonie is not so black as I have made her. Fond of intrigue and ambition, her head turned with her new position, intoxicated with pleasure and extravagant dress, she is yet incapable of disgracing her home.” This is quite enough to condemn the art which makes a silly and vain girl into a heartless and utterly corrupt and faithless wife, and then tells us that “Sidonie exists.” She does not exist, according to M. Daudet’s own confession, but only what might be the germs of her, should her development take a vicious turn. It is, accordingly, the most cruel wrong to say that this character is taken from the life. For the Sidonie of the book is, above all things, the dishonourer of her husband, the domestic traitor, the corrupt and unclean woman; and it is unpardonable to identify her heartless image with that of any one who is “incapable” of the chief act in her imaginary prototype’s life. In this case the method of literary vivisection, instead of obtaining the extraordinary effects of truth claimed, is odiously and cruelly untrue. As for the note-

books, this is what Mr Besant and other instructors in the art of fiction would teach their pupils to do; but we hope and believe with utter unsuccess so far as Englishmen are concerned. What would be thought of a painter whose pictures were solely collections of portraits of his models? One persistent face, indeed, looks out of the canvas of most artists, a subject of amused comment to his friends—the tribute of a husband’s or a lover’s admiration. And there are some who do not mind selling and reproducing to the widest extent the images of their children. But the practice does not gain the applause of the world.

Happily, however, we find that one pathetic little image (more and more like Dickens) was pure invention for once. Delobelle, that great actor *manqué*, who “had no right to give up the stage,” had in real life no daughter. The novelist, seeing the effectiveness of the situation, bestowed one upon him, in whom should be displayed “a little of the paternal extravagance, transforming his artistic exaggeration into the gentle sentimentalism of an ailing woman,” and made her in his imagination a dresser of dolls, “in order that this humble unfortunate might at least please her taste for the delicate and elegant, and clothe her dreams, if not herself, in scraps of silk and gold.” M. Daudet gave up this last idea when some one told him kindly of Dickens’s doll’s dressmaker; and the problem then was to find an occupation for her which would fulfil the necessary conditions.

“I was in despair after my conversation with Gill to find another trade for the poor little Delobelle. These things cannot be invented, and how to find a profession as poetically chimerical as that of doll’s dressmaker,

giving what I wanted, an instinct of exquisite grace in the midst of penury, of smiling dreams under the dark roof, of skilful fingers giving shape to flights of wishes. Ah! I searched that year through how many sombre houses, climbed grim stairs by their banister of rope, sought everywhere my ideal occupation in the infinite number of little trades. I lost hope towards the end, but at last my obstinate determination found its reward. One day, in the Rue du Temple, upon a piece of leather in one of those frames which are put up for the convenience of customers to show all the industries of a house, I read in old gilt letters which dazzled me—*‘Oiseaux et mouches pour modes.’*”

This is pretty, and we are glad to think that the discovery was for the advantage not of a living Parisienne, but of a creature of M. Daudet’s imagination.

It is, however, the early part of his personal story which is the most full of interest. The arrival in Paris of the young *pion*, whose sufferings are so piteously described in the autobiographical novel of the ‘Petit Chose,’ in Paris on a cold winter morning after two days in a third-class carriage almost without food, is told with delightful simplicity and feeling. M. Daudet, a distinguished man of letters, having made his mark in the world and put himself beyond the assaults of fortune, is not, we are happy to say, at all sorry for that boy. His illimitable hope, his fresh sensations, his joy in the Paris he has dreamed of, are delightful to look back upon even to himself. The savour of the warm delicious coffee—“Un café savoureux, balsamique,”—lingers in his nostrils, all the more warm and odorous and genial for the frozen stiffness of his young limbs after the cold journey—although in the light of youth and the novelty of sensation even those frozen limbs and the wintry morning in which

“les rues, la Seine, et ses ponts tout m’apparissait ténébreux à travers le brouillard matinal,” are things upon which it is pleasant to look back. The boy had nothing but a bundle of poetry, called by the not too hopeful title of ‘Amoureuses,’ and nobody to help him but his good brother Ernest, who was passing rich upon an immense income of seventy-five francs a-month. His youthful experiences are often droll and sometimes touching, full of interest always; and the little gallery of pictures which he sets before his readers of the Paris of that day have a strange freshness, yet antiquity, in them: for that Paris has disappeared—swept from the knowledge of men. It is the Paris of the Empire, when politics were subdued, when prosperity was at its height, when the old city, so beloved of its nation, was taking on new splendours every day. One of his chapters is headed “Les Salons Littéraires,” and begins thus: “There are none now. We have other *salons* more in the movement, as people say; political *salons*—those of Madame Edmond Adam, of Madame de Haussonville, white or red, where prefects are made and Ministers undone,—but the true literary *salon* has definitively disappeared.” We do not say that the amusing succession of vignettes with which M. Daudet furnishes us makes this disappearance seem a thing much to be regretted; but the little panorama, with its quickly passing figures, is extremely quaint and entertaining, full of shadows which even then belonged to an antique world, and upon which the young man gazed with mingled veneration and ridicule. These chapters read like a rapid abridgment of one of his own books: the little groups coming

and going, keenly individual, each with their little varieties and oddities, so essentially French, so full of character and genuine life. We confess that we like them better than the symposia of which everybody admitted to them seems so proud—*Chez* Flaubert, in the little apartment up many stairs, “des petites pièces coquettes, habillées d’algérienne, ouvertes sur le parc Monceau,” where five or six romancers of the new school—Zola, the Goncourts, and others—assembled every Sunday to discuss their art. M. Daudet’s description of this latter society agrees with that of Mr Henry James, recently noted in these pages. It is not half so amusing as his account of the *salon* of Madame Ancellot, with all its distinguished, and would-be distinguished, visitors. Human life perhaps needs a wider background than the striped hangings which encircle *ces messieurs*, and their eternal discussions of art. The nature, the humour, the sadness, the variety of actual human fate and fortune, even when seen in the glimpses of these little old faded entertainments, is much more than an eternal gabble about the rules and models of literary construction, however famous or eloquent the speakers may be.

Some of M. Daudet’s literary notes, however, are very instructive. His famous ‘Tartarin,’ the joy of so many readers, fell at first almost still-born from the press.

“I began its publication in the ‘Petit Moniteur Universel,’ with amusing illustrations by Emile Benassit. It was a complete failure. The ‘Petit Moniteur’ is a popular periodical, and the people do not understand irony in print; it confuses their minds, makes them think that they are being laughed at. Nothing could describe the disappointment of the subscribers to a halfpenny paper, eager readers of ‘Rocambole,’ and of

Ponsen de Terrail, in reading the first chapters of the life of Tartarin, the romances, the baobab—a disappointment which went the length of threats of subscriptions given up, and sometimes even of personal insults. I received letters of abuse, ‘Eh bien, oui — et puis après.’ ‘What does that prove?’ ‘Imbécile!’ and then a furious signature. The greatest sufferer was Paul Dalloz, who had spent a great deal of money on the illustrations and advertisement, and was paying dear for his experience. After ten numbers, out of compassion for him I carried ‘Tartarin’ off to the ‘Figaro,’ where it was better understood.”

But this was not the end of his tribulations: for the entire South was against this audacious exponent of their *naïve* peculiarities; and Tarascon in particular breathed fire and flame. M. Daudet confesses that he is still a little alarmed when he passes through that station, where even on the bookstall his works are forbidden, on his way southwards. He would fain have the train rush through, and hides himself in a corner of his carriage as long as the castle of the good King Rene is within sight.

Here is another bit of experience which will interest all who are concerned in literary work. He has been talking of ‘Jack,’ a novel for which he had made extraordinary studies, penetrating into all kinds of out-of-the-way places in pursuit of the necessary facts.

“A still greater stimulant, pushing me forward in this terrible and breathless work, was that long before I had finished my book the ‘Moniteur’ of Paul Dalloz began to publish it. It is my habit, which may seem a contradiction of my slow and conscientious method of work, to send the first completed chapters at once to the papers in which they are to be published. What I gain by this is the necessity of separating myself from my work without yielding to

the tyrannical thirst for perfection which makes an artist turn back ten times, twenty times, upon the same page, beginning over and over again. In this way a man exhausts himself, consumes his powers uselessly for years over one single work, paralysing his real qualities, and producing finally what I call 'the literature of the deaf,' the beauty and delicacy of which are no longer comprehensible save to himself. Once launched, one must keep afloat somehow, and this is my chief reason for resolutely taking the water. But what a fever of anxiety! how many hot and cold fits! and the fear of falling ill, and the anguish of feeling that paper always at one's heels in its seven-leagued boots."

'Jack' apparently succeeded in the 'Moniteur,' but not when republished at first. "Two volumes: it was too long and too dear for our French habits." "A little too much paper, my son," said Flaubert, to whom the book was dedicated. "I was also upbraided for having too much insisted on the sufferings of the poor martyr." The coolness of the French reader at sight of the two volumes is an instructive touch. One remembers in one's own passing experiences the instinctive hesitation. No doubt our traditional English three volumes would very soon disappear before such a test.

As if it were to detach more distinctly the life of the Maker from the theory of life which he himself presents as "real," we may add the following very pretty, if perhaps a little too confidential, description of the novelist's interior and manner of work. He describes himself as thinking and talking of nothing but his story while he is in the act of studying and constructing it. He fatigues all his comrades, "who are quite unaware of their own silent collaboration." But it is his wife above all who

suffers—from morning to night, at table, out of doors, going and coming to the theatre, and from parties in the evening, "during those long drives in cabs which cross the silence and the sleep of Paris." At all these undefended moments Madame Daudet has to listen. "Ah, poor artists' wives!" he cries. "It is true that mine is so much an artist herself, she has taken a great part in all that I have written. Not a page that she has not gone over, retouched, throwing over it a little golden dust. And so modest, so simple, so little a woman of letters!"

"My way of working is known. When all my notes have been made, my chapters in order, my personages thoroughly living, well set up in my mind, I begin to write, rapidly blocking out. I throw together ideas and events, without giving myself the time to correct or complete, because the subject presses on me, overwhelms me with all its details and characters. The page written, I pass it to my *collaborateur*, from whom again I receive it back in my turn: at last I copy it out, with what delight! the joy of a schoolboy who has finished his task, correcting a phrase here and there, completing, refining it: this is the happiest moment of the work. 'Fromont' was composed in this way in one of the old mansions of the Marais, where my study with its vast windows overlooked the verdure and blackened trellises of the garden. Outside that zone of calm and twittering birds was the working life of the *faubourg*, the smoke of manufactories, the rolling of waggons. . . . The entire district helped me, carried me on, worked for me. At one end of the immense room was my long table—at the other my wife's desk: and between us, running from one to another, carrying the successive sheets, was my eldest son, now with his regiment, then an infant with thick fair curls falling upon his little pinafore. One of the best recollections of my life as a writer."

The Parisian novelists describe life to us as made up of vile passions and the lusts of the flesh. How does this pretty scene correspond with the description? Did the child, with his curls, carry the sheets of Sappho from the husband to the wife? Did the lady, so charmingly celebrated, throw the "golden dust" of her feminine touch upon those records of the impure and loveless domination of a woman-beast over her victim? Is it possible that it is from the hands of good domestic men, in the calm of their respectable homes, that we get all those sickening details of wearisome and monotonous vice? If so, they merit a deeper condemnation than if they were as vicious as their books. But they also give the fullest justification to our belief that, however her astonishing vagaries in respect to "Art" are to be explained, France at bottom is not in the least what Frenchmen, with one accord, carried away by another of those theories to which they are so fanatically devoted, assert her to be. They are a fanatical nation: they cling to the idea, once beaten into their too logical national brain, of the Republic, at half-a-dozen *reprises*, and in the face of endless trouble. Let us believe that it is the same mad persistency in a mistaken view of art, which, out of the decent and harmonious interiors of a life such as M. Daudet claims for himself, brings the hideous nightmares of a corruption which no community could wallow in and live. These sketches, however, were made before the period of Sappho.

The still newer work¹ which has been published since the agreeable egotisms of 'Trente ans de Paris' is

by no means so pleasant a book. It is entirely concerned, as the title shows, with those famous Immortals, the Forty of the Academy,—that singular institution which is the butt and the hope of French writers, and the envy of many of our own. It is impossible to write a book with the intention of vilifying and degrading such an institution without laying one's self open to the insinuation that one has knocked at its gates in vain. The plums are sour, says the critic. This mistake, however, is too *banal*, too evident, to be attributed to M. Daudet. He thinks, perhaps, like many of his countrymen, that the Academy is an effete institution, that it sets up a false test, and awards its distinctions by a false method, so that nobody can take it for granted that literary merit or learning or eminence is proved by the fact of writing one's self *l'un des Quarante*. He is far from being the first to say this, though, curiously enough, those who have said it have always been men of letters outside the Academy. But however true it may be, we can scarcely find in such a contention a reason sufficient for holding the body in general up to contempt, especially when it is done with a passionate earnestness which is seldom called forth by mere public spirit. M. Daudet himself has so taught us to expect to recognise the personages in his books, that it is not to be wondered at if efforts have been made to identify the Academician whose pompous ignorance and folly are set forth at length. It is a cruel attempt, especially as one at least of the living members of the Academy has been mentioned. Happily the greater part of English readers do

¹ *L'Immortel: Mœurs Parisiennes.*
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Par Alphonse Daudet. Paris: 1888.

not even know who the members of the Academy are, and would be by no means interested by the discussion, so that it is unnecessary for us to make any attempt to follow it out.

The book introduces us at once into one of those spare and thrifty Parisian households, where a certain connection with the world and place in society is conjoined with a meagre living and parsimonious economy altogether unknown to ourselves. The Astier-Réhu are well-known people; he, one of the Forty—she, the descendant of equally distinguished personages, and maintaining relations with members of the highest circles. On Madame Astier's "day," floods of notables pour into her *salon*, which is no *salon* at all, but the study of her "Immortel," out of which he is turned into a small book-closet, that there may be room for the visitors. The lady, brought up under the very shadow of the Academy, is, we are given to understand, the prime agent in her husband's advancement, his title to such eminence being of the very smallest; but her whole soul is now absorbed in providing for the luxuries of her only child Paul, an architect, who has his mother's talent for the *exploitation* of friends, and has got himself a reputation by means of a cynical but generous sculptor, a *ci-devant* marquis—at least one of these persons abounding now in French records, who have resigned their ancestral honours, yet still do credit to their relinquished rank. Paul, however, is in continual want of money, and his mother at last takes the strong step of selling or pawning certain precious autographs on which M. Astier-Réhu spends all he has to spend, and by which he intends to enrich the

dull histories, *fortement documentés*, upon which rests his literary fame. They are in perfect good faith about these documents—both wife and husband: he putting the most exaggerated value upon the letters of Charles V. to Rabelais, which are the gems of his collection; she without a doubt as to the authority of his opinion in this respect, if in no other. The documents, however, turn out to be absolute and most contemptible forgeries, which any understanding person ought to have discovered at once; but the unhappy Immortal, in his green coat with its embroidered palms, instead of holding his tongue and saving his dignity, drags the forger before a court of law, and reveals his own shameful ignorance and folly to Tout Paris. This, with various complications in the loves and schemes of the son, is the plot of the tale, and it is not an attractive one. The dull and pompous academician is never made to call forth our interest,—not even when his pitiful farce of existence deepens into tragedy, and he at last finds an end to his miseries in the Seine, cast forth and insulted by his wife, as he is mocked and scorned by all his old associates. The scheming mother has not even any halo thrown over her mean artifices by the fact that it is love for her son that inspires her; the son is more entirely devoid of any noble quality, more base in his schemes even than his mother: the pretty young princess whom he woos (after a brutal fashion) within the mausoleum of her dead husband, for whom she has been inconsolable, deceives her too warm adorer immediately after she has returned his kiss, and runs away to marry a prince and ambassador—who, on his side, deserts the lady who has procured these

honours for him after a *liaison* of fifteen years,—and so forth. There is not one personage of the book in whom the reader can take the slightest interest, who touches our sympathy or attracts our regard. There is not even any humour in the figure which M. Daudet, in happier days, might have made at once delightful and pathetic, of the old Immortal, Jean Réhu, with his interminable stories and his “J’ai vu ça.” The author has sacrificed his art to the small motive of showing how the Academy dwarfs and debases everybody who becomes part of it. It is but a poor aim for a book.

It would, however, be futile to say that this curious side-glance at Paris, in one of its developments least open to the foreign reader, is without interest. One of the secondary figures is a certain Comte de Freydet, who comes to Paris on the publication of his poem, “Dieu dans la Nature,” which he has composed in the calm of the country, in his old chateau, amid all his rural pleasures and duties, in the society of an invalid sister, his letters to whom carry on part of the action of the tale. He comes full of poetic enthusiasm, eager for the applause of his old master, the Immortal, and the sympathy of his friends, and the “prix Boisseau” —an honour with which we are unfortunately unacquainted, but which is evidently an advanced and elder Newdigate in the gift of the Academy. The Count is already the gainer of a literary prize, and his mind is full of the thirst for distinction, though he is at the same time anxious to return to his fields and his country life. But when the Academician has breathed into his soul the poison of a hope that not the “prix Boisseau” but a *fauteuil* may be his reward, the

charms of his country life, and the love of his sick sister, and all his duties, are eclipsed, and the poet plunges into the middle of all the chicaneries and petty diplomacies of his canvass, breathlessly watching the last moments of one dying Academician after another, flattering, courting, laying siege in every way to any member of the Forty whom he can procure access to —finally bringing his sister to Paris to help him by dinners and receptions, which end by killing her, and leave him still a feverish candidate for suffrages which again and again are lost to him. The struggle fails somehow to interest us as it ought; but it is a curious study of the possibilities and dangers to which the French poet is subject.

And when all the dismal business is over, and the poor Immortal brought to the end of his career, the only regret that M. Daudet thinks likely to come into his mind at that supreme moment is the regret that he has never enjoyed himself like the noisy youths who promenade the *quais*. It was one of Balzac’s heroines, we think, who, after a life passed in the odour of sanctity, died in the deepest melancholy because she had always been immaculate, and never had known the delights of naughtiness. M. Daudet’s man of letters, pedagogue, historian, and Academician, goes out of the world with the same regret.

“Footsteps and laughter sounded on the bridge, approaching—students returning with their companions to their quarters. Afraid of being recognised, he rose, leaned over the parapet, and, while the band brushed past without seeing him, he reflected bitterly that he had never taken his pleasure, never given himself a night of enjoyment like that, singing wildly under the stars. Ambition, always

on the stretch, had held him straight on the way to that cupola, from which he had in return—what? Nothing. Long ago, even on the day of his reception, when the discourses were over, and the ceremony ended, he had the same impression of emptiness and mystified hope. ‘How now! I have got what I wanted; and is this all?’ Since then, by force of self-deception, by repeating with his colleagues that it was excellent, delightful, the greatest honour in the world, he had ended by believing it. But now the veil had fallen, he saw clear, and fain would have lifted his voice and cried aloud to all the youth of France: ‘It is not true. You are deceived. The Academy is a cheat, a false appearance. Make your own way, and do your own work outside of it. Above all, sacrifice nothing to it, for it has nothing to give beyond what you bring,—neither glory nor content. The Academy is neither a resource nor an asylum. It is an empty idea, a religion with no consolation in it. Under that cupola there is madness and self-destruction. And those who, in their distress, turn to it, holding out weary arms, embrace but a shadow—and emptiness—emptiness.’

“The old professor spoke aloud, bareheaded, holding the parapet with both hands, as he had often held the bar of his professorial chair in former days. Below the stream flowed dark with night between the lines of lamps, twinkling all with that silent life of light, which disturbs the spectator, as everything does that looks on and moves and says nothing. Upon the farther bank a drunken song wavered away into the distance—‘*Quand Cupidon, le matin qui réveille.*’ It was some tipsy Auvergnat returning to his boat. This reminded him of Teyssèdre the *frotteur* and his glass of wine. He seemed to see the man wiping his mouth with his sleeve. ‘Il n’y a que ça de bon dans la vie!’ Even that humble joy of nature he had never known it, he envied it. And feeling himself alone without resource, without a breast on which to lean, he

understood at last that his wife was right, and that once for all he must pack up and go!”

This is no doubt intended to be high tragedy. But it is difficult not to feel a certain grotesqueness in the despair of the man who thus regrets before he dies never to have been drunk—never to have given himself a good time, after the mode of the Quartier Latin. The poor gentleman was elderly, dull, and a terrible prig. It seems a little odd that these should be the things which he regretted before he died.

It is amusing, however, to hear, among other indications of the state of literary society in Paris, that whereas it used to be the custom to *débutait par des vers*, now “it is by way of criticism, and generally by a study of Shelley.” One of the ladies of the academical society proves her quality, among other things, by “discussing the poet Shelley with the very young critic of a review, correctly serious, with a high collar under his pointed chin.” Such sights may be seen elsewhere.

M. Hector Malot¹ is a writer who once took captive the British reader by his ‘*Sans Famille.*’ That, too, was very Dickenish, though not like M. Daudet, and it was very virtuous, which was still better; but, unfortunately, this able novelist has not adhered to that unexceptionable style. It is a pity when a man makes his *début* in this way without continuing in it, for great are the disappointments which he lays up for too confiding readers. It is difficult to imagine any greater shock to the British matron, for instance, than venturing timidly, as she does

¹ Conscience. By Hector Malot.

when on her travels, and not without many anguished uncertainties, upon the known name of the author of 'Sans Famille,' she finds herself not in the blameless centre of a domestic circle, but in—a very different place. Perhaps, however, when he has gone round the entire circle of varieties in the way of fiction, he may bethink himself of his early days and go back. He has not done this, we are sorry to say, in his last work, which is one of the boldest adoptions of another man's idea which we have ever met with in literature. The sensation caused wherever that terrible and revolting but enthralling book has been read, by 'Le Crime et le Châtiment,' has scarcely died away. Its name is yet fresh enough to call up a shudder; and the incidents, if not the appalling whirlpool of reflections and analyses, are still distinct, as if read yesterday. It is therefore a most daring *coup* on the part of another novelist to take up the same situations, the same crime—a construction almost identically similar to the sombre plot of the Russian. It is something of a novelty in literature which is thus inaugurated—not a plagiarism, but a comparison.

Clearly M. Malot has begun by a critical judgment of his *confrère*. He has found the terrible picture incomplete. His moral sense perhaps has been offended, and not unjustly so, by the escape of the double murderer from the consequences, both moral and physical, of his crime. Seven years in Siberia, softened by the ministrations of a soiled but rehabilitated angel, and the complete whitewashing of the criminal, has seemed to him, perhaps, too mild a fate. And we agree with M. Malot. Apart from the picture of that extraordinary chaotic

world of Russia, where everything seems too large and too crowded, and where in the whirl and endless interlacing of a population never before equalled in novels, Count Tolstoi and M. Dostoieffsky carry us labouring after them, incapable of rendering any account of the multitude we meet—the crime of — (we do not venture to attempt to recall his name), the hero of the last writer, is far too easily purged and got rid of. It makes upon us the effect of an accident, for which, indeed, the unfortunate man was scarcely to blame. He killed two women, it is true; but one murder was pure fatality, and the other really not such a bad thing to do if murder is permissible at all: which some people think it is not, but which the Russian novelist evidently considers an open question. The murderer, indeed, thinks it one, and turns round and round it as if it were the pivot of his being, in a way calculated to make not only himself, but everybody who looks on, frantic. But still it is difficult to imagine the man working out two base and cowardly murders in that way. M. Malot has evidently been of this way of thinking; and accordingly, he has taken up the subject to show how it ought to be treated. His hero, like the Russian, is a student, but a medical student—nay, practitioner, already exercising his profession, and on the verge of a special examination which is to open to him fame and fortune. At this point his resources suddenly break down. As a last hope he goes to an old money-lender, of whom there is a very curious and minute description,—an old wily vampire, sucking the blood of the miserable,—who holds out to him a sort of hope, and dis-

misses him till the next day, when he is to come again. The young doctor, Saniel, goes back to his miserable lodging, where there is neither fire nor food. He has no longer either money or credit, and, what is worse than starvation, his experiments must be relinquished, and the examination given up which is to open his career for him, unless the money-lender grants him the three thousand francs he has asked for. While he muses lugubriously over his work, various creditors appear, whom he has great difficulty in dismissing. Then comes a visit of another kind: a charming, bright, sensible, and gay young woman comes in upon his sombre studies. She is everything that is delightful, good, honest, and true; and if she has generously "given herself," as the phrase goes, to the young doctor, neither he nor the author think there is any harm in that. Finding that there is no fire, and that a little loaf which he has bought is all he is likely to have for dinner, this ministering angel spends all her money upon the materials for a good meal, and the two dine together with much cheerfulness by the side of the fire which she has found means to make. They speak of Caffié, the money-lender; and Philis tells him that her brother has been in his employment, and that he is "le plus dur, le plus méchant des hommes." Afterwards, when he finds that this is true, and that the hope held out to him by the old man was futile, the following conversation passes between the lovers:—

"You see what a monster he is."

"While he explained his arrangements to me, offering me advancement by the death of others, I thought of his own death; and said

to myself that if he were himself made an end of, it would only be what he deserved."

"That is very true."

"Nothing could have been easier for me at one moment. As he suffers from toothache, he showed me his mouth. I had nothing to do but to strangle him. We were alone: a miserable diabetic patient like that, with not more than six months to live, he could never have resisted a grip like mine. I should have taken his keys, opened his strong-box, and taken from it the thirty, forty, sixty thousand francs that I saw heaped up there. Justice would never have discovered anything. A doctor does not strangle his patients, he poisons them. He kills them scientifically, not brutally."

"The difficulty is that such means are at the command only of people who have no conscience, and who don't exist for us."

"I assure you that it was not any thought of conscience that held me back."

"The fear of remorse, to use a disagreeable word?"

"Intelligent persons have no remorse, my dear. Their reasonings precede the event, they don't follow it. Before they act, they weigh the for and against, and foresee what will be the consequences of their actions for others as well as for themselves: if this self-examination proves to them that there is a good reason for what they mean to do, they are tranquilised, and sure of never being exposed to remorse."

"No doubt," says Philis, "what you say is just, but it is impossible for me to accept it." They talk it over quietly as a matter of speculation. But when she leaves him, Saniel is plunged into a sea of horrible thoughts, and cannot get free. Late that evening he is called forth to perform an operation, and returns pursued by the same thoughts. He finds on the pavement a butcher's knife, which, after a moment's hesitation, look-

ing round him to see that no one is within sight, he takes up and carries home. The fate of Caffié is decided. The murder is accomplished accordingly next day, and, though he is much more agitated than he expects, everything goes well: nobody suspects him, and his experience completely fulfils his expectation, that people of intelligence have no remorse. For a time his troubles seem over; but he is rudely awakened from this dream of security by finding that the brother of Philis is suspected, and likely to be convicted unless some way can be found of saving him. He is willing to do all that he can for the accused; but it is not long before another and more appalling danger presents itself. Philis comes to him excited and happy, to tell him that a lady on the other side of the courtyard of Caffié's house has seen the face of the murderer through the window, and declares it not to be Florentin. But she is an invalid, and cannot come into court, and Saniel is the only person who can persuade and enable her to do so. Saniel is betrayed into a burst of furious passion when this is suggested to him; but, after a long fight against it, has to go, and is recognised by the lady, who sends for him afterwards to tell him so. The astonishing confidence with which the money-lender allows his desperate guest to see his wealth, and the invalid woman receives alone the man whom she knows to be already a murderer, is wonderful. Saniel, of course, having, it is clear, no other resource, kills his accuser cleverly by shutting unperceived the valve of her stove, so that in the morning she is found dead, without any violence or blame to any one. Florentin is convicted, and sent to the galleys. He

has thus three lives to reckon for.

But even now it is scarcely remorse that moves Saniel. A terrible agitation takes possession of him—the fear of discovery, and the impossibility of forgetting. He struggles with his thoughts, with his sleeplessness, and the incapacity of continuously following his work, which, after a time, seizes him. No suggestion of giving himself up, of saving Florentin, of accepting his punishment, comes into his mind. His effort is entirely directed to conceal, and, if possible, to cure himself of the physical consequences of his state. He struggles with himself by every medical means of calming excited spirits—swallows drugs, injects morphia; finally, finding himself tranquillised by the presence of Philis, he asks her to marry him, which, with much gratitude, she does. And then he stands on his defence against his wife—fearing to sleep, fearing to betray himself. The struggle becomes terrible as it goes on. At last, having exhausted every expedient, and practised every dreadful art to discover what she suspects, how much she suspects, he falls into his own trap and betrays his secret. Philis, who might have pardoned him his murders, cannot pardon him her brother's ruin, and she leaves him at once and for ever—leaving the deserted man in a state of tragical despair.

The book leaves him on the afternoon of a day when all the great physicians are coming out from a meeting of the Academy of Medicine. Dr Saniel is there among the heads of the profession. He has attained everything he desired, and security besides. Nobody suspects him of any crime. He is looked up to and consulted

on all hands—his eminence fully recognised. “Je vous ai accusé de vous croire plus fort que la vie: vous l’étiez en effet: mes compliments!” says an old visionary friend of his youth. The reader alone knows that the man’s life is a torture to him; that he is alone for ever, wrapt in a constant horror of betraying himself, isolated by the horrible recollection of ineffaceable crime.

On the whole, the conclusion is stronger than that of ‘Le Crime et le Châtiment.’ We leave the Muscovite in a fair way of wiping it out altogether, and beginning a new and finer life with a beloved companion who has also come through the deepest stains of corruption—a conclusion very charitable, no doubt, but somewhat startling; for human nature insists, whatever law may say, that there are some crimes inexpiable in this world. The Frenchman recognises more completely the logic of the situation. The life of the man-slayer is forfeited, and Nemesis cannot be escaped: if not on the scaffold, yet by a slower and more horrible *supplice*, it must answer for the other lives sacrificed. But even M. Malot has not been bold enough. In such a case, where repentance is not, suffering is not a sufficient atonement. Any secret, a mere act of deceit, the existence of a mystery in life, would have been enough to produce and account for the excited nerves and ruined temper of Saniei. Murder would work deeper: it would obliterate love, and sweep up all the tenderer emotions, or so at least one feels instinctively. Neither in the one book nor the other is the problem sounded to its depths. M. Malot has put himself voluntarily *en concurrence* with his Russian predecessor (un-

less, indeed, he also would have us believe that he has never read ‘Le Crime et le Châtiment’), with an evident sense of deficiency in the catastrophe in the first instance. It is scarcely less satisfactory in his own.

There is, however, a suggestion which rises in our mind after reading this book. Dr Saniei makes certain experiments, in what it is now the fashion of the day to call hypnotism, upon his wife, to ascertain how much she knows—with perfect success, for he finds out all he wants, and she remains unconscious of having told him anything. But why, then, if hypnotism, which means simply mesmerism, is so powerful, did the skilful young physician require to descend to the vulgar extremity of murder? Mr Besant, in his recent work ‘Herr Paulus,’ makes his expert do wonderful things with the unfortunate subject in his hands. He causes him to write letters of the utmost importance, to write cheques, to make and unmake various transactions both domestic and commercial, of none of which the poor gentleman retains any recollection when he wakes from his trance. Why should not Dr Saniei have availed himself of this power? He might have put the money-lender to sleep, made him open his safe himself and bestow handfuls of gold or rolls of bank-notes upon the operator, and when he waked be none the worse. Thus would Caffié’s life have been spared, and the horrors and struggles of the murderer avoided; while the difficulty of treating the case, of tracing the money and accounting for it, the expedients of the guilty (but not so guilty) man, and the efforts of the sufferer to remember how and

when he had parted with his money, would afford much ground for mental analysis. We present the suggestion to any intelligent novelist who may know how to make use of it. Herr Paulus does all this and much more, but with a disinterestedness and fine superiority in the midst of his elaborate deceptions which would disarm the best of detectives. If any one will take the ball from M. Malot's hands as he has taken it from those of M. Dostoieffsky, and combine it with the art of Mr Besant, a new combination might then be secured which, in the endless ever-changing yet ever-repeated varieties of fiction, is a most desirable thing indeed.

To strike out a new series of dramatic evolutions from the suggestion of a previous piece of fiction is most legitimate, and admits no question of plagiarism. It would seem that Madame Hector Malot¹, has been thus impressed by one of the combinations of her husband's novel. It is indeed somewhat remarkable, among all the studies of what is called love on the other side of the Channel (and indeed sometimes on our own), to meet with an *ingénue*, who is something more than an *ingénue*, yet has all that young person's beauty and charm and ingenuousness, who has "given herself" to her lover, and comes to him clandestinely, like any of the *intrigantes* of common fiction, yet remains as good and pure-minded as ever, and sees no occasion for shame in their relations. "Does your conscience upbraid you for loving me?" asks the lover in 'Conscience.' "No, assuredly," says the young lady. "You see, then, that you have a way particu-

lar to yourself of judging what is good and evil, which is not common to society, in which it is admitted, both in the religious and social point of view, that it is culpable in a young woman to have a paramour." But Philis is quite impervious to any such argument.

This, which is sufficiently remarkable, has evidently struck the imagination of the novelist's wife. A woman is apt to carry things further for good or evil than a man, and this lady has carried out the suggestion of her husband's book with great boldness. Her heroine is really a charming girl, full of girlish daring, romance, and a childish innocence and incapacity to understand any possibility of evil. From the seclusion of a too quiet home, she writes in her enthusiasm to an eminent musician, Reinert, at the moment when he has produced a new opera. He has all the world to applaud him, but nobody to sympathise with and understand him, and the girl's letter is balm to his soul. After keeping up a correspondence for some time they meet, and regard each other with instant mutual admiration. Reinert is married, notwithstanding which he has no hesitation in taking advantage of Delphine's indifference to the *convenances*, driving with her to Auteuil, where they spend several hours walking about and learning to know each other. After this first meeting it becomes necessary that they should meet again and often, always secretly, for she is aware that her father would look upon this tender friendship with other eyes. The friendship becomes more and more engrossing. It continues perfectly pure from

¹ Folies d'Amour. Par Madame Hector Malot. Paris: 1888.

any harm, but leads the two to the strangest expedients for meeting. He has to remove to the seaside at Havre with his wife and child. She is about to visit a sister at Trouville. By an elaborate system of deception and fibs innumerable, she comes to Havre for a few days on her way to Trouville, and they spend these days together like Babes in the Wood. But what is to be done in the winter, when they cannot walk together and see each other out of doors? The result of many consultations is that he takes an apartment and furnishes it with the utmost magnificence, and in this she meets him whenever she can escape from home, almost every day, as it turns out. This is their *chez soi*, their home, where they exchange every kind of noble and virtuous sentiment. She inspires him in his compositions, sings them to him, and his genius expands and is ennobled by her constant sympathy and love—but all in honour. This curious life goes on until, not less in honour, she is brought at last to “give herself” to her lover. But no shadow of guilt crosses Delphine’s mind. The hidden and mysterious life, the endless deception, the equivocal position, and the final fall—as it has always been considered even in French fiction—affects her not at all. She is evidently quite unconscious of doing wrong. Gradually, however, the catastrophe is prepared. When he has to leave Paris she becomes miserable, distracted—not jealous, for she has no doubt of him, but impatient of the enforced separation, and Reinert’s bondage to his duties. This condition of restlessness and wretchedness continues for some time, till at last she goes with a friend to a concert of her lover’s music, and sees his wife

and hears his history. She has believed that the wife was a *partie*, that the marriage was one of *convenance*. She ascertains that it was a mistake of youth, an early love; and realises with horror that the woman she has seen, the plain and common *bourgeoise*, has also inspired him in her day, and been an object of passion. “For her he had felt the same emotions; it was with the same heart that he had loved both one and the other.” Delphine is overwhelmed with shame. She breaks the tie between them definitely, and at once bids him farewell in an eloquent letter, and goes away—out of Paris and the book together. And this is a *folie d’amour*!

The book, perhaps, scarcely merits so detailed a description—though Delphine is really a charming creation—were it not for the extraordinary atrocity of the conception. We are sufficiently accustomed to the weeping Magdalene; but the strong, healthful, intelligent and high-minded young woman, whose moral composure is not in the least disturbed by what is universally considered the depth of shame by her sex—who is absolutely impervious to any touch of conscience or sense of downfall—is, so far as we know, absolutely new both in fiction and in morals. For Delphine is no *grisette* belonging to a world in which such adventures are common. She is a lady, educated, refined, and without acquaintance with evil; the daughter of an honourable man, brought up in all the traditions of a country very exacting in everything that concerns the *jeune fille*. It is true that these rules seem much relaxed in French novels, if not in French society, of late, and that the *jeune fille* seems now to be permitted many freedoms unknown

of old; but that is because the *mode Anglaise*, or rather the *mode Américaine*, is becoming the fashion, and is supposed to account for everything. To drive away into the country, however, with an unknown man, met for the first time, and there to wander about with him for hours of mutual *épanchement*, is a sort of escapade at which even an emancipated American would hesitate. It is one of the curious foreign readings, always exaggerated and often so unintelligent, of manners and habits different from their own,—not to say that the highest American fashion nowadays is, we have every reason to believe, entirely changed, and Daisy Miller no longer a possibility. And in no language, nor in any society, would the life of deception led by Delphine ever be considered pardonable, or other than culpable and degrading, not to speak of the final step, which never before has been looked upon, even by the most liberal and advanced interpreters of opinion, as anything less than ruin for a woman. The conduct of the man throughout, which is that of an unmitigated scoundrel, taking the basest advantage of a romantic girl's innocence and folly, is evidently, in the eyes of Madame Hector Malot, quite irreproachable. It is romantic, chivalric, poetical in the highest degree. In short, they are both victims of fate—guilt there is none, on one side or the other. There is no breach of morality, because morality has evidently no existence on that fine level of sentiment. It is a *folie d'amour*, and that is all; a mere episode, and no more.

This inconceivable conclusion is the climax, no doubt, of that complete indifference of art to moral-

ity, which the present school of novelists in France has been so industriously working out. For a long time it has been quite recognised that such an episode is of no importance in the life of a man—in short, that he is a milksop whose experiences are not enriched by several adventures of the kind. But up to this time it has still been considered a more serious matter for women, whose purity is an affair of public importance, watched over by the most dissolute, that at least the source of being may be kept clean. In the pursuit, however, of a higher and higher sensation, this has been arrived at, at last; and though Madame Malot's book is what, with a different *motif*, a feminine critic would call a pretty book, without offensive scenes, and with a heroine who is really charming and in some respects original, it is in this respect worse than the coarsest Zola. It is the triumph of evil suggestion over a wholesome and natural imagination, and marks a final infamy, the elimination of all morality—not only purity, but honour, honesty, and truth—from the ideal of the race.

M. André Theuriet¹ is another French romancer in whom the English reader has had a certain confidence. He is a lover of the woods and fields, and of sane and wholesome natural influences; and he has condescended on several occasions to treat of life in its larger sense, not as entirely a duel or struggle between the masculine and feminine. In his last work, however, custom has been too strong for him, and he has fallen into the coils of this eternal question. His hero, a middle-aged Parisian, rich and elegant, is

¹ Amour d'Automne. Par André Theuriet. Paris: 1888.

summoned to the deathbed of a friend, a gentleman of Savoie, who recommends to his guardianship in dying a young daughter, about to be left an orphan among relatives unfriendly to her. Philippe Desgranges, the Parisian, arrives too late, upon the day of the funeral ; but finds his help so necessary to Mariannette, the daughter of his friend, that he establishes himself in the village, on the banks of the Lake of Geneva, in order to arrange her affairs for her. The girl is fresh and fair, touching in her grief and the confidence with which she looks up to him, and by-and-by Philippe's mind is so renewed and refreshed by her company and by the pure country air and rural quiet, and all the simple influences round, that he forgets his age and his experiences, and falls in love, like a boy, with the delightful girl, who expands like a flower in the warmth of the new life rising upon her. Their walks and talks, the lake with its calm breadth and all its morning and evening glories, the blue hills behind, the haze of autumn in the air, the rural life with all its simple events, are touched with the grace and feeling of an accomplished artist. Philippe is charmed out of all the conventional cares and wearinesses of a man fatigued by the world. He begins to see that there may still remain for him a future un hoped for, a new existence full of love and peace. After long hesitation, and after certain modest approaches on the part of the girl, he has at last ventured to disclose what is in his heart, and has received her happy and tender response — when suddenly he is arrested by the terrible apparition of a woman with whom he has had relations extending over many years, who has taken fright at the

cessation of his letters, and who has come to call him back to a connection of which he has grown sick and weary. The lady who thus bursts into the idyllic scene is still beautiful and impassioned, an accomplished woman of the world, elegant and charming ; but the sight of her is as that of a basilisk to the unfortunate Philippe, who suddenly falls out of his paradise, with a horrible realisation of all the difficulties he had forgotten. The author has made Madame Archambault odious, but this is scarcely his intention. A desperate woman, making a last effort to recall the lover who loves her no longer,—full of passion and rage and the recklessness of despair, attempting seductions which have lost their power, and threats that turn his remorseful consciousness of his infidelity into hate and fear,—is not a pleasant vision. In the midst of a long struggle and altercation between these two, the innocent Mariannette, alarmed by her lover's air of suffering, comes anxiously to his door to see what is wrong, and sees and hears enough to reveal to her the state of affairs. "The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices make instruments to scourge us." When the old love is driven away in a transport of rage and misery, Philippe finds the door of the new love shut upon him. He has cut the ties which bind him to his old life, but the other and sweeter ties are torn asunder too.

The morality of this romance is not of a very high character. The hero, who is weary of the *liaison*, which has lasted too long, and of the constant demand upon him for signs of a passion which he no longer feels, is not an original conception. We have met with him a great many times already.

It is very probably not an unusual state of mind among gentlemen who form such connections: the desire to "range" himself, and pass on to the sober joys of a lawful life after having exhausted the other, is no doubt also quite natural, but it cannot be called novel or disinterested. On the whole, granted the first step, it is more noble to be, like Lancelot, falsely true, than to seek the comforts of respectability with a milder Elaine. And the woman who cannot make up her mind to be forsaken—who makes appeals, the vanity of which is too evident, to recollections which have become a bore, and love which exists no longer, is as commonplace as bread and butter, though in a different way. Even the *ingénue* is tiresome, although so innocent; and as we are by no means certain that she will not relent, even our sympathy for her undeserved trouble is lessened. It is curious that a man with so fine a talent as M. André Theuriet should not see how vulgar is that inevitable vice, and how many surprises there are in nature more novel, as well as more impressive, than the sudden appearance of Nemesis in the shape of the old love. He had been able to throw a veil of sentimental illusion upon the beginning of the intrigue; but there is nothing but staring, horrible, and ugly fact in the end.

'L'Unisson'¹ is, at least in the beginning, much more amusing and cheerful. It is the love-story of a sentimental young man, the only son of his mother, living with her in a *château isolé*, like so many of the young heroes of French romance, and a very lively and active-minded girl of the period, the daughter of a millionaire, her-

self very learned in the Bourse and the variations of trade, and a capable woman of business. They meet in the country, not without a little concert in the action of the parents; but the love-making itself is more than English in its freedom, though amusingly original in the contrast between the vaporous and romantic hero, full of fine sentiments, and the charming girl, *si gaie, si vivante, si vraiment femme à de certains moments*, but capable of metamorphosing herself into "*une sorte de petit notaire*," who tantalises and delights and shocks him. Claire regards her love at first as *un peu mouton*, till she is undeceived by driving him to the end of his patience. She favours him with her ideas upon marriage and most other things with a *sang-froid* which makes him frantic, but never shakes his adoration; to which, except by a glance now and then, she never responds, treating his high sentiments always with a little mockery, but healing every wound by an occasional gleam of something in her eye which betrays another soul within. These conversations are sometimes delightfully original—the emancipated young woman, from the French point of view, having quite a characteristic development of her own.

"'Mamma,' said Claire, all at once, 'you were wrong to advise me to buy the Adrianople Tramways. They have gone down twenty francs.'

"I asked her smiling if she gambled on the Bourse. She answered me with great composure that she did not gamble; but that as her mother was very clever in matters of business, she asked advice from her in order to make a good investment from time to time of her little economies. This statement made me

¹ L'Unisson. Par George Duruy. Hachette: 1888.

thoughtful. I had never saved any money for my part. When I had a little margin, I had bought engravings on the *quais*, photographs, useless curiosities with which I had encumbered my room; or I had given something to the Abbé for the poor. The little money I have to spend goes like this—I don't know how. How much wiser, like her, to lay something aside! Decidedly Mademoiselle Claire is full of sense, and I am nothing but a fool. These were my reflections while Madame Lecouterier entered into a consultation on the Adrianople Tramways with her husband and her daughter. I learned from this that the tramways of Adrianople, although *valeur à turban*, were also *valeur d'avenir*. A friend of the family, M. Blume, had told them so, and M. Blume was never mistaken.

“Who is M. Blume?” I asked, ingenuously.

“Blume of Guano,” answered Claire, with a certain shade of compassion.

“Blume de Guano—as we say Godfrey de Bouillon or Bernardin de Saint Pierre. I had no knowledge of M. Blume's title to nobility. I was unpardonable. What an astonishing aristocracy is being prepared for the twentieth century!”

The young lady informs him afterwards that marriage appears to her “a sort of superior comradeship, formed for the satisfaction of the interests and ambitions of the two persons concerned—who form a close union in order to make themselves a finer and larger position in life.” She reproaches him with sending her bouquets too magnificent. Mamma could have given him an address where they would have cost him much less than at the *Marché aux fleurs!* And when they are at last married, and he dreams of a retreat in the country—the *château isolé*, full of love and mutual happiness—she gives him her view of the life she

looks forward to in the following terms. She consents that love is a decided addition to the programme.

“If you wish me to tell you all my thoughts, I agree that it will be charming to be in love with each other. No need to hide it, since we are all right with M. le Maire and M. le Curé. A life large, easy, since we have already everything we need, with the prospect of being very rich one day or other. A nice *appartement* according to my ideas—bedroom, dining-room, a laundry with gas, three drawing-rooms, smoking-room, a large antechamber. And a series of receptions carefully arranged, not too many nor too few; neither women nor men of doubtful character. A few diplomats—nothing furnishes a room like diplomats; one or two composers for the piano—young composers on their promotion, who can be made to play other people's music as well as their own; literary people—because a writer who receives his brethren always seems to have more talent than they; a great man, but not more than one at a time. I feel that I am able to arrange all that, that I will do you credit, and that before six months our house will be most envied in Paris, if you will only leave me to do it my own way!”

The *dénouement* is less amusing; for after a time it is Claire who becomes sentimental, and he indifferent; and many anguishes have to be worked through before it comes all right in the end. The Unisson is at last made by means of the baby, whom at first she had been most unwilling to accept as a possibility. *Dénouements* in general, especially happy ones, are, it must be allowed, often foolish; but the wooing is delightful.

We step from this light and amusing story to the tragic volume which bears the name of M. Guy de Maupassant¹—tragic and full of

¹ Pierre et Jean. Par Guy de Maupassant.

sombre passion, scarcely relieved by any slighter margin of incident, although there is neither murder nor violence in it any more than light-heartedness of any kind. The book is one of those complete and careful studies of life in which certainly the higher masters of the French school are singularly successful, when they leave their one favourite subject behind and address themselves to the consideration of those mute tragedies, which may be carried on sometimes within the closest enclosure of a family circle. The story in this book is of the very slightest. We open upon the apparent tranquillity of a *bourgeois* family, of the most moderate means and pretensions, the father a Parisian shopkeeper, retired upon his savings to Havre, where he is drawn by a passion for the sea—a somewhat rude and rough *bon-homme* for the character of shopkeeper in Paris, which he has held all his previous life. There are two sons: trained, the one as a doctor, but without practice, the other as an *avocat*, in the same condition, both at home and depending on their parents. A suppressed rivalry, or rather jealousy, between these two is evident at once in the fishing expedition from which they are returning in the *Perle*, their father's little fishing-boat. The family have gone out on an expedition *à la pêche*: the mother and a pretty young widow, for whom both sons have begun to sigh, accompanying the fishers. The calm sea, the tranquil atmosphere, the sun declining in a great vault of sky, flushed with those faint rose-tinted clouds, which make its purity more apparent; the great steamships heaving in sight, rustling past towards the port, surround with a great calm the party in the boat,

the two strong young men—Pierre the elder, dark and moody; Jean the younger, blond and good-humoured: rowing homeward against each other, the elder especially putting forth all his efforts to pull his brother round and demonstrate his superior strength. This introduces at once the discord in the tranquil harmonies of sea and sky, which are reflected in the serene, half-slumbrous, half-reflective quiet of the mother, who, without saying anything or being much referred to, represents all the poetry that is in the party in her deep appreciation of the influences of nature. “Elle semblait jouir plus que tout le monde de cette promenade et de cette fin de jour.” On the return of the party to their home, they are met by one of the notaries of the town, who comes to announce the death of an old friend and neighbour in Paris, who, dying, has bequeathed all that he has, an income of twenty thousand francs, to the younger son, Jean. The surprise is great, and agitates the family much, especially Pierre, who, to his own great disgust, feels himself seized by that soured and painful jealousy of his brother which has been his misery all his life, and against which he has struggled so often in vain. All the good things, then, are for Jean. The pretty widow prefers him; he is the happiest in temper and life, and the trust of his parents; and now this inheritance to crown everything. The young man goes out to struggle with himself, asking himself what is the matter,—what has caused the excitement and misery he feels? Can it be this money? He is disgusted with himself. “C'est vraiment assez bas, cela!” Meeting his brother, he makes a great

effort, and congratulates him warmly, tenderly, on his good fortune, then wanders off again into the night pondering, and after a time wistfully looking out for some friend who will turn his thoughts from this subject. But he has few friends. He turns into a pharmacy, where an old Pole, whom he has done his best to help, essays to live. A word thrown out by the old man upon his piece of news, troubles him vaguely. "Ça ne fera pas un bon effet," says the apothecary. What does he mean? "In such a case," repeats the old man, "the two brothers should inherit equally. I tell you that has not a good appearance." A coarser commentary follows from a barmaid, to whom Pierre, in his loneliness, repeats the story, seeking sympathy wherever he can hope for it. "Your brother has great luck to have such friends as that," she says. "It's not wonderful that he resembles you so little!" What does she mean? She will not explain. And Pierre wanders out again into the night with these two arrows in his heart.

We cannot follow the tragical succession of thoughts, of questions, the piecing together of small incidents and stray recollections, and a hundred things half forgotten, which lead the unhappy young man from one step to another to the dreadful conclusion that Jean is not his father's son, but the son of the man who has left him this fortune. Pierre has adored his mother with the traditional fervour of a French son, and the horror of finding out shame and sin in the life of the gentle and tender woman who has made all the happiness of home for him makes him wretched, but does not make him relinquish the terrible keenly pursued inquiry into all the

evidences of her guilt. The struggle of his thoughts against this all-invading, all-absorbing passion; the mingling of the pitiful jealousy for which he despises himself with this devouring horror; the tragic certainty which he acquires that she divines his suspicions, and awaits helpless the moment of discovery, with an anguish which he shares—are all set before us with the finest skill and power. There are few sensational scenes—the ordinary incidents of life are enough to create and heighten the effect of the silent struggle in which the woman can do nothing, paralysed by her guilt and humiliation, and the man seems under the dominion of some sombre demon, and cannot arrest himself in the awful investigation into which he has been swept. Nothing can be more painful than the secret infallible progress from one certainty to another of the avenger, nor more terrible than the position of the mother, conscious almost from the first of the process going on against her.

Such a subject is scarcely within the possibilities of English art. It is too revolting and terrible for our methods. We may allow, so far as this goes, that Art is bolder on the other side of the Channel, hesitating at nothing. The same subject is treated in another novel by a less powerful hand than that of M. de Maupassant, when it is the daughter who finds out her mother's dishonour, and takes it upon herself, sacrificing everything, submitting to divorce and shame, rather than allow a horrible exposure to destroy and soil her parents. The story in this case is much more sensational, but also much less powerful. There is no self-sacrifice in M. de Maupassant's extraordinary book. Great scan-

dals are not in the way of the ordinary and commonplace people among whom, all the same, the greatest tragedies may be enacted. To bring his mother to shame is not in Pierre's thoughts. The father is not thought of by any of them. The ineffaceable shame shows in nothing so much as Jean's instinctive shutting up of his real father's portrait in the deepest corner of his desk, *fermé à double tour*. A way of making life possible is the only thing to be thought of, as it is so often among the deepest miseries of humankind. No *éclaircissement* or miserable exposure, — only how to go on, and spread a decent veil over the tragedy, and continue to live.

All this tremendous theme is wrought out upon the narrow peaceable background of the matter-of-fact *bourgeois* life with a reality and truth that give it double force. The head of the house all unconscious of what is going on around him, rude despot, never aware of any rebellion against him in the heart of the docile wife of whom, after a whole

lifetime together, he knows nothing; the honest sea-captain coming and going; the demure sensible young widow whom Pierre, after he sees that she prefers his brother, declares to be made to disgust the world with good sense and good behaviour! and not less the tranquil sea, the large atmosphere and openness of the harbour where Pierre so often pursues his gloomy thoughts, watching, without seeing them, the movement of the ships, the sounds and sights of the restless seaport, even the hoot of the "Sirene"—the horrible steam-whistle out of which no English brain has yet extracted any melody, but which answers shrilly through the mist and smoke to the perturbed soul of Pierre Roland with monstrous utterances not inappropriate,—all these accessories, so common, the very environment of ordinary existence, enhance the tragic effect. There could be no more perfect example, apart from all that can please and soothe and touch the heart, of remorseless yet all-accomplished Art.

MR FORSTER AND IRELAND.

THIS book¹ is a very valuable contribution to a right understanding of the Irish problem and difficulties. The latest conflict with conspiracy in that island has now been proceeding for nearly ten years, with varying fortunes, and with most trying and tragical incidents and results. During a controversy so prolonged, people forget, or if they don't forget they are liable to be overwhelmed with a mass of detail, and either way to lose sight of the great principles which are at stake. Under such circumstances it is very useful to obtain a true insight into the earlier portion of the struggle. It helps us to appreciate its true nature and importance, to see how and with what success or failure it was first grappled with, and thence to understand its present development, and, if possible, to find some clue to its further progress.

We think that Mr Reid was well advised not to delay publication until interest in the subject had declined. It is true that we must acquiesce in such drawbacks as this (vol. ii. p. 238), "The full truth cannot yet of course be revealed"—*i.e.*, in reference to the Irish administration; and also (vol. ii. p. 164), "There are comparatively few of his memoranda on those subjects"—*viz.*, discussions, often very perplexing and unsatisfactory, which took place amongst the Liberal leaders of Opposition after Mr Gladstone had withdrawn in 1875—"which it would be fair to those who survive to reproduce here." In that view publication is premature, for

the disclosures are not complete. Nevertheless it is in our judgment opportune and useful, and we are much too glad to get it, to indulge any unavailing regret for what is withheld.

The main subject of interest in the book, from the point of view of present politics, is, of course, Mr Forster's administration of Ireland. That was practically the first chapter in the conflict. It stands entirely by itself, and assuming the disclosure to be sufficient, we are in a position to pass judgment upon it. There are, however, many other subjects in the book; but we must with one exception pass them over in deference to that which is of overwhelming interest. It is imperative to notice his career as Minister of Education, and the author of the Act of 1870, for that was the most successful part of his life, and its results upon his personal position throw light upon his political surroundings as Chief Secretary for Ireland.

It is unnecessary to go much into detail. The main feature of it was this. Forster was an extreme Radical. In that character he had forced his way by the aid of Radical support into the Liberal Government of 1868. The Radicals therefore looked to him as their representative champion, in a Government the composition of which, after the Reform Act of 1867 and the decisive results of the general election of the following year, disappointed their expectation. The education policy of the Cabinet had been looked forward

¹ Life of the Right Honourable William Edward Forster. By T. Wemyss Reid. In 2 vols. London: Chapman & Hall (Limited), 1888.

to as a means of dealing a blow to the Establishment, by taking the question of education practically and completely out of its hands. Forster, on the other hand, was more intent on establishing schools than on disestablishing the Church. His view was that the hour had come and the man to effect a system of national education, and he declined to allow his view of what it was practicable to accomplish to be influenced by any ulterior views of Church policy. He was determined to pass the Bill of 1870, which was founded on compromise. It supplemented the existing schools by Board Schools. The Birmingham League wished to destroy the former and to establish a general State-controlled system of education, from which religion should be excluded. The Act of 1870, the first great constructive measure after the Reform Act of 1867, was carried with Conservative assistance over the heads of the Radical party, and in a way which precluded the accomplishment of their wishes. Birmingham was furious and Bradford disapproved. Forster was vehemently assailed and denounced by his own party, members of the League, and private friends. The charge was that he was false to his principles, and, to gratify his own ambition, was urging on a measure which directly violated them. He refused either to abandon his Bill or to recast it in a way which might have satisfied the Liberationists and the Birmingham League, but which would have led to its rejection probably by the Commons and certainly by the Lords.

The acrimony of the dispute was extraordinary. The Liberal party was in an enormous majority, and for one of its most advanced leaders

to frame and carry a measure which conciliated opponents rather than satisfied supporters created quite exceptional bitterness. It was at its height when Forster was raised to the Cabinet. During the rest of his career in Mr Gladstone's first Government, he was the object of increasing vituperation, animosity, and dislike from his own section of the party, who regarded themselves as betrayed. The sentiment did not die out during that party's long tenure of the Opposition benches while Lord Beaconsfield was in power. He was regarded by them as a traitor to the principles of his youth, which bound him over to forego a system of national education, rather than suspend his hostility to the Established Church; as a time-server, who had sacrificed his party to his own personal ambition. One result was that he lost a few years afterwards the leadership of the Liberal party, but at the same time he achieved his one great political success. We have often expressed in these pages approval of his education policy, and we never thought that the rancorous animosity of his old friends was at all justified. Great, or at all events successful, measures are not carried in this country by the triumph of extreme opinions. They are mostly founded on compromise, which is necessary alike to carry them and to work them. If Forster's sincerity and public spirit needed any vindication, they receive it in this book. At the time, all the irritation and anger of the disappointed supporters of the Government were discharged on his head; and those who remember the absurd agitation which was got up over the twenty-fifth clause of the Act, mainly to express their hostility, may appreciate the unreasonable extent of the animus

which was displayed. It was a clause which, at the time it was passed, was absolutely unnoticed by any single member of the House; it has since been forgotten; during the height of the agitation words would fail to describe the portentous consequences which it was foreshadowed would necessarily flow from it. The real fact was that Forster had completely alienated the allegiance, sympathy, and regard of a large section of his party.

Apropos of this twenty-fifth clause, there is one little incident worth recording. Though it was the chosen battle-ground of Forster's opponents when the League party, after the fall of the Gladstone Government, moved for its abolition, they were actually supported by some of Forster's old colleagues, who had been heartily with him when the Act was passed, but who presumably were more anxious to close a party discord than to support their old colleague. They were beaten by 373 to 128 votes. "I could not help telling Goschen," remarks Forster, "that they had not got much by throwing me over." On the contrary, he considered, in words applicable to more than the particular instance, that "so sudden and marked a change as twelve members of the late Government voting against a clause which that Government maintained up to the end of last session, was not an advantageous step for the party, and I think the division-list supports that view." The effect of this proceeding was to confirm the League party in what the biographer demonstrates to have been the erroneous belief that Forster alone was responsible for the character of the Education Act, so far as the religious question was concerned. They had combined at

the general election to expel him from his seat at Bradford, which he only retained by the aid of the Tory party. Their irreconcilable animosity threatened open antagonism in case he assumed the leadership of the party, and he was obliged, in order to avert party schism, to withdraw his candidature in favour of Lord Hartington—a step which further alienated from his side those of his party who, notwithstanding all that had happened, would have preferred his appointment as a definite repudiation of Whig ascendancy.

These personal relations of Mr Forster to his party must be borne in mind when we consider historically his fitness for the post of Chief Secretary of Ireland at the particular conjuncture of events in 1880. Years of opposition had not removed, they had hardly mitigated, the feeling towards him. It as much incapacitated him then for wielding the full force of a united Cabinet in conflict with conspiracy, as it had incapacitated him for the leadership of a united party five years earlier. And the explanation, it is clear from this book, lies deeper than the surface. We have to look not merely at his policy, which his critics denounced as treacherous and self-seeking. Something was attributable to the man and his manner, as well as to his policy; and that something was peculiarly odious to the Irish members, who were constantly, when they descended from the more scandalous extremes of abuse, inveighing against what they called his affectation of rugged virtue. Then he was self-contained and reticent, and had all the awkwardness which short-sightedness frequently produces. As his biographer observes:—

"It was unfortunate for him that amid his many absorbing preoccupa-

tions and anxieties he could not command that light and easy manner, which in superficial society passes current for politeness. If he was pressed in private by some member who caught him in the lobby or the club with a troublesome, or it might be simply an unnecessary, question, at a time when his thoughts were occupied with the grave and pressing duties of his office, he did not always show the patience which his interlocutor expected of him. Sometimes he would brush a troublesome questioner aside without thinking of his feelings. Intentionally discourteous he never was to any human being; and when he heard—as he sometimes did—that So-and-so had been wounded by the bluntness of his manner, he would show first surprise, and then the keenest concern.”

We must here digress for a short space to notice one important episode in his life, to which, if Ireland were not the all-absorbing topic of the hour, we should have been tempted to refer at greater length. A great deal has been said and written about Forster's influence in effecting a settlement of the Alabama disputes with the United States. Of course every one is glad that the sore was healed; but if we want an example of high-minded and sagacious statesmanship, the last instance we should cite would be that of the Gladstone Government and the Geneva arbitration. There was a treaty concluded, of which we recollect as if it were yesterday, one of the negotiators, an Oxford professor, in a lecture explaining that, for the sake of agreement, the parties had accepted words which bore different meanings, and in that way the “indirect claims” had been sprung upon us. And in this book we are forcibly reminded of the little wisdom with which the world is governed. When the arbitration court met at Geneva no one knew

exactly what would happen. There was a vague understanding, never fulfilled, that the American Government would withdraw the indirect claims, and the greatest uncertainty whether the arbitration would proceed or not. The English Government did not dare withdraw the direct claims; they never agreed to submit them; they were reduced to hoping the arbitrators would reject them. Some painter surely is required to do justice to the following impossible scene recorded in Forster's diary. A few of the Cabinet lunched with Lord Granville at the Foreign Office, waiting for telegrams which never arrived, as to whether or not we were floundering before the arbitrators in the bottomless bog of the indirect claims. “They had exhausted subjects of talk, and were listlessly looking at one another. ‘The Opposition would snigger if they saw us,’ said Granville; and soon after he said to me” (we are quoting Forster's diary), “‘I wonder whether West has brought a chess-board.’” Four days afterwards the joyful news arrived that the arbitrators had rejected the indirect claims, which, notwithstanding our diplomacy, had actually been submitted to them. We escaped a disastrous war or a disastrous humiliation by the skin of our teeth; and we pass without astonishment from the unutterable folly disclosed by this confession to the exulting statement that Gladstone announced this brilliant success in the House of Commons “amid great cheers on our side and the disgust of the Tories.” The whole annals of diplomacy might be ransacked in vain for a transaction more ridiculously fatuous, and, at the same time, more momentous in its possible consequences. The chess-board bears the same rela-

tion to the Alabama controversy that a celebrated fiddle did to a conflagration at Rome.

Before returning to our subject, we must notice some very interesting remarks, having regard to the quarter from which they emanate, of Mr Cobden as to Mr Gladstone's style of speaking—the peculiar charm of his eloquence. Writing in 1865, towards the close of life, he remarked to Forster that—

“Your utterances and Bright's have a distinct meaning. Gladstone's speeches have the effect on my mind of a beautiful strain of music. I can scarcely remember any clear unqualified expression of opinion outside his political, economical, and financial statements.”

And, alluding to his explanation of leaving Sir R. Peel's Government in 1845, he said:—

“I sat for an hour listening with real pleasure to his beautiful rhetorical involutions and evolutions, and at the close, turning to one of my neighbours, and exclaiming, ‘What a marvellous talent is this!’ Here have I been listening with pleasure for an hour to his explanation, and I know no more why he left the Government than before he commenced! It is, however, a talent of questionable value for public leadership.”

To return to Irish policy. At the time of Mr Forster's entrance upon his Irish career, the position, so far as it is at present ascertained, was this: Secret conspiracies, with active agents in Paris, London, and Dublin, had been at work for years. In 1877-78 Fenian prisoners, including Davitt, had been released. Bad seasons had occurred in Ireland, and a general election was approaching. There was a great opportunity for lighting up the flame of a land agitation, with a view to support that form of Home Rule policy which Mr Parnell had substituted for that of Mr

Butt. No one knows at present to what extent the Irish parliamentary party (if at all) were working in concert with these secret conspiracies. That will be the subject of investigation by a Royal Commission. All that it is material to draw attention to is that great activity was observable in Ireland; obstruction had been resorted to in the House of Commons, with all-night sittings beginning in 1876; extremely violent speeches had been made in America by Mr Parnell and others. Those had culminated in the emphatic declaration of Mr Parnell at Cincinnati, on the 23d February 1880, that the last link which keeps Ireland bound to England must be destroyed. Rebellion was thus openly avowed. What Mr Bright has lately called a rebel party existed then as much as it exists now. The extent and power of the conspiracy were the unknown factors. Lord Beaconsfield dissolved Parliament, declaring that a movement in its ultimate consequences more disastrous than pestilence or famine must be resisted. Mr Gladstone, in his addresses, made light of it, declared that it was all exaggeration, for the purpose of withdrawing the attention of the constituencies from the foreign policy of the Government. Mr Gladstone obtained the majority with the aid everywhere of the Irish vote. This, no doubt, was a great victory, and encouragement to the Irish leaders; but there was one element of the Liberal victory which probably disturbed their calculations—viz., that the Liberal majority was large enough to be independent of the Irish party. The relations between the Gladstone party and the Irish party, however cordial during the elections, were marked by estrangement immediately after-

wards. It was no part of Mr Parnell's policy to open his mouth and shut his eyes and see what his friends would give him. His plan was to establish his authority as the "uncrowned king" of Ireland, and prevent the establishment of the authority of Government. Subsequent events have shown that the materials were at hand—where they came from is another matter—to establish a reign of terrorism in Ireland. There is every reason to be convinced that the Gladstone Government were quite blind to the magnitude of the evil with which they had to contend. Events were in preparation which inflicted untold misery upon Ireland—misery worse than that of pestilence or famine. As they rolled along they have wrecked the Liberal party, and have raised the momentous question of the integrity of the British Empire and the unity of its Parliament.

At the time, however, these things were hid from the eyes of the new Government, each member of which settled down to his own department, thankful (all of them except Forster) that the Irish office had not fallen to him, and that the country had decided that things in that island were not nearly so bad as had been represented by the late Ministry. Mr Gladstone, who had spent his days and nights, as he had told the country, in thwarting the policy of Lord Beaconsfield, being now in power, was labouring to reverse it both in Asia and Europe, pulling up the rails to Quetta, impeding the execution of the Berlin Treaty, meddling and muddling in South Africa and Egypt. It is clear that the new Government had no settled plan of policy for Ireland. The modified coercion, permitted by the Peace Preservation Acts then in force, was allowed to drop,

notwithstanding the protests of the outgoing Ministers. It was impossible to exasperate the Parnellites by their retention. Ireland was simply handed over to Mr Forster, who was selected for the office of Chief Secretary, apparently as a man of recognised authority and experience, who would take the whole subject off their hands. Administration was never Mr Gladstone's *forte* (in fact he has not held an administrative department for more than forty years), so his panacea was, as usual, a piece of sensational legislation which he was obliged to keep till next year. It cannot be doubted now that Ireland was in a condition to require the closest attention of the Government. And if all its powers were to be delegated to a single member of the Cabinet, they ought, at least, to have been intrusted to some one more likely than Mr Forster to command the goodwill and sympathetic support of all its members. The mere fact that he was sixty-two years of age was an objection to placing him in an office which required such constant travelling and immense physical exertion. No man could have displayed more energy and courage than he did. Many of the qualities exhibited excite the highest respect. But he failed to conciliate support; his want of tact, blundering, and roughness exasperated his enemies to the utmost. The consequence was that, untiring as were his efforts, the result of this first chapter in the history of this struggle was the inglorious surrender at Kilmainham and the sacrifice by the Government of their champion and representative to the common foe. Not that it was deserved by any means. But a man in that position must count up his resources if he is to succeed. He soon found

he could not govern with the ordinary law. In October he wanted a Coercion Act. There were members of the Cabinet who would not let him have one. We won't assume that there was any desire to thwart him, or that any new members of the Cabinet seized an opportunity to assert their influence. Anyhow, he had to go on governing with the ordinary law, and meanwhile the forces of disorder were getting the upper hand decisively. When he got increased powers, they were practically limited to the old blundering device of suspending the Habeas Corpus Act. Then, having got them, late as it was, it was so "distasteful" to him to be tarred with the coercion brush that he forbore to use it for some little time. Possibly he thought he could hold it in reserve. Meanwhile time wore on. His extended powers were strictly limited in point of time—not much more than eighteen months, nearly half of which he allowed to pass before he made, with the aid and support of the Premier, his grand *coup* of arresting the leaders of the Land League in a batch. In the meantime his Act had lost half its force. The moment you get within measuring distance of the prescribed term, the question arises, Are you going to renew the Act? and you must pledge yourself one way or the other. If you engage to renew it, up starts organised opposition; if you pledge yourself against renewal, it must be because it is no longer necessary, and then your weapon breaks in your hands,—you can't go on enforcing it. In that way the nominal limit may be eighteen months, the real limit of time is much shorter. Add to this, that you have for your chief an old parliamentary hand, who, before all things, has an eye to votes—colleagues who are not all

of them very friendly or sympathetic—and the conclusion is that time is not on your side. Mr Forster was a beaten man from the outset of the contest. His enemies soon learnt to distinguish between him and the Government; and though he locked up nearly a thousand of them, a good many found the quarters and the mildness of the restraint no great hardship, and others felt that with patience they must eventually triumph. Mr Forster was cheered by some sympathetic letters from his chief, a great speech at Leeds, and an assurance that if he resigned his chief would go too. But for all that, when the parliamentary position required it, the resources of civilisation were at an end, the prison doors were unlocked, negotiations and compromises were entered into, and Forster had only one resource left, resignation, while his liberated prisoners were welcomed into the Liberal fold.

Such was in general terms the disastrous character of what we may call the first chapter of the contest for supremacy in Ireland. When we come to the details given in this book, they bear out most completely the view which all competent observers took at the time—viz., that Forster was honest, sincere, and determined, but that he was not the right man in the right place. It is impossible not to admire the rare courage and devotedness to duty which he brought to his allotted task. He displayed qualities and performed actions of real heroism in a position of unexampled difficulty. In reading the record of his struggles, for his own sake we heartily wish that they had been crowned with a larger measure of success. He ought to have been Secretary for the Colonies, and some younger man—an advanced Radical of suit-

able energy and equally averse from coercion, but on more cordial terms with his party—should have been placed in the van of difficulty and danger, till, having sorted his ideas as to the adequacy of the ordinary law to cope with Irish rebellion, he should appeal to sympathetic colleagues to support his demand for extended powers. However, Mr Forster was appointed; and what happened under his *régime* is well and forcibly narrated in this book, and is shortly as follows.

The spirit with which the Gladstone Government entered upon its Irish career resulted, we are told, from the conviction of all its members that to grant any kind of local autonomy to Ireland would be ruinous to the interests of the United Kingdom as a whole. No member of the Administration showed any sympathy with the Irish demand for Home Rule, but they expected from the Irish party a disposition to co-operate with the Liberals; and they expected, by making concessions to Irish demands, to modify or remove the desire for Home Rule, and diminish that hostility to the law which was so alarmingly conspicuous. In other words, they were under the persuasion that they had to deal with a purely constitutional agitation, *bonâ fide* desirous of an amendment in the law. They accordingly began with the experiment of governing the country under the ordinary law, contrary to the advice and remonstrances of their predecessors. But it was, or might have been very soon, discovered that the Irish party was implacable. They took offence at the absence of allusion to the Land question in the Queen's Speech. They then called for a temporary measure to stave off evictions. That led to the Com-

ensation for Disturbance Bill, which was to continue in operation till the end of the year, and the practical effect of which would be to stop evictions for that period. It was thrown out by the House of Lords; and although, after amendments moved by the Government, it had been opposed by the Home Rule party as illusory, every endeavour was made at the time and in this book to fix the House of Lords with responsibility for the disorders of the autumn. But in reality the Irish party adopted from the very first an attitude of pronounced hostility to the Government, notwithstanding their concessions and their promise of a Land Bill for the next year. Mr Parnell cast doubts on their sincerity; advised the farmers not to give evidence before the Commission of Inquiry; introduced the system of boycotting, to deter men from bidding for farms from which tenants had been evicted; and renewed his declarations of hostility, not merely towards English law, but also to the English connection. The Land League established courts of its own for the trial of land cases: outrages upon cattle, attempts at assassination, moonlighters, the sending of threatening letters, and all forms of agrarian crime followed in their train, including the sensational murder of Lord Mountmorris; while the leaders, instead of welcoming a policy of conciliation, openly bade defiance to imperial authority.

Under these circumstances, the immediate matter in hand was to preserve the social fabric from ruin, by maintaining the authority of the Queen. The measures proposed by Mr Forster for that purpose were, first, the prosecution of Mr Parnell and others (Dillon, Biggar, Sullivan, Sexton, Egan, Brennan, Sheridan, and Walsh) as

“men who, without doubt, are great criminals and mischievous criminals,” (vol. ii. p. 256). Even in October 1880 we find Forster writing to Mr Gladstone, “Parnell has incited to these outrages; but they may now be beyond his control.” Administratively, he proclaimed Mayo and Galway, and asked the military authorities to fill the barracks in those counties. He hinted thus early at suspension of the Habeas Corpus, to which Mr Gladstone replied the very next day, to the effect that legislation should not mean merely the suspension of the Habeas Corpus, but that the law should be amended, so as to render criminal certain forms of combination, in case on inquiry the existing law allowed them. In November, Forster wrote that the condition of the country which produced the outrages was owing to the action of the Land League; but the outrages themselves were now beyond its control. There were old Fenians, old Ribbonmen, or *mauvais sujets*, about, who were the actual perpetrators, and Forster had evidently been led to believe that they were all known to the police, and that if a few of them were arrested the remainder would shrink into their holes.

He proceeded with the State prosecution, and, as he had expected, failed. But when the Cabinet met in November, there was no chance of getting increased powers. This was the time when the advanced members of that Cabinet were talking of force being no remedy, and were gloating over landlords running for their lives. With them Forster had no influence; possibly they had some satisfaction in thwarting the man whom they, or those whom they represented, had denounced in no measured terms as a traitor. The

struggle threatened the disruption of the Cabinet, six months after it had been formed. It ended in a compromise: that Forster should struggle on a little while longer, and that Parliament, instead of being resumed in December for special legislation, should not meet till January 1881. One side in the dispute, so far as we remember of the public utterances at that time, insisted that coercion and remedial measures should go hand in hand. Mr Forster wanted to combat “a system of general terrorism,” exercised by means of personal outrage. Mr Gladstone, who does not seem at this stage to have been at all alive to the urgency of the Irish peril, doubted whether the number of homicides justified the extreme step proposed. The offences, in his opinion, were mostly agrarian, and the Land League the source of them. The disruption of the Cabinet was averted by Forster throwing his responsibility on his colleagues, and undertaking to struggle on till the turn of the year.

Mr Reid says that both Forster and his colleagues were soon called upon to feel that grievous injury had been wrought in Ireland by this refusal of additional powers to the Irish Government. Boycotting grew apace, and could not be touched by the ordinary law; while its relentless cruelty cannot be exaggerated. It was the poor especially who suffered when once they had fallen under the ban of the League. It was a system of organised and remorseless persecution of all who failed to obey Ireland’s “uncrowned king.” Reform of the law could not be its object, for nothing was more calculated to impede it. It was veiled rebellion — the substitution of an authority which ousted that of the established Government. The

contest was most unequal, for the established Government was fettered by the laws of the realm, the new authority could plan and execute in secret, and could, with complete impunity and freedom, adapt its action to any circumstances that might arise. The suffering was intense; the number of outrages in December reached 2573; and when Parliament met, public feeling was running very high indeed.

It was in this way that the contest began, which has not yet terminated, for ascendancy in Ireland, between the Government of the Queen on the one side, and the League, by whichever name it is called, on the other, supported by American gold and wielding an authority sanctioned only by crime. The party of disorder gained time; and time in such matters, and with the resources which they possessed and actively wielded, gave them an enormous advantage. The contest can only terminate in one of two ways: either by the successful vindication of the Government of the Queen, or by the triumph of the League—in the form of separating Ireland from Great Britain, by dividing the present united sovereignty or legislation, or both. Until that contest is ended, it is in vain to expect any effective solution of Irish difficulties—either by schemes of local government or by remedial measures. While the contest is going on, whatever is done for Ireland is of practical importance, not as regards the welfare of the Irish people, but mainly so far as it can be turned to account by one or other of the political belligerents. The questions raised by the 'Times,' and shortly to be under investigation by a Royal Commission, as to the degree of per-

sonal complicity in crime on the part of Mr Parnell and his political associates, are, in the main, personal questions only; but the answers to them will powerfully affect the political controversy, by disclosing, for good or for evil, what are the true character, aims, and antecedents of the *de facto* representatives of Ireland. Mr Forster, when Parliament met, speedily showed that he had made up his mind as to the character of the Irish crisis. He observed that the meetings of the League were followed by outrages; that its object was not to bring about alterations in the land law by constitutional means, but to prevent payment of rent except in accordance with the "unwritten law" of Mr Parnell. He did not openly, as he had in his letters, charge Mr Parnell with actually inciting to outrage, but with knowing that crime must necessarily result from his speeches and action. Throughout that dreary autumn the leaders of the League had abstained from denouncing crime. Mr Forster's object, thus early in the struggle, was to drive them from this attitude of diplomatic reserve, and force them to take a side, either as the open enemies of crime, or its avowed supporters; in the belief that whichever course they took would be for the benefit of the party of law and order. He drew a glowing picture of the reign of terror which had been established, and then proposed and carried his Protection Act, which empowered the Lord Lieutenant to arrest any person whom he might reasonably suspect of treasonable practices or agrarian offences, and to detain him as an unconvicted prisoner for any length of time, but not later than September 30, 1882.

It was during the progress of this measure that the system of parliamentary obstruction which had begun in 1876 was carried to its extremest lengths. The result of such proceedings, which had been persisted in for years, would have been to bring Parliament into contempt, and to paralyse its efficiency and powers. The time-honoured rules of the House of Commons had to be altered several times in the course of a few years to meet this mode of conducting hostilities against the established Government and Legislature of the realm. The Protection Act was passed, and in the same year was also passed Mr Gladstone's second great Land Act, the result of which, in the opinion of men of all parties, has been to take away every vestige of reasonable grievance from the Irish tenant, and to place him in a more advantageous position as respects his landlord and his holding than he occupies in any other country in the world.

Then followed a remarkable incident. The passing of the Protection Act was succeeded by a lull in outrages, and also by a certain inaction on the part of the Government, as if both sides were pausing before resorting to extremities. Before the Act passed, Mr Michael Davitt was arrested as a Fenian convict on ticket-of-leave, and sent back to penal servitude. After the Act passed, no wholesale arrests were made, and no sudden swoop took place on the centres of lawlessness. Here and there a notorious agitator was arrested and conveyed to Kilmainham. The leaders of the Land League proclaimed their contempt for the Act and for the Government. Outrages began to mount up again, and there were constant collisions between the

process-servers and the public. Several fatal conflicts ensued.

Mr Reid says there were differences between Forster and his colleagues in respect of the Land Bill. Forster was still indignant with the House of Lords for having rejected his Compensation for Disturbance Bill. Having regard to the dissatisfaction of the Irish party with that Bill, the hostile reception afterwards accorded to the Land Act itself, and the view which Forster himself took of the real aims of his opponents, the constant harping on the rejection of this Bill, both by himself and his biographer, seems a little absurd. The task of governing a people by means of a Coercion Act was "intensely distasteful" to him, now that he had got it; and he hoped that after the passing of the Land Act he might retire from the Chief Secretaryship.

If the delay in procuring extended powers had been disastrous, what followed was not much better. Forster early discovered that the Protection Act did not give him the full power he had hoped to obtain from it. All he could do was to imprison those whom he "reasonably suspected." Except in regard to those who made public speeches, he was dependent upon his police as to whom he should suspect. The fact is, that suspension of the Habeas Corpus is in the main a measure for the increase of the power of the police, and of those who can influence the police. Forster relied on their representations that, provided they could arrest on suspicion, they would soon clear the country. The police, however, were at fault—they could not "reasonably suspect"; and, worse than that, it so happened that actual outrages occurred without being followed by arrests—or with such delay as to

deprive them of most of their effect. He arrested Mr Dillon for violent speeches which could not be ignored. However, some arrests were made during the summer of 1881: it is not clearly stated in this book how many or for what causes. One striking feature about those arrests and imprisonments was this. No criminal taint was allowed to attach to the prisoners. They were treated far better than first-class misdemeanants. They had no menial tasks, wore their own clothes, could provide their own food, read books and newspapers, received friends, were allowed out whenever reasonable excuse for temporary liberation arose. Mr Reid calls this combining firmness and gentleness. It seems to us to involve the maximum of illegality with the minimum of deterrent effect. The political advantages of martyrdom were cheaply purchased. Outrages were frequent, and each fell on Forster, we are told, like a personal blow. In June he informed his colleagues he was doing three things: (1) arresting the central and local leaders of the Land League; (2) letting sub-sheriffs and landlords know that they must tell us what protection they want, and when and where; (3) giving the people to understand that if they drive us to it, we must fire on them. "I think, by striking blow after blow every day, I may make the law prevail." But by the end of June it was clear that the fall in the outrage returns which had followed the passing of the Protection Act had been temporary merely; and that murders were increasing.

July showed a considerable falling off in agrarian outrages. So in August Forster took a short holiday; and in September Mr Gladstone, uneasy as usual as

to votes, wanted to relax coercion. That soon brought his Chief Secretary back. He dreaded the possible results of anything which might be construed into a surrender to Mr Parnell and the League. Father Sheehy, however, was released. That, of course, was regarded as a triumph over the Chief Secretary; and the Father forthwith accompanied Mr Parnell on his speaking tours, in which abuse of Mr Forster, and systematic attempts to prejudice the people against the Land Act, were continuously resorted to, so successfully that Parnell had the Land Act at his mercy.

This hostility to accomplished legislation touched the Prime Minister closely, and Mr Gladstone is not a person to be trifled with when his will is paramount, as there is no doubt it was over all classes of political opponents in Ireland when the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended. The law officers soon gave their opinion that Mr Parnell had by his speeches been guilty of treasonable practices. Forster could not say that he had ever condemned the explosive dynamite policy, but that, on the other hand, he had called one explosion which had been fatal in its results a practical joke. "Unless," said Forster, in words quite as applicable now as then, "we can strike down boycotting, Parnell will beat us; for men, rather than let themselves be ruined, will obey him and disobey the law." He accordingly suggested Parnell's arrest, and Mr Gladstone consented, earnestly adjuring him to have everything in readiness to arrest, not merely him, but the leaders of the League, directly the consent of the Cabinet had been obtained. There is also a statement by Mr Gladstone in his letter of 3d October, that his

own fancy had been to have an autumn session for the purpose of breaking down the League.

This was the heaviest blow yet struck at the power of the agitation; but it was "too late," and, under all the circumstances, a failure. Parnell, Dillon, and Sexton were in prison. Egan, the treasurer, fled. Then came the No-Rent Manifesto, which Forster met promptly by a proclamation, issued on his own responsibility, declaring the Land League an illegal association, and announcing that its meetings would be suppressed by force.

But though the League lay crushed, secret conspiracy prevailed. Gangs of desperate men, says Mr Reid, were engaged in establishing a system of organised terrorism. Bands of "moonlighters," men masked and armed, carried out the decrees of secret courts, their victims being, not the landlords and the wealthy, but cottiers and small farmers, men of the same rank with their murderers or persecutors. Nothing could protect any man who had incurred their vengeance. Outrages again increased; the terror which they inspired was the foundation of this lawless and illegal authority. Both the Prime Minister and the Chief Secretary interchanged notes expressing each a desire to resign as soon as things had mended. The work was very arduous. Personal responsibility for every arrest, every detention, and the consequence of every detention, was a greater load than should have been laid on the shoulders of any single man, more especially when the arrests nearly reached a thousand in number. "They talk of the Czar of Russia," said Forster after his retirement; "but the Czar is not more of a personal ruler than I was during

that last winter in Ireland. My colleagues left me to do as I pleased, and the whole thing was on my hands."

The position of things at the beginning of 1882 was by no means a pleasant one, and Forster's position had become extremely difficult. The Protection Act had not put an end to outrages; hundreds of prisoners (they eventually reached the number of 872), including Mr Parnell and other members of Parliament, were locked up, reasonably suspected but not even accused. Irish Nationalists, landlords, party opponents, and political friends combined to denounce the Chief Secretary. It was contended that Forster was solely responsible, and that other members of the Government disapproved his policy. Great efforts, at all events, were made to discredit and drive him from office. It was in the midst of this that Forster determined to go down personally to Clare, Limerick, and Galway, to see the state of the country there with his own eyes. Without police protection, he visited the most disturbed districts, remonstrated face to face with the inhabitants on their silent acquiescence in the reign of terror organised by the agitators. He walked about unarmed and unprotected, and talked to groups of farmers and labourers. At Tullamore, the centre of one of the outrage districts, he made a speech which produced a profound impression, winding up with the assurance that the suspects would be released as soon as outrages ceased, and men were no longer ruined, maimed, and murdered for doing their duty or asserting their rights.

It was at the end of March that the differences which led to his resignation first began to arise between Forster and the Prime Minister. Mr Gladstone, with an eye

to the parliamentary position of the Government and the opinions of his supporters, began to point out to his Chief Secretary the impossibility of renewing the Protection Act when it expired in September. That of course involved an early pledge not to do so. Forster, of course, objected to any present pledge not to renew. He said he could not keep the suspects in prison after it had been given; also that the Act was the best weapon against boycotting and the secret societies; that the alternative strong measures should be proposed concurrently with the pledge not to renew, for which it was doubtful if parliamentary time sufficed. "I trust," he wrote to Mr Gladstone on the 25th March, in terms which foreboded a rupture, "we shall not buy votes by any concession to the Parnellites. I see signs everywhere of the approaching defeat of the conspiracy; but we are in the crisis of the conflict, and any such concession just now would be fatal."

Placed in the van, in the supreme moment of the conflict, he may have hoped that his colleagues would not strike his weapon out of his hands; but it was hope against hope. The most ordinary observer, who noted the exigencies of party at Westminster, with the Chief Secretary's difficulties in Ireland, could not fail to conclude, what the Parnellites doubtless had foreseen during the whole course of their imprisonment, that as far as Forster was concerned, the game of law and order was up. On the 4th April he again protested against giving up the Protection Act. "I dare not face the autumn and winter without it," or at least without suspending trial by jury, and taking power to arrest persons out at night under suspicious circumstances. He accordingly drafted

a bill for extension of the powers of the executive, and, with the consent of Mr Gladstone and Mr Childers, provided for the establishment of provincial councils in Ireland. Then came the release of Mr Parnell on parole, followed by overtures from his friend Captain O'Shea to Mr Gladstone. Mr Forster stoutly objected to the release of Parnell and other *leading* suspects, unless (1) the country was quiet, (2) fresh powers were given by a new Act, (3) the prisoners engaged not to intimidate. Mr Chamberlain negotiated with Captain O'Shea on behalf of the Government. A bill, inspired by Mr Parnell, being brought into the House of Commons by Irish members, on the subject of arrears of rent, Mr Gladstone saw in this circumstance evidence that they were seeking by constitutional methods to amend the Land Act, and that they were beginning to abandon their uncompromising hostility to it. Lord Spencer then replaced Lord Cowper as Lord Lieutenant, in reality with Mr Forster's wish and consent, though at the time it was considered to discredit him. Many members were beginning to grow impatient at the continued imprisonment of members without charge and without trial. The Cabinet was divided. Mr Gladstone was anxious "to discuss the prospective policy in lieu of coercion." Forster stuck to it that he would not consent to release except on one or other of his three conditions. Then came the treaty of Kilmainham, which was the cause of Forster's resignation. He disapproved the negotiations, as well he might, between O'Shea and another member of the Cabinet. As to the result of the negotiations, he said he expected little from them, and found still less. Mr Gladstone, on the other

hand, was gratified beyond measure; and that of course settled the question of Forster's resignation, and the release of the suspects.

The concordat thus established between Mr Parnell and Mr Gladstone has had great and increasing results, not merely on the welfare of Ireland, but on the course of English party history, and on the nature of the political questions to which the wider democracy of the United Kingdom, established in power by the Reform Act of 1884, has had to direct its attention. That concordat is expressed in a single sentence, which is now of high historical significance and importance; and we shall accordingly transcribe it.

"If the arrears question," said Mr Parnell, "be settled upon the lines indicated by us, I have every confidence—a confidence shared by my colleagues—that the exertions which we should be able to make, strenuously and unremittingly, would be effective in stopping outrages and intimidation of all kinds. . . . The accomplishment of the programme I have sketched out to you would, in my judgment, be regarded by the country as a practical settlement of the land question, and would, I feel, soon enable us to co-operate cordially with the Liberal party in forwarding Liberal principles and measures of general reform, and that the Government at the end of the session would, from the state of the country, feel themselves thoroughly justified in dispensing with further coercive measures."

It must be added that Captain O'Shea is said by Forster to have explained in so many words "that the conspiracy which has been used to get up boycotting and outrages will now be used to put them down, and that there will be a union with the Liberal party," Parnell hoping to make use of Sheridan for that purpose, and to get him back from abroad.

The split between the Cabinet and Mr Forster arose in this way. Forster never concealed his reluctance to countenance the negotiations between O'Shea and Mr Chamberlain. "His strong conviction was that the secret bands of outrage-mongers, by whom Ireland was held under the spell of a cruel and demoralising terror, could not be dealt with by means of any negotiations whatever with the Land League leaders." Mr Gladstone had no such reluctance and denied any such conviction. He expressed his gratification with the sentence quoted above from Mr Parnell's letter. As to his promised co-operation with the Liberal party, "this is a *hors d'œuvre*," he wrote, "which we had no right to expect, and I rather think have no right at present to accept." The Cabinet agreed with Mr Gladstone. Forster's criticism on it, in his speech of February 1883, is, that if his colleagues had been in his position they would have done as he did; if he had been in theirs, he would probably have thought as they did.

The transaction recorded is one of the most memorable in our recent history. When it was made known a short time afterwards, strong attempts were made to suppress the passage relative to future co-operation with the Liberal party, but Forster refused to allow it. Its real character was a marked concession to Parnell. If unconditional, it was a complete surrender. If conditional, it was, as Forster said, a disgraceful compromise. It represented a complete administrative failure on the part of the Government, and the triumph of the law-breakers.

Such was the close of the first chapter in the history of the conflict between the champions of law and order and the forces of anarchy.

Forster made no complaint of having been left in the lurch, and therefore that personal element may be left out of consideration. Whether the agreement was worth the paper it was written on will never be known; for the Phœnix Park tragedy immediately super-vening, practically remitted all parties to their original position. It is very doubtful whether the leaders of the Land League, with or without Sheridan's aid, could or would have stopped outrages and intimidation. It was assuming a great deal to suppose that they could. The change of attitude might have ruined their influence over the movement in force. If they had such power, no Government could have availed themselves of it without ceasing to govern and without degradation. What the position of the rest of the Cabinet was in regard to this matter is not explained. How far they knew of the transaction before all was altered by the tragedy in Phœnix Park, does not appear. Yet it must have been in contemplation before that event to trust for a time to the ordinary law. There was talk of a new Coercion Bill before Forster left, but he evidently expected (vol. ii. p. 442) that the Premier would require both Budget and Procedure to be first dealt with. This, however, seems clear, that the Ministry considered Forster's mode of coercion had failed; they did not or could not have shared Forster's views of the real character of the so-called Land League agitation, or they must have regarded it as sufficiently repressed to justify a pause in the conflict. Another thing, however, is quite clear,—Mr Gladstone's great anxiety to secure the co-operation of Mr Parnell and his parliamentary party. They knew it, and by the

mere promise of affording it, effected their release from prison and the sacrifice of their determined opponent. The understanding then effected, in a very few years, was destined to have portentous consequences.

The Phœnix Park murder and Carey's revelations in the following year changed the situation, or at least retarded its progress. The murders of Forster and Burke had been in contemplation; Lord Frederick Cavendish and Burke were the victims. The crime no doubt was inopportune for the released suspects; it did not show their power to stop outrages, nor exhibit in any favourable light the value of the concession made by them to secure their triumph over the Government. The Cabinet took matters into their own hands; and the new Chief Secretary, Sir George Trevelyan, was not admitted thereto, but placed in a position more subordinate than Forster had occupied. The new Coercion Act was immediately proposed by Sir William Harcourt—not a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, but a stringent Crimes Act, designed not to imprison suspects, but to detect and punish actual criminals. In the second half-year of 1882, agrarian crimes fell to less than one-third of what they had been in the first half; and under its provisions the perpetrators of the Phœnix Park murders were brought to justice. The Act was much more effective than a mere suspension of the Habeas Corpus, without anything like the same amount of strain upon constitutional usage and private rights. There was a special court established, and power was taken, not to arrest on suspicion, but to investigate on suspicion—that is, to examine witnesses without any accusation

being made against particular persons—that right of investigation with which we are all familiar when conducted by means of coroners' juries. The effect of the Act, and, it is fair to say, of its administration by Lord Spencer and Sir George Trevelyan, was that in the three years of its continuance crime diminished and order was becoming re-established. The Cabinet, moreover, had learnt the lesson of Phoenix Park, and recognised the enormous gravity of the situation. Dynamite explosions in England, and the constant police protection of the persons of Ministers, had brought conviction to their minds, and compelled a closer attention to the subject. We have it on Mr Chamberlain's authority, in the debate of 1883, that until the Kilmainham negotiations he had never even heard of Sheridan, a name now familiar, in respect of doings antecedent to that date, to every child who reads a newspaper. Forster might well object to negotiations of which he disapproved being carried on over his head by colleagues who had not a title of his knowledge of the subject; but those colleagues, on the other hand, might shrewdly suspect that, left to himself, he had locked up the wrong men. Subsequent events showed that he never suspected the constant plots against his own life, or even the existence of the Invincibles—a body of men far more dangerous than any whom he had under lock and key. His administration was not a success: the most striking features are his numerous arrests, his failure to put down crime, his miraculous escape from assassination.

From the time of the Cabinet taking the state of Ireland into closer consideration, there seems to have been a growing division

of policy. The concession of national councils appeared in Forster's draft bill. We learn from recent debates in the House of Commons that Mr Parnell and Mr Chamberlain were both in favour of that measure. On the other hand Forster, in the debate of 1883, brought forward grave charges against Mr Parnell and his associates of recklessness and culpable negligence in allying themselves with persons who had subsequently fled from justice, and were steeped in crime. There seems to be no doubt that those charges, which in 1887 developed into the still graver accusation of the London 'Times,' told upon his late colleagues and those of his party who were afterwards known as Liberal Unionists; and probably some of the others were convinced of the paramount necessity for putting down crime, and were averse to that stewing in Parnellite juice which was foreshadowed by the abortive Kilmainham treaty. Others, however, entered more into the spirit of that arrangement, and were keenly alive to the prospective advantages of Mr Parnell's co-operation with the Liberal party.

From this point of view a significant correspondence has recently been published between Mr Herbert Gladstone and Mr O'Donnell (neither of them personages who need be taken seriously, except so far as the former's utterances may indicate the views of his father), as occurring before and after Forster's resignation. We must assume that it was shown to Mr Forster,—public life could not go on if such correspondence by his colleagues were possible behind a man's back. From the contemptuous terms in which Forster alluded to O'Donnell in the debate of 1883, it was improbable (and his

diary confirms it) that he attached any importance to his letters. But Mr Herbert Gladstone's letters are indicative of considerable desire to secure that "co-operation" which was the basis of the treaty. The tone of the letters which he received showed that his correspondent was aware of it. The letters on both sides imply an understanding between the writers derogatory to Forster and his policy. There was not merely to be a change of policy—all the world knew that; but it was insisted by Mr O'Donnell that you cannot change your policy and supplant "the officials and magistrates in Ireland who have worked the present mischief. Ireland is now in the hands of Forster's men, and they will do all in their power to produce results during the next few weeks to justify Forster's predictions." Parnell's difficulties were insisted on, and his utter want of power to carry out his compromise. As for hostility and distrust of the Land League, "of course," says the writer, addressing the Prime Minister's son, "your excuse was that you accepted blindly the Tory information which Forster got from the permanent officials, and which he served up regularly for your intellectual nourishment." The whole tone of the letter befitted an address to a repentant sinner. "The time has come for a decisive step and a magnificent speech. Your father can accomplish both the one and the other."

Then there were allusions to England's vast and enormous debt to Ireland, and Irish hatred and detestation of England, though the writer sought to separate himself from the fierce animosity of the Egans, the Fords, and the Devoyes. Mr Herbert Gladstone, in reply, was apologetic about the Crimes

Act, "but for goodness' sake do not let us shut the door of final conciliation." No wonder, if this is any clue to the policy of the Government, that the Land League was allowed to spring up again during its remaining tenure of office under another name.

In 1883 Mr Parnell announced himself as deriving from the coming Franchise Bill the power to decide which party should rule in England. It was known that the effect would be to give him the command of eighty-five votes. No one foresaw the further consequences which would ensue. It seems clear, however, that there was no real unity of purpose in the Cabinet. Some of them, and the Prime Minister especially, would have been glad to conciliate the Parnellites, and secure the promised co-operation. But Mr Parnell would have forfeited the confidence of his supporters, American and Irish, if he had effectively come to terms with the Coercion Ministry.

So, in 1885, the Ministry resigned suddenly and unexpectedly on a matter connected with beer; and, of course, without proposing to renew their Act. It is no lack of charity to suppose that the old parliamentary hand left that for his successors to do, and in the course of a vehement opposition to such a profligate manœuvre, he would have established an *entente cordiale* with the Parnellites more satisfactorily than he could hope to do in office. But order had been so far re-established that the Conservatives, having no official information that the renewal of the Act was necessary, forbore to propose it, circumstances pointing at that time to a truce between the English Government and the Irish malcontents, whose game clearly was to wreak vengeance on the Liberals who had so long coerced

them. Mr Gladstone has always alluded to this decision as one of momentous importance. If the Conservatives could undertake to govern with the ordinary law, the weapon of coercion was for ever struck from the hands of the Liberals, and that was an end to the whole system. Another way of looking at it was, that one door of approach to the Parnellites being closed, another must be found. It came in due time, a few months later, in the shape of a Home Rule policy, which, of course, as far as the Parnellites were concerned, carried all before it. Meanwhile, two determining motives of action supervened. There was the interview between Lord Carnarvon and Mr Parnell. The details of it were so misrepresented to Mr Gladstone, that he concluded that he was going to be outbid. Then there was the general election, at which he found that younger and more active rivals were bidding for the support of the Liberal party over his head with their unauthorised programme. The boroughs declared against him; but the counties, whether fascinated by the unauthorised programme or not, declared in favour of extreme men. Mr Gladstone must have been dissatisfied not merely with the result of that election, but with the manner in which the issues which he put forward had been confused by his more impatient colleagues. They refused, as the phrase was, to stand under his umbrella; but, as 'Punch' put it, they proposed "to re-cover it while you wait." Evidently, at whatever cost, if the Grand Old Man was to recover his disputed authority, he must square with the Parnellites, and hoist a banner which was unmistakably his own.

While these proceedings were going on, Ireland was governed by

the ordinary law for nearly two years. The Home Rule policy of Mr Gladstone, which we are told Mr Forster strongly condemned, failed; a large section of his own party being entirely dissatisfied with it, and, above all, with the manner in which it had been sprung upon them. The second Ministry of Lord Salisbury did not demand extended powers till the session of 1887, when, finding that the alliance between the Parnellites and the Gladstonians, instead of raising the former to the rank of a constitutional party, confining itself to strictly constitutional usages, rather degraded the latter to the position of extenuating crime and encouraging obstruction in the House and disorder in the country, it proposed and carried the Criminal Procedure Bill of that year.

The controversy has therefore reached a stage which widely differs from that at which Mr Forster had the sole handling of it. The extended democracy which was enthroned in power by the Act of 1884 has had broad issues and far-reaching policies submitted to its decision. Patient forethought and far-sighted persistency of purpose are required at its hands. The next few years will test its possession of those gifts of self-government and empire which its flatterers have claimed for it, and which we hope it possesses. It has begun well. It dismissed Mr Gladstone from place and power decisively. It rejected his policy, or at least disapproved the manner in which it was proposed, and demanded time to consider it. It has, up to the present, steadily persisted in enforcing law and order in Ireland, and in postponing schemes for its better government until law has prevailed. And whatever may be the ultimate issue of the proposals which have been laid before it, it

is all clear gain that time has been secured. The effect upon the Liberal party has been dissolvent. Those who were disposed to tamper and coquet with the power of disorder, to obtain votes, are obliged to stand forth in their true colours. Those to whom the integrity of the empire, the unity of Parliament, and the preservation of order are dear, have been compelled to seek alliance with the Conservative party. If public opinion on the one hand has been shocked by some astounding changes of opinion and policy and conduct, on the other hand its confidence in the integrity of public men has been universally strengthened by the deliberate abandonment by many of private interest and ambition in deference to the demands of public duty. And the task which Mr Forster so manfully struggled to achieve, and for the accomplishment of which he at least paved the way and proclaimed the necessity, is in a fair way to completion. The Act now being administered has the very minimum of illegality with the maximum of deterrent effect. Two recent utterances by public men, to both of whom we are indebted for this result, are extremely important, and we are not sure that they have received adequate attention. One is by Mr Chamberlain, addressing a gathering of supporters in his own neighbourhood:—

“I am glad to think that in Ireland itself a great improvement has been making itself manifest. I have continually accounts from all parts of Ireland. I have many correspondents there in all classes of life, and the universal testimony is, that in all parts of Ireland the people, thanks to the firm action of the Government, thanks partly to an improvement in the prospects of the harvest, which in Ireland promises to be exceedingly good, thanks greatly to the effect of the re-

cent land legislation, which has placed them in so favourable a position, the tenants are, as a rule, seeking to make the best of their position, and in many cases are gladly throwing off the yoke of the League. . . . The universal opinion of my correspondents is, that things are very much better in Ireland, and that a few months longer will probably see the death-blow dealt to the pernicious agitation.”

The other is by Mr Balfour, in the city of London:—

“I believe, if you compare the six months just elapsed in this year with the six months at the beginning of last year, it will be found that we have diminished agrarian crime by more than 30 per cent; but we have diminished intimidation and boycotting in a far larger ratio. And at what cost has this great gain been obtained? Have we crowded the Irish prisons with offenders? Have we put laws in force antagonistic to the spirit of British freedom? I absolutely deny it. The laws are the laws in force in every free community; and as for the Irish prisons, . . . there are at the present time fewer persons in the Irish prisons than there were before the Coercion Act was passed.”

The work which Forster undertook is therefore being accomplished, and if so long a time has been allowed to elapse, we must bear in mind the disastrous influences which at the outset fanned the conflagration, or, at all events, allowed it to spread without resistance. Next to the re-establishment of order we attach special importance to the disclosures to be obtained from the Royal Commission. The personal portion of that investigation will probably excite the most interest. But its real value politically will be the unravelling of conspiracy, the showing to the world and to Parliament who are the real authors of that system of terrorism which has been the curse of Ireland.

Statesmen who in past times have been squeamish about being tarred by the coercion brush may turn out to have been simply and solely the antagonists of crime and criminals. It must be of the greatest advantage, not merely to Ireland but to public life generally, that the hidden recesses of crime should be explored, and that the full light of publicity should be turned upon the events of the last few years, so that all should know not merely who executed those deeds of savagery and violence, but who planned and profited by them. We must know whether the Land League or National League, or any of its members, organised or encouraged intimidation and crime, and to what extent. No one will grudge indemnity for the past, if we can only get security for the future. If the investigation should disclose once for all the true character of the agitation and of the agitators, we shall know to what extent we are dealing with the true constitutional representatives of Ireland, or the American contributors of gold will know whether they have been getting, or are likely hereafter to get, value for their money from those whom they pay. When once this political agitation, which is so widely denounced as mischievous, can be appraised at its real worth, we shall find it easier to get at the real wants and wishes of the Irish people.

It is unreasonable to believe that Irish hatred is of the malignant type represented by Fenians and outrage-mongers; that English debt to Ireland is incalculable; and that the real Ireland is constantly demanding concessions, only to become more and more impracticable as she obtains them. Granted that England was oppressive to her in the last century;

so she was, though no doubt in a less degree, to her own people. All through this century a policy not merely of justice but of expiation has been pursued towards the Irish. It is acknowledged, and both sides of the House of Commons have been equally ready to adopt it. We have hitherto met with no adequate return, no gratitude, and no consideration. If the two democracies of England and Ireland are to coexist on friendly and cordial terms, it is of the utmost importance to come to a clear understanding as to what are the real wishes and aspirations of the Irish people, and what is the true character and aims of those who assume to speak in their behalf. It seems to be tolerably clear from this book what was Mr Forster's opinion of the men and the transactions with which he had to deal; and if it should turn out to be the right one, we may confidently hope that the common-sense and sound political judgment on both sides of the Channel may work out in the future a more salutary *modus vivendi* between the two countries than has hitherto been found possible. Meanwhile, it is only just to the memory of a statesman who struggled manfully against overwhelming odds, to express the respect, admiration, and gratitude which even his political opponents must feel for the resolute manner in which he set himself to cope with rebellion, for the clear-sighted sagacity with which he refused to be a party to an unworthy compromise, and for the unflinching sternness with which he sought to fix responsibility upon those whom he believed to be, directly or indirectly, the fomenters of disturbance and the inciters to crime.

THE NAVAL MANŒUVRES: THEIR OBJECTS AND RESULTS.

For several years past, large fleets, consisting of all the men-of-war available at the home ports, have been collected for a couple of months during the summer, for what is now generally known as the summer manœuvres. When they were in progress, daily accounts appeared in the papers of the movements of the different ships and divisions; but at the end the general public have but a hazy idea of what has been going on, or for what useful purpose so much time and money have been spent.

The navies of the world have been for years past in a transition stage—in fact, ever since the introduction of armour-plating for ships of war, which necessitated the manufacture and use on board ship of heavier guns, which have since been competing with the thickness of armour until it seems probable that the extreme limit has been wellnigh reached in either case, the ideal man-of-war has been sought for by continual change and improvement; but on looking into the future, nothing but further change can be seen ahead. It is therefore essential to find out, as far as possible, which of our various types of ships best fulfils the requirements expected of them.

The true solution of this question, and of many others waiting to be solved, conspicuous amongst them being the question, "What is the value of the torpedo as an offensive and defensive weapon?" will have to stand over till after the next great naval war. The wars of late years have not helped us much. The American civil war developed the defensive tor-

pedo to a stage beyond which it has not since made much advance; but from the Franco-German and Russo-Turkish wars but little was learnt, beyond the undoubtedly great value of torpedoes for purposes of defence, in each case the stronger fleet being rendered innocuous by their use. But such questions as "The best way to defend a large ocean-trade from attack by cruisers?" which to England is of vital importance, remain as obscure as ever; and to arrive at an approximate answer to them and many other disputed points, is the object of the summer manœuvres.

This year four squadrons were formed, two belonging to an enemy being stationed—one at Berehaven, in Bantry Bay, and the other at Lough Swilly, in Donegal. They were blockaded by two English squadrons of superior number and strength, and the two English squadrons were in position outside of Bantry Bay and Lough Swilly when war was declared by telegram from the Admiralty. Ireland was considered an enemy's country—Berehaven, Lough Swilly, and Queenstown being looked upon as strongly fortified ports, within range of whose guns the British ships dare not approach, and only torpedo-boats could enter; whilst Pembroke, Portland, Plymouth, Portsmouth, and the Medway were similar ports in England.

The enemy's squadrons were in telegraphic communication with each other, while the British squadrons were not. This was a source of great weakness to the latter, and showed the necessity of having telegraph ships to accompany fleets in time of war.

War was declared on July 23; and although a few nights afterwards very thick weather occurred, no attempt was made to escape by either of the enemy's squadrons. It was clearly evident that they were being restrained by some force other than the ships outside, as some, at any rate, of their ships could have escaped without difficulty. The presumption is that the Admirals had orders not to attempt to break the blockade for a certain time, so as to give the outside ships a chance of finding out what blockading was like when subject to the attack of torpedo-boats.

This they soon had a chance of doing, as on several nights attacks were made on the outside ships by the torpedo-boats from within, thus keeping them continually on the alert.

On August 3, the night being dark, the first ships left Lough Swilly unmolested, and proceeded at once to levy contributions on seaport towns and destroy shipping, showing in a startling manner what, in all probability, would actually occur on the first outbreak of sudden hostilities between this and another first-class naval power.

The next day all the fast and powerful ships of the enemy's squadrons, both at Berehaven and Lough Swilly, broke the blockade, and proceeded to work their will in the metaphorical destruction of England's seaboard and shipping.

Finding the blockade broken, the British squadrons joined forces, and, after a good deal of vacillation, proceeded to the mouth of the Thames to defend it, but found that the enemy had contented themselves with making a clean sweep of towns and shipping from Liverpool north round both coasts of Scotland, and south as far as the Humber; after which

the main body of both the enemy's fleets rendezvoused at Lough Swilly and filled up with coal at their leisure, leaving out some of their fastest cruisers to prey on British shipping on the principal highways of commerce. Things had reached a pretty pass for England, and the ineffectiveness of the blockade and want of superiority of the British fleet was well shown.

This practically ended the manœuvres, as the enemy's fleet at Lough Swilly took some days to complete with coal, and the British fleet, under Admiral Baird, seemed to think it wise not to leave the vicinity of the Medway, so that the 20th August (the date on which hostilities ceased) arrived without anything more worthy of note occurring.

The following are the chief points brought prominently forward by the summer manœuvres:—

1. Do we require more iron-clads?
2. Possibilities of a successful blockade.
3. Advisability of blockading an enemy.
4. Best means of coaling at sea.
5. Use of torpedo-boats and offensive torpedoes.
6. Use of defensive torpedoes.
7. Best types of ships.
8. How to protect our ocean trade.
9. System of mobilisation.
10. Have we a sufficiency of officers and men?
11. Best way of imitating warfare.

These are the immediate questions that suggest themselves as requiring an early answer, and it is hoped that the summer manœuvres just over will have afforded valuable experience, and an answer to, at any rate, some of them.

Many of these questions—in fact,

we may say almost all—are of intense interest, not to the navy alone, but to England as a nation; it is therefore necessary that the answers to these questions, when they are found, should be acted upon, and not relegated to the waste-paper basket or to a more convenient season, for that is where the real difficulty and danger lie, and where the British public can and should insist vehemently until they get what they want, not being put off by specious promises; and they have only to call loud enough and long enough, and their voice will be obeyed, and much possible misery in the future averted.

Let us shortly discuss these questions, without entering into detail.

1. Is it advisable to build more ironclads? That we want more battle-ships appears to be beyond doubt, but it is not so clear that they should be armour-plated. It has been laid down that we should have two battle-ships to our strongest neighbour's one, and nobody can dispute the fact that we have not got them, or the accuracy of this calculation of our needs, except on the score of expense. Therefore let us make haste and get them. With the number we have at present, the recent manœuvres have clearly shown that after telling off a sufficient fleet to protect the Channel and coasts of Great Britain, we should not only not have a sufficient fleet, but should not have a single ship with which to blockade or mask the enemy's ports and arsenals, or reinforce our Mediterranean squadron.

All the available battle-ships at home are now together. They number twenty-two. Of these the Northumberland, Agincourt, Black Prince, and Monarch are obsolete beyond cavil; leaving

eighteen, of which the Hotspur, Bellisle, and Rupert are only fit for coast defence; leaving fifteen, of which the Inflexible requires extensive repairs; leaving fourteen, of which the Hercules, Invincible, Devastation, Ajax, Shannon, and Neptune are coast-guard ships; leaving eight, namely the Benbow, Collingwood, Rodney, Conqueror, Hero, Warspite, Iron Duke, and Northampton, of which the two latter cannot steam more than eleven and a half knots, to form our fleet for the defence of the Channel, should war be declared to-morrow. Where, then, is the fleet with which we are to reinforce the Mediterranean squadron, blockade the enemy in his ports, or act on the aggressive towards such ships as he sends out? The answer is, that some are in our dockyards without guns, and the remainder have not yet been designed.

Besides the above, which is of itself sufficiently alarming, the thick, heavy, and expensive armour with which our fine new belted cruisers are supposed to be protected at the water-line is below water, owing to these ships drawing three feet more water than they were designed to draw; so that not only is it useless, but far worse than useless, as its equivalent in weight might be carried in coal. Several other ships—the Warspite class, for instance—are in a similar plight. Surely some one should be hung for this, not metaphorically, but in truth and deed, and it would not be difficult to find a naval officer to adjust the cap and pull the bolt. As to the advisability of in future putting armour on ships at all, it seems likely soon to come to the front as a practical question, especially if shells containing high explosives come into use in the navy, as,

judging from the experiments in America, and more recently against the Resistance at home, they are likely to do. Speed and coal-carrying capacity are of such primary importance, that the great sacrifice which has to be made in them to carry the enormous weight of armour which must be carried in order to be effective can hardly be justified, and points to the adoption of coal protection only.

Almost invariably, in the arguments which are carried on about the number of our available ships, ships are counted which are away on distant stations—China, Australia, the Pacific, or elsewhere. These vessels are quite ineffective for home defence or operations; thus false and misleading conclusions are arrived at.

When, as at the present time, it has become possible for discussion to take place as to whether the navy of England or France is the stronger, there can be but one answer to the question of the advisability of our at once increasing our fleet of battle-ships.

2. Is it possible to closely blockade an enemy in port? what is the best way to blockade an enemy? and what number and description of ships would be required for the purpose?

The game of blockade is one which can be made to resemble the real thing more closely than almost any other species of warfare, and is on that account of peculiar value as enabling us to arrive at a definite conclusion. The "discomfort," in particular if the weather is bad, approaches very nearly to what the reality must be, though nowadays our sailors live in such comparative luxury on board ship, and are as a general rule so short a time at sea at a spell, that the significance of the word "discomfort," as

realised by Nelson when over two years at sea blockading the French coast, or by Columbus in his early voyages, is hardly understood.

These manœuvres have taken place during what should be the finest weather of the year, and all the difficulties of blockading would be much enhanced in winter.

The conclusion to be drawn is, that it is not possible in these days of fast ships to keep an enemy in his own port unless the force outside is overwhelmingly strong—say, as two to one; that even with such a force, the strain on the outside squadron is very great, and in thick weather, single ships could not be prevented from coming out; that the risk of being torpedoed by the enemy's boats is enormous, and far outweighs all advantages; and finally, in the next great naval war, no such blockade as that practised this summer will be attempted.

When the manœuvres began this year, the general idea was that the outside squadrons were so strong that the blockaded ships would not effect an escape. This opinion having proved entirely erroneous is a great thing learnt, and well repays the trouble and expense of collecting the ships, even were there nothing else learnt, which is far from being the case. As to the best means of keeping an enemy in check, and the nearest approach to the old system of blockade that is feasible, there will be still difference of opinion; but it is probable that the cruisers and torpedo-vessels and boats only will be kept outside the enemy's port, to report, watch, and follow all vessels leaving; the larger ships being kept at sea at a distance, or, if possible, in some adjacent harbour as a base. The plan of using an enemy's port

close to the blockaded port as a harbour of refuge, in which to repair machinery, coal, &c., as has been practised by the outside squadrons during these manœuvres, would hardly be feasible. A large number of cruisers would be required for this system of blockade—very many more than we at present have. To double our present number would be a safe beginning. For each enemy's cruiser that left port, a faster and stronger cruiser must be detached from the outside squadron; and every battleship that left would require to be followed by a cruiser, whilst another went to the base to inform a battle-ship of our own where to follow her. By this means the equivalent of a complete blockade might be established. The difficulty of picking up an enemy's ship if she escaped unobserved, or without being followed, would be very great; the number of ships blockading must therefore be large, depending on the number of the enemy's ships in port. Our cruisers should be, at least, double the number of theirs, and our battle-ships as four to three, or perhaps more. With our present navy this is out of the question; we have not got the ships to do it.

3. Is it advisable to blockade an enemy in port? is a question which should be considered. We see that to do so effectively absorbs an enormous amount of our strength, which might perhaps be better used acting offensively; but taking into consideration the difficulty of catching an enemy's cruiser once he gets fairly away, and the amount of damage he can do to our commerce in a short time—as shown by the *Alabama*, and during these manœuvres by those cruisers which ran the blockade, and in a few days, without molestation, captured and destroy-

ed millions of pounds' worth of shipping—it is certainly a safe thing to do if you have the ships.

4. It was hoped that the best means of coaling at sea would have been decided during these manœuvres, but it still remains an open question—except that to coal at sea directly from a collier in anything of a sea-way is impossible, and to coal by boat or by any system of baskets and hawsers from the ship to the collier is very tedious, the difficulty having been solved by quietly going into the nearest harbour to complete when necessary. More experience is required with properly fitted fast-steaming colliers, such as would accompany a fleet in war time, before this question can be properly answered. These colliers should have the best condensing arrangements, and large tanks for stowage of fresh water with which to supply torpedo boats and vessels which are only allowed to use fresh water in their boilers—a class of vessel on the increase. The delays and difficulties of coaling at sea must be very great, and the efficiency of all war-ships depends largely upon their coal-carrying capabilities—a fact inclined to be overlooked in some ships of late construction. It is this question of coaling which, amongst others, gives our foreign depots and arsenals their great value, and makes it imperative that they should be speedily armed so as to protect themselves, for with our present attenuated navy we certainly cannot spare ships for their defence. So long as our coaling-stations remain inadequately armed they are to us a source of weakness and danger, inviting attack, which, if successful, would be a blow to our prestige even though they were eventually recovered.

5. Of what use are torpedo-boats and offensive torpedoes?

Perhaps these may of late years have been classed somewhat too high in the list of weapons of war; there is now a danger of their falling too low in the scale—their true value, no doubt, being somewhere between these two estimates.

The great difficulty in arriving at a correct answer to this question from the manœuvres, lies in the numberless disputes which arise as to when a boat is put out of action—the boat being always able to escape in the darkness, and ready to swear that she was not the necessary time under fire to be put out of action, whilst the ship maintains the opposite. Sometimes a boat will make three or four consecutive attacks on a ship looking out to be less than the allowed time under fire each time, and pretending, under cover of darkness, to be a different boat each time. The total times added together would be enough to blow her to bits. This harasses the ships, which have consequently an animus against the opposing boats. However, several ships were actually struck by torpedoes discharged, and handed over to the opposite side.

The torpedoes were this year fitted with copper heads, which collapsed on striking the ship's side, thereby saving the expensive weapon from being damaged beyond repair by the force of the blow on striking. The value of torpedo-boats and torpedoes to both squadrons was conclusively shown. Nelson would surely have been a prematurely old man had he blockaded for two years continuously in days of torpedoes.

The enemy's squadron made most use of their boats, which were of the 125 feet pattern, and though not fit for long sea-voyages

by themselves, are capable of going anywhere in company with a parent ship. By day a ship would probably be able to repulse an attack of boats, unless they attacked in great force, prepared to lose half their number, in which case they might well succeed even by day; but at night every chance is theirs, and it is their presence which makes the close blockade of a port impracticable, as at night the iron-clads have to haul farther off shore for safety, and leave the work of looking out for ships escaping to the cruisers, who cannot possibly do it unless in far greater numbers than we at present have.

On the other hand, the blockading force might make use of his boats to attack the enemy in port. For some reason, during these manœuvres this was not attempted, but in war time it would have to be done. So long as there are torpedo-boats in a port, ships outside that port can have no rest or peace of mind. The first thing therefore, to do, would seem to be to destroy the enemy's boats, and this might be done by a daring attack with torpedo-vessels of the Sandfly-Rattlesnake class, which ships have during these manœuvres been classed as cruisers, so that their useful qualities as torpedo-boat-catchers, for which they were designed, and also their powers of offence with their own torpedoes, which, owing to their high speed, is great, have lain dormant.

Besides the constant fear which torpedo-boats inspire, and the successful blows they strike with their torpedoes, they are most useful for look-out purposes and for signalling the approach of an enemy.

Distances are difficult to judge by the electric light; a torpedo-boat offers but a small target; passing at a speed of 16 knots past

a ship moving in an opposite direction, or even at anchor, makes aiming the guns of the ship a difficult matter; and judging by the confusion which prevails on board a battle-ship when attacked by torpedo-boats, even in mimic war, it seems reasonable to conclude that a boat making an attack would have an extremely good chance of escape, especially if the attack was successful, when the confusion would be increased ten-fold, and the boat probably forgotten in the excitement caused by the explosion of the torpedo.

What chance would a ship have, attacked on a dark night by six or eight of these pigmies? England has been slow to realise their value. Russia alone has twice as many boats as we have. We require at least twice our present number, and they should be of greater speed than our present boats, which can only steam 16 knots.

For the defence of our coast they are simply invaluable, and far cheaper than any other mode of defence. By night they could be relied on by themselves, but by day they should, if possible, have the support of guns. Had Liverpool owned twelve or even six torpedo-boats, it is very doubtful if the enemy's squadron could have made the successful raid they did. If the Government will not supply these boats, as they should do, the wealth of our large mercantile ports would not feel the amount it would cost to buy and maintain a sufficient number for their own defence. The attacks on the Clyde and the Mersey will, it is to be hoped, bring this home to the country.

6. Of what use are defensive torpedoes?

Defensive torpedoes, by which are meant stationary ones, floating

either on or below the surface, and which explode on contact with an enemy's ship, or can be fired by observation from the shore when an enemy's ship is over them, have not come to the front much in this year's manœuvres. They are, however, very valuable auxiliaries to the defence of a port, and all our large mercantile ports should see that they have them, as well as the torpedo-boats already recommended. The mines to be fired by contact should be laid in all side channels that can be conveniently closed, the main channel for the passage of friendly ships being defended by the observation mines. These mines are cheap to buy, but, if war broke out suddenly, would be difficult to get in sufficient quantities. Peace time is obviously the time to make all preparations, and, for such cities as Liverpool and Glasgow, to put their house in order by getting a sufficient number of these torpedoes, and some one to keep them in order and put them down in time. The worthy citizens might then, on war being declared, feel pretty secure in their beds from attack by hostile cruisers. A certain amount of practice in laying down these torpedoes and picking them up again is essential for doing it properly and quickly when the time arrives to repel the enemy.

The Royal Engineers are supposed to defend our coasts with these weapons; but they have neither the men nor the plant to do it, except at a few of our arsenals.

These torpedoes might also be usefully employed by the outside squadron to block the enemy into his port by placing them at the entrance. A fast ship might easily run in at night and strew them about. The blockading fleet

should be accompanied by a large depot-ship carrying a large number of them, and all requisites for their manipulation.

7. Which types of ships are best? is such a vexed question that it is best to touch but lightly on it; but one thing is sure—namely, that at present we have too many types. Of the cruisers, the Amphion and Thames class seem most satisfactory. They are of 4300 tons, 5500 horse-power, and 4000 tons, 5700 horse-power respectively, capable of steaming $17\frac{1}{2}$ knots. We require, however, four times the number we possess. Some of the cruisers that were out had been engined by contract, and the engines not taken over from the contractors: it was therefore not surprising that they broke down, and gave much trouble. One advantage of having these new ships out is, that many defects are thus discovered in them, and remedied before they go to sea.

The battle-ships vary so in type and speed that the speed of the squadron, which is the speed of the slowest ship, is very much reduced. In war time this would be very serious. The best battle-ships appear to be of the Benbow and Conqueror type, were it not for their being deeper in the water than they were designed to be, which serious defect is common to all our recently built ships, looking as though our contractors were determined not to be taught by experience. Fewer different types of battle-ships should be built, so as to have more uniformity in our squadrons, both as to fighting power, speed, and manœuvring qualities.

The same applies to our guns (when we get them). At present the different patterns of guns and ammunition are almost number-

less, and must lead to fearful confusion in time of war.

8. What is the best way to protect our large ocean trade? Firstly, all our large steamers should be fitted to carry light and quick-firing guns, so as to be able to repel an attack made on them by a small lightly armed cruiser. This is being done slowly as new ships are built; but it is no use having the fittings unless the guns and ammunition are ready to put on board at a moment's notice, and this is not at present the case. Only such ships as are subsidised by the Government are at present being thus fitted; whereas it is to the interest of all owners of steamers to have their vessels fitted, if necessary, at their own expense, for it is to their own interest. Steamers should in war time travel in pairs, or three or four together, for mutual support; so that, if all armed, they might defy or even capture a small cruiser, and at any rate, by separating in different directions when chased, ensure only one being caught. The old system of convoy, when a man-of-war accompanied a fleet of merchantmen, is probably past; but we must remember that we have still an enormous number of fine sailing-ships traversing the globe, and protection must be afforded to them.

The only safe plan appears to be for us to have a very large number of cruisers to watch all ports of the enemy, and follow and destroy their cruisers as they appear, other cruisers being scattered liberally over the principal ocean-routes, which routes our merchant-ships would have to closely follow. To carry out this, as mentioned before, at *least* four times the number of cruisers we have at present, and probably a still greater number, would be re-

quired. We are told that the expense of this would be too great; but when looked upon as an insurance investment on the value of our shipping, the expense is trifling. Here is a simple Rule of Three sum: "If the total shipping of France or any other Power is valued at a certain sum, and the shipping of England is valued at another certain sum, and France possesses so many cruisers, how many cruisers should England possess?" The answer is, more than four times the number we at present have, and their cost would be but a fractional percentage on the value of our shipping.

9. Have we a proper system of mobilisation in case of emergency? This point is supposed to have been tested this year; but only a bogus test was applied, as for two months previous to the ships' commissioning, the dockyards were busy preparing them, and putting stores on board the vessels they knew would be required. A real test must come as a surprise, and the date must not be known beforehand. In this case the date was not known beforehand, because the date was not given until everything had been reported ready. However, it has served a useful purpose, as many difficulties arose, which will be more easily overcome on another occasion; and if, as is very much to be hoped, the summer manœuvres become an annual affair, the mobilisation will in course of time approach more nearly to what would actually occur on war being imminent or declared. Some people say, "Of course we should know some days before war is declared," but that is an altogether unjustifiable presumption, and a most dangerous one. At present our system of mobilisation

is incomplete, and only practice can make it otherwise: no amount of paper-work will do it.

10. Have we sufficient officers and men for our present fleet? and our present fleet being insufficient, for the fleet we should have?

Of this there is no doubt, that we have not enough officers and men to man our present fleet, and therefore, *a fortiori*, we have not enough for the fleet of the future. A Lord of the Admiralty quite recently admitted that we should be 300 lieutenants short in case of war; this question, therefore, requires no demonstration. It has been brought out with striking distinctness by the summer manœuvres. Officers but a few days returned from long tours of foreign service, instead of being allowed their usual leave, were instantly appointed to ships, leaving absolutely no reserve of officers on the active list to fill up casualties, and appoint to the at present incomplete ships which in time of war would be brought forward and commissioned with all despatch. All harbour-ships were depleted of their crews, every available seaman being taken out of them, and the coastguard-stations were also much weakened by heavy drafts from the different stations, leaving no crews for the vessels to be brought forward. It has been particularly noticeable that the stokers of the fleet are of a poor *physique*. All this is nothing new; it is well known to the responsible authorities, and the rectification of the matter is solely a question of money. The lieutenants' list should be at once increased, and more seamen and stokers entered, being careful that the latter are of a better class than we at present have. There is a general idea that we can easily supplement our seamen and stoker classes by men

from merchant-ships. This is fallacious. We might get a few men worth having, but very few. The great majority of sailors and firemen on board our merchant-ships of the present day, who are not foreigners, are quite unsuitable for the navy. A man-of-war's-man nowadays is highly trained, and the gutter-scrapings which the press-gang supplied as food for powder in olden days would now be worthless, for there would be no time to train them.

11. What is the best way of carrying out the practice of war in peace time?

The general principles and ideas of this year's manœuvres were good, but the rules were badly framed, and the Admirals did not have a sufficiently free hand. The number of umpires, one in each flag-ship, was perhaps inadequate, and led to so many disputes that the game lost much of its zest and consequent usefulness.

It is an open question whether, in the next naval war, undefended towns will be attacked. In past wars they have not been, but some think that they will be in future—that is to say, they will be given the option of paying heavy sums

of money in a short time, or suffering bombardment; the idea being that the more money obtained, and the greater misery generally inflicted, the shorter will be the duration of the war: and this may very possibly be true. That small cruisers of the enemy will, if they can, sink our merchant-shipping and leave the crews to take their chance of sink or swim in their own boats is moderately certain; for such a cruiser could neither afford time to rescue the crews, space to stow them, nor men of her own to form a prize crew. Under these circumstances, a list of the ships captured and destroyed by Admiral Tryon's fleet would be very instructive, and should certainly be published for the information of the public.

Year by year these summer manœuvres should, by taking hints from previous years, become more and more analogous to war; and if they in any way assist in arousing public opinion from its present lethargic state as to the deplorable insufficiency of our navy, and the terrible risk incurred by leaving our coasts improperly defended, then, on that score alone, who can estimate their value?

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THE TRUE STORY OF A HALLUCINATION.

By X. L.

“πρὸς τῶν θεῶν, ἐνύπνιον ἐστιώμεθα.”—ARISTOPHANIS Σφήκες.

“Again, I believe that all that use sorceries, incantations, and spells are not witches, or, as we term them, magicians; I conceive there is a traditional magic, not learned immediately from the devil, but at second-hand from his scholars, who, having once the secret betrayed, are able and do empirically practise without his advice; they proceeding upon the principles of nature, where actives aptly conjoined to disposed passives will, under any master, produce their effects.”—SIR THOMAS BROWNE: *Rel. Med.*

CHAPTER I.

To be ordained has been looked upon for many years in this country as the best, speediest, and safest way of “making gentlemen” of such bipeds as stand in sore need of the transformation.

As we are all by baptism spiritually cleansed of all blemish, so is the son of the tradesman, doctor, solicitor, or what not, socially regenerated by taking holy orders.

Now this bewilderingly wholesale social acceptance of the ninety-and-nine who positively decline to stray, finding it a much more profitable policy to stay quietly in the fold nibbling the fodder, is peculiar to Protestant communities, and we

do not find the same social indulgence extended to spiritual advisers in Roman Catholic countries. In climes still fascinated by the scintillations proceeding from the Triple Crown, the priest is not received—that is, familiarly received—apart from his official capacity in society. He is, of course, ever to be forthcoming and at hand as a professional healer of souls when no other or better healer of souls can be found, and when a soul needs healing very badly; but if he be not a man of culture and refinement,—that is, if he has failed to catch the tricks, manners, and bearing of such—for the mere

question of birth is, of course, of minor importance, the laying on of the bishop's hands having smoothed over all that difficulty,—the mere fact of his being a priest does not entitle him to claim any of the privileges accruing to that most elastic title of gentleman; and many a woman of social rank abroad will readily, gladly—nay, eagerly—confess to, and receive absolution from a man whose society at her dinner-table she would not tolerate for a moment.

We cannot but think that this reserve has its advantages, and that all people of refined feeling benefit by a rule which requires from one seeking familiar social recognition the production of some other credential, save only that the postulant be a servant of the Church.

At home we find the spiritual adviser, merely by reason of his office, entitled to lay a claim—nay, actually laying a claim—to a place at our dinner-table, to a chair at our club, to the smoking of our cigars, the drinking of our wines, the riding of our horses, the consoling of our wives, and, alas! the marrying of our daughters, when, in many instances, the social merits of the man himself would hardly justify him, under ordinary circumstances, in aspiring to a closer intimacy with us than may reasonably be expected to arise from the proper exercise of his professional duties in the saving of our souls, and the flogging of our boys.

Such a man being so received, in the event of his not being sweet and whole, will hardly think it worth his while to purify himself of his uncleanness solely for our sakes—nay, in many instances, will take a grotesque and savage delight in endeavouring to widen by his vulgarities the deplorable

breach which, if we are to believe cynics and scoffers, already exists between St James's Square and Mount Sinai.

Abroad, the priest who would seek to be considered a gentleman, and be received as such in society, must endeavour to imbue himself with some of the refinement innate in those with whom he would fain consort, and thus it happens that he studies with more or less success to imitate such *ad unguem facti homines* as may from time to time swim within his ken.

So it is that we not unfrequently find (and oddly enough more often than not in the most exclusive social coteries like that of the Faubourg Saint Germain) not only the most charming, refined, and sought-after men to be priests, but also to be men of low birth and origin, who owe, however, their social recognition and success not to their cloth, but to the grace with which they have learned to wear it. To such a man as this we will now introduce the reader.

The career of the Abbé Girod had been an eminently successful one—successful in every way; and even he himself was forced to acknowledge such to be the case as he reviewed his past life sitting by a blazing fire in his comfortable apartment in the Rue Miromesnil previous to dressing for the Due de Frontignan's dinner-party.

Born of poor parents in the south of France, entering the priesthood at an early age, having received but a meagre education, and that chiefly confined to a superficial knowledge of the most elementary treatises on theology, he had, in five-and-twenty years, and solely by his own exertions, unaided by patronage, obtained a most desirable berth in one of the

leading churches in Paris, thereby becoming the recipient of a handsome income, and being thus enabled to indulge in his rather expensive tastes as *dilettante* and *homme du monde*.

The few hours snatched from his parochial duties he had never failed to devote to study, and his application and determination had borne him golden fruit in more ways than one. He had, moreover, so cultivated and made such good use of the rare opportunities afforded him in early life of associating with gentlemen, that when now at length he found his presence in demand at every house in the "Faubourg" where wit and graceful learning were appreciated, no one would ever have suspected he had not been nurtured and bred in accordance with the strictest canons of social refinement.

But in his upward progress such had been his experiences of life that when, during the brief intervals of breathing-time he allowed himself, he would look below and above, down to where he had begun and up to where he was endeavouring to climb, he was forced to confess that at every step a belief, an illusion had been trodden under foot; that the clouds of glory of which Wordsworth speaks had either altogether died away on the horizon, or had become so threatening and dark in aspect as to make him instinctively seek refuge under the umbrella of cynicism; and he would wonder, while bracing himself for a new effort, how it would all end, and whether the mitre he lusted for would not perhaps, after all, be placed upon a head that doubted even the existence of a God.

He was not, however, a bad man, but merely one of that class

who have embraced the priesthood merely as a means of raising themselves from obscurity to eminence, and have in their intercourse with the world discovered many flaws and blemishes in what at one time they may have considered perfect. He was indeed only fervent in his apolausticism; and the embracing of such golden images as he might care to adore, he found dangerous to his peace of mind, in that the gilding thereof was but too apt to come off upon his lips. When at first his reason began to reject many of the dreams and fables hitherto cherished and believed in, the Abbé Girod was almost inclined to abandon in despair any attempt to discern the false from the true, and this all the more that he saw plainly the time thus spent was in a worldly sense but wasted, and that the good things of this world come to such reapers as gather in wheat and tares alike, well knowing there is a market for them both.

During a certain period, therefore, of his struggle upward—

"An infant crying in the night,
An infant crying for the light,
And with no language but a cry,"—

while his worldly ambition was aided by sly insinuations the deadly work already begun by the destruction of his dreams, Henri Girod was nigh being an atheist.

But the nature of the man was too finely sensual for this phase to be lasting; and when at length he found himself so far successful in his worldly aspirations as to be tolerably sure of their complete fulfilment; when at length he found time to examine spiritual matters apart from their direct bearing upon his social altitude, his aesthetic sense—which by this

time had necessarily developed— was struck as by a new revelation, and thrilled and entangled by the exquisite *beauty* of Christianity; and thus, as a shallow philosophy had nearly reduced him to become an atheist, so a deep and sensual spirit of sentimentality nearly reconciled him to becoming a Christian.

His Madonna was the Madonna of Raphael, not that of Albert Dürer: the woman whose placid grace of countenance creates an emotion more subtly voluptuous than desire; not she in whose face can be discerned the human mother of the Man of Sorrows and of Him divinely acquainted with all grief. The Christ he adored was not the friend of the broken-hearted, the Healer of the blind Bartimæus, He whom Andrea del Mantegna shows us hanging on the cross; but He “who feedeth among the lilies”—the Alpha and Omega of all æsthetic conception. Christianity, in a word, he looked upon as the highest moral expression of artistic perfection, and he regarded it with the same admiration he accorded to the Antinous and the Venus of Milo.

He was not, however, by nature a pagan as some men are, men who, in the words of De Musset—

“Sont venus trop tard dans un monde trop vieux;”

but the atmosphere in which his early years had been passed had been so antagonistic and stifling to his warm sensuous nature, his inner life had been so cramped in and starved, that when at length the key of gold opening the prison door let in the outer air, his spirit revelled in all the wild extravagance so often found accompanying sudden and long-wished-for emancipation.

His nature was perhaps not one that could have been attuned to a perfect harmony with that of a Greek or Roman of the golden days, but one rather better calculated to enjoy the hybrid atmosphere of the Italian Renaissance; and he would have been in his element in the Rucellai Gardens, conversing with feeble little Cosimino or laughing with Buondelmonte and Luigi Alamanni.

He did not trouble himself to believe in the narrative of the Bible; but its precepts and tendencies he appreciated and admired, although it must in all honesty be confessed he did not always put himself out to follow them.

In his heart he utterly rejected all idea of a future life, since it was incompatible with his conception of the artistic unity of this; but then again he would blandly acknowledge to himself that there are perhaps, after all, things we cannot comprehend, and that beauty may have no term.

Being, however, broadly speaking, an honest man, and one unwilling to eat bread he had not earned, he assimilated so far as in him lay his duties as a priest with his ideas as a man of culture; and his sermons were ever of Love—sermons which, winged as they were with impassioned eloquence, were deservedly popular with all, from the scholar who delighted in them as intellectual feasts to the fashionable *mondaine* who was only too enchanted to find in the *quasi*-fatalistic and broadly charitable views enunciated therein, excuses whereby her dreary and vulgar intrigues might be considered in a light more pleasing to herself and more consoling to her husband.

On the Sunday afternoon preceding the evening on which we introduce him to the reader, the

Abbé had departed from his usual custom, and by special request of his Curé had preached a most remarkable sermon on the personality of Satan.

It is a vulgar error to suppose that men succeed best when their efforts are enlivened by a real belief in the matter in hand. Not only have some men such a superabundance of fervid imagination that they can, for the time being, provoke themselves into a pseudo-belief in what they know in their saner moments to be false, and thus fire themselves with real enthusiasm for a mere myth and shadow; but, moreover, a large class of men are endowed with minds so restless and so finely strung that they can play with a sophism with marvellous dexterity and skill, while lacking that vigorous and comprehensive grasp of mind which the lucid exposition of a hidden truth necessitates.

The Abbé Girod belonged a little to both these classes of beings; and, moreover, his vanity as an intellectual man provoked him to extraordinary exertions in cases wherein he fancied he might win for himself the glory of strengthening and verifying matters which in themselves perhaps lacked almost the elements of existence.

"Spiritual truths," he once cynically remarked to Sainte Beuve, whom, by the way, he detested,

"will take care of themselves: it is the nursing of spiritual falsehood that needs all the care of the clergy."

On the Sunday in question he had surpassed himself. With biting irony he had annihilated the disbelievers in divine punishment, and then with persuasive and overwhelming eloquence he had urged the necessity of believing not only in hell but in the personality of the Prince of Evil.

Women had fainted in their terror, men had been frightened into seeking the convenient solace of the confessional, and the Archbishop had written him a letter of the warmest congratulation and thanks.

It was a triumph which a man of the nature of the Abbé Girod particularly enjoyed. The idea of finding himself the successful reviver of an inanimate doctrine, while secretly conscious that he was in reality a sceptic in matters of dogmatically vital importance, was, to a mind so prone to delight in paradoxes, eminently agreeable; and it tickled his palate with a sharp pungent joy to see the letter of the Archbishop lying upon a volume of Strauss, and to read the glowing and extravagant praise lavished upon himself in the pages of the 'Univers,' after having enjoyed a sparkling draught of Voltaire.

CHAPTER II.

Such was the Abbé Girod, the type of a class. The Duc de Frontignan, with whom he was dining on the evening this story opens, was, or rather *is*, in many ways a no less remarkable personage in Paris society.

Possessing rank, birth, and a splendid income, he had been

blessed with more than a fair share of the good gifts of Providence, being endowed not only with considerable mental power, but with the tact to use that power to the best advantage. Although beyond doubt clever, he was universally esteemed a much more intellectual man than

he really was, and this through no voluntary and wilful deceitfulness on his part, but simply owing to a method he had unconsciously adopted of exhibiting his wares with their most favourable aspect to the front.

He was well read, but not deeply read, and yet all Paris considered him a profound scholar; he was quick and epigrammatic in his appreciation and expression of ideas, as men of cultivation and varied experience are apt to be; but he enjoyed the reputation of being a wit without ever having said a really good thing; and, finally, having merely lounged through the world, impelled by a spirit of restlessness begotten of great wealth and idleness, society looked upon him as a bold and adventurous traveller. Only the day before we have the pleasure of introducing him to our readers, he had politely declined to leave Paris and conduct an expedition to the North Pole, but had generously volunteered to give a large sum to any one who cared to risk his life in endeavouring to discover that inestimable boon to suffering humanity known as the North-West Passage, for which we are all so hungrily longing, and which Mil-lais, aided and abetted by Trelawny, asserts to be the bounden duty of England to find out; at the same time kindly promising to take care of and provide for the widows and orphans of such adventurers as might find the climate of the Pole, or the appetites of the indigenous bears, a serious impediment to their safe return and ultimate reception of the conqueror's laurels, with which we should all so eagerly greet them.

One gift he most certainly possessed, and that to an eminent degree: he was vastly amusing and entertaining, and resembled in that

respect the Abbé Galiani, as described by Diderot, for he was indeed "a treasure on rainy days; and if the cabinetmakers made such things, nobody would be without one in the country."

He not only knew everybody in Paris, but he possessed that precious, rare, and extraordinary faculty of drawing people out, and of forcing them to make themselves amusing. No man, indeed, was in his society long before—often to his own great surprise—openly discussing his most cherished hobby with a new and unwonted eloquence hatched by apparent sympathy, or airily scattering as seed for trivial conversation the fruit of long years of experience and reflection. From what has been said, it may be superfluous to add that the Hôtel de Frontignan, in the Rue de Varenne, was the resort, lounging-place, and almshouse of all that was most remarkable and extraordinary in the fashionable, the artistic, the diplomatic, and the scientific world.

His intimacy with the Abbé Girod was one of long standing: they were bound together by one bond of union which (alas! how rarely it is forged!) is stronger and more enduring than many cemented by vows, prayers, and tears;—they mutually amused each other; and while, on the one side, the keen intellect of the priest found much that was interesting in the shallow, but attractive and brilliant, nature of the layman, the Duke, on the other, entertained feelings of the warmest admiration for a man who, having risen from nothing, enlivened the most exclusive coteries with his graceful learning and charming wit.

It was one of the peculiar whims of Octave de Frontignan never to have an even number of guests at his dinner-table. His *soirées*, in-

deed, were attended by hundreds, but his dinner-parties rarely exceeded seven (including himself), and in many cases he only invited two.

On this especial occasion the only guest asked to meet the Abbé Girod was the celebrated diplomatist and millionaire, the Prince Paul Pomerantseff.

This most extraordinary personage had for the past six years kept Europe in a constant state of excitement by reason of his munificence, eccentricity, and power.

Brought up under the direct personal supervision of the Emperor of Russia, he had escaped the emasculating influence engendered by the atmosphere of the Cour des Pages, and had learnt at an early age to rely upon himself for his virtues, while ever ready to generously extend an indulgent confidence in his friends to be ready to provide him with the requisite amount of vices. He had distinguished himself as a diplomatist and as a soldier, and had left traces of his indomitable will in many State papers, as on many an enemy's face, during the period of the Crimean war.

In London, but perhaps more especially in "the Shires," his face was well known and liked, and his method of negotiating fences was as clean and clever as the negotiator himself. Duchesses' daughters had sighed for him, but in vain; and to the "endless desolation and impotent disdain" of mothers the continuance of his celibacy appeared to be as certain as the splendour of his fortune. Pomerantseff had, moreover—and this is really worthy of note—escaped altogether from that most terrible because most hopeless and incurable of maladies, *ennui*; and he owed this miraculous immunity from the disease which almost al-

ways overwhelms the young, rich, prosperous, and powerful, to his lucky spirit of *insouciance*, which he had carefully cultivated from early youth—from, in fact, the moment when he had met with his first disappointment.

The monotony of happiness is perhaps the most hideous monotony of all to a thinking man; and the reason of this is obvious—it is unnatural. Pleasure, with its thousand subtle perfumes, exhausts the moral atmosphere as flowers absorb the oxygen in a closed room; and we all know what the copy-books tell us about the feeling of diffidence entertained by nature as regards a vacuum. Then, again, the man who finds happiness, as it were, an inseparable accident of his life, like dining, will surely begin by fatal degrees to criticise and analyse the nature of it, as he will carefully choose the vintages of his wines. When he has reached this state he is lost; for, as Champfort truly says—"Celui qui veut trop faire dependre son bonheur de sa raison, qui le soumet à l'examen, qui chicane, pour ainsi dire, ses jouissances, et n'admet que des plaisirs délicats finit par n'en plus avoir. C'est un homme qui a force de faire carder son matelas le voit diminuer et finit par coucher sur la dure."

But Pomerantseff carefully avoided this phylloxera of the lucky: in riding to hounds he always looked at the fence he was going to take; in love he invariably ignored the heart he was supposed to be about to awaken; so that, both in jumping and kissing, he met with but few "croppers." He had, moreover, one great and precious gift, that of making himself well beloved by his friends, and healthily feared by his enemies; and the Abbé Girod, who had known him for

many years, proved no exception to the general rule; for although their friendship had never ripened into great intimacy, there was perhaps no man in the wide circle of his acquaintance in whose society the priest took a more lively pleasure. "Late as usual!" cried the Duke, as Girod hurried into the room ten minutes after the appointed time. "Prince, if you were so unpunctual in your diplomatic duties as the Abbé is in his social (and, I fear, in his spiritual!) where would the world be?"

The Abbé stopped short, pulled out his watch, and looked at it with a comically contrite air.

"Only ten minutes late; and I am sure when you think of the amount of business I have to transact, and the nature of it, you can afford to forgive me," he said, as he advanced and shook hands warmly with his friends.

"To my mind," said Pomerantseff, smiling, "dining being the most serious of our transient worldly pleasures, as it certainly is the most harmless—for indigestion is the malady of fools, and does not concern the man *qui sait manger*—anything that interferes with the proper enjoyment of it should be seriously punished as a crime of *lèse-volupté*."

"You are right," said the Duke;

"and as regards that, one of the most striking proofs of Shakespeare's subtle insight into human nature is to be found in Macbeth. It is more than probable that a man so steeped in murder, and one who had contracted the rather dreary habit of consorting with witches, would, under ordinary circumstances, have treated with well-merited contempt the ghostly visitations of that utterly uninteresting Banquo; but to be annoyed at the supper-table was intolerable. This view, to my mind, gives the key-note to the latter part of the play."

"Capital!" cried the Abbé. "That is quite a new idea. Fancy the Eumenides in the *pot au feu*! You cannot conceive," he continued, throwing himself lazily down upon a lounge, "you have no idea of the amount of folly I am forced to listen to in a day. Every woman whose bad temper has got her into trouble with her husband, and every man whose stupidity has led him into quarrelling with his wife—one and all they come to me, pour out their misfortunes in my ears, and expect me to arrange their affairs."

But here the servant, announcing "M. le Duc est servi," interrupted the poor Abbé's complaints.

CHAPTER III.

"I tell you what I should do," said Pomerantseff, when they were seated at table, the Cossack coming out, as it had annoyed him to have to wait. "I should say to every man and woman who came to me on such errands, 'My dear friend, my business is with your spiritual welfare and with that alone. The doctor and solicitor must take care of your worldly

concerns. It is my duty to ensure your eternal felicity, when the tedium of *delirium tremens* and the divorce court is all over, and that is really all one man can do.'

"Very well; but suppose they should reply to me," answered the Abbé, quoting his favourite Novalis, "that 'life is a disease of the spirit.'"

"By the way," broke in the Duke, "talking of spiritual matters, Pomerantseff has been telling me his experiences with a man you detest, Abbé."

"I detest no man."

"I can only judge from your own words," rejoined Frontignan. "Did you not tell me years ago that you thought Home a more serious evil than the typhoid fever?"

"Ah, Home the medium!" cried Girod, in great disgust. "I admit you are right. It is not possible, Prince, that you encourage Octave in his absurd spiritualism?"

But just at that moment came a whisper from a better world.

"Chateau Margaux, M. l'Abbé?" murmured the butler in his ear.

"Wait!" cried the Duke, as Girod was about to smile assent; "I have some wine I want you to try." Then, turning to the butler, "Bring that Lafite Dugléré sent in yesterday, Gregoire. Now, Abbé, taste that. I want your opinion before touching it myself or giving it to others. It is of the famous comet year, and of course you know the story of the sale. Dugléré sent me up a dozen yesterday as a present, with a charming note to say that he wanted the opinion of my friends, and especially of yourself. He added, that of course he could not think of charging me for it, since he bought it at such a ruinous price that no serious man would think of *buying* a bottle. He keeps it therefore merely as an advertisement, and to give to friends. He says, moreover, that although of course too old, it is still a generous wine."

The Abbé looked carefully at the glass, and daintily swallowed a thimbleful; and then, after a pause of half a second, shook his

head at the Duke and said, smiling—

"Dugléré for once spoke the truth. It is a generous wine; far too generous, for it has given away all its best. Margaux, Gregoire."

"Capital!" laughed the Duke. "I shall tell Dugléré your opinion, and he will probably sell out his stock at once. It cost him two hundred francs a bottle."

"It is possible to keep even wine too long," replied the Abbé: and then added with a sweet smile, "here below all is but ephemeral and transitory, as you know."

"You asked me just now, Abbé, if I encouraged our friend here in his spiritualism, did you not?" asked Pomerantseff.

"I did."

The Prince smiled gravely.

"Do not you know me well enough to know that I should never dare to presume to encourage any man in anything, *mon cher Abbé?*"

"But you cannot believe in it?"

"I do most certainly believe in it."

"*Mon Dieu!*" exclaimed Girod. "What folly! What are we all coming to? If men like you and Octave encourage such vulgar jugglery, it will become so paying a game that we poor priests will stand no chance against the *prestidigitateurs*. Robert Houdin will get the best of all the fathers of the Church in a week!"

"It has always struck me as most remarkable," said the Duke, "that with all your taste for the curious and unknown, you have never been tempted into investigating the matter, Abbé."

"I am, as you say, a lover of the curious," replied the priest, "but not of such empty trash as spiritualism. I have quite enough cares with the realities of this world, without bringing upon my-

self the misery which would surely be entailed by investigating the possibilities of the next."

"That is a sentiment worthy of the Abbé Dubois," said Pomerantseff, laughing; and then the Duke suddenly making some inquiry relative to the train which was to take him and the Prince to Brunoy on a shooting expedition the following morning, the subject for the nonce was dropped.

When dinner was over, they repaired to the *fumoir*, which Frontignan had had furnished with all the soft sensualism befitting such a temple of selfishness; and a man might, if so inclined, have not inaptly murmured to himself, on lighting his cigar and sinking into one of the voluptuous arm-chairs which embraced your limbs with a *chatterie* quite their own, "Moi seul, et c'est assez!"

But Pomerantseff strode towards the piano and opened it. "I want to sing you a rather pretty ballad a friend sent me from London yesterday," he said; "and as you both understand English perfectly, you will see that the words are rather above the ordinary level. They are written by a very dear friend of mine—a most extraordinary man—Tresilyan."

"Ah! Tresilyan is a friend of yours, is he?" said the Duke.

"One of my dearest. Do you know him?"

"Hardly—although I have, of course, met him scores of times. He promised to stay with me for a few days last year at Chataigneraie"—one of the Duke's places—"on his return from the Baden races; but he wrote to excuse himself. It was a bore, for I had asked two of the princes to meet him."

"Oh, of course," laughed Pomerantseff, seating himself at the piano. "One can never catch

him: he has so many engagements and friends, that his life is passed in saying in that wonderful voice of his—"Je le regrette, je ne demanderais pas mieux, mais c'est impossible!" But one thing I will say for him: he does not pretend to be a poet; never publishes anything, and only writes for his own amusement. I am indeed one of the few men who know he writes verses at all. This thing he calls, I believe, 'Æstas Captiva.'" And the Prince hummed, in a clear, true, but unpretentious baritone voice, the following:—

I.

"I had thought when we met (for the year was moved,
By the tears October must always bring),
I the lover, and you the loved,
I had said good-bye to spring.

II.

"How could I foresee what I now well know,
That you'd caught and imprisoned all summer's best.
That June, beguiled by your bosom's snow,
Lay throbbing within your breast?

III.

"That those blue-grey eyes could the sun eclipse;
Hide him away, with his heat increased.
Though the roses peeped from your pouting lips,
Burning to be released.

IV.

"That the secret of all the sweet flowers had said,
Only awaited one kiss of mine,
To awaken and thrill when I bowed my head,
Where you can well divine.

V.

"But thus it chanced, as we both now know,
With a kiss from me and a kiss from you,
June lay revealed in your blushes' glow;
Shall we keep her October through?"

"You must not think me rude," said the Abbé, when Pomerantseff had got through his ditty; "but whenever I hear any sentiment of that kind I think perforce of that profound but unappreciated remark of Voltaire — 'The first man who compared a woman to a rose was a poet, the second a fool!'"

"Il est impayable, ce cher Abbé!" said Pomerantseff to the Duke, with a laugh as he rose from his seat and resumed his still-lighted cigar. "What can we do, Duke, to make this wretched little pagan less material in his views?"

"Convert him to spiritualism," said Frontignan.

"Never!" cried the Abbé.

"It is absurd for you to disbelieve, for you know nothing about it, since you have never been willing to attend a *séance*, as you yourself admit."

"I *feel* it is absurd, and that is enough, for me at least."

"Certum est quia impossibile," murmured Pomerantseff, striking a match.

"I myself do not exactly believe in *spirits*," said Frontignan, thoughtfully.

"*À la bonne heure!* Of course not?" cried the Abbé. "You see, Prince, he is not quite mad after all!"

The Prince said nothing.

"I cannot doubt the existence of some extraordinary phenomena," continued the young Duke, thoughtfully, "simply because I cannot bring myself to such an exquisite pitch of philosophical imbecility as to doubt my own senses; but, to my thinking, the exact nature of the phenomena remains as yet an open question. It is some phase of electro-biology which we do not yet understand. I have a theory of my own about it, and although it may be absurd

and fantastical, it is certainly no more so than that which would have us believe that the spirits of the dear old lazy dead come back to the scenes of their human hopes and disappointments, their lives and miseries, to pull our noses and play on tambourines."

"And may I ask you," inquired the Prince, with a touch of sarcasm in his voice, "what this theory of yours may be?"

"I will give you," said the Duke, ignoring the sneer, and stretching himself back in his chair, as he sent a ring of smoke curling daintily toward the ceiling—"I will give you with great pleasure the result of my reflection about the matter. You are both far more clever men than I am, and you can draw your own conclusions.

"It is my belief that the things—the tangible things—we create, or rather cause to appear, when sitting with what is now called, for want of a better name, a materialising medium, come from within ourselves, and are portions of ourselves.

"We produce them, in the first instance, generally with fingers linked; but afterwards, when our nervous organisations are more harmonised to them, they come to us of themselves, and even against our wills.

"It is my belief that these are what we term our passions and our emotions, to whose existence the electric fluid and nervous ecstasy we cause to circulate and induce by sitting with hands linked merely gives a tangible and corporeal expression.

"And after all, why should not this be so? Why, as a matter of fact, is there anything extraordinary or improbable in the suggestion? We all know that grief, joy, remorse, and many other passions

and emotions can kill us as surely and in many instances as quickly as an assassin's dagger; and it is a well-known scientific fact that there are certain nerves in the hand between certain fingers which have a distinct and direct *rapport* with the brain, and by which the mind can be controlled.

"Since this is the case, why is it that under certain given conditions, such as sitting with hands linked—that thus sitting, and while the electric fluid, drawn out by the contact of our hands, forms a powerful medium between the inner and the outward being—why is it, I say, that these strong emotions I have mentioned should not take advantage of this strange river flowing to and fro between the conceptional and the visual to float before us for a time, and give us an opportunity of seeing and touching them who influence our every action in life?

"Nay, I will go further, and insist that my theory has a right to at least be admitted to serious discussion and investigation, for the greatest men since the death of Christ have founded their whole theory of life upon the unseen, the purely conceptional. 'Faith is the evidence of things unseen,' as the Abbé here knows well; and how terribly material have been the sacrifices made for this splendid conception! Why, then, should not a man like Loyola, for instance, have been able to really see with his earthly eyes, under certain given conditions of nervous excitement, what he was ready to sacrifice his very material body, nerves, blood, and sinews to pay due homage to? The media through which these great conceptional realities may become tangible and corporalised should, to my mind, be thoroughly tested and examined through the lens of science be-

fore we can reject as absurd the possibility of their being so materialised.

"*Bref*, it is my belief that I can shake hands with my emotions; that Regret or Remorse, for instance, can become tangible and pinch my ears, and slap me on the back, just as surely as they can and do keep people awake at night by agitating their nervous system, or, in other words, by mentally pinching their ears."

"That is certainly a very fantastic idea, Octave," said the Abbé, smiling. "But if you have seen any of your emotions, what do they look like? I should like to see my hasty temper sitting beside me for a minute: I should take advantage of his being materialised to pay him back in his own coin, and give him a good thrashing."

"It is difficult," said the Duke, gravely, "to recognise one's emotions when brought actually face to face with them, as it were, although they have been living in us all our lives,—turning our hair grey or pulling it out—making us stout or lean, upright or bent over. Moreover, our minor emotions, except when the medium is remarkably powerful, often outwardly express themselves to us in some unrecognisable form, sometimes as perfumes and flowers, often as mere luminous bodies. I have reason, however, to believe that I have recognised that most complex of emotions—my conscience."

"I should have thought he'd have been too sleepy to move out," laughed the Abbé.

"That just shows how wrongly one man judges another," said Octave lazily, without earnestness, but with a certain something in his tone that betokened he was dealing with realities. "You very probably think that I am not

much troubled with a conscience, whereas the fact is that my conscience, with a strong dash of remorse in it, is a very keen one. Many years ago a certain episode changed the whole colour and current of my life inwardly and to myself, although, of course, outwardly I was much the same. Now this episode of which I speak aroused what I am pleased to call my conscience,"—bowing to the Abbé,"—"to a most extraordinary degree; and since that catastrophe, which changed the whole tenor of my life, I have never taken part in a *séance* of spiritualism without seeing a female figure with a face like that of the heroine of my episode, dressed in a queer strange robe, woven of every possible

colour save white, who shudders and trembles as she passes before me, holding in her arms large sheets of glass, through which dim Bohemian-glass colours pass flickering every moment."

"What a very disagreeable thing to see this weather!" said the Abbé; "everything shuddering and shaking."

"Have you ever discovered why she goes about like the wife of a glazier?" asked the Prince.

"For a long time I could not make out what they could be, these large panes of glass, with variegated colours passing through them, but now I think I know."

"Well?"

"They are dreams waiting to be fitted in."

CHAPTER IV.

"Bravo!" cried the Abbé; "that is really a good idea! If I only had the pen of Charles Nodier, what a charming *feuilleton* I could write about all this!"

Pomerantseff laid his hand affectionately on the Duke's shoulder. "*Mon cher ami*," he said, with a grave smile, "believe me, you are wholly at fault in your speculations. Girod here of course (naturally enough, since he has never been willing even to attend an ordinary *séance* of spiritualism) thinks we are both madmen, and that the whole thing is folly; but you and I, who have been to very many extraordinary *séances*, and have seen very many marvellous manifestations, know that it is not folly. Take the word of a man who has had greater experience in the matter than yourself, and who is himself a most powerful materialising medium, as you know: the theory you have just enunciated is utterly false."

"Prove that it is false."

"I cannot prove it, but wait and see."

"Nay; I have given it all up now. I will not meddle with spiritualism again. It unhinged my nerves and destroyed my peace of mind while I was investigating it."

The Prince shrugged his shoulders.

"Prince, leave him alone," said the Abbé, smiling; "his theory is a great deal more sensible than yours; and if I could bring myself to believe that at your *séances* any real phenomenon *does* take place (which of course no sane person can), I should be rather inclined to accept Octave's interpretation of the matter.

"Let us follow it out a little further, for the mere sake of talking nonsense. 'Qui vit sans folie n'est pas si sage qu'il croit!' Doubtless the dominant passion of a man would be the most likely to appear

—that is to say, would be the most tangible?”

“That,” replied the Duke, “would depend upon circumstances. If the phenomenon should take place while the man is alone, doubtless it would be so; but if while at a *séance*, attended by many people, the apparition would be the product of the master-passions of all: and thus it is that many of the visions which appear at *séances*, when the sitters are not harmonised, are often most remarkable and unrecognisable anomalies.”

“I thought I understood from Madame de Girardin that certain spirits always appeared.”

“Pooh, pooh! Madame de Girardin never went deep enough into the matter. The most ravishing vision I ever saw was when I fancied I saw Love.”

“What? Love! An emanation from yourself?”

The Duke sighed.

“Ah! that is what proved to me that what I saw could not be Love. That sentiment has been too long dormant in me to awaken to a corporeal expression.”

“What made you think it was Love?” asked Pomerantseff.

“It was a white dove, with something I cannot express in words, that was human about it. I felt ineffably happy while it was with me.”

“Your theory is false, I tell you!” said the Russian; “what you saw probably was Love.”

“Then it would have been God!” cried the Abbé.

“Why?”

“I believe with Novalis that

“‘Love is the highest reality,’” replied Girod; and then, breaking forth into a laugh, he sang, pirouetting on his heels—

“La prospérité s’en vole,
Le pouvoir tombe et s’enfuit;
Un peu d’amour qui console
Vaut mieux et fait moins de bruit.”

“Don’t quote Hugo to me about love, Abbé, I beg of you, for he knew nothing about it, any more than he understood a word of English, although he coolly wrote a whole volume of criticism on Shakespeare.”¹

“Where is the soul when the body is asleep?” asked the Muscovy Prince.

“No, Duke!” cried the Abbé, laughing, and not heeding Pomerantseff’s pregnant question; “what you saw was not Love, but it might all the same have been an emanation from yourself—a master-passion. I daresay it was the corporeal embodiment of your love of pigeon-shooting.”

“Perhaps,” laughed the Duke.

“I tell you what, *mon ami*,” said Pomerantseff rising, as he saw the Abbé making preparations to depart, “I am glad that my appetite, corporealised and separated from my discretion, is not in your wine-cellar, — your Johannisberg would suffer!”

“Prince, you must drive me home,” said the Abbé. “I cannot get into a draughty cab at this hour of the night.”

“*Très volontiers*. Good-night, Duke. Remember to-morrow morning at half-past nine at the Gare de Lyon,” said the Prince.

¹ I have now lying before me one among the very numerous letters which the great poet did me the honour to address to me, bearing date 19th October 1879, in which occur the following words; “Malheureusement je ne lis pas l’anglais mais je me ferai traduire,” &c., &c., &c. This will, I hope, put an end to the controversy as to whether or not the author of ‘William Shakespeare’ understood English, for I am quite ready to produce the letter in question.—THE AUTHOR.

“Remember to-morrow night at half-past ten at Madame de Langeac’s!” bawled the Abbé, and so they left.

The priest hurried down the cold staircase and into the Prince’s brougham.

“What a pity,” exclaimed the Abbé, when they were once fairly started, “that a man with the brains of De Frontignan should give himself up to such wild ideas and dreams!”

“You are very complimentary,” rejoined the other, smiling gravely; “for you know that, so far as believing in spirits is concerned, I am as bad, if not worse, than he is.”

“Ah, but *you* are jesting.”

“On my honour as a gentleman, I am not jesting. See here,”—as he spoke Pomerantseff seized the Abbé’s hand,—“you heard me tell the Duke just now that I believed he had seen the Spirit of Love. Well, the sermon you preached the day before yesterday, which all Paris is talking about, and in which you endeavoured to prove the person of the Devil to be a fact, was more true than perhaps you believed when you preached it. Why should not Frontignan have seen the Spirit of Love, *when I know and have seen the Devil?*”

“*Mon ami*, you are insane!” cried Girod. “Why, the Devil does not exist!”

“I tell you I have seen him—the God of all Evil, the Prince of Desolation!” cried the other, in an excited voice; “and, what is more, *I will show him to you!*”

“Show the Devil to *me!*” exclaimed the Abbé, half terrified, half amused. “Why, you are out of your mind!”

The Prince laid his other hand upon the arm of the Abbé, who could feel he was trembling with excitement.

“You know my address,” he said, in a quick passionate voice. “When you feel—as I tell you you surely will feel—desirous of investigating this further, send for me, and I promise, on my honour as a gentleman, to show you the Devil, so that you cannot doubt. I will do this only on one condition.”

The Abbé felt almost faint, for apart from the wildness of the words thus abruptly and unexpectedly addressed to him, the hand of the Prince, which lay upon his own, as if to keep him still, seemed to be pouring fire and madness into him.

He tried to withdraw it, but the other grasped the fingers tight.

“On one condition,” repeated Pomerantseff, in a lower tone.

“What condition?” murmured the poor Abbé.

“That you trust yourself entirely to me until we reach the place of meeting.”

“Prince, let go my hand! You are hurting me! I will promise to do as you say when I want to go to your infernal meeting, which will be never.”

He wrenched his hand away, pulled down the carriage-window, and let the cold night air in.

“Pomerantseff, you are a madman: you are really dangerous. Why the devil did you grasp my hand in that way? my arm is numb.”

The Prince laughed.

“It is only electricity. I was determined, since you doubted the existence of the Devil, to make you promise to come and see him.”

“I never promised!” exclaimed the Abbé. “I only promised to trust myself to you if the horrible desire should ever seize me to investigate your mad words further. But you need not be afraid of that.

God forbid I should indulge in such folly!"

The Prince smiled.

"God has nothing to do with this," he remarked simply. "You will come."

The carriage had turned up the street in which the Abbé lived, and they were within but a few doors of his house.

"My dear Prince," said Girod, earnestly, "let me say a few words to you at parting. You know that I am not a bigot, so that your words—which many might think blasphemous—I care nothing about; but remember we are in the Paris of the nineteenth century, not in the Paris of Cazotte,

and that we are eminently practical nowadays. Had you asked me to go with you to see some curious atrocity, no matter how horrible, I might, were it interesting, have accepted; but when you invite me to go with you to see the Devil, you really must excuse me: it is too absurd."

"Very well," replied Prince Pomerantseff; "of course I know you will come; but think the matter over well. Remember, I promise to show the Devil to you so that you can never doubt of his personality again. This is not one of the wonders of electro-biology, but simply a fact: *the Devil exists, and you shall see him.* Good night."

CHAPTER V.

Girod, as he turned into his *porte cochère* and made his way up-stairs, was more struck than perhaps he confessed even to himself by the quiet tone of certainty and assurance in which the Prince uttered these words; and on reaching his apartment he sat down by the blazing fire, lighted a cigarette, and began calmly considering in all its bearings what he could hardly bring himself to believe to be other than a most remarkable and extraordinary case of mania and mental derangement.

In the first place, was the Prince deceived himself, or merely endeavouring to deceive others? The latter theory he at once rejected. Not only the character and breeding of the man, but his nervous earnestness about this matter, rendered such a supposition impossible.

Then he himself was deceived: and yet, how improbable! Girod could remember nothing in what he knew or had heard of the Prince that could lead him to sup-

pose his brain was of the kind charlatans and pseudo-magicians can successfully bewitch.

On the contrary, although native of a country in which the grossest superstitions are rife, he himself had led such an active healthy life, partly in Russia, partly in France, and partly in England, that his brain could hardly be suspected of derangement; for an intimate and practical acquaintance with most of the fences in "the Shires," and all the leading statesmen of Europe, can hardly be considered compatible with a morbid disposition and superstitious nature.

No; the Abbé was forced to confess to himself on reflection that the man who deceived Pomerantseff must have been of no ordinary ability. That he had been deceived was of course beyond all question, but it was certainly most marvellous. In practical matters, the Abbé was even forced to confess to himself he would unhesitatingly take the

Prince's advice sooner than trust to his own private judgment; and yet here was this model of keen healthy worldly wisdom gravely inviting him to meet the Devil face to face, and not only this, but assuring him, moreover, that it should be no unintelligible freak of electro-biology, but as a simple fact.

Girod smoked thirty cigarettes without coming to any satisfactory solution of the enigma.

What if after all, he, the Abbé Girod, for once should abandon the line of conduct he had laid down for himself, and to satisfy his curiosity, and perhaps with the chance of restoring to its proper equilibrium a most valuable and comprehensive mind, overlook his determination never to endanger his peace of mind by meddling with the affairs of spiritualists?

He could picture to himself the whole thing. They would doubtless be in a darkened room; an apparition clothed in red, and adorned with the traditional horns, would duly make its appearance, and there would of course very likely be no apparent evidence of fraud. That the farce would be cleverly played the Abbé did not doubt for a moment. Even supposing some portion of the absurd theory enunciated by Frontignan to be true, and some strange thing, begotten of electric fluid and overwrought imagination, were to make its appearance, that could hardly be considered by a sane man as being equivalent to an interview with the Devil.

The Abbé told himself that it would be most likely impossible to detect any fraud; but he felt convinced that should the Prince find this phenomenon ridiculed and laughed to scorn, after a full investigation by a man of sense and

culture, his faith in it would be shaken, and ere long he would come himself to despise it.

All the remarkable stories he had heard about spiritualism from Madame de Girardin and others, and which he had hitherto paid no heed to, came back to-night to the Abbé as he sat ruminating over the extraordinary offer just made him.

He had heard of dead people appearing, and that was sufficiently absurd—for he did not believe in a future life; but the Devil—the idea was preposterous! Poor Luther indeed might throw his ink-pot at him; but no enlightened Roman Catholic priest could in these latter nineteenth-century days be expected to believe in his existence, no matter how much he might be forced, for obvious reasons, to preach about it, and represent it as a fact in sermons.

Yes; he would unhesitatingly consent to investigate the matter, and discover and lay bare the fraud he felt certain was lurking somewhere, but that the Prince seemed to feel so provokingly certain of his consent, and he feared by thus fulfilling an idly expressed prophecy, to plunge the unhappy man still deeper into his slough of superstition.

One thing was certain, the Abbé told himself with a smile, nothing on earth or from heaven or hell—if the two latter absurdities existed—could bring *him* to believe in the Devil. No, not even if the Devil should come and take him by the hand, and all the hosts of heaven flock to testify to his identity.

By this time, having smoked and thought himself into a state of blasphemous idiocy, our worthy divine threw away his cigarette, went to bed, and read himself into

a nightmare with a volume of Von Helmont.

The following morning still found him perplexed as to what course to adopt in this matter.

As luck (or shall we say the Devil?) would have it, while he was trifling in a listless way with his breakfast, there called to see him the only priest in whose judgment, purity, and religious conviction he had any confidence. It is probable, to such an extent was his mind engrossed by the subject, that no matter who might have called just then, he would have discussed the extraordinary conduct of Prince Pomerantseff with him; but inasmuch as the visitor chanced to be the very best man calculated to direct his judgment in the matter, he, without unnecessary delay, laid the whole affair before him.

"You see, *mon cher*," said the Abbé, in conclusion, "my position is just this: it appears to me that this person, whom I will not name, has been trifled with by Home and other so-called spiritualists, to such an extent that his mind is really in danger. Now, although, of course, we are forbidden to have any dealings with such people, or to participate in their infamous, foolish, and unholy practices, surely it would be the act of a Christian if a clear healthy-minded man were to expose the fraud, and thus save to society a man of such transcendent ability as my friend. Moreover, should I decide to accept his mad invitation, I hardly think I could be said to participate in any of the scandalous, and perhaps even blasphemous, rites he may have to perform to bring about the supposed result. What do you think, and what do you advise?"

His friend walked up and down

the room for a few minutes, turning the matter over carefully in his mind, and then, coming up to where the Abbé lay lazily stretched upon a lounge, he said earnestly—

"*Mon cher* Henri, I am very glad you have asked me about this. It appears to me that your duty is quite clear. You perhaps have it in your power, as you yourself have seen, to save, not only as you say a *mind*, but what I wish I could feel you prized more highly, a *soul*. You must accept the invitation."

The Abbé rose in delight at having found another man who, taking the responsibility off his shoulders, commanded him as a duty to indulge his ardent curiosity.

"But," continued the other in a solemn voice, "before accepting the invitation you must do one thing."

The Abbé threw himself back on the lounge in disgust.

"Oh, pray for strength, of course," he exclaimed, petulantly; "I am quite aware of that."

"Not only pray, but *fast*, and that for seven days at least, my dear brother."

This was a very disagreeable view of the matter; but the Abbé was equal to the occasion.

After a pause, during which he appeared absorbed in religious reflection, he rose, and taking his friend by the hand—

"You are right," said he, "as you always are. Although, of course, I know the evil spirit cannot harm an officer of God's Holy Catholic Church, even supposing, for the sake of argument, my poor friend can invoke Satan, yet, if I am to be of any good—if I am to save my friend from destruction, I must be armed with extraordinary grace, and this, as

you truly divine, can only come by fasting."

The other wrung his hand warmly. "I knew you would see it in its proper light, my dear Henri," he said; "and now I will leave you to recover your peace of mind by religious meditation."

The Abbé smiled gravely, and his friend departed.

The following letter was the result of this edifying interview between the two divines:—

"MON CHER PRINCE, — No doubt you will feel very triumphant when you learn that my object in writing this is to accept your most kind offer of presentation to Sa Majesté; but I do not care whether you choose to consider this yielding to what is only in part whimsical curiosity a triumph or no.

"I will not write to you any cut and dried platitudes about good and evil, but I frankly assure you that one of the strongest reasons which induces me to go on this fool's errand is a belief that I can discover the absurdity and imposture, and cure you of a hal-

lucination which is unworthy of you.—*Tout à vous,*

"HENRI GIROD."

For two days he received no reply to this letter, nor did he happen to meet the Prince in society in the interval, although he heard of him from De Frontignan and others; but on the third day the following note was brought to him:—

"MON CHER AMI,—There is no question of triumph any more than there is of deception. I will call for you this evening at half-past nine. You must remember your promise to trust yourself entirely to me.—*Cordialement à vous,*

"POMERANTSEFF."

So the matter was now arranged, and he, the Abbé Girod, the renowned preacher of the celebrated — Church, was to meet that very night by special appointment, at half-past nine, the Prince of Darkness; and this in January, in Paris, at the height of the season, in the capital of civilisation,—*la ville Lumière!*

CHAPTER VI.

As may be well imagined, during the remainder of that eventful day until the hour of the Prince's arrival, the Abbé did not enjoy his customary placidity.

A secretary of the Turkish Embassy who called at four found him engaged in a violent discussion with one of the Rothschilds about the belief held by the early Christians in demons, as shown by Tertullian and others; while Lord Middlesex, who called at half-past five, found he had captured Faure, installed him at the piano, and

was inducing him to hum snatches from "Don Juan."

When his dinner-hour arrived, having given orders to his valet to admit no one lest he should be discovered *not* fasting, he hastily swallowed a few mouthfuls, fortified himself with a couple of glasses of *Chartreuse verte*, and lighting a Henry Clay, awaited the coming of the messenger of Satan.

At half-past nine o'clock precisely the Prince arrived. He was in full evening dress, but—contrary to his usual custom—wearing

no ribbon or decoration, and his face was of a deadly pallor.

"*Mon Dieu!*" exclaimed the Abbé, "what is the matter with you, Prince? You are looking very ill; we had better postpone our visit."

"No; it is nothing," said the Prince, gravely. "Let us be off without delay. In matters of this kind waiting is unendurable."

The Abbé rose, and rang the bell for his hat and cloak. The appearance of the Prince, his evident agitation, and his unfeigned impatience, which seemed to be token terror, were far from reassuring; but the Abbé promptly quelled any feelings of misgiving he might have felt. Suddenly a thought struck him—a thought which certainly his brain would never have engendered had it been in its normal condition.

"Perhaps I had better change my dress and go *en pékin*?" he inquired, anxiously.

The ghost of a sarcastic smile flitted across the Prince's face as he replied, "No, certainly not; your *soutane* will be in every way acceptable. Come, let us be off."

The Abbé made a grimace, put on his hat, flung his cloak around his shoulders, and followed the Prince down-stairs.

He remarked, with some surprise, that the carriage awaiting them was not the Prince's.

"I have hired a carriage for the occasion," said Pomerantseff, quietly, noticing Girod's glance of surprise. "I am unwilling that my servants should suspect anything of this."

They entered the carriage, and the coachman, evidently instructed beforehand where to go, drove off without delay. The Prince immediately pulled down the blinds, and taking a silk pocket-handker-

chief from his pocket, began quietly to fold it lengthwise.

"I must blindfold you, *mon cher*," he remarked simply, as if announcing the most ordinary fact.

"*Diable!*" cried the Abbé, now becoming a little nervous. "This is very unpleasant; I like to see where I am going. I believe, Pomerantseff, you are the Devil yourself."

"Remember your promise," said the Prince, as he carefully covered his friend's eyes with the pocket-handkerchief, and effectually precluded the possibility of his seeing anything until he should remove the bandage.

After this nothing was said. The Abbé heard the Prince pull up the blind, open the window, and tell the coachman to drive faster. He endeavoured to discover when they turned to the right, and when to the left, but in a few minutes got bewildered, and gave it up in despair. At one time he felt certain they were crossing the river.

"I wish I had not come," he murmured to himself. "Of course the whole thing is folly; but it is a great trial to the nerves, and I shall probably be upset for many days."

On they drove: the time seemed interminable to the Abbé.

"Are we near our destination yet?" he inquired at last.

"Not very far off now," replied the other, in what seemed to Girod a most sepulchral tone of voice.

At length, after a drive of about half an hour, but which seemed to the Abbé double that time, Pomerantseff murmured in a low tone, and with a profound sigh, which sounded almost like a sob, "Here we are;" and at that moment the Abbé felt the carriage was turning, and heard the horses' hoofs clatter

on what he imagined to be the stones of a courtyard.

The carriage stopped, Pomerantseff opened the door himself, and assisted the blindfolded priest to alight.

"There are five steps," he said, as he held the Abbé by the arm. "Take care!"

The Abbé stumbled up the five steps. They had now entered a house, and Girod imagined to himself it was probably some old hotel like the Hôtel Pimodan, where Gautier, Baudelaire, and others at one time were wont to resort to disperse the cares of life in the fumes of opium. When they had proceeded a few yards, Pomerantseff warned him that they were about to ascend a staircase, and up many shallow steps they went, the Abbé regretting every instant more and more that he had allowed his vulgar curiosity to lead him into an adventure which could be productive of nothing but ridicule and shattered nerves.

When at length they had reached the top of the stairs, the Prince guided him by the arm through what the Abbé imagined to be a hall, opened a door, closed and locked it after them, walked on again, opened another door, which he closed and locked likewise, and over which the Abbé heard him pull a heavy curtain. The Prince then took him again by the arm, advanced him a few steps, and said in a low whisper—

"Remain quietly standing where you are. I rely upon your honour not to attempt to remove the pocket-handkerchief from your eyes until you hear voices."

The Abbé folded his arms and stood motionless, while he heard the Prince walk away, and then suddenly all sound ceased.

It was evident to the unfortunate priest that the room in which he stood was not dark; for although he could of course see nothing owing to the pocket-handkerchief, which had been bound most skilfully over his eyes, there was a sensation of being in strong light, and his cheeks and hands felt as it were illuminated.

Suddenly a horrible sound sent a chill of terror through him—a gentle noise as of naked flesh touching the waxed floor—and before he could recover from the shock occasioned by the sound, the voices of many men—voices of men groaning or wailing in some hideous ecstasy—broke the stillness, crying—

"Father and Creator of all Sin and Crime, Prince and King of all Despair and Anguish! come to us, we implore thee!"

The Abbé, wild with terror, tore off the pocket-handkerchief.

He found himself in a large old-fashioned room, panelled up to the lofty ceiling with oak, and filled with great light shed from innumerable tapers fitted into sconces on the wall—light which, though by its nature soft, was almost fierce by reason of its greatness and intensity, proceeded from these countless tapers.

He had then been, after all, right in his conjectures; he was evidently in a chamber of some one of the many old-fashioned hotels which are to be seen still in the Ile Saint Louis, and indeed in all the antiquated parts of Paris. It was reassuring, at all events, to know one was not in the infernal regions, and to feel tolerably certain that a *sergeant de ville* could not be many yards distant.

All this passed into his com-

prehension like a flash of lightning, for hardly had the bandage left his eyes ere his whole attention was riveted upon the group before him.

Twelve men — Pomerantseff among the number — of all ages from five-and-twenty to fifty-five, all dressed in evening dress, and all, so far as one could judge at such a moment, men of culture and refinement, lay nearly prone upon the floor with hands linked.

They were bowing forward and kissing the floor — which might account for the strange sound heard by Girod — and their faces were illuminated with a light of hellish ecstasy, — half distorted, as if in pain, half smiling, as if in triumph.

The Abbé's eyes instinctively sought out the Prince.

He was the last on the left-hand side, and while his left hand grasped that of his neighbour, his right was sweeping nervously over the bare waxed floor, as if seeking to animate the boards. His face was more calm than those of the others, but of a deadly pallor, and the violet tints about the mouth and temples showed he was suffering from intense emotion.

They were all, each after his own fashion, praying aloud, or rather moaning, as they writhed in ecstatic adoration.

“O Father of Evil! come to us!”

“O Prince of Endless Desolation! who sittest by the beds of Suicides, we adore thee!”

“O Creator of Eternal Anguish!”

“O King of cruel pleasures and famishing desires! we worship thee!”

“Come to us, thy foot upon the hearts of widows!”

“Come to us, thy hair lurid with the slaughter of innocence!”

“Come to us, thy brow wreathed with the clinging Chaplet of Despair!”

“Come to us!”

The heart of the Abbé turned cold and sick as these beings, hardly human by reason of their great mental exaltation, swayed before him, and as the air, charged with a subtle and overwhelming electricity, seemed to throb as from the echo of innumerable voiceless harps.

Suddenly — or rather the full conception of the fact was sudden, for the influence had been gradually stealing over him — he felt a terrible coldness, a coldness more piercing than any he had ever before experienced even in Russia, and with the coldness there came to him the certain knowledge of the presence of some new being in the room.

Withdrawing his eyes from the semicircle of men, who did not seem to be aware of his, the Abbé's, presence, and who ceased not in their blasphemies, he turned them slowly around, and as he did so, they fell upon a new-comer, a Thirteenth, who seemed to spring into existence from the air, and before his very eyes.

CHAPTER VII.

He was a young man of apparently twenty, tall, as beardless as the young Augustus, with bright

golden hair falling from his forehead like a girl's.

He was dressed in evening dress,

and his cheeks were flushed as if with wine or pleasure; but from his eyes there gleamed a look of inexpressible sadness, of intense despair.

The group of men had evidently become aware of his presence at the same moment, for they all fell prone upon the floor adoring, and their words were now no longer words of invocation, but words of praise and worship.

The Abbé was frozen with horror: there was no room in his breast for the lesser emotion of fear; indeed, the horror was so great and all-absorbing as to charm him and hold him spellbound.

He could not remove his eyes from the Thirteenth, who stood before him calmly, a faint smile playing over his intellectual and aristocratic face,—a smile which only added to the intensity of the despair gleaming in his clear blue eyes.

Girod was struck first with the sadness, then with the beauty, and then with the intellectual vigour of that marvellous countenance.

The expression was not unkind or even cold; haughtiness and pride might indeed be read in the high-bred features, shell-like sensitive nostrils, and short upper lip; while the exquisite symmetry and perfect proportions of his figure showed suppleness and steel-like strength: for the rest, the face betokened, save for the flush upon the cheeks, only great sadness.

The eyes were fixed upon those of Girod, and he felt their soft, subtle, intense light penetrate into every nook and cranny of his soul and being. This terrible Thirteenth simply stood and gazed upon the priest, as the worshippers grew more wild, more blasphemous, more cruel.

The Abbé could think of noth-

ing but the face before him, and the great desolation that lay folded over it as a veil. He could think of no prayer, although he could remember there were prayers.

Was this Despair—the Despair of a man drowning in sight of land—being shed into him from the sad blue eyes? Was it Despair or was it Death?

Ah no, not Death! Death was peaceful, and this was violent and passionate.

Was there no refuge, no mercy, no salvation anywhere? Perhaps, nay, surely, but while those sad blue eyes still gazed upon him, the sadness, as it seemed to him, intensifying every moment, he could not remember where to seek for and where to find such refuge, such mercy, such salvation. He could not remember, and yet he could not entirely forget. He felt that help would come to him if he sought it, and yet he could hardly tell how to seek it.

Moreover, by degrees the blue eyes,—it seemed as if their colour, their great blueness, had some fearful power,—began pouring into him some more hideous pleasure. It was the ecstasy of great pain becoming a delight, the ecstasy of being beyond all hope, and of being thus enabled to look with scorn upon the Author of hope. And all the while the blue eyes still gazed sadly, with a soft smile breathing overwhelming despair upon him.

Girod knew that in another moment he would not sink, faint, or fall, but that he would,—oh! much worse!—he would smile!

At this very instant a name,—a familiar name, and one which the infernal worshippers had made frequent use of, but which he had never remarked before,—struck his ear; the name of Christ.

Where had he heard it? He could not tell. It was the name of a young man; he could remember that and nothing more.

Again the name sounded, "Christ."

There was another word like Christ, which seemed at some time to have brought an idea first of great suffering and then of great peace.

Ay, peace, but no pleasure. No delight like this shed from those marvellous blue eyes.

Again the name sounded, "Christ."

Ah! the other word was cross—*croix*—he remembered now; a long thing with a short thing across it.

Was it that as he thought of these things the charm of the blue eyes and their great sadness lessened in intensity? We dare not say; but as some faint conception of what a cross was flitted through the Abbé's brain, although he could think of no prayer—nay, of no distinct use of this cross—he drew his right hand slowly up, for it was pinioned as by paralysis to his side, and feebly and half mechanically made the sign across his breast.

The vision vanished.

The men adoring ceased their clamour and lay crouched up one against another, as if some strong electric power had been taken from them and great weakness had succeeded, while, at the same time, the throbbing of the thousand voiceless harps was hushed.

The pause lasted but for a moment, and then the men rose, stumbling, trembling, and with loosened hands, and stood feebly gazing at the Abbé, who felt faint and exhausted, and heeded them not. With extraordinary presence of mind the Prince walked quickly

up to him, pushed him out of the door by which they had entered, followed him, and locked the door behind them, thus precluding the possibility of being immediately pursued by the others.

Once in the adjoining room, the Abbe and Pomerantseff paused for an instant to recover breath, for the swiftness of their flight had exhausted them, worn out as they both were mentally and physically; but during this brief interval the Prince, who appeared to be retaining his presence of mind by a purely mechanical effort, carefully replaced over his friend's eyes the bandage which the Abbé still held tightly grasped in his hand. Then he led him on, and it was not till the cold air struck them, that they noticed they had left their hats behind.

"*N'importe!*" muttered Pomerantseff. "It would be dangerous to return;" and hurrying the Abbé into the carriage which awaited them, he bade the coachman speed them away—"au grand galop!"

Not a word was spoken; the Abbé lay back as one in a swoon, and heeded nothing until he felt the carriage stop, and the Prince uncovered his eyes and told him he had reached home; then he alighted in silence, and passed into his house without a word.

How he reached his apartment he never knew; but the following morning found him raging with fever, and delirious.

When he had sufficiently recovered, after the lapse of a few days, to admit of his reading the numerous letters awaiting his attention, one was put into his hand which had been brought on the second night after the one of the memorable *séance*.

It ran as follows:—

“JOCKEY CLUB, *January 26, 18—.*

“MON CHER ABBÉ,—I am afraid our little adventure was too much for you—in fact, I myself was very unwell all yesterday, and nothing but a Turkish bath has pulled me together. I can hardly wonder at this, however, for I have never in my life been present at so powerful a *séance*, and you may comfort yourself with the reflection that Sa Majesté has never honoured any one with his presence for so long a space of time before.

“Never fear, *mon cher*, about your illness. It is purely nervous exhaustion, and you will be well soon; but such evenings must not often be indulged in if you are not desirous of shortening your life. I shall hope to meet you at Mme. de Metternich's on Monday.—*Tout à vous,*

“POMERANTSEFF.”

Whether or no Girod was suffi-

ciently recovered to meet his friend at the Austrian Embassy on the evening named we do not know, nor does it concern us; but he is certainly enjoying excellent health now, and is no less charming and amusing than before his extraordinary adventure.

Such is the true story of a meeting with the Devil in Paris not many years ago—a story true in every particular, as can be easily proved by a direct application to any of the persons concerned in it, for they are all living still.

The key to the enigma we cannot find, for we certainly do not put faith in any one of the theories of spiritualists; but that an apparition, such as we have described, did appear in the way and under the circumstances we have related is a fact, and we must leave the satisfactory solution of the difficulty to more profound psychologists than ourselves.

THE ENGLISH PEASANTRY.

“ Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
 Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke :
 How jocund did they drive their team afield !
 How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke !”

I HAVE often thought that in these lines we have represented to us the three most characteristic and picturesque operations of rural industry—ploughing the ground, reaping the harvest, and felling the timber in the brown autumn woodlands. Throwing ourselves for a moment into the spirit of the poet, we see the sturdy English peasant going forth to his work in the fresh early morning, well clothed, well fed, cheerful and contented: out at the farmyard gates, past the rugged elms and the ivy-mantled tower, across the brook, and up to the accustomed hill, there to labour steadily till the declining sun warns him to unyoke his weary horses and bring them back with loosened traces to the old moss-grown stable. We watch him shouldering his sickle under the bright and dewy August sunrise, and speeding over the dank greensward for a long day among the yellow corn till the moon is high in heaven. Or we follow him to the November woods, ankle-deep in dead leaves, surrounded by fallen trunks—a scene that Linnell loved—and wielding his axe with right good will against the oak, the ash, or the beech, till it is time to plod home again at dusk hour to his cottage on the edge of the common, with its garden and its orchard, its pigsty, its cowshed, and its hen-roost, to eat his bacon and potatoes by the fireside, and hear the village news till it is time for him to tumble into bed, tired, happy, with a good conscience, and without a care.

Such is the picture which it requires no effort of the imagination to conjure up before us as we read these well-known stanzas, written some hundred and forty years ago—for we are entitled to believe that they represent only the actual truth. They recall to us a time when, according to Mr Hallam, the tillers of the soil in England lived in great comfort, when the “happy peasant” pursued the even tenor of his way, with enough for all his humble wants, and asking no more; catching only at intervals faint murmurs from the outside world through the waggoner or the post-boy; with elbow-room for himself and his children, and the prospect of a decent support in his old age, without misery or disgrace; when the whole country life of England basked in a kind of afternoon repose, and rural felicity was not entirely a dream.

Why should it be so now? and is it, indeed, really so? No doubt, between the end of the reign of George II. and the close of the American war there is a great gulf fixed. During this interval prices rose without any corresponding rise in wages: and although too great stress may have been laid on the numerous Enclosure Acts which were passed in the early part of George III.’s reign—since the more land that was brought under tillage, the more employment there would be—still the fact remains that these Acts did deprive the peasantry of the commons, and swallow up at the same time various little bits of waste ground

which they had made their own. The French war found them with crippled resources, ill prepared to face the new troubles that awaited them. Mr Pitt had a scheme for their relief, which, like all his schemes, was bold and comprehensive, but which would rather hurt the feelings of modern ratepayers and shock the prejudices of modern political economists. He proposed that industrial schools should be established in all the villages of the kingdom, and that the parish officer should be empowered to levy the necessary rates; and, what is more to the present purpose, that any person entitled to receive parish relief might receive a lump sum in advance to enable him or her to buy a cow or a pig, or pay the rent of a small plot of ground.

The pressure of foreign affairs prevented Pitt from proceeding any further with his scheme; and instead of it, an Act was passed in 1795 empowering the parish authorities to give relief in aid of wages to able-bodied men. The remedy was worse than the disease; and matters became so intolerable in the course of forty years that the new poor-law, rushing into the opposite extreme, was the natural result. During the whole of this time, and for some years afterwards, the agricultural interest, in spite of the corn laws, was very much depressed, and the labourers were very badly off. Rick-burning and machine-burning became common; and it was not until the social and monetary system of the country—deranged, firstly, by the long war, and secondly, by the peace which put an end to it—gradually righted itself, that the murmurs of agrarian discontent began to die away, or were lost in the louder wail of the factory operative.

From about the year 1840 down

to the great agricultural strike of 1870, the world heard little of the agricultural labourer. The interest of the philanthropical public now became concentrated on the artisan class, on the truck system, and on factory tyranny. But after these grievances had been redressed and political rights conferred upon town populations by the bill of 1867, the public had leisure to turn once more to the condition of the peasantry. Although this was still far from satisfactory, it was evident that during the last thirty years their position had been steadily improving. In some of the English counties, the south-western counties especially, they had made perhaps but little progress. Elsewhere, it may be doubted whether they had not so far regained the ground lost during the dreary interval I have mentioned—that is, from about 1790 to 1840—as to reinvest the old-fashioned conception of rustic happiness with some tints of its original reality. In the year 1874, Mr Frederick Clifford visited East Anglia as correspondent for the 'Times' newspaper, just when the quarrel between farmers and labourers was at its height. His letters were published afterwards in a volume styled the 'Agricultural Lock-out'; and in the tenth chapter of that book will be found a description of the peasantry which strongly confirms this supposition. The peasantry of the eastern counties were not exceptionally well off. And what was true of them then, is still more true of them now. Mr Clifford concludes this chapter with the following words:—

“A few visits paid by intelligent working men in towns to an average country village would do them more good than joining a mob of holiday

excursionists to the sea-side, and would probably dispel some illusions about rural serfs and their brutal oppressors. I doubt also whether the sight of pretty roomy cottages, gardens gay with flowers, well-cropped allotments, leafy lanes, and green fields, would not send a good many back to town regretting that their lines had not fallen in such pleasant places, or, at all events, feeling that rural life, if the reward of labour be small, has many and great compensations."

These words were written fourteen years ago; and now that a new future seems to be opening before the agricultural labourer, it may be well perhaps to take another glance at his progress, and learn what we can of his material welfare, his character, and his aspirations at this particular moment. The late Mr Jefferies has given us in 'Hodge and his Masters' a fairly complete account of the peasantry of the southern counties. But that was written nearly ten years ago, and events have moved rapidly in the interval. There are, too, some phases of English rural life which did not come quite within the range of his vision; or, at all events, which he did not understand so well as others: and I doubt whether any one, anxious to foretell the future of the English counties, would be justified in relying exclusively on the data supplied by this ingenious and picturesque writer.

The first thing to be done is to obtain a general, but as far as possible an exact, view of the physical and economical condition of the labourer at this present moment. That must be the basis of all further inquiries. When we know that, we have firm ground to stand upon, and can pursue our speculations on his moral and intellectual

characteristics in comparative security. With regard to his material condition, something like certainty is attainable: and I must protest at the outset against that method of criticism which proceeds on the assumption that all statements of this nature are more or less ingenious guesses, and that none of them are based on actually ascertained facts. In the very brief survey of the labourer's material position, which is all that it will be necessary to lay before the reader in this article, all conclusions not deduced from official sources are derived partly from personal experience, partly from answers to questions addressed directly by myself to residents in the country, and in some instances to those who have worked as day-labourers themselves.

The latest official information on the whole subject is to be found in the evidence taken before the Duke of Richmond's Commissioners, 1879-1882, and the reports thereunto annexed. Another very useful work is 'The History and Present Condition of the Allotment System' (1886), by the Earl of Onslow. And the information contained in them I have myself supplemented, as already stated, by direct personal inquiries in the spring of 1887.¹ One cannot stereotype the condition of any class: wages and prices may differ a little to-day from what they were fifteen months ago: but no such depression or deviation has occurred on either side as to throw my account off its balance and necessitate a fresh adjustment.

I first began to write on this subject about eighteen years ago, and the conclusion at which I arrived last year I described as follows:—

¹ The Agricultural Labourer. By T. E. Kebbel. 1887.

“His circumstances [the labourer’s] have fluctuated very greatly during the interval on which we are now looking back; and comparing the end with the beginning, the balance of advantage is not always on his side. But it is generally. Wages, which rose with the Agricultural Union, and fell again with the agricultural depression, have no more than gone back to the point at which they originally stood, even if they have done that; while, on the other hand, the purchasing power of money has increased within the same period by something like 30 per cent. The agricultural labourer, therefore, has been no sufferer by the agricultural distress of the last ten years. His condition, instead of being worse than it was before, is better.”

The title of the work of Mr Jafferries to which I have just referred is, it may be observed, ‘*Hodge and his Masters*’; that is to say, it is a book about farmers and landlords as well as about Hodge himself—in other words, about all three branches of the agricultural interest. And he says himself in his preface, “The labourer at the present moment has the best of the bargain.” I am anxious to call particular attention to this point, because one of my main objects will be to show that, in calculating the line of conduct likely to be adopted by the peasantry under the new responsibilities thrown upon them—in striving to get behind mere appearances, and to penetrate to their inner motives,¹—we must allow no place in our account for exceptional physical distress, or for any sense of injustice provoked by a compari-

son of their present lot with anything they have enjoyed within the reach of rural memories or traditions. I must ask my readers, therefore, to start with me (under protest if they please) from this position—namely, that the English peasantry are in all material respects better off now than they have been at any time during the last hundred and twenty years—and this not only absolutely but relatively,—better off in proportion to the prosperity of the other agricultural classes.

A very few pages will be sufficient to show what grounds we have for arriving at this conclusion. But before entering upon particulars it may not be unnecessary even now to caution the reader once more against the common error of confounding wages with income, and of supposing that when the labourer has received his allotted number of shillings on Saturday night he has nothing more to depend on. His wages on an average do not represent more than three-quarters of his income.

Wages,² perquisites, and agricultural customs differ so greatly in various parts of England, that a resident in the north, acquainted only with the system prevailing in his own country, would very likely be inclined at first sight to dispute the accuracy of figures relating to the south and south-west. But it appears, on the whole, that the total yearly income of an ordinary English day-labourer, including both wages and perquisites

¹ As the ‘*Spectator*,’ in some comments on another article of mine, invited me to do.

² By wages are meant the weekly money which the labourer receives every Saturday night. By perquisites are meant: 1. The difference between the rent which he pays for his cottage, and the rent which it is really worth; 2. Harvest-money; 3. Beer; 4. Fagots; 5. Driving coals; 6. Bacon; 7. Potatoes; and there may be more, according to the different customs of different counties.

of every kind, ranges from about £50 a-year in Northumberland to a little over £30 in Wiltshire and other south-western counties. This gives an average of £40 a-year.¹ But it is only the exceptionally low wages paid in a few counties which pulls down the average even so low as this. In the eastern, midland, northern, and south-east counties it is commoner to find the sum-total rising to £43 and £44 than sinking to £37 or £38. Shepherds, waggoners, and stockmen are paid at a higher rate, and their wages average about £50 a-year.²

Before the Education Act of 1870 came into general operation,³ and when it was more usual for women to work in the fields than it is now, the earnings of the labourer's wife and family made a considerable addition to his yearly income. Where women are employed now, they earn from 4s. to 6s. a-week at ordinary times, and from 10s. to 12s. in harvest. From juvenile labour, as boys can usually get to work by the time they are twelve or thirteen, I calculate the average addition to the cottage income to be about £18 a-year. Throw in an average of £2 a-year for the women, which is certainly much below the mark, and that gives a total average of £60 as the annual income of an able-bodied English peasant, with the help of his wife and children.

Under the head of perquisites, I include cottages and gardens, let

to the labourer considerably below their real value. But I have not included the value of his garden-produce, nor yet whatever profit he may make from his allotment, both of which must therefore be added to the above total. The net profit on an allotment of one rood is usually calculated at about £5 a-year.

Such being his income, we have next to consider what he can buy with it; and this much seems to be certain at any rate, that he can buy more with it now than he could have done at almost any time within the present century. Ordinary commodities—bread, mutton, bacon, cheese, butter, tea and sugar, boots, shoes, and coats—are all from 20 to 30 per cent cheaper than they were eighteen years ago, while wages are just about the same. The village labourer now is a wholly different man from what he was in the last generation. He wears different clothes, eats different food, lives in a different house, and works in a different manner. He wears broadcloth on Sundays, and sometimes at his work too. The old smockfrock is entirely discarded, except by a few village patriarchs, who cling to it just as gentlemen here and there clung to their pigtails in the reign of George IV. That decent garb will soon become a thing of the past, equally with the more picturesque velveten coat, corduroy knee-breeches, well-fitting grey worsted stockings, and neat well-greased boots, which formed the

¹ *i.e.*, Average wages 12s. a-week; value of perquisites about 4s. a-week.

² Our authorities for these figures have been given on the foregoing page. They are the Report of the Duke of Richmond's Commission, 1879-1882, especially Mr Druce's Table of Wages; a paper in the 'Royal Agricultural Society's Journal,' by Mr Little, 1878; and thirty returns obtained by the present writer from farmers and landowners in twenty-seven representative counties.

³ The Commissioners in 1867 calculated that the withdrawal from farm-work of children under ten years of age would involve an average loss to the parents of £4 or £5 a-year.

Sunday attire of the younger peasantry thirty years ago. They must all now have their black coats to their backs, and badly made trousers on their legs, and badly polished boots on their feet; the consequence being that they do not look a quarter so much like gentlemen as they did in their old costume; and are all the poorer for looking all the more vulgar.

The average day-labourer in regular work now eats butcher's meat four times a-week. He will have broiled ham for breakfast; and at harvest-time, when his wife, or oftener his little girl, carries out "father's tea" to him in the meadows, if you lift the corner of her apron, or peep into her basket, ten to one you will find a tin of preserved salmon or a box of sardines stowed away between the loaf and the jug. Look into the window of the village shop and see the tale it tells, —tinned meats and soups, delicacies and "kickshaws," which, to "the rude forefathers of the hamlet," would have seemed as strange and wonderful as the Tokay and Johannisberg of Lord de Mowbray seemed to the savages of Hell House Yard. Grocery and chandlery are now brought round to the villages in vans at a much lower rate than the local shopkeepers can afford to sell them at. Necessaries are far cheaper than they were in the labourer's childhood, and luxuries have now become as cheap as necessaries were then.

I would avoid wearying the reader with statistics while still on the threshold of the subject. I will only add, therefore, that the labourers' cottages, as a rule, are far better than they used to be; that landowners have almost everywhere been making great efforts to provide proper accom-

modation for the peasantry on their own estates; that the decrease of the village population has in many places caused the supply of cottages to be in excess of the demand; and that houses with two sitting-rooms, three or four bedrooms, and a good garden, can now be had for the same rent (*i.e.*, 1s. or 1s. 6d. a-week) which was formerly paid for a hovel. The hovels which still exist under the name of cottages almost always belong either to the occupiers themselves, who sturdily refuse to quit them, or else to speculative builders in some adjoining town, who have run them up as cheaply, and charge for them as dearly, as they can. The labourer may still be dissatisfied with his lodging, but he knows perfectly well that it is a great advance on what it used to be, that it is improving every day, and that in a few years it will leave him nothing to complain of.

Next we come to the allotment system—and on this subject great misapprehensions prevailed down to the passing of Lord Onslow's Act, when, however, public interest being aroused, the question was examined and many foolish errors put to rout. A little while before the passing of this bill, Lord Onslow himself had written a book upon allotments, the contents of which were abundantly confirmed by the parliamentary debates which followed. All that those who had been loudest in their denunciations of the landowners now found to say was that, although the demand for allotments had been all but entirely supplied by voluntary effort, still it was desirable to have an Act of Parliament to provide for the very few instances in which it had not. Besides Lord Onslow's book, we have the Government returns pub-

lished last year; and it is now known, or easily may be known, to all who will take the trouble to inquire, that of the whole number of agricultural labourers in England and Wales only a very small percentage are without either allotments, cottage-gardens, or cow-runs. According to the census returns of 1881, the number of *bonâ fide* agricultural labourers in England and Wales was 807,608. We know that they have not increased in number since that time; and according to official statements in 1887, the number of allotments, gardens, and cow-runs amounted to 654,028, of these 389,000 being allotments.

But what it is also very interesting to know is this: that, according to the evidence collected by Lord Onslow, and published only two years ago, in many English counties allotments were at that date going begging. The old tenants had voluntarily abandoned them, and no new ones could be found to take their places. It was not the rent that was deterrent; for in some cases this was lower than the agricultural rent of the district, in many it was just the same, and in only a few a little higher. Nor can the fact be entirely owing to the distance of the allotments from the villages; for I can remember allotment-grounds more than half a mile from the nearest cottage for which there was a regular scramble as soon as a vacancy occurred, though now it appears half of them are on the landlords' hands. Whether this has anything to do with the development of a new trait in the agricultural labourer—the dislike, namely, of hard work—may be worth consideration. Of allotments I will conclude by saying that, though the system is sometimes spoken of by self-constituted

champions of the peasantry as if it was a new thing, it has been in existence since the beginning of the century, and was taken up generally by the country clergy, who were the first to appreciate its benefits at least sixty years ago.

It will now be seen, I think, that if the English peasantry have any reason to be dissatisfied with their present lot, it can hardly be on the ground of physical privations. We are none of us so well off but what we might be better; and unquestionably the agricultural labourer may legitimately aspire to a somewhat higher life than he leads at present. But he is better off relatively than either the proprietor or the tenant-farmer. They have sunk in the scale of prosperity; he has risen. He enjoys comforts and luxuries unknown to his fathers and grandfathers; while they have been obliged to abandon what their fathers and grandfathers enjoyed. He is not obliged to work so hard as he did formerly, nor to begin work so young; and he is educated a great deal better. Where then does the shoe pinch, if it does pinch? Why are the peasants leaving the land, as we are told they are, and crowding into the large towns? Why is skilled agricultural labour growing scarcer and scarcer in our villages, and why are the farmers complaining that they cannot get their ground properly cultivated owing to the fact that the labourers who remain behind are too stupid, too indolent, or too indifferent to learn the details of agriculture? To know this, one might almost say would be to know everything—to know what is passing in the minds of the most active and intelligent of the peasantry as well as in the minds of the most sluggish, and to be able to give a good guess at

what they are likely to do with the power newly placed in their hands. Of the facts themselves I am afraid there can be no doubt. The exodus of the peasantry is a fact. The inferiority for all agricultural purposes of those who stay at home is a fact. The Richmond Commission is a witness to this. But what would keep the better ones at home, or stimulate the worse to greater exertions and to a more lively interest in the work they are called on to perform, are questions not so easily answered.

Some say that what the emigrants want is "a better position" generally than they occupy as farm-labourers, even at the best; and that as they cannot get it on the land they go to seek it in the town. Others say more specifically that they wish to be farmers, or to see a fair prospect of becoming farmers, on their own account, by the time they have passed middle age; that they are tired of being dependent all their lives, and wish to have something to fight for, as the artisan has—the chance, that is, of becoming a master man. A third class say they run away because they cannot stand the cottages; and a fourth, that they have acquired a taste for the excitement and the pleasures of a town life, and that nothing now would retain them in a country village. If so, it is a bad look-out for English agriculture. Finally, we are told that they go away simply because they cannot get work, while all the time the farmers say they cannot get labour. Akin to this is the assurance that the peasantry leave the land because there is no longer enough under the plough to find employment for them, and likewise that machinery has lessened the demand for agricultural hands.

I am allowing the hypothesis on which the whole discussion hangs—namely, that discontent *does* exist among the English peasantry to a perceptible if not to a serious extent—to pass unchallenged. We had better see it where it does not exist, than not see it where it does. Besides, though I think it is much exaggerated, I do not think it wholly imaginary. It is no very difficult thing in this world, of course, to set class against class; and in some parts of England, I daresay the labourers may have been taught to think that whatever they have to complain of in their lot is the doing of those above them, either the farmers or the gentry, or both. But I do not honestly believe that, if left to themselves, their thoughts would travel in this direction. It is a very exceptional state of things indeed in which there will not be from time to time some kind of friction in the relations between employers and employed. No doubt the labourers in many counties at this moment are grumbling at their wages and girding at the farmers. But they understand something about farming. They can calculate pretty well what wages the farmer can afford to pay, and what rent the landlord is entitled to demand; and I see no evidence that there is among them any widespread or deeply rooted feeling that they are being treated with injustice. I do not believe, therefore, in the existence of any serious ill-will on the part of the peasantry towards either the owners or occupiers of the soil. What they do think, I believe, is, that if the farmers cannot cultivate the land themselves, they might as well give the labourers a chance. Anything, they think, would be better than letting it remain as it is. On a certain

percentage of the peasantry we may suppose that this view of the land question does operate with more or less effect. But my own opinion is, that we must go behind this if we want to get at the root of the matter. Different motives springing from distinct sources may converge towards similar results in the long-run; and it may very well be that the vague kind of dissatisfaction which prompts the labourer to leave his home, may ultimately be allayed by some readjustment of the land question. But the land question is only very partially the cause of it at the present moment.

Assuming, then, that dissatisfaction to a greater or less degree does exist, I will not say but what there may be an element of truth in all and each of the above explanations of it. But my own belief is, that there is more in the first than in any of them. Those who converse with the educated young labourer of the present day, will perceive that he is thinking of things only indirectly connected with the conditions of agriculture. With his former garb he has cast his former self.¹ He has lost his relish for the country. He will tell you, if you can only lead him on to talk frankly, that village life is "a poor thing": that is a favourite phrase with him. He will declare that his native village is "a poor place"—and that not from any fancied sense of personal superiority in himself, but really because it fails to satisfy those newly felt yearnings in his own heart which education has planted there. He is conscious that an agricultural labourer is not so important a member of society as an artisan. He has no

corporate life: no institute, no discussion, no power. The artisan seems to breathe a larger and freer moral and intellectual atmosphere. The young labourer has read quite enough at the board school to put thoughts of this kind into his head. Tennyson, referring to a different class of society, has described the feelings of a country-bred youth on first seeing the lights of London, in words which express very much my own meaning:—

“And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him, then,
Underneath the light he looks at, in
among the throngs of men.”

Something of this kind of longing has now, I think, penetrated down to the agricultural labourer. The young, clever, well-educated peasant wants to be something more than the best ploughman or the best thatcher in the village. It is not with him a question of wages. Young, unmarried, skilful, and intelligent, if he gives his mind to farm-work, he may earn wages that will give him all he wants and more. It is not altogether a question of the land either. He knows what kind of life the owner of three or four acres leads, and it has few charms for him compared with pushing his fortune in the city.

It is only natural that it should be so. Nearly all the young men in the rural districts between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five have now passed through the educational process. It has opened a new world to them. Who ever could have expected it to be otherwise? It has thoroughly unsettled them, and till the process of fermentation is over we must be prepared for startling phenomena.

¹ These remarks refer only to one class of the peasantry—those who are on the move—not to those who still cultivate the soil.

The danger is lest this, which is only the natural disturbance consequent on a period of transition, should be mistaken for the symptoms of deep and permanent disaffection with the structure and conditions of society. If we avoid this error, and do not plunge into precipitate measures to conciliate a class which is not really estranged, I have little doubt that in process of time recent changes will do a great deal towards bringing back the peasantry to the land. The parliamentary suffrage and the municipal suffrage have yet to bear their fruit. When the peasant finds he can be "as big a man" in his native village as in the adjoining town, his principal inducement to leave the country will disappear.

The others, such as they are, will still remain, and I am afraid always must remain. Town life to the labourer seems fraught with indefinite possibilities to which the country affords no parallel; and since his imagination has once been stirred by them, he will never again be exactly what he was before. Setting aside, however, all these glittering visions, the practical common-sense view of the matter is, that he sees in the town opportunities of rising in life which do not exist in the country. They do not exist for the farmer, nor yet for the squire, any more than they do for the labourer. Their place in society is fixed. But the peasant sees that artisans become shopkeepers, that shopkeepers become merchants, and that merchants become merchant princes. If such thoughts ever entered into his head in the old days, they remained thoughts only. He did not know how to go to work to begin a new career. But schools

and railways have taught him; and in less than another generation the peasant of the olden time—the peasant of Gray's *Elegy*, the peasant of George Eliot, contented to end his days as he began them in his native village, satisfied with his own position, and without a wish to rise out of that station in life to which it had pleased God to call him—will probably be quite extinct.

But whether the newly awakened ambition of the peasantry, and their desire to find themselves in a position where, in common with their fellow-labourers in the town, they may have opportunities of rising, will be satisfied by providing them with greater facilities for obtaining land of their own, is a question which it is useless either to ask or to answer till we can make up our minds on the possibility of establishing in this country the system of petty culture on a large scale, and as an important and substantial branch of our agricultural economy. The exceptionally industrious, skilful, and economical labourer never had any difficulty in obtaining "a bit of land" for himself by the time he was forty or fifty years of age; and has less now than ever. But, as I have already stated, I doubt if the class of men who are now turning to the towns would care to live as he does, always supposing them to be possessed of the same qualifications. The time may come when they will find out their mistake, and be glad to come back again to the land. But that time has not come yet. The question of small farms and large is still *sub judice* in this country, and it cannot be said that recent experience¹ either at home or abroad tells strongly in their favour. The

¹ See the last Report of the Small Farms and Labourers Land Company.

question is whether the average English labourer could live at all on a farm of four acres: not whether he could live well, but whether he could subsist, keeping the land in a reasonably good condition, and paying his way from year to year. The feeling of independence would reconcile him to hard living. To tell the ordinary peasant that as a small farmer he would have to work harder, live harder, and die sooner than the ordinary day-labourer, makes no impression on him; his answer is that he would "chance that." He would readily pay that price to be his own master. But the more clever and adventurous youth would rather not. He would foresee the end; and I doubt if this class will ever settle down as little farmers till the town experiment has been worked out, or till village life has assumed a new character more in accordance with their aspirations.

That the pleasures and the excitement of a town life, quite apart from the opening which it affords to the more enterprising and aspiring spirits, tend to draw the labourer away from home, is only natural and probable; and there is this not unimportant fact to be remembered, that when the labourer calls his village life "a poor thing," it really is a poor thing in one sense compared with what it used to be within living memory. It may be that the younger labourers, if they could suddenly be thrown back for a generation, retaining at the same time their present tastes and habits, would not care for the pleasures which satisfied their grandfathers.

"The sports of children satisfy the child;"

and the labourer has put away

childish things. But there is no doubt that the life of an English village at the present day is duller than it was fifty years ago. Different customs prevailed in different parts of England; but everywhere the villages kept up old festivals and traditional rejoicings with a heartiness which has now died out. I cannot remember the May-pole, and have only seen a limited number of village greens of the old-fashioned cut; but the "feast" or "wake," which is still not entirely extinct, was in many English counties thirty years ago a kind of village carnival to which the whole population looked forward with intense delight. Most of the cottagers had then their friends and relatives to stay with them, and the poorest had a large piece of beef, a plum-pudding, and a bottle of home-made wine. The children who were out at service always came home for the feast—or fee-ast, as it was pronounced in the midland counties; and by some of the more privileged among the matrons the parson's children would be asked to tea. The village street in the evening, if the feast came in the summer, was a regular promenade. Booths and caravans, with all kinds of shows, toys, and sweets, stood on each side; and, as I need not say, the public-houses drove a roaring trade. The principal farmers did not in those days think it *infra dig.* to follow the example of the labourers; and they, too, used generally to have their houses full at the feast. It was a great time, too, for weddings; and also for fights. The champions of two neighbouring villages would often make a match to come off at the feast, besides the numerous scratch encounters got up over the ale and pipes. The feast began on the saint's day to whom the church was

dedicated, or the Sunday nearest to it, and usually lasted a week. It afforded matter to talk of for three months before it began, and for three months after it was over.

I have known villages elsewhere where the great festival was on Trinity Sunday, and on the Monday evening the whole village danced upon the parson's lawn. Then there were Christmas-day, and Plough Monday, and Whitsuntide, and other time-honoured occasions which brought their appropriate diversions, but which now, from all I can ascertain, if still observed, have lost much of their former light-hearted joviality. Above all, there was the harvest-home, for which the modern harvest festival is no exact equivalent, though it may be, and no doubt is in some respects, a great improvement on it. But there is not the freedom, the licence, and the old joviality of the farmhouse kitchen in these modern entertainments. They are not "cakes and ale," and can never be equally attractive to the younger generation, who will have their fling in one way or another, let the moralists say what they please.

In the days of old, then, the village was a little, self-contained community, with its own simple round of amusements and interests, providing sufficient excitement for a population which knew no others, and rearing generation after generation of sturdy agricultural labourers, who accepted their vocation as a law of nature, and never looked beyond it. Village life was not dull to *them*, partly because it really was more cheerful and diversified in itself than it is at present, partly because the

labourer had not learned to look abroad and compare Mantua with Rome.

Those labourers who are driven from the country simply because they cannot get work, have in most instances only themselves to blame. They can't *do* the work, and they won't learn it. This is the unanimous¹ testimony of farmers from all parts of England, north, south, east, and west. Formerly, when the better class of young men which produced the skilled labourer—the thatcher, the hedger, and the drainer—remained at home, they kept up the standard of work. Now that they are gone, it has fallen to a lower level. The labourers are listless and indifferent. Some kinds of farm-work they can't do at all, and what they can do they do badly. Few of them are fit to be trusted with horses, or dumb animals in general. Many of them are men who have made a venture in the towns, but having neither the energy nor the talent to secure success, have wandered back to their native villages, rejected by the warehouse and spoiled for the corn-field. This is the material on which the farmers now have to work; and we can understand them saying that they cannot afford to pay such men high wages, and that they do not choose to make work for them when none is absolutely wanted.

With regard to the effect of machinery on the demand for agricultural labour, opinions seem to differ. Some say that it has had no effect at all; and even where it has, seeing that it is the best men who are in demand for the management of engines, the introduction of machinery can scarcely

¹ Duke of Richmond's Report (1879-81), *passim*. The Agricultural Labourer, pp. 57-66.

account for the migration of the best men.

No doubt the withdrawal of land from cultivation has injured the labourer's position; but the effect of it has been greatly over-rated. If we take the number of acres of arable land which have gone out of cultivation during the agricultural depression, and then calculate the number of labourers which would ordinarily have been employed upon them, the product will account for only a small percentage of the emigrants.

We have now gone over the various causes to which the so-called "exodus" of the agricultural population may be attributed, and we find, as might be expected, that those who remain behind are inferior both in character and intelligence to those who have departed. We are next confronted with the fact that it will be these men, and not the peasantry of an earlier and better day, who will represent the peasant vote in the new scheme of county government. I for one should have no fear of that class of labourers from whom formerly came all the skilled workmen, and among whom every farmer found his right-hand man. These men, with their higher education and sharpened wits, have not parted with their old traditions and old associations, to fall under the yoke of new masters and become the cat's-paws of a selfish conspiracy. On all questions relating to the land, the poor-law, and the village charities, we could have trusted their good sense and practical knowledge to keep them straight. Supposing them to retain not a remnant of their former respect for the ancient proprietors of the soil, and the families with whom their ancestors have been connected for so many generations,

they have got some ideas of political economy instead; while their minds have been sufficiently trained to accustom them to look a little way ahead in judging of questions which touch their own immediate interests. They would not be so likely as the more ignorant class whom they have left behind them, to judge of the small-farm question by its immediate benefits without looking to its ultimate results. Their minds would be capable of embracing both sides of the controversy; while on questions of pauperism and poor-relief, their own self-respect would be some guarantee against their sanctioning extreme courses.

But can we say as much of the residuum, left to their own sweet wills, and uncontrolled and uninfluenced by the more intelligent members of their order who have left the soil? I doubt it. It is among these, if anywhere among the peasantry, that the worst kind of demagogues will find their readiest tools and most ignorant and credulous disciples. It is among these that communistic doctrines may possibly make some progress—and any theories whatever which promise a day's independence, regardless of all future consequences. It is difficult to say exactly what thoughts are passing through their brains at this moment. Some of these men—not, I think, the majority—may fancy themselves ill-used; some few may cherish a grudge against the farmers; and a still smaller number may have been taught to see their enemies in the gentry. I fancy, however, their feeling towards both, ethically at all events, is one rather of indifference. But they think a good deal of the "turn and turn about" doctrine. They have a kind of vague idea that it ought to be their turn now. The gentry and

the farmers have had a good time of it, they think, for many centuries. Why should not they themselves have a slice of good fortune at last? I don't think they go further than this. Such ideas as that the land belongs to them; that they have been robbed of it; that the present owners are tyrants and oppressors,—I do not think have made much way with them. They apply the parable of Dives and Lazarus to the conditions of this world. They think that those above them have had their good things, and likewise themselves evil things. They are therefore entitled to compensation. But I believe, in their hearts they would fully recognise that the rich had been quite in the right of it to get as much as they could, and enjoy themselves as long as they could. They have no dislike of gentlemen as such; nor do they want to be gentlemen themselves. They know very well that they have experienced nothing but kindness from the old families and from the clergy; and they have, as a rule, no angry feelings towards them. They have no desire to injure them for the sake of injuring them. They wish only to better themselves. I believe this to be a reasonably close approximation to the mental condition of those men who still “plough the glebe and lop the glades”—the *bonâ fide* agricultural labourers of this country.

It is easy to see, however, that here are materials for the demagogue and revolutionary agitator to work upon; and one of the most important, if not *the* most important, social questions of the present day, is how best to counteract his intrigues. For all honest and conscientious endeavours to elevate the condition of the peasantry, without any *arrière-pensée* in the

background, we have the most unfeigned respect. But it is perfectly well known that a detachment of Radicals are now busily at work who only make the improvement of the peasantry a stalking-horse for the destruction of the gentry; and it is against these, and *their* dealings with the peasantry, that we have to be on our guard. The country gentlemen are marked men with a certain set of politicians. A triple attack is gradually being developed against their property, their influence, and their amusements. Their estates are threatened by the compulsory appropriation of land for purposes of very doubtful utility. Their influence is threatened by the transfer of their local duties to other hands. And their amusements are threatened by the Cockney clamour which is still kept up against all manner of field-sports. To compel them to retire from the position which they now occupy by robbing it of all which makes it either dignified or pleasant, is the scarcely disguised object of one section of “the labourer's friends.”

The Church, too, is an integral part of the English rural system; and it is only to be expected that county or district councils will, sooner or later, claim the right of interference with the parish churches. On all these subjects the labourer will be appealed to by the usual arguments. And the question is how far he has the intellectual stamina to hold out against the fallacies that will be laid before him, when they seem to promise him any immediate material advantage.

So far we have contented ourselves with registering the distinction which must just now be drawn between the higher and lower grades of the English peasantry—between those who are at-

tracted to the towns and those who remain upon the land. But when we have done this, there are still other distinctions to be drawn, and modifications and reservations to be taken into account besides. All the superior class of labourers have not left the land. All the inferior class are not such as I have described. All villages are not alike—the difference between those in which there is a resident proprietor, and those in which there is not, being marked, and apparently indelible. And finally, all the cottage population are not agricultural labourers. Thus we shall see that, with all these limitations, the class to which our less favourable estimate applies is not quite so large as might at first sight have been supposed; though I am afraid, at the same time, that the non-agricultural elements of the English peasantry are not of a nature to do much to neutralise any mischievous ingredients which may have crept into the general mass. The small shopkeeper, the tailor, the shoemaker, and the carpenter, in a country village, are not usually either the best Churchmen or the best Conservatives in the parish: for what reason I cannot imagine, unless it is from some inherent moral antagonism between trade of any kind and agriculture, which to the philosopher is foolishness, but which to the practical observer does often seem to be the only explanation of various rural phenomena.

To set against this, however, we have the better disposition and more conservative sentiments of even the present class of labourers in villages which have been for generations under the immediate influence of a resident landed proprietor, and have had average good fortune in the vicars or rectors of the parish. If the trading element

in the country goes to weigh down the scale on one side, the lingering spirit of feudal loyalty will depress it on the other. We may allow these two influences perhaps to cancel each other. But even then we have a floating balance of doubtful if not unfriendly feeling to reckon with, which we cannot contemplate without anxiety.

How the present race of labourers would demean themselves with regard to the various questions above mentioned, tithes, compulsory expropriation, wastes, footpaths, game, &c., if appealed to on such matters by candidates for a county or district council, would be determined very much by the presence or absence of the conditions to which I have just referred. Where the squire and the parson were resident, and did their duty to the people—as in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, where they are resident, they do do it—there it is likely that much of the agitator's eloquence would be exerted in vain. Where this wholesome influence was wanting, it would probably as a rule prevail. The English peasantry, I repeat, have, as a body, no desire to annoy their superiors. But there are two or three questions on which they feel strongly. They are tenacious of what they suppose to be their right to roadside wastes. They are sensitive on the subject of footpaths. And though I am quite certain they do not wish to see game exterminated, they are irritated by the severity with which petty breaches of the game-laws are occasionally punished. Now in regard to their behaviour on these questions, the character of the men they lived under would just make the entire difference. If they felt that on the whole there was an honest desire, on the part of the gentry and clergy, to

consult their comfort and convenience, and to regard trifling offences with lenity, then they would act upon the principle of give and take, and would not insist too obstinately on their own claims, whether real or imaginary. But where this was not felt, or where there was nothing to soften down the friction usually created by bailiffs, agents, middlemen of all kinds, and gamekeepers, then the peasantry would be very likely to show their teeth, and in some cases to regulate their votes by pure malice. What is true of comparatively small things is true also of larger ones. Leave him to the promptings of his own unbiassed disposition, under what I call the natural conditions of rural life, and I do not believe the labourer would raise a finger to cut up the estate of any neighbouring proprietor against his will, to say nothing of the fact that plenty of land is to be had without it, and that he would wish to exhaust the voluntary market before having recourse to compulsion. But apart from this, I do not think that under the conditions I am supposing he would desire to injure the gentry in order even to benefit himself. The misfortune is, that in so many parts of England these conditions are absent, and the danger is lest the sins of a small class of country gentlemen should be visited on the whole body.

It is further to be remembered that the peasant, after all, is a countryman, with all a countryman's tastes and instincts in his nature, though circumstances may stifle or eradicate them. He sympathises with sport, much as he may grumble at some of the consequences which the laws enacted

for its maintenance may occasionally inflict upon himself. He delights in the hounds, and the younger men, if they have a chance, will sometimes run with them for miles. When he sees a gentleman out shooting, he is pleased to come and tell him that he has marked down a covey or a wounded bird, and will stay with him to see a bird or two killed if he can. I may be told that all the time he is thinking of the sixpence with which his zeal will be rewarded. I say emphatically that he is not; that though he has no objection to the sixpence, he comes to see the sport.¹ And in these tastes there is undoubtedly a bond of union between the three orders of the agricultural interest which will not be without its influence in holding them together in the future. The labourer who snares a hare or tickles a trout is often moved more by love of sport than love of gain. "If I wasn't a gamepreserver, I'd be a poacher," is what I have heard many a country gentleman say.

Whatever the country gentlemen still have it in their power to do, either to retain or to regain the affections of the peasantry, they will probably see the policy of doing. And though the "graceless zealots" who have set these friends against each other have done a good deal of harm, it is not perhaps wholly irremediable. The English peasantry are nowhere alienated like the Irish; they are easily affected by kindness and liberality; and it is only here and there, I think, that respect for the ancient proprietors of the soil is absolutely extinguished. There is a natural courtesy and politeness among the country labourers, where they have not been brutalised by

¹ Cf. article on "The English Gentry," *Blackwood's Magazine*, May 1888.

long neglect, which it is very pleasant to experience, and which would make it doubly painful should there ever come to be a class war between the peasantry and the gentry. I will not believe for a moment that these manners are assumed by the labourers to serve their own purposes or disguise their real feelings. Let a stranger during a country walk ask any labouring man at work in the fields his way to the next village, or the name of the owner of the land, or any other question concerning the neighbourhood, and observe the manner of his reply. It is quite easy and natural; at the same time perfectly respectful. He conveys the impression that he likes to be spoken to, and he is evidently anxious to oblige. This is not the manner of the townsman, who, I believe, at heart is equally willing to be of service to you, but has not the faculty of conveying his information in the same agreeable and good-humoured manner as the rustic. The latter is never in a false position; never on the alert to detect any fancied slight in your mode of addressing him; never uneasy for fear you should be thinking too little of him: he knows his own station, and what is due to himself; and as long as you show that you know it too, he is perfectly satisfied, and never afraid of being too complaisant. This natural ease is the secret of good-breeding in all classes. It is self-consciousness that makes men awkward; and to this failing the peasant is a total stranger.

He is indebted for its absence partly to the life he leads, and partly to the fact that he has till lately been satisfied with his lot, and animated by no social jealousies or ambitions. The mere fact that he is not struggling for

admission into any higher sphere of society than his own, but is satisfied to be what he is, and to know that nothing more is expected of him than what is proper to that station, tends to put a man at his ease; and herein the peasant will contrast very favourably with the artisan. But he is still more indebted to the rural deities. The woods and brooks and hills, and rich corn and pasture fields—the perpetual presence of nature all round him—make a man think less of himself than he does when pent up in cities amid the work of human hands, and the incessant din of social rivalries and controversies. The trees and the fields speak to him in a different voice. They speak to him of that which is simple, beautiful, eternal, and incorruptible, rebuking not only “the fierce tumultuous passions,” but also all the little petty animosities of this fleeting existence. Though he is unconscious of the source from which it comes, it is hence that the peasant derives much of that composure of manner and that natural dignity which is one of his generic characteristics. This last remark, however, applies, it must be owned, rather to the generation that is going off the stage than to the one that is coming on.

And what a pleasant generation it was! I have lived with them, played with them, ate and drank with them, gone bird-nesting with them, shot and fished with them, and talked with them by the hour while they were threshing in the old barn with the good old flail—whose sound perhaps I shall never hear again—or cutting and “layering” the stiff whitethorn hedges with their short bill-hooks and huge leather gantlets, standing up to their ankles in the water

at the bottom of the ditch from eight o'clock in the morning to four o'clock in the afternoon. Such men were ignorant of many things which village children of ten years old understand now. But they had a natural shrewdness and sense of humour which always made their conversation interesting, and were as free from any taint of what is commonly called vulgarity as the finest lady in the land. They were indeed nature's gentlemen. They never tried to talk fine. They used their own rustic language without shame, and thinking no evil; and I even recollect a most worthy old villager and excellent churchman who habitually addressed the vicar's daughter, a lady of seven or eight and twenty, as "my wench," to the intense amusement and delight of the lady herself, so naturally and politely was it said, so evidently meant as a mark of affection and regard from one who had known her from the cradle. When the young peasantry become old, they won't be able to do this, I am afraid. I remember another old man who, after I began to carry a gun in the holidays, would come all the way up from his allotment to the parsonage house, a distance of three-quarters of a mile, to tell me there was a nice leveret lying snug in his potatoes. He could

have knocked it over with a stick and carried it home without anybody being a bit the wiser. But no. That was not his way, not his idea of his duty, or of the right way to show his regard for those who had always befriended him. Their language was often picturesque, and singularly expressive. A very old man taken to see the sea for the first time in his life, declared, after a long silence, that he "couldn't mek it out at all—it wur all of a work, like." He was thinking of brewing.

Well, all these old men will soon be laid in their narrow cells, and with them much sterling honesty, shrewd sense, fidelity, and simplicity. New questions which they never understood will be agitated over their graves, and new conditions of rural life may gradually emerge from the hurly-burly which the most inveterate idolator of the past will, if he lives to witness them, acknowledge to be improvements. But while it is yet doubtful whether this result will follow, we cannot help casting a longing lingering look at the ancient race, with their antique virtues and simple kindly manners, and devoutly hoping that the greater enlightenment of the new generation may compensate for their absence.

T. E. KEBBEL.

A STIFF-NECKED GENERATION.

CHAPTER XXVI.—“ANY OTHER COURSE WOULD BE UNWORTHY.”

“It behoves the high
For their own sake to do things worthily.”

“It is a case of nervous prostration, Lady Julia. Complete nervous exhaustion, and prostration of strength. Miss Liscard has experienced a severe shock to the system in that very sudden and—and deplorable death of her mother; and coming at such a time as it did—in connection with the other event,”—for the speaker was a faithful old *habitué* of King’s Common, and well up in its affairs,—“it was altogether more than this poor young lady could bear. I have known Miss Rosamund since she was a child. Nervous—highly nervous—and excitable. It only surprised me that she did not give way before; but she has great spirit—unbounded spirit. She would confess to nothing when I questioned her more than once of late about herself. Now, Lady Julia, this is a case requiring great care—very great care, and judiciousness. You understand me? Any return to the scene of her recent distress would most certainly be detrimental. By-and-by it may be necessary to try the effects of a thorough and complete change, but for the present I must ask you to let my patient remain here.”

“Let’ her remain!” cried Lady Julia,—“let’ her remain, Dr Makin!” for her companion was the village doctor, once or twice before mentioned, and the two were together in the otherwise deserted drawing-room, he having been sent for in hot haste an hour before; “why, *of course* my dear niece remains. I will

not permit her to be removed by any one. On my own responsibility I should have insisted upon it; and of course now, with your authority to detain her, nothing can be said.”

“Certainly—certainly you have my authority. In fact, I should consider any attempt at removal might be attended with most serious consequences. The symptoms are too grave to be trifled with.”

“Quite so. Yes, I am sure they are. Just what I said myself,” and Lady Julia’s faint pink cheeks flushed with a sort of jubilant hilarity, and her eyes sparkled in a manner that made the worthy doctor look at her in astonishment.

“Where should the poor child be but under my roof?” proceeded she, briskly. “At whose house would she meet with greater care? Who would watch over her and nurse her as I should? Am I not now in the place of her own dead mother?”

“And a vast deal better fitted to fill it!” thought Makin.)

“Why, *of course* Rosamund is my rightful charge, and I shall give her up to no one,” pursued the little woman, fierce as a bantam-hen over one of her brood; “and I am sure—yes, I am sure that she is quite ill enough to warrant my saying so.”

Now this was not precisely what her learned authority had meant to be the result of his words, and he was just a trifle puzzled in consequence. Of Lady Julia’s unbounded affection for her sister’s family, and for this member of it

in particular, he was quite aware ; and yet, in consulting him on the present alarming occasion, and discussing the chances of a serious illness to follow, instead of the tearful and tender anxiety which would have been only natural, he beheld a curious satisfaction, even an exhilaration in the good lady's demeanour which was inexplicable.

Her great, her one thought seemed to be that the patient was not to be removed, her one fear lest others should differ on the point.

He thought she did not realise the gravity of the situation.

"She will certainly require very great care," he observed, emphatically.

"And she shall certainly have it," replied she, with vivacity.

He hardly knew how to make himself more intelligible. Lady Julia's ideas and his own were clearly not in accord, and hers not precisely the sort of care he meant : of her goodwill he was secure, but of her discretion she was not at the moment giving him the most favourable of impressions.

There she stood on the tiptoe with eagerness ; excitement, and apparently really pleasurable excitement, lighting up every feature, her words tripping each other up in their haste, and the lips remaining apart and ready again for immediate action, even when the stream was for a brief second checked. It was with difficulty he obtained an innings at all ; and it was only by throwing all the authority he could into a profoundly solemn countenance, that he found himself in any way able to cope with the voluble spinster. "I never knew before what a tongue she had," he thought.

Could he have put down the whole to agitation — but Lady Julia was not a person to suffer

from agitation ; her feelings were too simple, too natural, her tears too profuse,—even on hearing of her only sister's startlingly sudden end she had merely wept and wailed, and ordered her mourning with heartfelt but perfectly wholesome grief,—so that her present humour was against all precedent, and was, in fact, almost reprehensible.

"If there be not the very strictest watch maintained, and unless my instructions are carried out to the letter," he pronounced, with his best frown, "recollect, your ladyship, that I cannot answer for the consequences. Your ladyship will remember that I have warned you."

"I will, indeed, Dr Makin ; and I shall say so to every one. I shall tell them that you think very seriously indeed of my poor niece——"

—"Well, we must take care, Lady Julia. I should hardly like to say 'very seriously indeed' ; I could hardly go so far as that. I said very serious consequences might ensue——"

—"But you do think she requires the closest attendance and the strictest guard," urged the lady, coming closer, and glancing round, as though what she was now saying would not bear the chance of being overheard. "I am sure you think that ? I am sure you said it ? Do you not ? Did you not ?" intent upon her object. "You may be quite, quite honest, Dr Makin, you may indeed. Is that not your express desire ? Have I not your orders for insisting that no one is to be admitted to her room but myself ? No conversation — no letters——"

—"My dear madam, we must not go too far. We must tread softly, your ladyship, softly. We must wait and see. For a day or two I should certainly recommend

absolute repose; but after that, if Miss Rosamund goes on favourably, and would like to see a friend—one at a time——”

“Oh, if you once begin, there will be no end to it,” interrupted her ladyship, snappishly, “and I am sure you did say she ought to see no one. I assure you, and you may take my word for it, that if you wish my niece to be quiet, her only safety lies in your most positive orders that no one, no one whatever, is admitted to see her. Dr Makin, you do not know these Gilberts—forward, pushing people——” she stopped, bit her lip, and was aware of her indiscretion.

The doctor, however, prudently showed nothing. “Naturally, naturally,” he rejoined, shaking his wise head; “new connections, eager to show attention. We cannot wonder at it—but we must be careful how we permit it. We must ward them off as civilly as we can. It would certainly not do to allow them *too* much encouragement, and we must run the risk of giving offence rather than fail in our duty to our patient. Perhaps it would be better taken if I were to speak myself——”

——“Why, yes, that is the very thing I wish!” cried Lady Julia, joyfully restoring him to all her former favour, “the very thing, my dear Dr Makin, that I am trying to point out to you. If you would take these—these strangers in hand, if the prohibition were to come straight from you, there would be no ill feeling created, and the effect would, besides, be much greater; but if I were to interfere, it might be supposed that it was I who was trying to create an estrangement. So now, I see you understand the position, and how necessary, how absolutely necessary, it is for you to speak out boldly. Do not hesi-

tate. A medical verdict, you know, is *never* disputed.” And she sighed her relief.

A few minutes before, she had trembled lest he was about to desert her cause and take service with the enemy.

The “enemy.” That was the light in which she now regarded Major Gilbert and his family. Among them they had brought her darling to this pass, and they should now be annihilated—at any rate for the present, while for the future also her hopes now rose—by this most excellent mouthpiece whom Providence had sent her. Neither did Makin dislike his errand.

“It is undoubtedly indispensable that I should be plain,” he assented cheerfully; “and as your ladyship observes, a physician is licensed to deal with the unvarnished truth. I shall not hesitate to——”

——“Forbid their coming to the house?”

“To Miss Rosamund’s room. I presume you would not wish to have me close your front door also?”

She perceived that, whatever she might wish, she could hardly carry such an injunction into effect, and once more her brow faintly clouded over. But it was a great point gained that she was to have the sick-room kept sacred; and with the thought of that dear form lying there, with the touch of those clinging arms still hovering round her neck, that wet cheek still felt on hers, that cry whose very incoherence had made all clear—that feeble, imploring cry, “You only, you only,” ringing in her ears—with all of this so sweet, so inexpressibly sweet, to her loving heart, she was fain to be content. Her beloved was her own once more.

As soon as ever Rosamund should be sufficiently recovered,

there would again be the fullest confidence between them, and their old affection would be only redoubled and intensified by all that had passed.

The Gilbert episode should be a thing of the past (Lady Julia was rapid in her conclusions); and having become equally obnoxious to both, its termination should be as equally looked upon in the light of a deliverance.

And then, after a brief delay—there need be no hurry, nothing indecent nor unseemly—but after a proper interval had elapsed, then surely, surely the dearest project of her heart might, must, could, and should come to pass.

Had poor Caroline only lived to see it!

But poor Caroline's child should not suffer from her mother's loss. Here was she, ready and willing to play a mother's part; and in the variety of emotions thus suggested, her eyes were suffused in happy moisture, almost before the worthy doctor had put his seal upon Rosamund's bedroom door.

Rosamund had been carried up to a chamber next her aunt's—a large, warm, bright apartment—which, with its faded blue hangings, its curious walls hung with black-framed engravings, its small round mirrors, high carved mantel-piece, roomy couches and chairs, and, above all, its broad low window-seats, from which could be seen a far-stretching view of beechen slopes and sunny uplands, had ever been a favourite with her.

As a child she had always begged to be put to sleep in the huge four-post bed; she had liked to slumber off gazing upon those marvellous pictures and those quaint devices on the ceiling. She had rejoiced to know that Aunt Julia was on the other side of the green baize door, the door which would alone

be visible when the outer one stood open, as she would have it do when there. The room had been her mother's, but Lady Caroline had never so much as heard of Rosamund's predilection for it. For herself, she had never slept at her father's house since the day she had had a home of her own, and it had never occurred to either her sister or her daughter to think it would be in the least degree interesting to her to learn that on the holiday occasions when Lady Julia's pet would be summoned thither, it was the great treat to both that Rosamund was safe and snug within the old blue room.

Thither she had now been borne in her extremity.

"It was really almost providential the way it came into my head," explained Lady Julia afterwards to Hartland, "because you know, Hartland, what my poor head is. And how I ever came to think at all, what with the shock of seeing the poor darling lying on the floor, and hardly knowing whether she were dead or alive, and all those girls crowding round, and those officious Gilberts seizing her hands——"

"My dear aunt, be just. They were rubbing and chafing them, and that, as you know, is always considered the correct thing to do when a person faints——"

"Much good it would have done poor Rosamund! Well, well, it was kindly meant, no doubt, and we were all beside ourselves; but if I had not cried out, 'Carry her to the blue room,' there was Major Gilbert tearing along with her in his arms straight for the butler's pantry!"

"The best place to go," said Hartland, half laughing; "he knew he should find brandy there."

"The brandy could have been brought, and was brought imme-

diately—oh, by yourself, I remember. What we wanted was to get her things off, to get her undressed; and so I tried to explain to him, for at first he had plumped the poor child down on the sofa here—on the sofa in this great, hot, noisy drawing-room! As if she would ever have got better here!—as if, with him and his stupid, saucer-eyed sisters standing by staring at her——”

——“Now I say, Aunt Julia—now, dear auntie, this is not in the least like you,” said Hartland, very kindly. “Why should you be so bitter against those poor girls?”

“Why? O Hartland! you know why too well—far, far too well. You have yourself spoken of it. And—and they were *dreadful*, beyond what I had even imagined. And to see them round my darling, taking possession of her——”

“Making themselves far more useful than the Waterfields did. I doubt if Rosamund would have come to herself half so quickly if it had not been for the eldest Miss Gilbert. I own I was struck with her sense and energy. And as for Gilbert, what a fine, big, strong fellow he is! He picked her up as if she had been a baby!”

“Oh, big enough,” said Lady Julia, scornfully; “those sort of men, with their bull-dog strength, are useful sometimes; and as the poor child was only half-conseious, and seemed scarcely aware of what was going on, or of whom she was being held by, she could not have minded.”

“Do you mean anything by that, ma’am?” said Lord Hartland, after a moment’s steady look into her face. “Do you mean to say that you have any reason for—for supposing that Rosamund would have objected to——”

“Now, my dear Hartland, were

you not yourself the person to give me the hint?”

“But you did not take it?”

“Not then; but I have done so since. I do now, for I have seen for myself.”

“What have you seen?” said he, in a low voice.

“That she detests him, shrinks from him, and recoils from the very idea of having him for her husband.”

“You are—sure—of that?” he said, slowly.

“Absolutely—absolutely sure. Oh, could any one doubt after to-day? Even before his ill-timed appearance, her wretched, sorrowful face, her piteous eyes—my heart was aching for her; and Hartland, I felt how deeply I had been to blame for not sooner perceiving the truth. But you only said *he* was to be pitied—you only said *he* was not being done justice to—and I was so stupid,—my dear, I am stupid you know,—that it never once occurred to me to think *why* I should pity him. If I had ever for a moment thought that it was because our dear Rosamund had changed her mind,—but Hartland, will it be thought,—will any harm be thought of her for changing it? Will she be thought to have—oh dear, how dreadful!—to have jilted this Major Gilbert?”

“You may set your mind at rest. She will not jilt him.”

“Not!”

“She says not—that nothing will induce her to do so.”

“You have spoken to her, then?” said Lady Julia, almost in a whisper. She had not supposed he had done this.

“I have.”

“When?”

“Yesterday evening. There is no reason why I should not tell you about it,” said Hartland, calmly, “especially since Rosa-

mund will probably do so herself. I found her in the garden—in the roseray; and not perceiving any one there till I was close by—and she not perceiving me till I spoke to her—I could not help involuntarily playing the spy, and saw and heard——”

——“What?”

“Enough to warrant my taking her boldly to task for her folly and injustice. That she has made and is making herself miserable by her persistence in it, is no excuse for her.”

“Oh, not so harsh—not so cruel, Hartland.”

“I cannot help it, Aunt Julia; I think Rosamund is behaving very, very badly.”

“And you are not in the least sorry for her?”

“I did not say I was not sorry for her,” said he, gloomily.

“You never expressed one syllable of kindness, of compassion.”

“My compassion is for the wronged and the innocent.”

“But she is so young and so innocent herself,” cried poor Lady Julia, “she did not know what she was doing. She was driven into it by her mother’s pride and obstinacy. Heaven forgive me that I should say such a thing!” fumbling wildly with the truth, “but it was so; it really was so, Hartland. My poor sister was full of prejudices, and when once she had taken up a prejudice, nothing could move it. And then some of them being so unreasonable—for they were unreasonable, and I will say it—how were the poor children to discover which were, and which were not? Poor dear Caroline was quite right, quite wise to object to this Major Gilbert; but then she had objected to so many people—so many *nice* people before—that she had naturally weakened her judgment in their opinion, Rosamund’s espe-

cially. Rosamund has all her poor mother’s self-will and independence of spirit; and she has often told me that as she grew older she meant to judge of people for herself. Sometimes I ventured to hint to Caroline as much, but my poor sister did not take it in good part. She fancied I had no right to assume that I knew more of what her children felt than she did. But it was a mistake—indeed, Hartland, it was a mistake—the seclusion in which those poor dears were kept. Nobody was thought good enough for them. Excellent, worthy people, if rather homely and plain, would be sneered at in their presence. If they had been provided with other friends and companions, the evil would not have been so great. They have cousins, admirably brought up, pleasant young people, but they have hardly so much as seen them! And here, although there are several nice families about—not very near perhaps, but near enough to have been asked to dine and sleep, or spend a few days at King’s Common—people such as the Weybridges, and the Caldecotts, whom Caroline herself could not have objected to,—yet they were never asked in that way. She would send them a card for her one large party in the year! Well, how was poor Rosamund to tell when her mother was right and when she was wrong? She knows that I like and approve of many whom her mother would scarcely speak to; and she knew that even those with whose birth and breeding my sister had no fault to find, were kept at a distance!” From sheer lack of breath the speaker ran down at last.

“I never heard you speak like this before,” said Hartland.

“And I cannot bear to speak like it now. I cannot bear to say

such things ; but it is only justice to this poor unhappy child that somebody should stand forward on her side. Let us be on her side, Hartland, whoever is against her. Let them say what they will——”

“I tell you, Aunt Julia, there will be nothing to be said ; at least, if I know Rosamund, as I think I do. I wish to heaven I could think otherwise ! I may be wrong—I hardly think I am ; but it is my distinct conviction now that she means to fulfil her engagement at all costs.”

“Can he not see ? Can he not be made to see, and free her of his own accord ?”

She drew closer, and put her hand upon his arm as her voice breathed in his ear. He shook off the hand.

“Think what you are saying—beware of what you are advising,” he replied, in a deep stern voice. “Would you bid her dare to do so base a thing ? God help the poor child, if it is this which she is being tempted to. Oh, my dear aunt, I beg, I beseech you, save her from it ; never let the suggestion cross your lips a second time.”

Her eyes fell before his.

“All that can be done ought to be done to put her present conduct in its true light before her,” continued the speaker ; “but it is not in that way, not in that way that any high-minded woman should seek to escape the chain she has forged for herself. One course only is open to Rosamund, to confess her terrible blunder, and to bear its terrible consequences. Any other is beneath her, unworthy, most unworthy of that noble nature.”

The faltering phrase appeared to escape him unawares ; he seemed for the time to have forgotten the presence of another, and to be but communing with

his own spirit : and while she yet remained mute and abashed beneath the severity of his rebuke, he slowly passed out of the room.

“Dear me ! I had meant no harm. I must certainly take care how I say that again,” quoth Lady Julia, promptly recovering ; “but it had really seemed to me the very best way in which it could have been managed.”

Meantime Rosamund lay still in the faded blue chamber overhead, watching the shadows fall deeper and deeper down upon the wall in the flickering firelight, as the stars rose, one by one, in the pale sky without.

She had no desire to stir, to speak, to move ; it seemed to her that if she should never again rise from that bed of weakness all would be well : she would have found rest and peace.

With her entrance into that calm abode, with the nestling down among the softly wooing pillows, with the departure of all save that one loved and loving face, there had fallen such a hush upon her spent and storm-tossed spirit as she thought she should never care to break again.

Was she going to be very ill ? Delightful hope. To be very ill, and have to lie there, in that quiet haven where she had found an anchorage, for long, long years to come ! To have every entrance from the world without sedulously barred, guarded, barricaded ! To see none, speak to none, communicate with none ! Oh, what bliss !—what a heaven already !

And her aunt had sworn it should be so. Poor Lady Julia, feverish as herself with anxiety upon the point, had repeated assurances and promises over and over again. “Yes, my dear, dear child, yes ; it shall be as you wish, it shall indeed. I will let no one

near you—no, not even the housemaids, for old Charlotte and I will do all the nursing between us. Charlotte will do everything in the room—I know she will. You shall not see a strange face. Old Nanny may come in now and then to sit by the fire. You would not mind her. She likes to fancy she is not altogether put on one side; and you would not need to talk to her,—for, my darling, you must not talk, nor move, nor even think, if you can help it. You are safe now—safe under Aunt Julia's care; and oh, my dear one—my dear one—Rosamund, my precious, we may be happy yet!”

Rosamund had scarcely heard, but she had felt it all.

Tears flowed from very thankfulness.

But presently they started again from another source. She fell to wondering and recollecting.

What now would be thought about her by others? What would Hartland think, for one? Hitherto he had been so completely engrossed by Gilbert's wrongs that he had had no room in his mind for hers. No. Not for her wrongs, perhaps, but for her misery. Would he reflect on it now? Would he forgive her now? If she were to grow worse and die, would he not pity her just a little?

The pillow was wet beneath her head.

CHAPTER XXVII.—A HOST ENJOYING HIMSELF.

“If she laugh, and she chat,
Play, joke, and all that,
And with smiles and good-humour she meet me,
She's like a rich dish
Of venison, or fish,
That cries from the table, 'Come eat me!'"

—ANON.

“But, dear me! this is very awkward, Rosamund's not coming home to dinner,” quoth Rosamund's papa, when informed of what had happened. “Not coming home at all to-night, is she?”

Major Gilbert, to whom the inquiry was put, made answer in the negative; and then hastily explaining—for he was pressed for time—that he was himself obliged to be absent likewise, he made for the door, before his astonished host could collect himself for anything further.

“Dear me! this is really very awkward,” proceeded Mr Liscard, reflecting. “I wish one or other of them had been here. I—really—upon my word, what am I to do? Am I to entertain these young ladies all by myself? Am I to be obliged to talk to them

during the whole of dinner? And how in the world am I to know what to talk about? I must say if there is one thing I like, it is to eat my dinner in peace. Really this is very annoying. I do hope it is only for once and away: I do hope Rosamund will not do such a thing again. If there is any chance of its happening a second time, Hartland must come over, or the Stonebys, or somebody. I cannot undertake to have these Miss Gilberts here, and nobody to attend to them. They should never have been invited if this was to be the way. Their brother making off too, just when he could have been useful! The whole thing has been very badly managed.” And the meek man, who would never have presumed to lift up his little finger on his own behalf in the days of

his imperious spouse, was now quite creditably peevish, and stood upon his rights like any other middle-aged head of a house.

It will thus be seen that he had come on during his widowhood.

He had indeed astonished everybody, and none more than himself; for those days of mourning had, to speak the truth roundly, been the most peaceful and congenial he had passed for many a long year.

He had been, as was only natural, shocked and distressed by the tragical event which had left him a widower, and it had taken full eight-and-forty hours for him to collect his ideas, and feel the new ground whereon he stood.

But that accomplished, almost simultaneously there had breathed throughout his soul a spirit of sweet resignation, and an indistinct and novel sense of importance.

Never in the course of his whole married life had he been made of consequence to anybody—he was now *the* person of the house.

His wishes, his desires were paramount as regarded all arrangements to be made, and the slightest hint that dropped from his lips was acted upon forthwith.

To him were condolences primarily offered, and letters of sympathy addressed; for, in the eye of the world, he must presumably stand out second to none in the august affliction which had overtaken the august family.

It might have been a little troublesome—for so high a position had its responsibilities—but he could not well at such a period have otherwise occupied himself. His treatise on Kant would have had to wait at any rate until after the funeral day; and previous to it, he would not even, as we know, unpack the new books, although the box had actually got as far as the

niche in the library sacred to such arrivals.

That being the case, he would have been sadly at a loss had the vacuum remained unfilled, so that it had seemed quite the right thing for the steward to come to him with suggestions, Lord Hartland with reminders, and Mr Stoneby with the programme of the burial service.

He had really had little to do beyond putting as it were his seal upon each and all of these: Rosamund had written the bulk of his letters, the servants among them managed the household business, and Lady Julia had proved an authority on the outlay expected in the way of mourning. As one and all had matured their own ideas before submitting them for his sanction, it could not have been called severe mental labour which the demands occasioned, and they had brought with them a gentle variety of interest which at such a juncture had been rather welcome than otherwise. His own tailor had, moreover, made him the most comfortable and well-fitting suit he had had for a long time; and when he had discovered this, in addition to the other amenities of his condition—and when he had slipped ‘poor Caroline’s’ wedding-ring upon his little finger, and found that it also fitted, and would require no troublesome alteration, poor Caroline herself would have opened her eyes could she have beheld the swiftness with which her bereaved one was accommodating himself to his loss.

It may indeed have been questioned whether matters would have been quite so smooth had Rosamund not been taken up with her own affairs at this time.

We are inclined to think that had there been no Major Gilbert, no recent betrothal and new-found

remorse mingling with the natural shock of distress, a push for the leading rein would have been made from that quarter. But Rosamund had been bewildered, amazed, and immersed in self-consciousness, and the one thing clear to her at the moment had been the duty which she owed her single remaining parent. Moreover, it had been a relief to turn to his wants and needs, and fancy them greater than they were, and exaggerate his grief, and presume that he was a sufferer. She had chosen to consider that he and she were in unison, and that no deference nor attention was too great to be shown to one so afflicted. It had been her best way of silencing Gilbert, and making him uncomfortable—that was the truth; but naturally of this her father could not be aware, and, in consequence, it had been perhaps with her more than with any one else that he had tasted the sweets of consequence.

That she should now desert him was therefore what he had little expected; and he had by this time become so used to his advance in public estimation all round, that he was quite equal to being aggrieved thereby.

Here were Major Gilbert's sisters, nice young people, likely to make the house more cheerful, give him a little music of an evening, and require nothing of him beyond an arm for the elder in to dinner—here they were all at once to be thrown on his hands entirely! He had had no sort of objection to their coming; he had been quite pleased to have them and they had been easy and sociable during the preceding evening, and had made altogether a favourable impression,—but that was not to say he was ready to have them for his guests when not a single other member of the family was present.

It was downright inconsiderate of Rosamund; and as for Gilbert, he could as well have stayed as not,—and in this humour he descended to the drawing-room.

Immediate relief, however, awaited him there.

In the easiest lounging-chair by the fire, arrayed in her new black evening frock, her hair elaborately drawn up and arranged—(she had prevailed on her maid to do it, fearless of exposure now that her eldest sister was disposed of, and Dolly tongue-tied by connivance)—there sat Miss Catharine Lis-card, the very picture of cool, prim composure.

“I knew that you could not do without me to-night, papa;” on his entrance he was thus accosted. “I made haste, so as to be down in time to help you with the visitors. They will be down directly. But they were rather late in going to their rooms.”

“Are you going to dine?” inquired her father, immensely relieved. “By the way, you did dine yesterday, did you not?” Until now the recollection of this had escaped him.

“Yes, papa. And I think I had better dine as long as the Miss Gilberts are here, for it would be so uncomfortable for you to have them all by yourself,” rejoined the astute miss, with commendable grasp of the situation. “You could not possibly be left without *some one*, and as we do not know how long poor Rosamund may be away——”

—“Dear me! what do you mean, child? Not know how long Rosamund may be away!”

“Or even that she will be able to sit up to dinner when she does come back,” proceeded Catharine, deliberately; “and if that is to be the way”—and she glanced at him with a glance which meant—

"if that is to be the way, here am I, equal to anything, and perfectly competent to fill any one's place."

Apparently, however, Mr Liscard did not see it. "Who told you this?" he demanded, discomfited anew. "Who said that Rosamund would not be able to come home to-morrow? She is merely passing the night at her aunt's, as she has often done before."

"Aunt Julia told Emily that she did not at all expect that Rosamund would be able to return to-morrow," began Catharine; "Emily will tell you herself what Aunt Julia said," as Miss Gilbert entered; "here she comes, papa, and you can ask her."

"I am exceedingly sorry that this should have happened on the very first day of your visit, Miss Gilbert," said her host, who was not deficient in old-fashioned politeness; "I don't know what my daughter has been about, I am sure. They tell me she has been overdoing herself; but she never was a delicate girl, and I don't think it can be that. She looked as well and bright as anybody yesterday evening. I remarked to myself that I had not seen her so like her old self for many weeks. Your and your sister's coming had seemed to do her good directly," he added, gallantly.

"I have no doubt it will soon pass off," replied Emily Gilbert, "and it was such a good thing that it happened in the house, and not out of doors. If Rosamund had been sitting up in Frederick's dog-cart, for instance, she might have had a terrible fall. And he had arranged for her to drive with him—only think! But we were all sitting quietly in the drawing-room, and so she was attended to directly, and was better, and trying to get a little sleep, before we left."

"And Aunt Julia had got Dr Makin," added Catharine, who had apparently mastered all details.

"I am only so sorry it should have happened to spoil your day," reiterated Mr Liscard, who, as we know, was not an anxious parent. "Upon my word, it is most unfortunate. I know my daughter had been arranging a number of little expeditions; she was most anxious to make your stay pleasant."

"Oh, we shall be sure to find it pleasant, Mr Liscard."

"And your brother to be obliged to run off too!" continued he, "when he dines with us almost every evening! I never, or at least hardly ever, knew him unable to remain before—certainly never when he was wanted—I mean especially wanted. However, we will do our best. Here is Catharine says she is to sit up for once——"

Catharine's face fell. "For once," indeed! And she had thought he had so entirely accepted her as his ally and assistant! For this—for a series of sittings up—she had planned and hoped, and had had her hair dressed like Rosamund's, and made herself look as old as ever a girl of sixteen could—and then to hear herself spoken of as though she were six!

In an agony now as to her right to head the table—that *Ultima Thule* of her imagination—she hastily interposed, "I am to take my sister's place for to-night, papa says. Papa must have some one to take her place," she added confidentially to Emily; "it would look so odd if no one sat at the other end of the table."

"I daresay! Put it on 'papa,'" cried Mr Liscard, feeling that his way was being smoothed, and his spirits rising in consequence. "So you have left one of your number behind, I hear," to Henrietta, who

now entered. "I was just telling your sister that I consider it very bad manners on Rosamund's part to play you such a trick. But if you do not mind—oh, there is dinner," and he gave her his arm unsuspectingly, and even when the sisters looked at each other, visibly betraying his mistake, he did not alter it.

"What! Have I made a mistake?" he said; "but, upon my word, I do not think it was my fault. Miss Gilbert, I beg your pardon, and I shall place you on my right hand, so it will be all straight in the end, I think. We are a very small party to-night, certainly. Soho, Catharine! so you have stuck yourself up there, have you?" (Poor Catharine!) "You little impertinence," added he, laughing, "I wonder what Rosamund would say if she saw you! Well, now, what soup is this?"

It chanced to be oyster-soup, and if there was one soup he loved above all others, that soup was before him. His satisfaction and cheerfulness increased with every mouthful. His young guests wondered how they had ever feared him, ever dreaded the meal, and telegraphed to each other the termination of their doubts and fears. Even Rosamund's and Frederick's absence was atoned for by the new tone adopted by their host, and by the celerity with which he had thus come to the front; and, encouraged to be easy, their native assurance soon re-asserted itself, and their tongues ran fast.

"I do think they are rather free," internally commented demure Miss Catharine, who had also undergone a change since her promotion, and from being an anxious and insecure adherent fawning on the strangers, had become in her own

eyes a sort of queen-regent for the time being, once she found herself in the coveted throne-chair to which Rosamund had succeeded on her mother's death. "They are actually chaffing papa, and making fun with him!" cried she to herself in virtuous horror.

What was worse, papa was chaffing back, and laughing heartily.

The poor man was indeed little accustomed to being amused at his own dinner-table. If his wife had been in good humour, she had prated of her own concerns, and had not cared a jot whether or no any one listened; if not, she had partaken of her food in morose silence. But in neither mood had any one else dreamed of leading the conversation; and although at the beginning of Rosamund's butterfly reign there had been some faint signs of better things, and her prattle had been tolerated, and had even won an occasional response and smile, the rift in the clouds had been of brief duration, and with the rise of Gilbert had come the fall of his champion.

It was therefore with a new sensation that the widower, long accustomed to sipping his sherry, and partaking of his soup, his fish, his mutton, and currant-jelly, down to the morsel of cheese his digestion permitted, in almost unbroken silence and with undivided attention, now found himself partaking of a second slice in the middle of a jest, and quite inclined for a newly warmed plate and some fresh vegetables, since Emily Gilbert was so fond of seakale.

He was convinced it did him good to have his appetite thus provoked.

Surely it was a mistake to eat as a duty, and lack of conversation and mirth was apt to make the meal degenerate into a mere bolt-

ing of the food. His poor wife had never understood this, and who could say how much harm her taciturnity might not have done her? But women rarely had sense in such matters. And with these reflections he racked his memory anew for fresh quotations and pleasing anecdotes.

Miss Catharine's disapproving visage at the top of the table for some time escaped his notice, and when it could no longer do so, it merely inspired him with a sense of amusement. What did the silly thing mean, that she should presume to look like that at him? And why should she or any one suppose that he could not be agreeable and entertaining, and produce some of his rich stores of learning for the benefit of an appreciative audience, as well as any other man? Clever men, brain-working men, such as himself, were the very people to be most delightful and instructive when they gave themselves up to being so. "That foolish girl little knows," thought he.

As for the young ladies on either side of him, he did not know when he had met with such nice, merry, unaffected lasses.

How much they had to say, and how nicely they said it! Not a bit shy. Evidently not at all bored. Before he was well done with the one he would be attacked by the other, and whatever he said was applauded and agreed to by both. It came in the end to this, that he found himself half-way through a helping of rich steam-pudding—which he would as soon have flown as partaken of two months before—and vastly enjoying the sauce, without having once inquired into its ingredients!

He really did not know himself. But this he did know, that after partaking of such a reckless repast

as he had never before in his life ventured upon, he found himself as light and comfortable as heart of man could desire. He flicked his napkin in Catharine's surly face as she filed past after the others, for whom he was gallantly holding open the door; he almost made a grimace at her behind her back. "Ridiculous puss! if she thinks to sit there and look sour at her own father, she is mistaken," cried he to himself; "that's the nuisance of daughters. But I shall certainly not put up with any nonsense from *her*. Back she shall hop, skip, and jump to Miss Penrose to-morrow if she does not behave herself better—ay, even if Rosamund has to be still away. What odds? I can get on without either of them,"—and so openly did he show this, and so effectual were the few words presently whispered in the ear of the malcontent, that there was a swift curtailment of the young lady's long-drawn face, and a rearrangement of her ideas.

"Of course, if poor papa makes a point of it, poor papa ought certainly to be the first consideration," Propriety counselled; "and anything would be better than being stopped dining to-morrow," Truth slipped out, next.

There was also breakfast to be thought about. The schoolroom breakfast at King's Common was over a full hour before the great gong sounded for the more elaborate repast of the elders, and the mysteries of the latter had never once been unclosed to Catharine's yearning vision. Here was her opportunity. By playing her cards well she need hardly doubt but that permission would be granted for that most coveted post of all—the seat behind the massive silver tea and coffee pots; whereas, on the contrary, if she should receive an-

other "What are you thinking about? You are no good at all. We might as well be without you, unless you exert yourself to be more agreeable,"—it would be the deathblow of all her hopes.

Without a parent's express permission she durst not absent herself from the eight-o'clock breakfast and appear at the other. Dinner had been another matter. At that hour the sway of Miss Penrose had of late been relaxed, indeed altogether suspended, and once downstairs, her pupils had considered themselves escaped from her jurisdiction. But Miss Penrose was not a person to be braved with impunity during the time of her lawful authority; and the recollection of this speedily put an end to all Catharine's elegant scruples, and made her on principle as vivacious as anybody.

Such being the case, she could, ere the evening closed, put forth the morrow's claim, and indulgence being granted, her cup was full.

But though this was all very well for the nonce, it was an unnatural state of things, and one which could not go on, and two questions were agitating the breasts of all ere the next day ended: the first being naturally as to whether Rosamund were or were not ill enough to be long detained from her home; the second, regarding the Miss Gilberts and their visit.

They had come avowedly to make friends with their future connections, their brother's affianced wife in particular; could it be necessary for them under such circumstances to feel *de trop*? On the other hand, was it in accordance with etiquette that they should remain at King's Common without a hostess, and throughout the day left to their own devices?

To decamp in hot haste because

Rosamund was suffering from a feverish attack, seemed, however, somewhat unreasonable.

"Good Lord!" cried Gilbert, "what are you thinking of?"

"But then," responded Miss Emily, "we don't quite know what to do with ourselves, brother."

"Do with yourselves? How? I should have thought that you might have found plenty to do. Go about and see the place; go over to the Abbey——"

"It is not that, Frederick. Of course there is plenty to be done; but it does feel so odd, and somehow as if we had no right to be doing it. We don't feel as if we had any business anywhere."

"And we have been alone ever since breakfast," chimed in Henrietta; "for although Catharine was with us then, she said she had to go off directly afterwards, and we have not seen her again. And we did think of going over to call on Lady Julia, but we did not quite like——"

"Not like! Not like to go over to Julia! What nonsense! Nobody minds Julia. And I had counted on your having been at the Abbey, so I came here first. Why, bless my soul! I thought you would have been sure to go. I'll answer for it your places were laid for luncheon there. I made sure you would have asked after Rosamund the first thing."

"So we did—at least Mr Lis-card did. A groom was sent over this morning."

"Well?"

"She had passed a restless night, but was no worse. However, she was to be kept perfectly quiet, and Lady Julia would let us know how she was, later on. Nothing was said about our going over there."

"Hum! Oh, well, perhaps it was as well you didn't go, then.

But I shall go. I shall ride round presently. I did not bring the dogcart to-day, as none of you would go in it yesterday."

"Oh, Frederick!"

"You would not. You preferred that old arm-chair of a chaise."

"Frederick, you know why; it was because we had been promised to go round by the mill-stream and see the place where—you know"—and the affectionate sisters each looked the rest.

"Oh, that was it, was it? And you could not wait? Well, now about your stopping on. Of course you must stop on now that you have come. It would never do to sneak back the way you came, before you were well out of sight. I don't want it all over the place at home that Rosamund is delicate either—mind that, both of you. We must manage somehow," ruminating. "You say you get on well with the old gentleman?"

"Oh dear, yes; as well as possible. He is so kind, and really quite lively and talkative now. He is going to show us all his books and things. But you know, Frederick, he only appears at meal-times, and to-day he has not even done that at luncheon. He explained that this was the day of some meeting at Longminster, and it was to be his first appearance at it."

"I know. It is always on a Wednesday."

"So we two had to sit up in state in that great, huge dining-room," said Etta, her blue eyes growing round at the remembrance. "Think of Em and me seated there, being waited on by those three tremendously fine men, and solemnly going through all the courses! Brother, it was dread-

ful," and her voice sank to a whisper.

Frederick laughed superior. "My dear children, you would soon get used to it. Rosamund sits up all alone, I believe, and would not care a hang if there were thirty to wait on her."

"Does she? But no; I should never get used to it," said Etta. Em was silent, for she was beginning to think that for her part she could.

"I suppose if you had Catharine you would be all right?" inquired their brother, presently.

"Oh dear, yes; her, or any one. It is the being just our two selves, with no one else at all—not one single member of the family——"

"Even a dog or a cat would be an addition," said Frederick; "is that it?"

"So that we need not rack our brains for something to converse solemnly about. You cannot think, Frederick, how terrible it is to have regularly to *converse* with each other, when we dare not say a single thing we want to say."

"It does sound rather bad. Well, the only thing for it that I see," said he, "is for me to go to old Penrose—old Penrose will do anything for me—and beg her to give Catharine holidays in advance of the others. The Christmas holidays must be on before long, and I don't think she could refuse. I don't suppose Rosamund would mind," he added, more doubtfully; for he was learning not to take Rosamund's acquiescence for granted even in very simple matters. "It really seems the only thing to be done," he concluded. "Come, we'll go for a stroll now, and I'll tackle the governess afterwards."

CHAPTER XXVIII.—UNCERTAINTY.

“Uncertainty!
Fell demon of our fears! The human soul
That can support despair, supports not thee.”

—MALLEE.

On the abrupt termination of the luncheon-party at the Abbey, the three Miss Waterfields had walked off with Mr Stoneby and his sister, Emily and Henrietta Gilbert having been disposed of in the pony-carriage, and their brother having flown for medical aid. He had constituted himself Lady Julia's messenger, since no one else, he was sure, would go so fast, or get to the village so soon; and, all anxiety and activity, had been off ere she could say “Yes” or “No.”

The absence of the entire Gilbert family was far from unwelcome to the walkers. The Waterfields were dying to know what the Stonebys thought, while the Stonebys were equally on the tenter-hooks to learn the impressions received by the Waterfields. The latter had seen nothing of Major Gilbert as an engaged man, the former scarcely anything of him in any other capacity. His sisters were new to all alike.

In consequence, the four females were thirsting to discuss the matter in all its bearings; while even Jack, though but little was to be looked for from him in the way of contribution, was nothing loath to hear what others had to tell.

“I had forgotten that you knew anything of Major Gilbert,” began Clementina, bravely taking the first plunge; “it took me by surprise to hear him say ‘Miss Violet’ so glibly.”

“That is one of Major Gilbert's little ways,” said Violet, drily. “He is very particular about giving each one of us our Christian name, and never misses an opportunity.

You saw he had but half a minute for his ‘Miss Violet,’ and it would have been ‘Miss Eleanour’ the next, but that his eye fell on Rosamund fainting in Eleanour's arms.”

“It must have been very alarming for you, Eleanour,” said Clemmy; “but I own I, for my part, was not surprised. Rosamund has been so strange for some time, so odd and irritable and——” she just remembered to pause before another adjective slipped out. She did not wish the suggestion of unhappiness to come from her.

“She felt her mother's death exceedingly,” observed the rector, coming to the rescue.

“It must certainly have been a great shock,” added Miss Waterfield. But they all knew it was not Lady Caroline they were thinking about.

“I like Major Gilbert,” said Clementina, abruptly. Even Jack started. He had been hastily running over in his mind something neat and vague which should sound to Gilbert's credit, and yet which should not compromise his own conscience, but the four plain words of his little truthful sister somewhat took him aback; and, unable to endorse them himself, he listened breathlessly for some one of the other three to make the almost necessary response.

But there was a long, awkward silence before at length Eleanour Waterfield began. “Perhaps I ought not to say it, and I am sure I would not be unkind to Rosamund for the world, for you know what very old friends of the Liscards we are; and, indeed, it is

just because we think so much of them all, that we do feel Major Gilbert is fortunate beyond his deserts. He may be very well as an acquaintance—he is certainly good-looking, and, I suppose, clever; but we—we cannot quite reconcile ourselves to the idea of him as Rosamund's husband."

"He will make a very good husband," said Clemmy, bluntly.

"Certainly—but not for her. Oh, I daresay he is really a worthy man"—(no one could help laughing)—"pshaw! what is the use of talking?" cried Miss Waterfield; "we all know what I mean. And those sisters! My dear Clementina, you saw the sisters."

"His sisters are not *him*."

"They are a part of him. No man can so separate himself from his belongings as not in a measure to rise and fall with them. Major Gilbert's family must presently become Rosamund's also; and how will Rosamund—Rosamund, with her proud, quick spirit, and all that unsparing judgment which made Lady Caroline so much feared, and which would make Rosamund equally so but that she has a dear, warm heart underneath it all—but still, I say, Clementina, how will she ever endure those dreadful girls?"

"She—I don't know, upon my word," cried Clemmy, suddenly bursting into ringing laughter. "That, Eleanour, I really, really do not know. Oh, I cannot help it, I cannot help it! Oh, I am very cruel, I ought not to laugh; but it was when you said that, Eleanour, that Rosamund's face rose up before me—Rosamund's face as it was turned now on one sister, now on the other, just as you walked up the room. It was almost grotesque, the expression of calm despair with which she regarded them. I do not think

they annoyed her. The case was too desperate. No; we must give up the sisters. As to the brother——" but here the tongues of all were let loose; and as our readers may form a tolerable guess as to what next passed, we need not trouble them with a detailed account.

Mr Stoneby alone endeavoured from time to time to check the current, and at the last his final words did receive some attention. "There is one thing," he said very gravely, "before we part let us all agree to remember; we are Rosamund Liscard's friends, and whatever we may think or say among ourselves regarding her engagement, we must one and all feel bound to——"

"Oh, to hold our tongues about it to other people, of course," said Clementina, briskly.

"Never to mention—never to allow it to be gathered from us that we entertain any doubts of her future happiness. She has made her choice—God grant it prove a happy one!" he broke off abruptly, and all felt they were on new ground.

"I am sure you are right, Mr Stoneby," said Eleanour Waterfield, very respectfully, "and we shall all observe what you say. Good-bye," and as she shook hands she did not look into Jack's face, nor seem to have observed anything in his tone, but to herself she commented, "Yes; I was right. I always thought so. Poor Mr Stoneby. And he would have been a great deal better than Major Gilbert, at all events."

"And you say the sisters were actually worse than he!" cried Mrs Waterfield, who was not of course to be reckoned among the excluded public, from whom the real sentiments of the chosen few were to be veiled. "But I do

not know why we should be surprised at that. The eldest son of people of that sort is certain to have had advantages over the rest, and our first impression of Major Gilbert was not altogether unfavourable. I can quite believe he is the best of his set. Probably the only difference, the only real difference, we should now find between him and his sisters would be, that with the one the gloss has worn off, and with the others it never was on."

"Besides, he is handsomer than they," said Eleanour.

"And he is a man," added Violet.

"Very true," observed their mother, sententiously. "As Violet says, he is a man, and what is bad in a man is worse in a woman. Major Gilbert's manners——"

——"Think of them intensified!" cried Eleanour. "Think of Major Gilbert's voice trebled! Think of Major Gilbert's self vulgarised!"

There was a general cry of "Impossible!" and she was felt to have been quite smart.

"You should have seen them pressing round poor Rosamund, tearing off her jacket and necktie, unbuttoning her collar, and the one calling to the other to take off her boots and rub her feet"—said Eleanour, in a tone of disgust, for she had taken Lady Julia's and not Hartland's view of the assistance rendered—"it was altogether such a scene! Sorry as I felt for Rosamund, I never was more thankful than when it was over. And how she would have disliked it herself, poor child!"

"I shall have to call upon them, however," concluded Mrs Waterfield, who would not have been human if her curiosity had not been somewhat aroused by all this. "I must not neglect any

of the customary civilities, more especially as Rosamund, if she is already ashamed of her new connections, will be quick to look out for them;" and accordingly she ordered her carriage, and set forth for King's Common on the following day.

"Miss Liscard not going to return to-day?" she exclaimed, in some surprise, when informed of this. "Is it anything really serious then, Badeley?" for the butler was an old friend, and had himself advanced to the carriage-window. "Not scarlatina, nor anything of that nature, is it?"

"I believe not, ma'am. I have not heard anything of the kind."

"A nervous attack, I was told," proceeded Mrs Waterfield. "I had certainly thought she would have returned by this time," and she mused doubtfully. How about going in? She had not asked as yet for any one else. Should she do so?

"Major Gilbert and the young ladies are walking in the garden, ma'am," said the old man, presently, and by the remark committing her to nothing. If she did not care to have the major and the young ladies summoned in, well and good, she had merely to hand him her card, and no one would be the wiser; if, on the contrary, it was her desire to alight, he had given her the opportunity of doing so.

"I suppose we had better?" the lady turned to her daughter. "We will come in, then, Badeley," for in Eleanour's countenance was a prompt assent, and the two entered.

If ever a presence-chamber plainly showed a change of dynasty, it was that into which the visitors were now ushered. Not only was there no longer the formal figure at the far end, but the

davenport itself had been wheeled aside ; a disused sofa had emanated from some hidden corner, and now claimed a prominent position in front of the hearth-rug ; chairs and tables, instead of being arranged precisely, as of yore, were placed hither and thither ; books that had been neatly laid one on the top of the other, bore signs of recent inspection and disturbance ; while work baskets and boxes, whose contents protruded, seemed to be everywhere ; footstools, apparently freshly used, strewed the hearth ; a couple of railway novels lay open, face downwards, among the sofa-cushions ; and the piano was littered with music.

The whole, in short, had an air of being *en déshabille* ; and although it could not be denied that something had been gained in the way of comfort, and that there was a habitable appearance about the apartment which had previously been lacking, yet in Mrs Waterfield's eyes the contrast was so vivid as to be scarcely seemly, and further, to be strangely wanting in reverence to the memory of its late possessor.

She recollected, moreover, that to the Gilberts alone the present cosy disorder must be due. Rosamund might indeed have altered the substantial pieces of furniture ; but Rosamund was not now here to drop work and books about.

There was nothing of the daughter of the house visible anywhere, and as an old family friend, Mrs Waterfield experienced a sensation of having to lower the King's Common standard yet another step.

People of the Gilbert order rumpling those time-honoured chintzes, putting their feet upon those stately stools, piling the cushions together at one end of the sofa ! The novels, too, coarse

and common-looking, tossed down just where the reader had lain ! She felt that the half had not been told her.

Poor Em and Etta had indeed yawned through a long morning, and half the long afternoon besides, with no other help than that of those novels, and that fancy work—and the latter having been expressly intended to be done in company, they had felt it to be waste of their fine materials to progress much in it. They had tried the piano and Rosamund's music ; examined everything in and about the room ; wished a hundred times that it would stop raining, and as it did not, had been obliged to fall back again upon their books, their footstools, and their sofa-cushions. By luncheon-time they had become acclimatised to the drawing-room ; and although it had been rearranged during their absence, they had somehow managed to effect again the full disorder of the morning before three o'clock, when their brother had appeared, as we have seen in the last chapter. Overjoyed, they had then flown out with him, as the sky had by this time cleared, and had left the room with the windows shut and the fire low, just as it was.

"Good gracious ! we left that room in a pretty state," cried Emily, now. "We never dreamed of any one's coming to call in this country place. And Rosamund away too. It is the mother of those girls who came in at the Abbey yesterday, I suppose."

"And a precious lynx-eyed mother too," added Frederick. "So if you haven't done the right thing, you'll soon know it. I have a great mind not to go in. I don't see why I should. She will have to be civil now she finds I am booked here, and all's

settled; but I know better than to believe she is really over-well pleased. If I had taken up with one of her daughters——”

“Surely, Frederick, you will come in; you will not allow Em and me to go in all by ourselves,” implored the much-alarmed Etta. “We *can't* go in by ourselves, can we, Em? We have never even seen her, and——”

——“She won't eat you.”

But he could not resist their entreaties, nor his own inclinations.

In his heart he was by no means ill-inclined to play the host on the occasion—he at home, and the Waterfields as guests in the King's Common great reception saloon.

He had never, he knew, advanced to anything like intimacy with the Waterfields; it had nettled him more than once in former days to find they had been entertaining when he had received no invitation, and he and Rosamund had had their confidences on the subject—both of one mind—both triumphing that fate had spited all endeavours to separate them from each other.

“Well, well, I'll come with you,” he now gave in, with a good grace. “I'll come along and keep the good folks in order. I wonder how many of them there be? A whole bevy, I'll warrant 'em. Waterfields—unlimited order—eh, Em? eh, Etta?” and happy in his jest, he was reasonably disappointed at finding only the eldest daughter had accompanied her mother on the occasion.

If Rosamund had supposed that nothing could exceed the disadvantage at which her future sisters-in-law had been seen the day before, she was mistaken. True, they were not now arrayed in gaudy “bests,” fresh from a sub-

urban dressmaker, nor were they over-heated and disordered by mid-day feasting; but they were louder bolder, more aggressive, apologetic, and consequential than they had had any opportunity of being in Lady Julia's drawing-room.

Frederick had bidden them pluck up spirit, and be afraid of nobody; and, by way of further reassurance, he had entered the room first and flourished a welcome.

“How are you, Mrs Waterfield? Glad to see you again. It is ages since we met. What a lot has happened since then, has it not? Where will you sit? Away from the fire? Bless me, what a shocking bad fire! The girls have nearly let it out. It's what they are always doing at home. Emily, this is Mrs Waterfield. Mrs Waterfield, Miss Gilbert. Henrietta, Mrs Waterfield. I say, Etta, what a mess you have left this room in! Mrs Waterfield will tell tales of you to Rosamund. You heard about poor Rosamund?” turning to her; “oh yes, by the way, some of you were there at the time.”

It was now “Poor Rosamund!” all at once, and from all three.

“I never thought to hear that poor child's name so taken in vain!” cried Mrs Waterfield afterwards. “Really, I had hardly the patience to sit still and listen to ‘Rosamund! Rosamund! Rosamund!’ There was no stopping it, no turning it aside. And when I think of Lady Caroline, the proudest woman in the county——,” and she broke off with almost a groan; she had not loved Lady Caroline, but she had never wished her anything so bad as this.

“I am going to ride over to the Abbey presently,” quoth Gilbert, after a time. “I came here first,

knowing the girls would have the latest news, if I did not find Rosamund herself returned; so when I found they had not set a foot outside to-day, I just stopped to take them out for a bit. It is dull for them," he added, kindly.

"It is a great pity," murmured Mrs Waterfield, longing to add, "they had better go home."

"Yes it is, an awful pity," assented he; "spoils everything. My sisters had come on purpose to cheer her up, for I was sure she was out of sorts, and she had been uncommonly pleased with the idea; and I thought we should soon have seen her quite perked up. She was as bright as a humming-bird the night you arrived; wasn't she, girls?"

"Oh dear, yes, in such spirits!" replied Emily; "but still we thought, Etta and I fancied, that she was perhaps, if anything, in *too* great spirits—you know what I mean, Frederick; she was up one moment and down the next. And yesterday morning, she hardly spoke a word. Lady Julia asked if she were tired, directly we arrived there, and Rosamund owned she was; and——"

"I only know that I never saw her merrier than the evening before," said Gilbert, not above half satisfied with this; "but, of course, that bears out what I say," his brow clearing. "She has been overdone—the whole thing has been more than she can stand; she ought to get away from this place. And I hope we shall manage that before very long," with a significant smile. "Under the circumstances, I think we need not stand too much on the proprieties, eh, Mrs Waterfield?"

She bowed a cold assent.

"Meantime the point is, how long is this illness to last?"

proceeded he. "Makin is a dull ass, to my mind, and is making by far too much of it. I shall see what Rosamund says of herself. The poor girl should surely have a voice in the matter; and she is not the one to——"

The door opened as he spoke, and, to the surprise of all, Lord Hartland walked quietly in—as though merely entering from another room.

"Ha! it's you?" cried Gilbert, starting up and intercepting his hand ere he could reach any one else. "Well, what news? How is she? Better? Here is Mrs Waterfield come to inquire; and we were talking about her at this moment. Is she up? Will she see me, if I go over by-and-by?"

This was what Hartland had been sent to prevent.

"Not to-day," he replied, as soon as he had made his greetings. "Lady Julia bade me say, in case I should find you here, that she feared no visitors could be admitted to-day. Rosamund was going to sleep, and was not to be disturbed."

"But I need not go yet; I can wait a bit."

"Medical orders, you know, Gilbert," said Hartland, who had learned his lesson.

"Oh, medical orders be hanged!" rejoined Gilbert, evidently disconcerted. "I say——"

"I am so sorry," murmured Mrs Waterfield, her very soft voice seeming to rebuke his strident tones. "I am so grieved that such care should be needed."

Lord Hartland was silent.

"Is there anything we can do for her?" inquired the practical Miss Gilbert. "Does she want us to send her over anything?"

"Would she like books, or work?" chimed in Henrietta.

"I was not told to ask for anything—thanks," said the messenger gravely. "I believe Rosamund's maid brought over all necessaries last night."

"Please give her our love, and say how very, very sorry we are," quoth Em.

"And tell her that Catharine is such a good hostess," added Etta.

"And that Mr Liscard would have the Irish song again last night."

"And that the bullfinch took his sugar from my hand this morning."

There was no chance for Rosamund's old friends to get in a word or express a sentiment, all the interest and anxiety being thus already appropriated.

"I fear the messages will have to wait," responded Hartland, somewhat drily; "I shall not see the invalid."

"No, I thought not. So I shall not trouble you, Lord Hartland," and Mrs Waterfield rose to depart. She felt as if she should defile herself by entering into the lists with such competitors; and as Gilbert had withdrawn from her side, and with his sisters was now bestowing his whole attention on the Abbey delegate, nothing remained for her, if she would support her own dignity, but to go, and to go forthwith.

"And a jolly good riddance," cried the major, on his return from seeing her to her carriage; "she was no sweeter than usual to-day, that worthy lady. Now

Hartland, as I am not to go to the Abbey, you have got to stop on here. We can't leave Mr Liscard again at the mercy of these girls as he was last night. You should hear what an account they have to give of him. By Jove! it will make you stare. They badgered the poor old fellow so, that he was obliged to be festive in self-defence. They would not let him alone. You and I must really be here to protect him to-night.

"I—well—oh yes, I can stop," said Hartland, after a moment's consideration. "I'll just walk back and let Lady Julia know——"

"Walk back! Walk a couple of miles——"

——"Only a mile by the short cut."

"A mile's a mile when there is no reason for it. I can walk as far as anybody, but, by George! why should you do it when there's no object? Surely there are grooms and stable-boys enough about the place? We'll soon see if one of them can't go," and he rang the bell loudly.

Lord Hartland bit his lip.

He had never been quite played the host to in that room by Gilbert before.

He had seen him at home and at his ease there; but in the presence of his betrothed some sort of appeal to her had usually been necessary. Rosamund's absence had taught her cousin this new experience. He could not like it. He could not but be glad she had not seen it.

CHAPTER XXIX.—GOOD FUN AT KING'S COMMON.

“Then Reason grew jealous of Folly’s gay cap,
 Had he that on, be sure Beauty’s heart he’d entrap.
 ‘There it is,’
 Quoth Folly, ‘old quiz!’
 (Folly was always good-natured, ’tis said.)
 ‘Under the sun
 There’s no such fun
 As Reason with my cap and bells on his head.’”

—MOORE.

The order once given, however, Hartland was disposed to take rather kindly than otherwise to the prospect before him.

His own company had become grievous to him by this time, and that of Lady Julia afforded but slight variation. He was dull and sad. The great interest of his life at this juncture lay between the two houses of the Abbey and King’s Common, and of this interest he could not speak, and would fain not think, so that distraction almost of any nature was welcome.

The Gilberts might not be to his taste, but he had been about the world enough to take people as he found them, and pass a pleasant evening in almost any company. The rosy, good-humoured damsels who appalled Mrs Waterfield, and for whom indeed none of the women of his set could find a good word, appeared by no means so bad to him, and their open unsuspecting chatter was a positive relief to his overcharged spirit. With them there need be no anxiety, no doubts, no effort. Of late in his cousin’s presence there had grown to be one continuous strain of expectation and apprehension—while out of it, all had been the feverish, fretting impatience of a moth to return to its candle. To be by, to watch, to burn with indignation, and to be daily and hourly more convinced of the truth of his conclusions,—that had been the consuming interest of the past few weeks; and

debarred from it as he now was all at once, with Rosamund unapproachable, and nothing more to be seen or learned, divined or discovered—with the whole affair, in short, at a dead lock—he experienced a sudden desire to throw off his burden, and breathe another atmosphere.

“Come, we’ll have a jolly evening!” cried Gilbert, perceiving something of this. “We’ll have a good time. What do you say to billiards before dinner? The girls will come and look on. It is by far the best time of day for billiards to my mind, especially on these dark days when one has to come indoors so soon. And here’s tea, so we shall just have a nice comfortable couple of hours afterwards.”

“You must not forget to speak to Miss Penrose, brother,” Emily reminded him. “This is the best time—indeed the only time to catch her free, I think Catharine said.”

“Eh? What? Miss Penrose?” said he. “Oh, ay. I remember about Catharine. Oh yes, I’ll look in on our way to the billiard-room.”

“It is so very awkward for my sister and me being here all alone, you see, Lord Hartland,” explained Miss Gilbert, turning to him for further sympathy. “Being here without any other lady, is really very awkward. So Frederick is going to apply to the governess to have Catharine begin her holidays sooner than the others, in order that we may have her. Although

Catharine is made such a school-girl of, she is really quite old enough to go about now, and so Etta and I have been telling her."

("You have, have you?" thought Hartland. "Rosamund won't thank you for that.")

"Oh, Catharine is quite companionable," subjoined Etta. "If we had Catharine, we should not mind at all how long Rosamund stayed away,"—here she caught a scowl from Emily,—"I mean of course, of course for our own sakes; of course we are dreadfully sorry for her——"

"Etta always makes a muddle whenever she begins to talk, Lord Hartland; she only means that we should not mind for the *awkward* part of it. Of course we miss dear Rosamund dreadfully," apologised the elder sister.

He bowed.

"When do you think she will be able to return? To-morrow, or next day? Candidly, you know."

"Certainly not to-morrow, nor the next day."

"By the end of the week?"

"I hardly think that either."

"Eh! what? Not by the end of the week?" put in Gilbert, with his cup half-way to his lips. "Lord! you don't mean that Makin says that? Why, bless my soul! how very—what an awful pity! How beastly unfortunate! Well"—after a long drink, and a careful wiping of his heavy moustache—"well, we must put up with it I suppose, and do our best to get along without her. But——" and he set down his cup on the tray ruefully.

"There is one thing," said Lord Hartland, with considerable hesitation, "that Lady Julia wished me to speak about. She was sure that you would agree with her as to the advisability of saying as little about this as possible. We

do not want every one to be talking and gossiping about Rosamund——"

——"To be sure not. Keep it dark, certainly, or we shall have the poor girl bothered to death," assented her betrothed, readily.

"And, perhaps—perhaps for that reason—my aunt thought"—stammered Hartland, disliking his commission intensely—"she thought it might be as well for you not to be seen coming over to the Abbey every day. You see," he added, as the faces of all betrayed surprise, "it might get wind, and give rise to suspicion that the illness was more serious than it is."

"But I don't understand. I may go surely, if the girls don't," said Gilbert. "Considering how we stand to each other, and everybody knows about it by this time, I—upon my word—I can't see why my going should bear that interpretation."

"You would not go if she had a mere cold, or headache?"

"Well, I don't know," replied Gilbert, laughing, while his bronzed face coloured with a lover's shamefacedness, which became him well,—"*I am afraid I—I should be very much inclined to.*"

Lord Hartland rose and walked to the window. It was hard on him to have this just then—just when he wanted to find in Rosamund's betrothed only the jolly, rollicking, underbred good fellow, and to forget all that it was inconvenient to remember of anything else. When apart from the lovers, and more especially when in Lady Julia's company, he could almost persuade himself that a man of Gilbert's temperament, with no refined feelings nor acute perceptions, could not in the nature of things appreciate his cousin, and it need not therefore be feared

that more than his importance and his self-complacency would suffer were she to give him up.

In the depths of his own heart, to be sure, confidence would occasionally falter; but he liked to hear his aunt say as much, and could, at times, almost work upon himself to agree with her. Then would come some little word, or acknowledgment such as the above, to undo all, and cause a moment or two of acute agony. He would not show his face during such a moment.

"Since the fates are adverse, I suppose I must give in however," quoth Gilbert, presently. "There's no fighting against fate; and of course I would not be such a selfish brute as to do anything to worry Rosamund. I daresay she is best let alone—only I thought that perhaps she—she won't fancy I am neglecting her, will she?"

"Certainly not. I will take care of that," replied her cousin, steady-ing his voice as best he could, with all Lady Julia's assurances and asseverations ringing in his ears. "And I really think, Gilbert—I really think that she is better left undisturbed, and that it is her own wish to be so. Invalids, you know, have their fancies," still painfully evasive of Gilbert's eye, "and Rosamund is undoubtedly far from well. The doctor told me so himself. He said these nervous attacks were not to be trifled with."

"To be sure they are not. I have no doubt the doctor knows best, and will bring her round all right presently," replied the disconsolate lover, endeavouring to recover himself. "I am thankful to say I don't know what nerves are. There are no such things as nerves in our family, are there, girls?"

"No, indeed," laughed they.

"I wonder what our old mother would say to a girl of eighteen having nervous attacks," proceeded their brother. "I say, you two, we must keep it dark from her about this, mind."

"I had thought of that already, brother," replied Emily, "and though I wrote home this morning, I said nothing about it. Mother wouldn't understand; except that, of course Lady Caroline's death——"

"To be sure, yes; we must make the most of Lady Caroline's death," assented he, cheerfully. "Now, if every one's done, we'll go to the billiard-room. Come, girls,—I say, you two, it's like old times to have you hanging about one again," and he tucked an arm through that of each sister, and led the way.

He played well, as he did most things. His swift, clean cannons, straight hazards, and the manner in which he left his balls disposed for the succeeding stroke, speedily showed him a much greater proficient than his opponent, who scored his highest breaks of ten and twelve with satisfaction, and accepted the "flukes," which would have discomposed Gilbert, with an alacrity that was positively discreditable.

The sisters—albeit openly on Frederick's side, as in duty bound—consoled and encouraged, and at length found their sympathies so strongly enlisted for the one so far behind, that Etta was caught marking stealthily to Hartland a handsome score of her brother's.

Merriment and raillery were the immediate consequence.

("Ay, ay!" thought Gilbert, "ay, ay! is that what you are up to, miss? Lord, what a joke that would be! Hartland and Etta! Lord, what would the pater

say to that! The old gentleman would not know himself. But I said how it would be before ever I brought the girls here. There's Hartland for the one, and Jack Stoneby for the other."

Before the evening was over, he was shouting with laughter over a new idea.

"Old Liscard taken with Emily! O Lord! O Lord! I shall never get over it! If it really is so, it would be the richest thing I ever knew in my life. And I'll lay any money it is so. I never saw him anything like it before, nor, I'll wager, has any one else. He was making up to her the whole of dinner, talking away like a perfect parrot, and he would not stop ten minutes in the dining-room after they left—Kant and Cicero could not have held him there with cartropes,—and to see him, over the piano, beating time and wagging his old head,—and they say he is to show them all over his library to-morrow morning, and take them a drive in the afternoon! Oh, my dear Rosamund, what nuts this will be for you! I should say she'd be as glad as I, if anything really does come out of it. Well, he's not such an old boy neither; and he had a sorry time of it with that vixen of a Lady Caroline; he is quite right to chirp up a bit, and have a little pleasure in life yet. Em's the very girl to suit him. To be sure, there are the children; but they are young, and I should say the girls would soon go off. Catharine is not a patch upon Rosamund, but she's well enough. Dolly will be good-looking. Anyway, that's their concern, and I know one thing, I should be uncommonly well pleased. I should die of laughing. It would be the rummest idea. Now, I wonder," more seriously, "I do wonder whether any notion of the kind

has struck Hartland. Hartland is such a moony chap that I should not be one bit surprised if he had seen nothing; if it had all passed off like water off a duck's back."

Hartland had, however, seen enough, and more than enough. On his part he had never felt less inclined to laugh in his life.

Here was a fresh complication, with a vengeance.

It was not quite the agreeable jest to him that it was to the lady's brother, that his scholarly and refined relative, hitherto the personification of pedantry and respectability, as to whom there had formerly been but one feeling, that of consideration and goodwill,—it could not be to him quite what it was to Gilbert, to see the elderly widower blossom out into a new character.

Now, it was perfectly true that not only had Mr Liscard conversed incessantly with Emily Gilbert during dinner, but that the most laborious and long-winded instructions, the prosings which even Gilbert when on his promotion had surreptitiously yawned beneath, had been, to all appearance, hearkened to with the profoundest sympathy and interest by Gilbert's sister. The host had been intelligently questioned at due intervals. He had been drawn out, and led on, as it had scarcely ever been his fortune to be encouraged hitherto. Beneath such treatment he had expanded and thriven, as no one could have helped doing.

In the evening, he had joined the ladies far sooner than he had ever before been known to quit the comforts of the well-warmed room and glowing wine-cups. He had made some excuse for doing so certainly, but the excuse had been a slight one, and it had been obvious to all present that the attraction of good company had been

the sole and flattering cause of the change. He had invited Catharine to join the proposed drive next day. Catharine had been quite in luck, and had seen that it was her interest to be compliant and agreeable; and, in consequence, there had been no more seriousness nor disapprobation from her,—Catharine, as we know, being one ever to fall in with the times, whereas Rosamund would fight to the death for a principle or a prejudice.

But the sight to see had been Rosamund's papa over the music. On Gilbert's proposing music, he had seconded the move, not with his usual gentle passive acquiescence, but in a manner unseen before—he had himself stepped across the room with candles, and fumbled with the slides of the piano.

In former times when Lady Caroline, who had supposed herself a musician, had requested to be favoured by some guest, the inevitable response, and that which had been known to suit the petitioner, had been some dreary fugue, or grim, uncompromising sonata. Now the old piano scarcely knew itself. Until the two Miss Gilberts came, it had not been opened since the death in the house; but on that first evening after their arrival, in Rosamund's softened mood, she had been glad to consent to anything, and Catharine had known what to expect on the following night. True, the instrument was somewhat out of tune, for the tuner had been ordered away on the occasion of his last visit; but this did not greatly afflict the general ear of the company assembled. Gilbert's voice was equal to drowning any accompaniment, and Emily was almost equally independent.

They had sung together and apart, drawing each other on, and

inciting to further effort; and at the end of every performance, Mr Liscard had applauded and admired. It had even been drawn from him that once upon a time, before he had become a married man, and when he had had nothing else to think of, he had himself dabbled with the flute; and further inquiries had elicited the fact that the said flute was still in existence. Yes, it was certainly somewhere—he could not positively say where—and it was many a year since it had seen the light. But still—and when Hartland had heard him hesitatingly promise to look about among his old drawers on the following day, and see if it could be found, and if anything could be done with it—he had felt that although he had himself heard Lady Julia remark on the pity it was that the musical proclivities of her brother-in-law had never been looked kindly upon heretofore, she would hardly have cared to have heard them acknowledged on the present occasion.

He was certainly taking more notice of these Gilbert girls than was at all necessary, and more, his doing so was making it momentarily more improbable that they would fall in with the wishes and hopes which were entertained at the Abbey for their speedy vanishing from the scene. Was it likely they would want to go, when all was being made so pleasant for them to stay? Mr Liscard himself, from whom no hospitality had ever before been expected, and who was generally supposed not to know who was in the house, and who out of it—here he had been foremost in the task of entertaining! With his evident approval, Catharine had been emancipated for the purpose of rendering the young ladies easy in their minds, and there had been

rumours of excursions here and there, and driving parties and what not which had made the whole air festive. There had not been a syllable throughout to intimate any idea of cutting short the visit.

"No, ma'am, I can't say there was," he was forced to allow, in answer to the next morning's cross-questioning, for Lady Julia had retired, as he had meant her to do, ere he had returned home the night before. "I expect the Miss Gilberts will make out their time. You can hardly expect them to change their plans all in a moment, and they seem very happy, and quite at home where they are."

"They are sure to be 'at home' wherever they are," replied his aunt. "I daresay, indeed I quite believe, they may be very respectable well-inclined young women in their own sphere of life; but here they are placed in a completely false position. If they could only be brought to see this—if there were any one to put it before them——"

"You should ask your brother-in-law to do so," said Hartland, drily.

"Theodore! Dear me, Hartland, what are you thinking of? Poor Theodore never was of the slightest use to any one even in Caroline's days, and now—by the way, does he appear in the evenings? Was he there after dinner last night?"

"Very much there."

"And how did it pass? What did you do? How did they behave?"

"Oh, it passed very well; everybody was very lively; and Catharine sat at the head of the table."

"Catharine! That child!"

"You would not have had a Miss Gilbert do so?"

"No, no; you are right. Catharine was better than no one; and she was at least a daughter of the house, though a mere schoolgirl. But it was a fine chance for Catharine, with my poor Rosamund lying here——"

——"Tell Rosamund; it will make her laugh."

"She laughs at nothing now," said Lady Julia, very gravely. "Oh, Hartland, I am really disappointed; I had so hoped you would bring me some good news for her. I know what she needs more than anything, is to hear that these visitors have departed. It had seemed to me—and I told her so, poor darling—that they *must* go, that there was no other course open; and though when I assured Rosamund of this, she made no reply, I know it comforted her. And now—oh dear!" and she sighed sorrowfully, "I had even hoped they might have fixed to start to-morrow."

"To-morrow they are all going for a drive to Wingleford Ruins."

"All? Who do you mean by 'all,' my dear?"

"Mr Liscard, and Catharine, and the two Miss Gilberts."

"Theodore!" exclaimed Lady Julia, in fresh surprise.

"Yes, indeed," and he looked at her curiously.

But she had not seen Theodore over the piano and the Irish songs, nor heard the pretty speeches which evoked the still prettier responses.

She was in consequence only impressed by the superfluity of the compassion which had induced the scholar to leave his books, and trot the insignificant Gilberts about the country; he had always, she knew, favoured the match, and doubtless having done so from the first, he now felt bound to back his approval, and being thrown entirely on his own re-

sources, had outdone all that was necessary. Catharine too, eager for the frolic, had probably egged him on. Between them they were doing her darling all the mischief they could, and she could have cried to think how powerless she was to prevent it.

"You say Mrs Waterfield and Eleanour were there when you went," she began again, presently. "What do you suppose Mrs Waterfield thought of Rosamund's future sisters?"

"She hardly stayed a minute after I arrived."

"Had she called on *them*, or had she merely gone to inquire after Rosamund?"

"That I cannot tell. But she certainly did inquire very affectionately after Rosamund."

"And she expected to find her at King's Common?"

"Can't tell that either, Aunt Julia. She did not say so."

"Did you say plainly that Rosamund would remain here for the present?"

"I did."

"And what did they all say to that?"

"I think Major Gilbert was very much disappointed."

"I did not mean him—I meant the rest of them."

"I cannot remember that they said anything in particular."

"You might at least tell me *something*, Hartland."

It really seemed cruel that after being a whole evening away from her, and in the midst of the objectionable and all-absorbing circle, he should produce nothing where-with to compensate for his absence, and finding it so himself, he could only suggest that if he were to repeat the amusement he would try to do better.

"Go there again! This evening?" cried she, the same fancy

which had occurred to Gilbert glaring in all its horrors full at her. "Oh, my dear Hartland, surely you are not being drawn on to—to care for the company of those people? Surely you went last night for Rosamund's sake—to keep up appearances—to act civilly,—not—not because you enjoyed yourself?" There was something almost ludicrous in the tremor of her tone.

"My dear aunt——" then he stopped short, as he understood what she meant. He was not in a mood to play with her; he could not even be amused by her tortures.

"Set your mind at rest," he said. "Those poor girls have no more thought of me than I of them. And, on my part, I can assure you that I should never fall in love with either, if there were not another woman in the world."

In a moment all Lady Julia's benevolence returned. "Poor things! I am certainly very unjust to them; I am sure I am quite ashamed. It is not their fault that they do not belong to our grade in society, that they are inferior in their manners and appearance; and they are really very good-looking, and Emily is almost ladylike. I am so put out about Rosamund that you must see, Hartland, I hardly know what I am talking about. Pray, my dear Hartland, do whatever you think right about going. Go to-night, if you think it best. If it is at all necessary——"

——"Oh, not necessary."

——"But *do*—pray *do*; for my sake do, and it will show there is no ill-feeling. I can positively assure you, now that I think of it, that I should prefer your spending your evening elsewhere, because then I shall feel free to spend mine in

Rosamund's room. Now that you have quite set my fears at rest ——" and it ended in his agreeing to go, if only to pacify her.

But he told himself afterwards that it was as well he had done so. Upon this second evening things were even more amazing than before, and he had nothing to do but to stare and stand by.

It appeared that the expedition had been a great success; that a couple of hours had been spent in exploring and meandering; that Mr Liscard had been the most wonderful authority and guide; that the drive had been undertaken in the morning, because the sky had looked threatening; and that after the return of the party, the rest of the afternoon had been spent in the seclusion of the library;—tea also—wonder of wonders!—having been served in that venerable spot. Catharine, who now seemed to be part and parcel of the whole affair, gleefully informed her cousin of the fun, or at least of so much of it as had taken place up to date, and he himself was a witness of the remainder. Again he beheld his host all cheerfulness and animation, and

marked that his own especial chair, to which he had in old days been wont to retreat as a matter of course, again remained empty throughout the evening. On this occasion, furthermore, there were continual allusions to little epochs of the day, references to this and that occurrence, sallies, whose points were for the initiated only. Gilbert was not present, nor was any one but himself,—but he found that the Stonebys had been invited for the next evening; and he heard—yes, he was certain he heard—Miss Gilbert besought to remember that she was not to yield up her place to Clementina Stoneby,—that whoever was present, *her* chair was at her host's right hand.

"By Jove! ma'am, I have some news for you at last"—he went home in the end, boiling over with indignation and imprudence—"news that will satisfy any extent of craving, I should say. Look here, Aunt Julia, what do you say to this? If Rosamund does not look sharp and get well soon, she will find herself, on her return, provided with an embryo—stepmother."

THE ROMANCE OF STATE-MAPPING.

CONCLUDED.

ON the 3d March 1824, the Secretary to the Ordnance, Lord Fitzroy Somerset, wrote acquainting Major Colby that, at the request of the Irish Government, the Duke of Wellington had consented to undertake the survey of Ireland. The letter proceeded to intimate his Grace the Master-General's commands, "that you will immediately make arrangements for commencing the work, which is to be carried on so as to be completed with all possible expedition." And it added the notification that Colonel Ford had been directed to select at the Royal Military Academy "twenty cadets, from those who have passed their examination for commissions, to assist in the service."

Shortly after this announcement reached Colby, the Parliamentary Committee, presided over by Mr Spring Rice (afterwards Lord Mounteagle), delivered its report on the Irish Survey question; and its recommendation to map the sister island on such a scale that a length of six inches measured on the paper would represent a lineal mile, was, as we have seen, adopted. Nor was Colby slow to grasp the magnitude of the new task intrusted to him. A survey such as the English one was at that time, limited to the representation of no more detail than could be squeezed into a published chart where a square inch of the paper went to a square mile of country, was a very different affair. The grand triangulation would, of course, be

on the same lines; but the filling in of the greatly more numerous topographical features, as well as the satisfying of the multiplex objects and aims of the Survey of Ireland, was altogether an untried problem to solve. A mass of arrangements had to be adumbrated, and then shaped into a working organisation. Many more men and more officers were wanted, and these had to be allocated to new districts and divisions parcelled out over the country.

At this juncture it was only natural that the chief of the Irish Survey should turn to the corps of Sappers for the necessary military nucleus of his largely augmented force. Not only was there to guide him the example of his forerunner Roy, who, we have seen, well knew the value of soldiers as disciplined workmen;—at the outset of a new great survey like this of Ireland, its conductors must necessarily consult the existent ancient mappings and records of land-measurements of the island;—there were the old surveys of 1630 of the King's and Queen's counties; there was the Tipperary or "Strafford" survey of a few years later, so named from the ill-fated Earl, who was then Lord-Deputy of Ireland; and there was, besides, Petty's excellent achievement for his day—the Irish valuation survey of the forfeited lands, done during the Cromwellian period (1655-56), and commonly called the "Down" survey.¹ Now this last was pregnant with illus-

¹ Not from any connection with the county of that name, but as indicating among Irish country surveyors of the old school any survey laid *down* on a map,

tration of what capital surveying material soldiers would make with proper training and judicious treatment. Indeed, the story of Sir William Petty's enterprise and his soldier-surveyors is so racy a one in the literature of State-mapping, that it is worth our while making a momentary digression to take note of it.

Petty tells us of a formidable rival, one Benjamin Worsely, who, through being a shrewd and pushing adventurer, and by a timely change of his religious opinions "for others more merchantable in Ireland, . . . at length got credit to be employed in managing the Geometrical Survey of Ireland." But in process of time, finding Worsely's "way of survey, which the State was upon, to be a mistake," Petty managed, by working upon "severall sober and judicious persons in the business," to get a Committee appointed "by the Commissioners of the Commonwealth of England for the affaires of Ireland," to consider "how the business of surveys may be carryed on with most expedition and least charge to the Commonwealth." The order for this Committee was dated at Dublin the 8th of September 1654. The two men fought tooth and nail for their rival systems of surveying; and after several fresh Committees had been appointed, in which the "Surveyor-Generall" (Worsely) got decidedly the worst of it, Petty was at length recommended to get a State contract "for the survey of all the forfeited lands within the three provinces of Leinster, Munster, and Ulster, allotted for the satisfaction of the souldiery." Hereupon Worsely attacks Petty's surveying prices, and in his reply the

latter urges, among other advantages of his proposed system, "that uppon the field worke, it being a matter of great drudgery (to wade through boggs and water, climb rocks, fare and lodge hard, &c.), he would instruct *foot-souldiers*, to whom such hardships were familiar." Next, the contract having been passed, some of Worsely's surveyors, primed by him, forthwith remonstrate to the Lord-Deputy and Council that Petty would not employ them, but was teaching instead "private soldiers, whose labour he may hire at an easie rate;" and they endeavour to prove that their own work would be cheaper and better performed than that of "such who are raw and un-experienced." Petty, however, successfully vindicated his employment of the obnoxious "foot-souldiers," and also met another objection raised by his rivals, about employing "Irish Papists," "by acquainting the Council that there was noe more danger to have the measurer a Papist than the meares-man, which for the most part must be such." Finally, after the controversy had waxed so hot as to bring things to a standstill, Petty dexterously squares matters by framing a new set of articles, admitting Worsely and his recalcitrant surveyors into participation in the surveys. One of these articles was—" (5thly), That seaven souldiers and a corporall be allowed to waite uppon each instrument," which one objector nearly upset by urging, "that the steele and iron in those eight souldiers' swords would distract the needles' play" (in the circumferentors or compasses)!

Through all this, Sir William Petty's estimation of the value of military labour is clear: nor, in

view of similar controversies as to the relative merits of soldiers and civilians, which have cropped up in more modern times, is the story without instruction.

After the Down Survey, nothing of any consequence towards the cartography of Ireland, beyond a few isolated county maps, on diverse scales, and without cohesion, seems to have been executed prior to 1824, when the question of securing a grand National Survey, which should be an unimpeachable basis for assessment of land-taxes, became a leading one, and the working of it out was committed to Major Colby. This, then, was the state of matters in the year 1824.

It is now time to present to the reader a distinct notability among the State-mappers of the United Kingdom, a man of conspicuous ability, great inventive genius, and persevering industry—an apt and worthy pupil of the school of Colby, Thomas Drummond. Born three years before the close of the last century in the city which clusters round its “Maiden Castle,” tutored in or near its precincts, and a scholar of its historic university at the age of thirteen, the young Scot made early acquaintance with some of the foremost men of science in the northern capital—Brewster, Playfair, Wallace, Jardine,¹ John Leslie, and others. With the last-named, who, following Playfair, filled successively the chairs of mathematics and natural philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, Drummond afterwards formed a close and lasting intimacy, and the lessons learnt in such company were not lost to the British Survey. Ap-

pointed cadet at the Royal Military Academy in 1813, at which time, as we have seen, Mudge was its governor, he passed thence into the Engineers two years later, and by a coincidence his first station after Chatham was his native city. This gave him opportunity, writes his survey comrade Larcom in his admirable Memoir, of “pursuing the higher studies in which he delighted at the College classes, and among the scientific society” there. The prospects of the military service, however, especially in the non-purchase corps, were in these wearyful days of sluggish promotion and merciless retrenchment so disheartening, that Drummond contemplated leaving the army for the bar. But luckily for him, in the autumn of 1819, he became acquainted with Colby, on the occasion of the latter’s passing through Edinburgh after the outdoor “trig” season of that year, already described. Next year Colby offered him the Survey, which was accepted. This gave him for a time a winter residence in London, and (like the tough persevering Scot he was) he turned these winters to account by again applying himself with great assiduity to the higher branches of mathematics. For several years he used “to rise at four or five o’clock in the morning, and lighting his own lamp and fire, and taking a cup of coffee,” study on till eight or nine, when his regular duties of the day came on. During these years he devoted himself to chemistry, attending the Royal Institution lectures of Professors Brande and Faraday; and this

¹ Jardine bracketed him with another distinguished pupil, the future author of the ‘*Noctes Ambrosianæ*,’ pronouncing the two youngsters to be “the cleverest boys I ever had under my charge.”—Memoir of Thomas Drummond. J. F. McLennan. Edin. 1867.

led to his experimenting on improvements in signal-lighting, and ultimately to his substitution of the incandescent lime-ball for the Argand wick lamp in the focus of a parabolic reflector. The advent of the Irish Survey emphasised the need for a more powerful illuminant in survey signalling, to counteract the misty climatic conditions of the sister island.

In the autumn of 1824, Drummond was Colby's companion in a preliminary "prospecting" tour through the "green isle," when they traversed it from north to south, station-hunting after the manner we have already noted in Scotland, and also in search of a suitable site for a new base-line. The following year saw the Irish triangulation commenced on Divis Hill, close to Belfast. At this time, besides some artillery officers, there were employed on the Survey along with Drummond, Orde, Henderson, Murphy, Portlock, Vetch, Dawson, all commissioned officers of Engineers. To get connecting points on the opposite side of the Irish Channel, Murphy was sent over to Cumberland and Westmorland, and Portlock to the Isle of Man, in each case to identify the old great stations, and re-establish signal-posts or piles thereon, of sufficient height to be properly visible. Portlock, recounting his mountain experiences on Snaefell and North Barule in Manxland, tells us how he was lodged for several days at a country inn, faring sumptuously off roast-pig, custard-puddings, and gooseberry-pies *ad lib.*; and how, including his landlady's journeys up the hillside to bring up the viands, the whole score came to only

nine shillings! Reasonably cheap as was the same locality in my own Survey recollections of it a score of years ago, this whilom primitive island of tailless cats and poultry must long ere this have risen superior to such simple dealings.

The winter of 1824-25 at the Map Office in the Tower of London was quite a memorable season for the Survey officers, with their great "Irish question" to tax their brains and ingenuity, spurred on by the example of their chief, and by his ardent zeal and desire that the very best scientific methods should be brought to bear on the new work. There was the question of devising a better description of day and night signals; and, in view of the new Irish base-lines that would be necessary, there was also to be thought out what mechanism should be adopted which should combine or surpass the latest improvements extant. "Major Colby," writes Portlock, "lived as it were in an atmosphere of science." He belonged to nearly every scientific institution of the metropolis, attended their public meetings, dined three or four days a-week at their clubs, and was thus constantly "hearing of and discussing the merits of the inventions of foreign countries." In all these matters Drummond at this time took a leading part with his brilliant inventive faculty, and his quarters in Furnival's Inn "became a laboratory and workshop." He tried all sorts of contrivances to arrive at an improved base-measuring apparatus, and he has himself told us something about what he was doing in this way.¹ His first work was on

¹ See paper in Phil. Trans. Roy. Soc., by Lieutenant Thomas Drummond, R.E., "On the Means of Facilitating the Observation of Distant Stations in Geodetical Operations," 1826.

“heliostats” or day-signals, reflecting the sun from a plane mirror. Professor Gauss had tried the principle successfully at Inselberg and Hohenhagen; and, as we have seen, Colby and Kater had, with the aid of solar reflection, counteracted the effects of the dense smoke of London. Drummond’s first performance in this line was ingenious, but rather too elaborate and not sufficiently portable; but this was soon discarded for the very simple and effective form of heliostat (directed towards the distant station through a brass ring) which has been in use on the Ordnance Survey ever since. It has been worked with great success at distances exceeding 100 miles—as, for example, from Precelly in South Wales to Kippure in Wicklow, and from the Keeper mountain in Tipperary to Culcagh in Fermanagh. The instrument with the directing ring packed into a leather case slung over the shoulder, and the mirror could be screwed on to the top of a stick and be stuck in the ground.

But the invention with which Drummond’s name is most bound up was his oxycalcium or lime-ball light. For survey-signalling purposes, what he designed was a most neat and handy appliance. It was a small framework to set up on a stand; and in order to obtain the requisite temperature for the light, “I had recourse,” he writes, “to the known effect of a stream of oxygen directed through the flame of alcohol as a source of heat free from danger, easily procured and regulated, and of great intensity.” The apparatus consisted of (1) a set of tubes and jets to conduct the spirit and gas respectively; (2) a small cistern of alcohol behind the reflector; and (3) a small container for the

oxygen gas, which might be either a common gas-holder, or a silk bag with a layer of caoutchouc. The spirit being conducted through the tubes, was played on by the gas-jets at its emission, and was directed upon a small ball of lime about the size of a schoolboy’s marble. Behind this machine was placed the parabolic reflector, a thing shaped like the metal sander of the little hand-gongs one uses on a dinner-table, only much larger. The lime-ball was fixed in the focus of the reflector, being adjusted there by foot-screws in the base of the standard. Drummond found by very careful experiments that his lime-light was eighty-three times as intense as the brightest flame of an Argand burner fed with the finest oil.

I have said that Divis Hill, near Belfast, was the first of the great trigonometrical stations established in Ireland, and that it was the scene of our operations in 1825. In point of fact it became a Survey camp of instruction for the junior officers under Colby’s immediate superintendence, as had been the case previously in Scotland. The officers took the all-important duty of watch on the weather by day roster, the officer for the day turning out at daybreak and reporting to Colby if the hill was clear of fog, his chief personally taking all the most important observations, and the others assisting. Drummond was early in the season at this station preparing for the reception and setting up of the great theodolite, and got together an elaborate collection of delicate scientific instruments (as the photometer, æthroscope, &c.) This collection, with which, we are told, the meteorological observatory at Divis camp was furnished, presented a singular spectacle on the mountain-top. The

instruments were carefully observed and recorded, till a calamitous storm, of the sort our State-mappers were not seldom treated to, destroyed the observatory and its entire contents together.

Slieve Snaght is a wild and exposed hill-summit, over 2000 feet high, situated in the Innishowen district of Donegal. At this station, on the 23d August 1825, a conspicuous signal-object was set up, intended to be visible from Divis camp, $66\frac{1}{4}$ miles distant. But on till the 26th October a haze impenetrable to the observers at Divis prevailed, and then Colby, wellnigh in despair of ever getting sight of the Donegal peak, ordered off Drummond and a party of men to Slieve Snaght, which they reached on the morrow. For the first ten or twelve days it was very tempestuous weather, and Drummond tells us he and his surveyors were nearly blown away. Ultimately the weather moderated, and on the 9th and 10th November both heliostat and lime-light night-signal were brilliantly visible. It was a veritable triumph for its designer, this practical and highly successful inauguration of the "Drummond Light."

"Its first appearance," writes Larcom, in his singularly graphic description of the scene at Divis camp on this 9th night of November, "will long be remembered by those who witnessed it. The night was dark and cloudless, the mountain and the camp were covered with snow, and a cold wind made the duty of observing no enviable task. The light was to be exhibited at a given hour; and to guide the observer, one of the lamps formerly used—an Argand in a light-house reflector—was placed on the tower of Randalstown Church, which happened to be nearly in the line at fifteen miles. The time approached

and passed, and the observer had quitted the telescope, when the sentry cried, 'The light!' and the light indeed burst into view, a steady blaze of surpassing splendour, which completely effaced the much nearer guiding beacon. It is needless to add that the observations were satisfactorily completed, the labours of a protracted season closed triumphantly for Drummond, and the Survey remained possessed of a new and useful power."

Drummond, it may be remarked, laid no claim to the actual discovery of the lime-light. His merit was in rendering practically useful what had been before only a recondite experiment.

The triumphant success of the Drummond light was "purchased at the cost of a severe illness" to its inventor.

"A mountain camp, at an altitude of 2000 feet, in the winter of these climates, is under any circumstances a severe trial, but Drummond and his little party were peculiarly exposed. Few in number, being merely detached from the general camp at Divis, they were ill able to buffet with the storms of these wild regions; and the tents were so frequently blown down, that after the first few days they abandoned them, and constructed huts of rough stones, filling the interstices with turf. Such, without the additional luxury of a marquee lining, was the study and the laboratory on which depended the success of the new instruments; here were to be performed the delicate manipulations their adjustment required; here was to be manufactured the oxygen destined for the portable gasometer; and covering over the fire or wrapped in a pilot-coat, was Drummond day and night at work."¹

The result of all this hard toil and exposure was that the worker had to be invalided for a time, and to return to Edinburgh to be nursed by his family.

¹ Larcom's Memoir of Captain Thomas Drummond. R.E. Corps Papers, 1840.

Drummond afterwards turned his attention to the adaptation of his light for lighthouses, seeing that its intensity was so immeasurably superior to that of the Argand burners; and the Trinity Board allowed some trials of it to be made, placing at his disposal for experiments a small lighthouse at Purfleet. The experiments were witnessed by many distinguished persons, among others by Prince William, Duke of Clarence, then Lord High Admiral. But the expense and difficulties in manufacturing the oxygen gas appear to have militated against its general use for illuminating our coasts.¹

In 1827-28, as we have seen, Colby carried out his splendid and probably unrivalled labour of the kind, the base-admeasurement on the shores of Lough Foyle, with his bimetallic compensation-bars. And it would seem that the final perfection to which that apparatus was brought was in no small degree due to the material assistance rendered him by the various experimental tests so laboriously and devotedly conducted in the basement premises of the Tower Map Office, under the eye of their chief, by Drummond and his brother officer and collaborator, Murphy.

We have in all this, then, a vivid picture of Thomas Drummond in his Survey days. But the scientific part of his career was soon to be exchanged for em-

ployment of a less congenial kind, which ended in removing him from his corps, and making him a distinguished civil servant of the State. The Reform Bill was introduced in 1831. Lord Chancellor Brougham had met Drummond in the course of his lighting experiments, and taken note of him. A Boundary Commission for the purposes of the Bill was on the *tapis*; and after sending for him and discussing the subject of the statistical information and other work required by Government in connection with the Bill, Brougham proposed to Government that Drummond, though still only a lieutenant of Engineers, should be placed at the head of this Commission. It was indeed tremendous work for him at this time. The parliamentary contests were long and severe, and it required all Drummond's energy and application to prepare the requisite data and vindicate his calculations: toilsome days, sleepless nights: the Home Office in the morning, in the evening the House of Commons. Illness and exhaustion again followed this severe labour.

After the Reform Bill became law, Drummond returned for a time to the duties of the Survey. The Bill made him known to Lord Althorp (afterwards Earl Spencer), then Chancellor of the Exchequer, and leader of the House of Commons. Drummond became his

¹ In a very charming chatty letter to his mother (all his letters to her were of this sort) dated 24th January 1831, Drummond describes a visit to the King (William IV.) at the Pavilion, Brighton, a fortnight before, for the purpose of presenting to his Majesty, as Master of the Trinity House, a copy of his Royal Society paper on the Trinity House lighting experiments. During the audience, while Drummond was explaining the experiments, "I mentioned the remarkable fact of a shadow being cast" (by the light) "at the distance of ten miles. Whereupon his Majesty was pleased to exclaim, 'God bless my soul! that's very wonderful.'" Drummond was commanded by the King to join the Royal dinner-party the same evening, of which he gives a piquant description.—Memoir of Drummond: M'Lennan.

private secretary; and Lord Spencer is stated to have said that "one of the most pleasing recollections of his political life was that it had made him acquainted" with this accomplished Engineer officer. The sudden break-up of the Government in 1834 again threw Drummond aside for a time; but during the next year he went over to Ireland with the Earl of Mulgrave as Under-Secretary to the Irish Government. In 1836, the Bill for Municipal Reform in Ireland took up a good deal of Drummond's attention; and in October of the same year the Irish Railway Commission was constituted, and he was placed at its head. The railway report was presented in 1838; and, not physically fit for the heavy work, "he never recovered that fatal addition to his labours. . . . Of those labours some view may be formed from a perusal of his examination before the Committee on Crime in Ireland in 1839." After this Drummond's health gave way; illness succeeded illness; and at length, on the 15th April 1840, at the early age of forty-two, "in the plenitude of mental power and the maturity of knowledge, beloved in private, and esteemed in public life, he sank, undimmed by failure, unclouded by reverse."¹

That Drummond's influence in the Mulgrave Administration was very great, appears from diverse independent sources to be indisputable. It mattered little, one writer tells us, who was Lord Lieutenant, provided "he had Drummond as Under-Secretary, and Lord John Russell to give him his political cue."² "There

is no survivor of that Administration," wrote his intimate friend Harriet Martineau, "who will not eagerly assent to the avowal that one member, Mr Drummond, was the mind and soul of it." What he did for Ireland she thus sets forth:—

"The cool man of science came out the philanthropist, the statesman, the virtual preacher, carrying the loftiest spirit of devotion into each function. He put wisdom into the counsels of the Irish Government, and moderation into its demeanour. . . . It was he who repressed crime throughout the nation, and rebuked its passions, and stilled its turbulence, and encouraged its hopes, and stimulated its industry, and soothed its sorrows. . . . 'I am dying for Ireland,' he said, just at the last. He died for Ireland; and in the contemplation of his death, how do other deaths, which bear more of the external marks of martyrdom for Ireland, shrink by comparison, in our estimate!"

And, apropos of the present phase of the Hibernian trouble, may we not profitably give special heed to the concluding words of this gifted woman's eloquent panegyric?—

"Let them name his name when Ireland wants his example. When boasts of martyrdom abound, and blustering patriots would rouse the ignorant and suffering to rash enterprises, and men who will not work for Ireland talk of fighting for her, and those who cannot deny their own vanity, or indolence, or worldly ease, claim the glory of patriotic agitation, let the name of Thomas Drummond be quietly spoken, and human nature has lost its rectitude and its sensibility, if the arrogance be not shamed and the vaunt silenced."³

Thomas Aiskew Larcom, author of the appreciative obituary notice

¹ Larcom's Memoir of Drummond.

² Ireland and its Rulers—Madden.

³ History of England during the Thirty Years' Peace, 1816-46, vol. ii.—H. Martineau.

of his friend Drummond I have quoted from, was another notable officer, who began with State-mapping (in the year 1824), and who also rose to the eminent position of an Under-Secretary of State. In 1826 he was upon the top of Slieve Donard in Downshire, preparing for the great trigonometrical observation across the Irish Channel into Wales. On this lofty eminence, the observing party, including Colby, were camped out till November, and appear to have had a rough time of it, the mountain-side being deep in snow before they descended it for the winter. Larcom was for some years local superintendent of the Irish Survey at Mountjoy, in succession to another distinguished man, who had been charged with the military organisation of the largely augmented Survey force—Sir William Reid, afterwards governor of one of our chief dependencies. When the Irish Railways Commission was appointed in 1836, although the triangulation of the National Survey of Ireland was complete, the mapping of the topographical details had only extended over about one-third of the island. The Commission had to consider and report upon the most advantageous lines for railways, and this at once gave rise to an urgent need for a special general map of the country. Lieutenant Larcom was intrusted with the preparation of such a map (scale 4 miles to an inch) which served its purpose well; and it was due to him that the Continental system of delineating contours on maps was introduced into the Survey of the United Kingdom for the first

time. His able editing of the account of the Down Survey, and in later years his copious and lucid evidence before the Commission of 1843 on the statistical branch of the Irish Survey, would alone suffice to stamp this officer as a man of no common attainments. But in yet later days, as a high permanent official of the Irish Government, the name of Sir Thomas Larcom was long known and esteemed far outside the privileged circle of Dublin Castle.¹

With Robert Kearsley Dawson we have already made acquaintance among the glens and mountain-chains of Northern Britain, in that memorable outing of his in 1819. The great Reform Bill, which drew Drummond into its net, did the same for Dawson, his old comrade and fellow-cadet in early days; and by the end of the year 1836 we find him installed a Commissioner under the Title Commutation Act, and his connection with the National Survey closed. Dawson's great experience of all the branches of topographical work, and his thorough intimacy with maps, made him at all times a valuable referee to Government and the country. Various State departments enlisted his services—*e.g.*, the Enclosure Commissioners, the Poor Law Board, the General Board of Health; and he underwent examination before a large number of parliamentary Commissions on the Ordnance Survey, Registration of Land, and kindred inquiries. And among the many valuable suggestions his wide acquaintance with these technical subjects enabled him to offer to the authorities, perhaps the greatest

¹ It was once remarked by Fitzstephen French, during a debate in the House of Commons on an Irish question, in terms more neat than complimentary to the then heads of the Irish Administration, that "Ireland is governed by a colonel of engineers. In the departments, Carlisle does the dancing, Horsman the hunting, and Larcom the work."—*Memoir of Drummond*: McLennan.

inspiration which emanated from him was made in the year of the accession of our most gracious Sovereign, the Jubilee of whose glorious reign we have but just ceased celebrating. Dawson's recommendation was to adopt for the Tithe Maps, about to be constructed, the decimal scale of $\frac{1}{25000}$ th of actual size, which our French neighbours, years and years before, had had the sense to incorporate in their national Cadastral Survey. It was a far-seeing proposition; it would have bestowed upon the country a grand series of parish maps on one uniform system nearly a score of years sooner than the nation actually and ultimately was forced into obtaining them; and, as afterwards proved, would have saved a comparatively useless outlay expended under the Tithe Commutation Acts, estimated at about two millions of money.

Space allows of no more than bare mention of Joseph Ellison Portlock, author of the valuable treatise on the Geology of Londonderry, and of the excellent memoir of Colby I have already referred to; of Henry Tucker (1824-54), who elaborated, with extraordinary pains and precision, the system of ascertaining and recording the civil boundaries of Great Britain, which, first given application in the Survey of Lancashire and Yorkshire, has practically represented our *modus operandi* ever since; of William Yolland, compiler of two important official volumes,¹ who for some years filled the responsible post of Executive Officer to the Survey Department, an officer possessing a sound and thorough knowledge of his work. Nor can I do more here than pick out from among the host of former

officers the Survey annals commemorate, the names of Alexander Robe and his "gunner" namesake, the two Gossets, Vicars, the two Lanceys, Dalton, Waters, Fenwick, Richard Stotherd (*primus*), Rimington, Bordes, Wilkinson (*primus*), Greatorex, Edward Durnford (father of the gallant soldier who fell with his Basutos at Isandula), John Cameron (ultimately Director-General), Leach, and Bayly, whose periods of employment as State-mappers ranged from ten to seven-and-thirty years, and all of whom served under General Colby.

To return now to Colby. During 1828, when the Irish work was in full swing, the number of commissioned officers on the Survey touched the maximum total ever reached—47. In the same year, Lieutenant-Colonel Colby, desiring to be near where the bulk of the Survey business was then going on, moved from the Tower of London to Dublin, making the Mountjoy office his headquarters; and there he resided for the next ten years, returning to the Tower at the end of that period. By 1833 the grand triangulation of Ireland was completed, and this year saw the departure from the National Survey of the last of the artillery officers employed upon it, the military authorities having ruled that the Royal Regiment could no longer spare any of its commissioned strength for this special service. The year 1838, when the triangulation of Scotland was resumed, appears to have been the last in which Colby was actively engaged in field duties; this season he and Alexander Robe were up on the top of Ben Hutig. To Colby's lot it fell to see the

¹ Astronomical Observations made with Ramsden's Zenith Sector, 1842; and Account of the Measurement of Lough Foyle Base, 1847.

virtual completion of the original field work of the Irish Survey, and the publication of the maps to the last county: the commencement of the two great northern English counties, to be mapped on an equally large scale as the sister island: the railway mania which culminated in 1845, and filched from his splendidly trained staff some of the best men by the lure of the inflated wages any one calling himself a surveyor was able at this period to earn. And on the eve of his enforced retirement from the State department he had so assiduously served for over five-and-forty years, it must have been some satisfaction to General Colby to have elicited from the parliamentary Select Committee, which sat in 1846, the admission that the Ordnance Survey of Ireland "will bear comparison with any survey which has ever been completed." Indeed it may be truly said that the Irish Survey was the touchstone of Colby's capabilities and organising faculty.

In summing up his chief's character and idiosyncrasies, Colonel Portlock eulogises Colby's nice judgment, and his desire to avoid offending national prejudices. To this latter feeling, and the maxims inculcated in that sense among the subordinates of the Survey in Ireland, are ascribed the freedom from molestation enjoyed by our people in their wanderings through that country, even in the most disturbed times. The Sabbath-whistling incident in Scotland we have already noted, was an exemplification of this. To these traits are to be added his remarkable discrimination in the selection of officers of special ability, his frank simplicity of character, his genuine yet unostentatious hospitality, and his

kindness of heart. Unlike some chiefs, the man was too generous to suck the brains of his subordinates for his own advantage, and then give them no personal credit for their labours. On the contrary, his habit was ever to push their scientific reputations to the front side by side with his own. Nor, in bidding farewell to this masterly director of State-mappers, can we do better than carry away the words of one super-eminent in the world of science—testimony not less laudatory to the great national institution, which had been so expanded and improved by Thomas Frederic Colby, than to the individual himself. "I never," wrote the now veteran Ex-Astronomer-Royal and past President of the Royal Society,¹ "heard a word from him which implied that he was looking abroad for personal glory, or for any expression except the recognition of his results,—as producing a scientific survey superior to any that had ever been made, and a cadastral mapping to which no other, I believe, can be compared."

I shall conclude my review of those who conducted the British Survey with special mention of one, whose figure next to Colby's, fills the largest and most conspicuous place in its history—Lieutenant-General Sir Henry James. It is, to begin with, noteworthy as somewhat of a coincidence that, in the same year (1803) and corner of England (Cornwall) which saw Colby so maimed for life by his unfortunate accident, Henry James was born. At the age of two-and-twenty he was posted to the Royal Engineers, and a couple of years later (1827) joined the National Survey. He remained on the Survey, devoting himself to his duties,

¹ Sir George Biddell Airy.

and in particular to geology, which at that time formed a part of them, till 1843, when Colonel Colby recommended Captain James for the appointment of Local Superintendent of the Geological Survey of Ireland under Sir Henry de la Beche as General Director for the Geology of the United Kingdom. This post he held for some time, but was afterwards transferred to the Superintendence of the Admiralty Constructional Works at Portsmouth Dockyard. In 1850, James returned to the Survey, and had his divisional headquarters in Edinburgh, where, like some of his predecessors, he made acquaintance with many scientific celebrities and congenial friends. Four years later, he was selected to succeed Colonel Hall in the directorate of the department, causing thereby the withdrawal from the Survey of a first-rate officer already spoken of, Tucker, on account of his seniority to Major James in the service; Yolland, also, being transferred to the Board of Trade about the same time.

On the assumption of his command by the new chief, the great "battle of the scales," as it has been termed, was still in activity; and in regard of anything like settled orders, fixity of plan, or steadiness in the annual grants of money, the National Survey had been for a considerable time past at sixes and sevens, and was destined for yet a few years more to be tossed about in troublous waters. One set of experts had advised this, another that; but out of it all had at last emerged a Treasury order to adopt on the British survey the French cadastral scale of $\frac{1}{25000}$, which had been fathered by Laplace and Delambre at the beginning of the century, strenuously urged by Dawson, R.E., in 1837, and pressed home

to the attention of European States by the Brussels Statistical Conference in 1853. At such a time as this, no fitter or stouter arm could have been put to the helm than that of James. Notwithstanding the decision of Government in favour of the large scale for the future Ordnance maps, its opponents were many and vigorous, and they returned to the charge in Parliament off and on during the next three years, ultimately carrying their point by a small majority in June 1857. The effect of this was the stoppage for a time of the supplies voted for the large-scale surveys, and the appointment of a Royal Commission in the following year to go all over the old ground again. Now, as may be imagined, all these inquiries and vexed questions kept the chief of the Survey continually on the *qui vive*. He was perpetually running up to London and going about from one Government office to another, or dancing attendance on this committee or that; while the lives of the unfortunate clerks and subordinate officers at Southampton were made a burden to them from the multiplicity of statistics they had to collect, and the special returns or estimates they were called upon to prepare. James was just the man to carry this sort of thing through, and do it well. It was not enough to be possessed of scientific knowledge of the Survey work. What was wanted was some one with his knowledge handy, able to give a ready answer, to stand cross-questioning, and to give back on occasions to an inconvenient or hostile querist a Rowland for an Oliver. The pages and pages of Sir H. James's evidence before the parliamentary tribunals which examined him are proof enough that he was the right man in the right

place to see the National Survey through the difficulties that at this period beset it.

The consequences to the work, too, of all this chopping and changing, were simply disastrous. For fifteen months in 1853-54 the director of the Survey was without any orders as to the particular scale or proportion of actual ground dimensions the maps were to be drawn upon: the result of which was, that there was an accumulation at the end of the time of nearly a million of acres of work surveyed but not laid down on paper. Well might Sir Henry complain "of the extreme inconvenience to which we were subjected, and how thoroughly all our arrangements were upset by the perpetual changing from one scale to another."¹ Again, "the great drawback to the Survey has been the frequent change of orders relative to it." And again, in a note written at the end of June 1857, evidently in disgust, and appended to his Report for 1855-56, he says: "The decision of the House of Commons, on the 18th instant, has rendered nugatory all the arrangements we have made for making the plans on the 25-inch scale, and the reductions from them: and, after a seven years' discussion, we revert to precisely the same position we were in when the Treasury minute of 1st October 1840 was issued." In 1857-58 the cutting down of the Survey grant some £30,000 compelled James to discharge upwards of 1000 men (nearly half his force), "and the progress of the Survey," he writes, "has in consequence been greatly retarded."

In 1857, Colonel James became head of the Topographical and

Statistical Depot of the War Office, and remained in this position till the severance of the Ordnance Survey from the War Department in 1870. This considerably added to his labours. He was the author of several *brochures* on different scientific subjects germane to the work of the Survey—*e.g.*, projection of maps, meteorological observations, antiquities, &c. But the principal study with which the name of Sir H. James will always be associated was his successful application of photography to the production of maps, without which auxiliary it would have been a simple impossibility to keep pace with the ever-increasing volume of map publications on all the various scales. The great diminution of cost as well as increase of accuracy in copying by this over any other known process were placed beyond a doubt by the committee appointed to investigate the subject under the able presidency of Sir Roderick Murchison. It was feared that error might arise in a photographically reduced copy of a map by reason of mechanical distortion. But the committee set this apprehension at rest by declaring, as the result of their inquiry, "that the greatest deviation in any part of the plans from perfect accuracy does not amount to $\frac{1}{400}$ part of an inch;"² a quantity quite inappreciable, and much less than the error due to contraction and expansion of the paper the maps are printed on.

Of all our branches of work, none attracted more attention from foreign Governments than those connected with the reduction of maps by photography and photo-zincography. The Spanish

¹ Select Committee of 1861—Minutes of Evidence, Q. 18.

² Report of Committee on "Reduction of the Ordnance Plans by Photography," 1859.

Government on three different occasions sent officers of their staff corps to Southampton to study and report upon the organisation of the British Survey, with a view to modelling their cadastral and topographical surveys on a similar system. In particular, Colonel Pedro de Zea and two other officers of the Spanish army came over to this country in 1862 to acquaint themselves with our photographic processes and appliances; and, on their return home, they reported so favourably to General de Calonje, director of their staff corps, that our methods and system of work were adopted. Moreover, Sir Henry James and Captain (now Major-General) A. de Courcy Scott, whose great technical knowledge had so materially assisted his chief in everything connected with photo-zincographic printing, were nominated by her Catholic Majesty of Spain to the Royal Order of Carlos III. When, however, James asked permission to accept the insignia of the Order, and reference was made to Earl Russell, the answer was that it was not permissible for British subjects to wear foreign Orders, and so the matter for the moment dropped. But the Spaniards were not to be put off in this way from their courteous desire to confer honour upon the representatives of a Department from which their country had reaped so much. In October 1863, Colonel Juan de Velasco writes from Madrid by authority to "Señor Coronel D'Enrique James," offering him the diploma of "Comendador de la Real Orden de Isabel la Católica," and to Scott of a knight of the same Order, a more distinguished one apparently than that of the third Carlos. Again a similar hitch occurred in the way of their accepting these dignities, but this

time James deftly got over it. On 15th June 1864 he writes to the Brigadier Don Francisco Passino, chief of the Spanish War Department, regretting that the British regulations precluded Scott and himself from *wearing* the insignia of the Order *in this country*; but expressing himself "highly gratified to learn that her Majesty the Queen of Spain has been graciously pleased to nominate us members of so distinguished an Order."

In connection with the numerous foreign visitors who made use of our Southampton establishment at different times as a school of instruction — mainly during the directorate of James—our official photographic album contains not a few interesting portraits. We have (in 1860) General Blaramburg, director of the Imperial Survey of Russia; in the same year, Ibañez, head of the Geographical and Statistical Institute of Madrid; (1862), De Zea and Godos Perez de Guzman, Spanish officers; Captain de Stalhammar of the Swedish staff; Lubois, of the Belgian staff; and the distinguished Otto Struve; (1863), Colonel Count Avet, of the Italian army; and many others. In 1858, Von Moltke visited the Survey headquarters.

What perhaps specially distinguished the *régime* of Sir Henry James as conductor of a great State-mapping department, was the way in which he struggled to advertise it. While Colby and those before him appear to have been content to stir the scientific world only, James seems to have felt that, in the precarious prospects of the Cadastral Survey as he found it when he took office, the greatest safety lay in giving people of importance and outsiders generally a knowledge of what we were doing, instead of allowing

our work to lie hid under a bushel. If it could be kept before the public, he thought, there would be less chance of its being stamped out of existence, or cramped into insignificance, in a cold fit of economy. And without doubt, after 1854 the National Survey did become better known throughout the country, though there is yet much to be desired in that direction.

James was undoubtedly a man of versatile gifts, with a faculty for summarising results. Whether it was as a geologist describing raised beaches and glacial boulders, as in his 'Notes on the Parallel Roads of Lochaber'; as a geodesist discussing the figure and density of the earth or the oscillations of the pendulum; as originator of a new projection for maps; or again, in the walks of archæology, now descanting on Stonehenge, Irish cromlechs, sculptured tombstones, the ancient tin-mines of his native county—now poking fun at high-flying theorists who wanted to find a sacred measure of mystic origin enshrined for all time in the dimensions of the Great Pyramid,—whatever it was, James was always practical and to the point, an ingenious conjecturist, but keeping himself well within the bounds of common-sense. He was wont to express himself in writing very much in the first person, an idiosyncrasy of style which some people objected to as savouring of the egotistic, but which was, I take it, the expression of his strong personality. A man of commanding presence, he was withal of a masterful, not to say imperious, character, misliking contradiction, and ill brooking opposition of any kind; yet possessing a keen sense of humour and full of racy stories, the outcome of much

travelled experience of good company.

James was, besides, a first-rate sportsman with rod and gun. Few could beat him on a grouse-moor or by the side of a salmon-pool. Deer-stalkers had reason to be grateful to him, for he was always most particular in clearing out the Survey men from the deer-forests before the close season came on. When out on his annual autumn tours of inspection in Scotland, he was a familiar and welcome guest in many a Highland home. Indeed, as I can call to mind his saying (though I think it was rather hard on our Survey headquarters town), he used to breathe once he got north of the Tweed, after being parboiled in the sultry summer heats and stifling atmosphere of Southampton.

The end of it all came at last, as come it will to the best or worst of us. And there is something almost pathetic in the final days of Sir Henry's connection with the National Survey. Adverting in a farewell circular (19th August 1875) to how his health had broken down the previous summer during his round of Scotch inspections, and had got no better since, he says he thought it his duty to resign office. "This was to me a most painful step to take, being so much attached to the duty, and to the officers and men belonging to the Department. . . . By a curious coincidence," he adds, "it was only yesterday that I had to acknowledge the testimony of the Geographical Congress at Paris to the superior merits of our engraving" (and other processes). Lastly, he congratulates the Survey Department on the appointment of his former executive officer, Major-General John Cameron, to succeed him, "as from his well-known ability there is no fear but that

the Survey will be maintained in all its integrity as the most perfect that has ever been organised."

Thus, full of regrets at his enforced severance from the great national undertaking he had so vigorously and successfully conducted for one-and-twenty years—and within two years of his death—Lieutenant-General Sir Henry James passed out of the roll of State map-makers.

My attempt to review the more personal and picturesque incidents, and make them serve as side-lights, in the history of the grand National Survey of these islands, is now completed. For those who may be sufficiently interested in the subject, and wish to obtain an insight into its other aspects, I will venture to refer them to another detailed account which has recently appeared, and in which it has been essayed to trace in a brief popular form the general outlines of the history, organisation, objects, methods of work, future outlook, and other distinctive features of this prolific ever-busy department of her Majesty's service.¹ In that account, too, something has been said respecting the successors of Sir H. James.

The Survey has suffered in the past both from extraordinary ignorance on the part of many, and also from the malevolent criticisms of some, who, for reasons

best known to themselves, bore it no love. Things, however, have mended a little in this respect of late, and we had the leading journal of this country remarking on a recent occasion, that "the Ordnance Survey company itself has never been guilty of shortcomings. It has constantly been ready to proceed with unceasing diligence. . . . Such as it is, it is none too much for the business on which it is engaged. . . . The corps is eager to be as useful and at as cheap a rate as possible to the public. Its only regret is that enough advantage is not taken of its labours." And the article with justice adds: "But the real delinquent, in respect of the benefits provided by the Ordnance Survey, is the English public itself. In England no proper comprehension has yet been attained of the utility of this great survey. . . . Hitherto a mere minority has regarded it in a serious light."²

It is indeed only the truth that so far the British public have never taken their National Survey quite seriously. It is left to the prize judges of foreign or colonial international exhibitions to discover its merits and award to it distinctions; or for appreciative writers in other countries to signify their approbation of its work.³ *Ignoti nulla cupido*. People care nothing for what they know nothing about.

¹ The Ordnance Survey of the United Kingdom. By Lieutenant-Colonel T. Pilkington White, R.E. William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London: 1886.

² The 'Times' of 30th May 1887.

³ In a pamphlet lately published by M. Carusso—'Importance de la Cartographie Officielle,' Genève, 1886—the writer thus alludes to the Ordnance Survey: "Nous ne pouvons pas montrer ici l'œuvre dans toute sa grandeur. . . . Encore moins pouvons-nous passer en revue—telles que nous avons eu l'occasion de les voir—ces magnifiques collections de cartes aux différentes échelles et toutes les excellentes publications scientifiques qui découlent directement ou indirectement de l'Ordnance Survey. . . . Il est naturellement impossible d'exprimer en chiffres, même approximatifs, les bénéfices matériels dont la nation est redevable à l'Ordnance Survey."

For the Survey in the future, as I have elsewhere shown, there is plenty of work yet in store. And in the hands of the present chief of the Department—whose professional training got its first start in North America, was afterwards developed in Palestine, again at the Topographical Depot in London, and later on in the Intelligence branch of the army in the East, very much under the public eye—we may rest assured its interests will be safe. But the coach can only run smoothly, provided that arrangements carefully thought out and planned in advance for its future progress be not wrecked or dislocated through a shifting policy, or an over-desire to economise on the part of those who have the pulling of the purse-strings. In this connection, the

finger of warning surely has been pointed with sufficient pertinacity by Sir Charles Wilson's predecessors. Nor can I do better than take for my closing text upon State-mapping these weighty words of one whose pre-eminent position as well in the service of the State as in public estimation entitles him to be heard with the profoundest respect. "I am sure," said Lord Salisbury, in the House of Peers, on the 17th of February last year, criticising a noble lord's personal explanation as to quitting the Government, "that neither in public nor in private life will any wholesome economy be effected by cutting off a sum arbitrarily without inquiring into what effect that economy will have, or to what items it is directed."

T. PILKINGTON WHITE.

MAURICE JOKAI.

MRS HEGAN KENNARD'S admirable adaptation of one of the best of M. Jokai's stories¹ has served to rouse the interest of English readers in a novelist whose title to a very high place in the ranks of contemporary writers of romance would long since have been recognised, were it not that his books are written in a language which is absolutely unknown outside a limited area in Eastern Europe. There is no tongue spoken by a civilised people—unless perhaps it be the Welsh—which is so completely insular as the Magyar. It stands alone in the Western world—a linguistic waif with no kin nearer than the arctic circle. Unlike the languages of other small nations,—the Norse, for instance, the Dutch, the Danish, or the South Slavonic dialects,—it has no points of connection with the speech of any of the great races. It is not even the language of Hungary; for the Magyars are only one of several nationalities who people their kingdom, and to more than half the subjects of the crown of St Stephen the dominant tongue is absolutely unintelligible. It is therefore not surprising that even an author so brilliant, original, and productive as M. Jokai, should have written for the space of a generation before so much as his name was known outside the boundaries of his own country. Germany discovered him first. During the last few years he has been extensively translated, and at the present time excellent versions of most of his best stories are to be had in the cheap paper-

covered editions which the German novel-reader loves. Several of the stories, too, have been rendered into French; nor can it be said that Mrs Kennard is, in point of time, absolutely the earliest English translator of Jokai. Some thirty years ago a little collection of his slighter tales was issued in this country by M. Emeric Szabad; and in 1868 Mr A. J. Patterson, the author of the best book on Hungary ever written by a foreigner, published a translation of Jokai's 'New Landlord.' For some reason this excellent piece of work attracted little attention at the time—perhaps because the novel selected was too local in its scope and character to be generally interesting, or more probably because twenty years ago the cycle of our great native romancers was as yet unfulfilled, and Englishmen in the lifetime of Dickens, George Eliot, and Charles Reade were better employed than in reading foreign novels. It is otherwise at present. Perhaps there never was a period when foreign novels excited a livelier interest in England, as numerous translations from Turguénieff, Tolstoi, Dostoieffsky, Björnson, and Paul Heyse testify; and many English readers will be grateful to Mrs Kennard for introducing them to a fresh and fascinating realm of fiction. It may be added that they could hardly have a better introduction. Mrs Kennard has done her work with excellent taste, judgment, and literary skill. She has omitted or curtailed some of M. Jokai's too numerous digres-

¹ Timar's Two Worlds. By Maurice Jokai. Translated by Mrs Hegan Kennard. Three Volumes. William Blackwood & Sons.

sions, while her translation has much of the easy fluency and vivid colouring of the original.

There can be few men of letters in Europe who have worked harder and longer than M. Jokai. He is not merely a novelist, but also a poet, a dramatist, a journalist, and a politician. The beginnings of his literary career take us some way back into the century. Maurice Jokai is sprung from a respectable family of Magyar "noblemen." In Hungary, before the reforms of 1848, everybody who was not a peasant or a Jew, was a nobleman, and indeed there were plenty of people who were peasants to all outward seeming, though they possessed the inalienable privileges of noble blood. Jokai's parents belonged to the class which in England would be that of country gentlemen. Being a younger son, our novelist was trained for the law, and in 1844, at the age of nineteen, he qualified as a *juratus*, or sworn advocate, a functionary who, under the old Hungarian system, united many of the duties of a lawyer with those of a professional politician. But in Hungary, as in other countries, it is not uncommon to find that the young legal probationer "pens a stanza when he should engross," and devotes himself less to law than to letters and art. M. Jokai, when he settled in Pesth, speedily found occupations which interested him more than the study of jurisprudence. The Hungarian metropolis, like most other Continental capitals, was just then in the condition of ferment and excitement which marked the period immediately preceding the "year of revolutions." There was a young Hungary which was expect-

ing a good deal—national reconstruction, the abolition of the old feudal system, constitutional reform, and much besides. The reform feeling was very keen among the cultivated classes of the Magyar capital, but not stronger than the sentiment of nationality. There was to be at once a modification of the harsh and oppressive Austrian rule, the abolition of the exclusive privileges of nobles, and a great development of the national literature, which had only just begun to revive after the silence of centuries.

Into all these movements young "Jokai Mór,"¹ threw himself with ardour. He was one of the knot of young artists and authors who gathered round Alexander Petöfi, the Burns and Tyrtæus of modern Hungary, whose poems sank so deep into the heart of the nation during the troubled years before the war of independence. Petöfi served as adjutant to General Bem in the war, and perished in the disastrous battle of Ségessvár. But the reality of his death was long doubted by the Magyars. For many years after the war false Petöfis appeared, and were worshipped and caressed in secret by their adoring countrymen, and perhaps to this day there are veteran Honveds of '49 who believe that "the Poet," like Frederick Barbarossa and Sebastian of Portugal, is not dead but sleeping, and will one day reappear to animate his countrymen, not so much against the "Swabian" as against the Muscovite.

In an autobiographical appendix to one of his books, M. Jokai has given some account of these apprentice years of his life. His two great friends at this period

¹ In Hungarian the Christian name always follows the surname, instead of preceding it.

were Petöfi and another young "jurat" of his own age, Samuel Orlay. Genius—and two at least of the trio possessed no small measure of that quality—not infrequently mistakes its own bent. The three young friends aspired to do great things in the artistic world, but not exactly what they actually did. Petöfi intended to be an actor, and made several unsuccessful appearances on the stage. Orlay, who subsequently obtained a considerable reputation as a painter, proposed to become a poet. M. Jokai's own thoughts were directed rather to the pencil than the pen, and he occupied himself in painting somewhat indifferent portraits in oil of all the pretty Magyar ladies who would consent to sit to him. But he soon found where his real strength lay. By 1848 he had married, and was steadily settling down to the profession of letters. Then came the Hungarian revolution, the rebellion of the Serbs and Croats against the Pesth Government, and finally the advance of the Austrian armies into Hungary. In these events Jokai bore his part. In the early days of the revolution he was one of the journalists of the reforming party, and supported Kossuth with might and main. When the Provisional Government, under Kossuth, withdrew farther and farther into the interior of Hungary, Jokai followed them. When Görgey's army, caught between the hosts of Russia and Austria, agreed to the disastrous surrender of Világos, Jokai found himself in the company of a small body of distinguished officers and officials, who debated as to the means of escaping a surrender which would probably be followed by an ignominious death. One of them, Joseph Molnár, Jokai's friend and pa-

tron, declared that he knew one way of escaping; and retiring into the neighbouring room, he blew out his brains. Two other of Jokai's companions in this conference were subsequently captured and put to death by the Austrians. The novelist himself was saved by his wife, who concealed him in a peasant's hut in the depths of the woods, while she hurried to Komorn and contrived to get his name inscribed among those of the Honved officers who had been guaranteed a free pardon on the surrender of that fortress. The young *littérateur*—more fortunate than many of his companions, who paid for their devotion to the cause of Magyar freedom by exile, imprisonment, or the scaffold—was able to return to Pesth and quietly resume his studies and his literary labours.

The years which immediately followed the war of independence were evil years for Hungary. The heroes of the revolution period were silenced or proscribed. Görgey, the leader of the Magyar armies, had gone into retirement in Carinthia, amid the execrations of his countrymen, who very unreasonably blamed him for a catastrophe which he could not have averted; Petöfi, the poet, had fallen on the battle-field; Count Szechenyi, the enlightened reformer, who had done so much for the material progress of the country, was in a lunatic asylum; Francis Deák was for the time politically extinct; Kmety entered the Turkish service, and as Ismail Pasha shared with Fenwick Williams in the honours of Kars; Klapka was writing books in London; Kossuth wandered about the world employing his superb eloquence in vain to rouse Europe and America to avenge the wrongs of Hungary. The Vienna Govern-

ment had triumphed, and it used its success with little moderation. Under the Ministry of Bach a resolute effort was made to break down the stubborn Magyar nationality. Everything that could keep alive the national sentiment was discouraged or proscribed. The Pesth Academy was compelled to close its doors; the theatres were not permitted to produce plays in the native language, and were obliged for some time to confine themselves to Italian operas. The Hungarians, disarmed and powerless, wisely gave up all idea of overt resistance. We do not hear that they formed secret societies, or shot at Austrian tax-collectors from behind hedges, or made any attempt to assassinate the "Swabian" governors and officials. They had fought their fight like men, and having been beaten by overwhelming force, they decided to wait patiently till fortune gave them another chance. That Providence would permanently allow them to be ground down under the heel of the Viennese "Camarilla," was an idea so revolting to Magyar pride, that the haughty little nation absolutely refused to entertain it. In the meanwhile, however, their foes had got the upper hand, and it was necessary to submit with dignity. Obviously, the armies of Austria and Russia were not to be fought by guerilla bands, nor was Herr von Bach's bureaucracy to be frightened away by sporadic outrages. Magyar self-respect, however, allowed a species of passive resistance to be practised which went far to baffle all the resources of Viennese officialdom. The harassing rules and regulations which issued from the Imperial Chancery were not disobeyed—that would have been unsafe; they were simply left on one side. The

country was full of stout Magyar squires like the one whom Jokai has sketched as Adam Garanvolgyi in 'The New Landlord.' M. Garanvolgyi having escaped with his life and the loss of half his property from the campaign of 1849, went back to what was left of his estates, and made it his business to avoid all communication or contact with the *régime* of Vienna. Like thousands of his countrymen, he vigorously boycotted everything Austrian. He was a great smoker of course—every Hungarian is; his meerschaums were among the things in life he cherished most. Nevertheless, when they told him that an imperial decree was issued creating a Government monopoly in tobacco, he gave up his pipes. "So much the better," he said, "I shall have the more appetite." He was a sportsman; but when an order was published requiring a licence to be obtained from the revenue for shooting game, M. Garanvolgyi laid aside his gun. So one by one he resigns everything which could bring him into contact with the "German" administration,—his newspapers, his letters, his rides round the country, his walks down the village street, and last and greatest sacrifice of all for a litigious Magyar laird—his lawsuits.

One thing, however, Herr von Bach could not take from the Hungarians—though it must be admitted he did his best to effect that end—and that was their native language. Adam Garanvolgyi and all his kind clung to the Magyar with a devotion which had become fanatical. The Austrian bureaucracy did more for the supremacy of the native tongue than all the literary and linguistic reformers. Down to almost the middle of the cen-

tury, the Magyar was the language of the people, but not the language of society, business, public affairs, or literature. In this respect Hungary was still in the condition of medieval Europe. There was no country where colloquial Latin lasted so long and prevailed so widely. The Hungarian bailiff, like the English "reeve" or steward in the middle ages, drew up his accounts and rendered his reports in debased Latin; the language of ancient Rome, as corrupted by monkish grammarians and seventeenth-century lawyers, was commonly used in the county assemblies and the courts of justice. In polite society, people talked French and Latin, or sometimes English and German; Magyar in a Pesth drawing-room would have been as much out of place as Russian, till recently, in a St Petersburg *salon*. The Austrian proscription changed all that. It became a point of honour to speak nothing but Magyar, to read nothing but what was written in the native tongue. But what to read? The vernacular literature, though it had made a vigorous start in the years preceding the revolution, was scanty, and, on the whole, poor. The hour had come for a great author who should write in the language of the people books which everybody could read; and the hour had, as usual, brought forth the man. It was Maurice Jokai's mission to supply a thirsty nation with its literature, and he set himself to fulfil it with astonishing industry and success. Novel after novel came from his hands, and was instantly caught up and devoured by his countrymen. The press was under rigorous censorship; but even Viennese bureaucrats had to admit that people in the nineteenth century must read something, and they do not

seem to have interfered with the circulation of M. Jokai's stories. Probably they thought that no great harm could be done by tales and romances which did not ostensibly occupy themselves with politics and never directly inculcated resistance to the established *régime*. But the official mind, if it had been wise in its generation, would have taken pains to fetter Jokai's fertile pen. Nothing kept alive national hopes and national sentiment more than this brilliant series of tales, in which the glories, the misfortunes, the virtues, and the failings of the Magyar character are displayed so vividly and well. Just as the Germans in their day of humiliation, under absolutism and foreign aggression, turned to poetry and philosophy, so the Hungarians consoled themselves under their defeat with the books of Jokai. The novelist's inexhaustible fertility of production was one of the necessities of the situation. He could hardly produce too much or too quickly, for a whole nation of eager, intelligent, keen-witted readers was hanging upon his pen.

This fertility of ideas and affluence of resources is, indeed, the most marked characteristic of M. Jokai. In the actual quantity of his work he is probably without a rival in Europe at the present time. As long ago as 1873 he communicated to his friend M. Kertbeny the particulars of his publisher's accounts. Up to that time he had published nearly 150 volumes, which included seven dramas, twenty-three long romances, and three hundred and fourteen minor stories, many of which are of respectable length, though others are mere vignettes in fiction. Up to 1873 over 650,000 copies of his works had

been sold—that is to say, in Hungary alone, for it was not till some years later that they became widely known in Germany. Perhaps nearly as many more copies have been circulated during the last fifteen years, so that altogether something like a million copies of M. Jokai's works must have passed into the hands of his Hungarian readers. Considering the scanty numbers of the whole Magyar-speaking population of the world, these figures bear witness to a national popularity which few writers of fiction have equalled. It is pleasant to think that Jokai has not lacked the material reward which some other popular novelists have failed to secure. Hungary is a poor country, and books must be sold there at a low price; in fact, the majority of Jokai's works appeared at considerably less than a florin a volume. Nevertheless M. Kertbeny estimated in 1873 that Jokai had made larger profits than any German writer, and than all but a few of the most successful novelists of England and France. When the difference in the size of his audience to that which can listen to a Thackeray or a Daudet is taken into account, the fact appears extremely creditable to the taste and liberality of M. Jokai's countrymen.

Maurice Jokai's activity has not been confined to the writing of novels. While he was animating, informing, instructing, and reproving the Hungarians in his great library of fiction, he was also directly engaged in political controversy. For a good many years he was the editor of two newspapers, one serious and one comic, both of which were devoted to the national and reforming cause. One of them—the 'Hon' or Country—was founded

in 1863, "the darkest hour before the dawn," when the Vienna Government, unwitting of the thunderbolt that was being forged for it in the north, was still steadily engaged in keeping down the aspirations of its Transleithanian subjects; and M. Jokai had to go through the usual *régime* of fine, imprisonment, and occasional confiscation before the collapse of Austria at Sadowa unmuzzled the tongues and liberated the pens of the Pesth journalists. Since the compromise of 1867, by which the Hungarian constitution was restored, M. Jokai has been three times elected to the Diet, and was a rather prominent member of the group of politicians who, after being some years in opposition, in 1875 coalesced with M. Tisza's followers to form the party which has kept that Minister in office ever since. M. Jokai has ceased to take an active personal part in politics, but he is still an energetic contributor to political journals, and he continues to issue fresh novels to a public which is no longer contained between the Danube and the Carpathians. We can well believe that, whether at his summer villa by the Balaton Lake, or at his Pesth residence on the "Swabian Hill," he is a most indefatigable worker, and is at his desk for several hours every day.

It is to be expected that this extraordinary productivity should not be altogether consistent with uniform excellence. Jokai has the defects of his qualities. He is not one of those artists who aim at flawless and classic perfection, or sustained equality of finished workmanship. His method is that of the elder Dumas rather than of Balzac. It strikes us that he is more likely to dash off the sheets of his novels, with the printer's boy waiting in the passage—we

should not like to hint that he gets industrious "ghosts" to do the padding of the narrative—than to spend long hours in correcting and re-correcting proof-sheets, and in writing the same passages over and over again. No man who writes so much can always write well. M. Jokai must be called a careless writer, though his carelessness does not, in his earlier novels at least, betray itself by bad literary workmanship and clumsiness of expression. Even those who can only read his stories in the German translations, or spell their way laboriously through the difficult language of the originals by the aid of grammar and dictionary, can appreciate the felicity, the energy, and the terse vigour of his style. The signs of hurry and pressure are visible rather in the matter than in the outward form. Some of the romances might have been shorter, and a good deal better, if the author had been at them longer. Not a few of them are prolix almost to the verge of tediousness, and overloaded with needless digressions and irrelevant incidents. The construction of the plots is often loose, awkward, and clumsy; the Aristotelian precept as to the parts of a work of art is disregarded, and the end in particular is sometimes singularly hasty and inartistic. It would seem occasionally as if the author towards the close of one of his lengthy dramas became suddenly conscious that the audience was getting tired of the performance and would like the curtain to be rung down as speedily as possible. Much of this want of symmetry and proportion may be due to the fact that nearly all the longer stories have been published piecemeal in the columns of newspapers. Jokai would not be the first novel-

ist to whom this mode of publication has proved a disadvantage. Mr Trollope has placed on record his opinion that a good deal of Thackeray's looseness of construction was due to the pressure of serial publication upon a writer who never found it possible to keep himself much in advance of the printers. But some of the faults of M. Jokai are probably quite independent of external conditions. His genius is sometimes in danger of being choked by its own fertility. Incidents, characters, and situations come to him so easily that he cannot resist the temptation of pouring them forth with almost wanton profusion. His canvases are crowded with figures and overloaded with detail. Background as well as foreground is filled in till light and air are almost excluded, and the mind of the spectator is overwhelmed with a general sense of confusion and bewilderment. A German critic has explained this tendency on the part of M. Jokai by the accidents of race and locality. In Hungary, he says, with its jumble of languages, religions, and nationalities, simplicity is not judged by the standards in use elsewhere. The Hungarian, accustomed from his youth up to this social, political, and ethnological complication, finds his way through a tangle of interests and personalities in which the reader of Western Europe would be lost. This seems an ultra-Teutonic way of explaining the matter, and it is the more unnecessary since there is little of this superfluity of detail in some of M. Jokai's best novels. In 'Timar's Two Worlds,' for instance, there is little to distract attention from the main problem of the story, or to withdraw the reader's interest from the principal person-

ages. The minor characters are held in strict subordination. There are many incidents and digressions, but they are kept in their place. The author has his story well in hand throughout, and the spectator is seldom permitted to lose sight of the absorbing drama of Timar's soul and the lives of the women who people his "two worlds."

If, however, Jokai's fertility sometimes betrays him into error, the same quality is often one of the great sources of his strength. The feature of his novels is their intense vitality. The writer is awake to every side and aspect of life. His collection is a vast gallery of pictures, rivalling that of Victor Hugo in its range and variety. To Victor Hugo, indeed, the Hungarian novelist may be with some degree of justice compared. He is without Hugo's poetic intensity, and, it must also be added, without Hugo's extravagance and melodramatic exaggeration; but he has Hugo's capacity for dealing with a large subject—his Olympian view of humanity as a whole, his comprehensiveness, his boldness, and not a little of the generous moral fervour which underlies the swaggering ethics of the author of 'Les Misérables.' Both writers have boundless audacity. Nothing human comes amiss to them, nor has either a particle of that artistic timidity which is at once the strength and the weakness of many contemporary novelists. To spend themselves with elaborate toil upon one small corner of life, one special and circumscribed problem of emotion or character, is not at all in their way. Both range freely over all the intellectual and social interests of the age. M. Jokai rivals Charles Reade in his capacity for "getting up"

technical and professional matters, and his books are studded with little essays on art, science, manufactures, theology, finance, commerce, history, and ethnology. These disquisitions could sometimes be spared by an impatient reader; but they testify to the varied interests and the keen faculties of the writer.

It may be worth while to give a brief sketch of the plot of M. Jokai's 'Black Diamonds'—a novel which, though less likely to interest Englishmen than the one which Mrs Kennard has so ably adapted, is in many respects more characteristic of its author. The "black diamonds" are of course coal; and it is thoroughly in keeping with M. Jokai's method that he prefaces his story with a long and brilliant popular lecture on the geology of the carboniferous strata. The hero of 'Black Diamonds' is one Ivan Berend, the owner of a small coal-mine and blasting-furnace in one of the remote forest valleys of northern Hungary. Ivan is a bachelor, a student, and an ascetic. His days are passed superintending his workmen in the mine; his nights in his laboratory, striving to find some antidote to the deadly vapours and fire-damp of the underground world. This peaceful and laborious existence is suddenly interrupted. Ivan falls in love with one of his own pit-brow lasses—a bare-legged damsel, with the voice of a siren and the limbs of a Hebe. His suit, however, is rejected by the young lady, who is engaged to one of Ivan's workmen. The disappointed lover soon finds matter to distract his thoughts. To him enters a young Viennese banker, who has conceived the idea of making what is now called a "boom" out of the Bondavar valley and its coal-mines. Ivan, however, does

not believe in the project, and declines to have anything to do with it. But he is only part owner of the valley; the rest belongs to a wealthy nobleman, whom Kaulmann the banker manages to gain over to his scheme. His mode of effecting this is rather improbable; but M. Jokai, as we have said, is never very reluctant to outrage the probabilities. Kaulmann sets eyes on Evila, the beauty of the pit's mouth, and, more successful than Ivan, he manages to induce her to accompany him to Vienna and go through the form (but only the form) of marriage. He has her properly instructed, taught singing, and generally civilised; but this is done with an elaborate ulterior motive. Evila is required to play the Vivien to the elderly Merlin of the Bondavar coal-field. Matters are so arranged that, though the precious plot is to outward appearance carried out, in reality the relations between Evila and Count Theodore are perfectly blameless and correct. However, the Count agrees to authorise the sale of his property to the company which Kaulmann now forms and proceeds to float. Now comes an elaborate description of the various manoeuvres by which Kaulmann and his associates drive up Bondavar shares to an enormous premium; while a rival syndicate, headed by a certain Count Waldemar—an unsuccessful suitor for the affections of the fair Evila—is equally hard at work to "bear" the company's stock. The gang of swindlers, however, are succeeding. Bondavar shares are rising higher and higher on the Bourse, and Kaulmann sees his way to making a gigantic fortune, when the news arrived that the new mine is on fire. Evila's old workman-lover has taken service under the company, and in a

sudden fit of drunken fury determines to destroy what he supposes to be the source of her prosperity and of the prosperity of those who have robbed him of his mistress. He opens his safety-lamp in the workings, and the catastrophe follows. Kaulmann, bankrupt and ruined, commits suicide. Evila, persecuted by the attentions of Count Waldemar, and failing in her efforts to gain success on the stage, disappears from the world, and is supposed to have followed her husband's example. Meanwhile Ivan Berend's opportunity has arrived. His long studies and experiments have at length been successful. He has discovered how to extinguish the burning gases which feed subterranean conflagrations. The company authorise him to set to work on their property: the fire is subdued, the valley is rescued from destruction, and Ivan, now at the head of both mines, proceeds to carry out long-cherished plans for the social and material improvement of the little colony of labourers. It is perhaps needless to add that Evila is not really dead. Ivan finds her at her former occupation of sifting coals and filling trucks, and this time his suit is not rejected.

The story thus presented in bare outline seems extravagant enough; but it is told with so much verve and animation, there is such an abundance of life and action throughout, that the reader has little inclination to notice the inconsistencies and the violations of probability, which are clear enough when he comes to analyse it in cold blood. There are some extremely ridiculous chapters, where Ivan Berend is made to play the part of a sort of Admirable Crichton to a clique of Pesth dandies, which are so much out of place as to be offensive. But all

this can be pardoned in consideration of the distinct originality shown in the conception of the leading characters, and the boldness of touch with which scenes and incidents are reproduced. M. Jokai is fond of building up a book round some striking phenomenon of art, nature, or industry. In 'Black Diamonds,' the story is anchored, as it were, to the Bondavár coal-field; and there is great skill in the way in which the working of the grim elemental forces of nature is bound up with the complex movement of human passion and greed.

M. Jokai is a great master of description. His country, with its vast level *puszta*—the nearest counterpart in Europe to the American prairie—its pathless woods, its huge marshes, its great rivers, its tempests, its floods, its torrid sun in summer, its snow-storms and ice-dams in winter,—gives him great opportunities, which he uses with extraordinary effect and judgment. It is to be remarked too, that, prodigal as his pencil is in scenes from nature, they are (in his best novels at least) always introduced in order to help on the story. Nothing, for instance, can be better in its way than the long description of the course of the Danube through the Iron Gates with which 'Timar's Two Worlds' opens:—

"We seem to approach a temple built by giants, with rocky pillars, towering columns, and wonderful colossal on its lofty frieze, stretching out in a perspective of four miles, and as it winds, discovering new domes with other groups of natural masonry, and other wondrous forms. One wall is smooth as polished granite, red and white veins zigzagging across it like mysterious characters in the handwriting of God; in another place the whole face is rusty brown, as if of solid iron; here and there the oblique

strata suggest the daring architecture of the Titans. At the next turn we are met by the portal of a Gothic cathedral, with its pointed gables, its clustered basaltic columns; out of the dingy wall shines now and again a golden speck like a glimpse of the Ark of the Covenant—there sulphur blooms, the ore-flower. But living blossoms also deck the crags; from the crevices of the cornice hang green festoons. These are great foliage trees and pines, whose dark masses are interspersed with frost-flecked garlands of red and gold.

"Now and then the mouth of some valley makes a break in the endless, dizzy precipice, and allows a peep into a hidden paradise untrodden by man.

"Here between two cliffs lies a deep shadow, and into this twilight shines like a fairy world the picture of a sunny vale, with a forest of wild vines, whose small red clusters lend colour to the trees, and whose bright leaves weave a carpet below. No human dwelling is visible; a clear stream winds along, from which deer drink fearlessly; then the brook throws its silver ribbon over the edge of the cliff. Thousands pass by the valley, and each one asks himself who lives there."

And so on for a good many pages, which, however, are not written to show the author's descriptive skill. They are eminently in their place as the overture, as it were, to a drama which is played throughout on the banks or among the reeds and islets of the Danube. As has been rightly said, the landscape is the natural and proper background to the human figures in front. It is part of the drama—as much a part of it as the wood in 'Midsummer Night's Dream' or the storm in 'Lear.' M. Jokai's treatment of these natural scenes and objects is extremely dramatic. They are nearly always described as they present themselves to the personages of the story, with whose own fate and actions they are

closely connected. The picture of the Iron Gates and its rocks leads naturally to the exciting account of the escape from the pursuing Turkish brigantine. Similarly we have, later on in the same story, the description of the ice-cleft on the frozen Balaton Sea :—

“Between the frozen margins the living water splashed. And again in the distance resounded the organ-tones which are the precursors of the nocturnal storm : amidst the howling of the approaching gale were heard the shrieks and groans of what seemed like ghosts in anguish, and higher and higher swelled the unearthly song. Again the whole frozen mass gave out the mysterious music, like the strings of myriad harps, until the sound grew into a booming roar, as though the lightning lured an awful, deafening melody from the resounding waves. The voices of the storm bellowed below the surface. With a frightful crash the floes were set in motion, and the tremendous pressure of the air once more closed the chasm in the ice. Timar fell trembling on his face upon the still quivering glassy mirror.”

This impressive natural phenomenon becomes tenfold more impressive when its witness, and almost its victim, is a desperate man whose sin has found him out, and who has at last been forced to recognise the impotence of evil and the eternal power of conscience. It is nature, with man as its victorious antagonist or its helpless prey, which M. Jokai especially delights in painting. There is probably no passage in ‘*Les Travailleurs de la Mer*’ which excels Jokai’s best efforts in this vein—such as the famine in ‘*The Good Old Squires*,’ the great flood in ‘*The Carpathian Sultan*,’ or the combat with the burning coal-mine in ‘*Black Diamonds*.’

We might expect the “note of provincialism” to sound pretty clearly through the pages of a

writer who addresses a comparatively limited audience which is shut off from the rest of the world by a Chinese wall of impenetrable language. But M. Jokai’s provincialism, though it may sometimes become rather wearisome to a foreign reader, is of a far from offensive type. It is similar in kind to much that we meet in several of the Russian and in more than one of the American novelists. In Count Tolstoi occasionally, in Turguénieff often, and in Mr Henry James perpetually, we are confronted by an odd species of national self-consciousness. The writers seem to take for granted that their readers are constantly in the habit of comparing themselves, their habits, their institutions, and everything that is theirs, with those of another country. The facts of race and nationality are almost morbidly present to their minds. One would imagine, sometimes, that the cultivated and intellectual Russian is perpetually haunted by the feeling that he is necessarily a different kind of being from the cultivated and intellectual Frenchman, Englishman, or German. In Mr Henry James’s stories this intense appreciation on the part of cultivated New Englanders of the differences between themselves and the inhabitants of Old England must sometimes provoke a smile ; but it is probably true to nature. It is characteristic of young and “new” peoples to be acutely sensitive of such matters. Both the Russians and the Hungarians, though historically old enough, are very young in some respects. Their appearance in the ranks of civilised, progressive, modern nations dates, as it were, from yesterday. It is only within quite recent years that the Hungarians have got rid of medieval feudalism, and taken to progress and material

development; and they are perpetually anxious to know how they are getting on, what is their ratio of movement compared with other peoples, and what is thought of them abroad. The last question, in particular, agitates them continually. It springs from the vanity which seems to be the most prominent trait in the national character. The Hungarian is the vainest and most self-confident of men—fortunately perhaps for him, for none but a race which had the most invincible belief in itself and its destinies could have survived the tremendous hammering it sustained for centuries from Turk and Austrian. This excessive self-importance and self-consciousness are always coming to the surface; and even M. Jokai, who knows his countrymen thoroughly, and never spares their weaknesses, sometimes displays a curious inability to get rid of it altogether.

For another and more agreeable kind of provincialism the foreign reader may be heartily grateful to him. His books are full of local colouring. True, he is in some respects the most cosmopolitan of writers. He refers to English and French authors constantly, and his characters are well up in Darwin and Mill, Dickens and Dumas. He knows Paris and Vienna as well, apparently, as he does Pesth. His personages belong to many nations; his stories shift from the Alföld of Hungary to the *coulisses* of the French theatres, and from the banks of the Theiss to the shores of the South Atlantic. Still, in the main he is concerned with the peoples and the places of South-Eastern Europe—a part of the world which, with its curious complication of races, religions, and Governments, affords excellent scope for the painter of manners and customs. This makes M.

Jokai a highly instructive as well as a very entertaining novelist. It has been said that there is more real light upon certain phases of the Eastern question to be gained from his picturesque pages than from the reading of many Blue-books. The strange jumble of East and West, old and new, civilisation and barbarism, which prevails, or did prevail till recently, in most of the countries between the Carpathians and the Ægean, may be perplexing to the politician, but it is just the thing for the romancer. M. Jokai has had opportunities almost equal to those of Scott. He has been in personal contact with a society in which medievalism is barely extinct, and in which the past is jostling against the present in its most modern and practical shape. It is a strange procession which stalks through M. Jokai's chapters. Viennese stockjobbers and young Hungarian dandies got up elaborately à l'Anglaise, Czechs and Wallechs, Gipsies and Jews, Magyar nobles of the old feudal school and smart Austrian officials, Greek merchants and Hungarian shepherds in their sheepskin mantles,—all the motley populations of these Danubian lands,—are in evidence. In the historical novels we hear the shouts of the Turkish horsemen and the roll of the Janissaries' kettle-drums; and we are introduced to the gallant Magyar nobles, who girded on their rusty old sabres, put flint-locks into the hands of their tenants and farm-servants, and vainly faced the conquerors of Austerlitz and Marengo to save the thankless Hapsburgs from their doom.

M. Jokai can at least do one thing which many great writers have failed to accomplish. He can make his heroes interesting. With his women he is not alto-

gether successful. His view of the other sex would seem to be rather oriental. Unlike many modern novelists, he is not at all inclined to concentrate the interest of the story upon the heroine. There are women of all sorts, good and bad, in the many mansions of his house; but if his bad women are brilliant and original conceptions, his good women are, with some exceptions, such as the fascinating heroine of "The Fools of Love," a little lacking in distinctiveness and character. They are virtuous, docile, affectionate, and rather dull. The *ewig weibliche* which bulks so largely—too largely perhaps—in the contemporary fiction of most countries, does not appear to have a worshipper in M. Jokai. His heroines are occasionally mere appendages and adjuncts to the hero, on whom the ethical and dramatic movement of the tale turns. These heroes, however, are lifelike figures of singular interest. M. Jokai is especially fond of giving us portraits like those of Ivan in 'Black Diamonds,' De Vavel in 'Castle Nameless,' and Halil Patrona in 'The White Rose,'—portraits of stern, silent, capable men, who have a sort of Tartar stoicism in suffering, and who, whether they succeed or fail, are always resolute, unflinching, and intelligible. They are such men as one supposes Mr Browning or Carlyle would approve; men made for combat and endurance, not greatly troubled with obstinate questionings of sense and outward things, or distracted by torturing doubts and fears. When they sin they sin boldly, as Timar does, with their eyes open, and with no manner of self-deception as to the kind of thing they are doing.

There can be no greater contrast than that between these

manly, self-reliant, masculine creations of M. Jokai and those of some of the other novelists whose works have come to us from the East of Europe. Indeed the comparison between the Hungarian writer and the two or three Russians whose works are so popular just now is interesting in many ways. M. Jokai must, no doubt, yield to Turguéniéff and Tolstoi in subtlety, in delicacy of insight into the finer shades of character, and in the sentiment of pathos; but he is their superior in humour, dramatic power, variety, and versatility. The most striking difference is in the tone of the two sets of novels. The Hungarian writer has none of the pessimism, the haunting scepticism, and the ingrained melancholy of the Slavs. His temper is buoyant, resolute, and healthy. He gives us the impression of being the representative of a people who are too much enamoured of material ease and prosperity, a little too fond of ostentation of display, a trifle vulgar perhaps, and somewhat deficient in taste and intellectual distinction; but full of confidence, hopefulness, self-respect, and energy. The Russians seem, as it were, a people prematurely old, and weighed down by an over-sensitiveness to the melancholy side of things and the burden of living; the Hungarians have the steady alertness not so much of youth as of well-set, vigorous middle-age. Yet the Slavs are commonly supposed to be one of the races for whom the future lies open; while the Magyars are a small and dwindling people, who perhaps from mere numerical weakness are destined in the end to be engulfed by the inflowing waves of the surrounding populations.

SIDNEY J. LOW.

A SONG OF THE SEA.

DARK and dismal is the day ;
The strong seas lash the snowy spray
 Upon the shivering sand ;
Black clouds are sailing through the sky ;
The solemn tempest seems to sigh
 Of ruin o'er the land.

A fisher has dared the waters wild,
 On this dim and dreary day ;
A loving wife and little child
 Gaze o'er the surging spray
For the tiny boat that sailed away
 In the early morning grey ;
Hope gleams through the gloom in their dewy eyes,
 'Neath the hopeless skies.

And all through the long and weary hours
 They gaze o'er the restless sea,
Till the dews of eve fall over the flowers,
 And the sun steals silently
From the cloudy sky, as hope from the breast
 Of wild unrest.

Oh strong was the heart that sailed away
 O'er the seas to-day !
Oh *still* is the heart that returns no more
 To the welcome shore !
And the helpless mother weeps in vain,
For her hopes are sunk in the sounding main !

Yet the face of the Fisher smiles far away
 From the evening grey ;
For he stands in the Dawn of Eternity,
 With a wondering eye ;
And by the shores of the Silent Sea,
O mother ! he waits thy child and thee !

DAVID R. WILLIAMSON.

CIVIL SERVICE REFORM.

THE important inquiry initiated by Lord Randolph Churchill, before he resigned office, into the organisation and cost of the Civil Establishments of the Crown, has now reached a stage when the general public, not less than the members of the Civil Service itself, are awaiting with interest the issue of the Report of the Royal Commissioners, which is expected to effect a startling transformation in our public offices. The recent debates in the House of Commons on various matters connected with the service have increased the desire to know the whole truth upon the subject; and there can be no doubt that when the Report is presented to Parliament it will reveal an amount of disorder and extravagance, the extent of which is little dreamed of by any save those acquainted with the internal working of the departments. The country, it is true, has long been familiar with complaints from within as well as without, but these have been more general than specific, and have not been always supported by definite and reliable information; and consequently, the inquiry conducted by Sir Matthew White Ridley and his colleagues will be particularly valuable to those who desire to secure an efficient and economical administration of the public service.

The inquiry has, needless to state, covered a large area, and embraced a multitude of questions of widely varying interest and importance, from superannuation and sick-leave down to copying-presses and co-operative trading. Foremost, of course, among these is the excessive cost of the higher or directing branches, and the extra-

ordinary diversity of the appointments therein. I may premise that the upper division of the Civil Service, unlike the lower, is in a very chaotic and complicated condition. The uniformity aimed at and desired by the Playfair Commission of 1874 could not be absolutely enforced owing to the opposition of the heads of departments, and, with a few trifling exceptions, has never been adopted. "Reorganisations" at too frequent intervals, upon indefinite principles, and occasionally without any adequate justification, have added to the general confusion, it being, however, a cardinal principle of every "clearance" that some portion of the spoils should be divided among those who remain. Hence by no means unusual is it to find four or five officials of the upper grade of a department, each of whom has a totally distinct *scale* of salary, without, however, any corresponding difference of duties. The number of official classes is, indeed, almost as bewildering as the variety of individuals composing them, nor is it easier to see what their special qualifications are. There is the uneducated *ex-valet* or butler who entered in the good old days before Inkermann (*i.e.*, the pre-examination period)—the middle-class *parvenu* who flourished under the auspices of Lord Palmerston—the "society" favourite who nightly basks in the smiles of duchesses, and believes that the Civil Service was ordained by Providence for the express purpose of securing him an income (this is a large class)—and the highly trained youth who knows everything from the elements of botany to the doctrines of Buddha, but who cannot

write legibly, or work without the inspiration of cigarettes. This strange medley costs about four times as much as any private firm would pay for the whole work of its office; but a grateful country provides a further staff of lower division clerks and writers, without whom the public business could not be carried on. Nor do the distinctions end with the men themselves—they extend to the offices. For instance, at the War Office or Admiralty, the new clerk of the upper grade begins at £100 per annum, and goes to £400; whilst at the Colonial Office the starting-point is £250, and the finish anything from £800 to £1500. Lord Basing, one of the Commissioners, truly remarked that “such practised and highly paid intellectual capacity” is quite unnecessary in the majority of cases; and this contention is amply borne out by the evidence of various witnesses. Two quotations will, however, suffice. The Commissioners asked Sir Reginald Welby, K.C.B., the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury: “If the work assigned to the upper clerks is so difficult and a sort of work that you have given to men of a superior education, how is it that the copyists can possibly do it for them?” To which he replied, “I only know of it by hearsay. I am told of cases in which it has happened. I cannot tell you any more than that. There are good copyists occasionally.” Not less instructive is the testimony of Sir Lyon Playfair, M.P. It will naturally be supposed that in the Education Department, of all others, the work of the examiners and higher officials is of a very superior kind; but it appears that the organisation of the office is so defective that these gentlemen are to a great extent like Nasmyth

hammers used for cracking walnut-shells:—

“The great body of the work in all offices,” says Sir Lyon, “is pure routine work. I am sorry to say—it holds among the highest men—that there is a great deal too much routine work given to them. Take the class of examiners in the Education Office, who are men of very high University rank. They do a great deal too much routine work, work which is perfectly unnecessary for men of their talent to do. It requires close administrative attention to separate the routine and intellectual work. But if men go into it earnestly, understanding what is the motive—in order to save the public exchequer—of having men who are contented with a low class of work, and with a low class of wages, you can arrange matters in the offices to do that. I think partly you could reduce the number—but that is only a matter of opinion—and improve the position of those that remain. I mean not to reduce the number just now, but not to add to the number when there are vacancies until a certain reduction has been made. I think a good deal of their time is wasted in mere clerks’ work, which is not fit for such intellectual men to do.”

The Royal Commission will, I fear, find it not so easy a task to remedy this state of affairs. So-called “vested interests” confront them at every step, notwithstanding the fact that every civil servant holds office “during pleasure only.” Any contemplated change has to be considered side by side with the amount of compensation it will involve. The key to the puzzle is to be found, I think, in the Commissioners striking a bold blow at these so-called vested interests which have no legal sanction, and making it clear once for all that the service exists not for the benefit of its members, but for the convenience of the country. This principle is already acted upon in the case of the writers who are liable to be dis-

charged (with a gratuity) when their services are no longer required; and there are many other classes of temporary public servants who do not work less zealously or efficiently because they have not the usual permanency of tenure. It may be said that pensions, which practically constitute this alleged permanency, are conferred by Act of Parliament, but it does not seem to be clearly understood that no official has a statutory right to a pension enforceable in law. The section of the Act of William IV. on this point has never been repealed, although it has been allowed to fall into disuse. The power of the Treasury to grant pensions is, therefore, unquestionably discretionary; but the practice, owing to the laxity of that department, is quite the other way. Sir Herbert Maxwell, M.P., who, as the Junior Lord of the Treasury in charge of the pension question, was examined by the Commissioners on this subject, said:—

“I am afraid there is considerable laxity, or at all events irregularity. Persons in a humble grade of life are not entitled to a pension unless they give their whole time to the public service. A postmaster, for example, in the country, if he keeps a shop, does not give his whole time to the Post-office, and does not earn a pension; but in higher grades there are examples, such as I have referred to, of men who do not give their whole time to the public service. If they are pulled up for it, they say they do it when they are taking a holiday. I think it is almost a scandal that persons in a humble grade should be very rigidly held to this rule, and persons in the higher grades should not be.”

And he further stated that it is next to impossible to get rid of an incompetent man, or of an official more or less unsuited

to his duties (except for misconduct) without awarding him an allowance of this kind. Unimpeachable respectability so often goes hand in hand with absolute incompetency that the Treasury has not the heart to hurt it. This, however, is a fault of administration which would be remedied if the control of the Treasury by Parliament were a reality, and not the sham it unfortunately is. Depend upon it, until the latter asserts its supremacy, there can never be any effective check upon public expenditure; and even Sir Reginald Welby himself advocated before the Commission that “reorganisation” should in future be carried out by Bill in Parliament, which would at least ensure that the subject would be adequately discussed.

Mr Frank Mowatt, C.B., the Treasury officer chiefly responsible for granting pensions, was, however, very clear upon the power of the Government to discharge civil servants, as will be seen by the following extract from his evidence:—

“Is the Government able to retire people, when the public service demands it, under the present system? —I think they are. I think all civil servants hold during pleasure; but in dealing with civil servants I do not think that has been quite recognised. I believe that the law officers of the Crown have advised that all service not held on a specified tenure is, of its essence, held during pleasure; and it would follow from that that an officer has no rights, except an equitable right that the conditions on which he is engaged are carried out.

“Then there is the further question as to whether the Government has any power to retire a man from the public service before he has earned the right of pension under sixty years of age, and without a certificate of illness. Does your contention go to the

extent that the Government has a right to dispense with Government servants?—Certainly. I think it is the essence of the tenure of pleasure that at the pleasure of the employer the employment ceases.

“Then they have no right to give a pension to such a man?—They have only such rights as the Superannuation Acts give them. If they retire him on the ground of reorganisation of office, or for infirmity of mind or body, or age, they have the right to pension him. Finally, under the Act passed last session, if they retire him because he ceases to perform his duties efficiently, they can give him a modified pension—modified in proportion as they consider that his own demerit has contributed to his inefficiency.

“Yours is a very strict contention, no doubt; but do you think that in practice it is possible for the Government to really carry out the principle that a public servant only holds during pleasure? Is not the principle of continuity and a right to pension, and so forth, during good behaviour, and living, so to say, up to the maximum of salary, so ingrained in the public service that the effect of removal during pleasure is almost an impossibility?—I think not; I think it is a possibility; and, in fact, it has been done.

“In the contract between the Government and the clerk, where would you say that was expressed? Taking now the ground of the Civil Service certificate as the first expression of the contract, how would you put it that it is the fact that the clerk only held during the pleasure of his employer? Where do you say that cropped up in the documents that he has when he enters the service?—Not in the documents, but in the conditions of his engagement, if he is on pleasure.

“Where are those conditions expressed? where do they exist in a form that he sees them?—I should not say that he sees them expressed anywhere; but, in fact, there is no contract, the Civil Service certificate is only a qualification.

“Would you say that he, having received the certificate of the Civil Service Commissioners, becomes by that certificate amenable to the Super-

annuation Act, and that your view of his tenure of office depends upon the reading of the Superannuation Act?—No. The tenure of his office depends upon the doctrine that an employment not expressly conditioned is during pleasure.

“I want to get exactly how you would put it?—The law officers have advised that any employment in which a tenure is not specified is during pleasure.

“Was that opinion taken with regard to the Civil Service?—It was taken with regard to a particular office, I believe; but I am not aware that it has ever been questioned.

“You mean that unless it is expressly mentioned that the office is permanent, the employer has the liberty to dismiss when he thinks proper?—I would rather limit myself to saying that unless it was expressly stated that the employer had not power to dismiss, he has the power.”

Mr Mowatt is quite right. This so-called security of tenure does not exist in law or equity, but is the outcome of the practice of the Treasury for many years past, and is the real obstacle to reform. Mr Mowatt describes it thus:—

“Previously to the passing of last year's Act, the Treasury had exercised what they called an extra statutory discretion in the award of pensions. That is, in cases in which they thought that the justice of the case required a pension, but the definition of existing Superannuation Acts had not made provision for such a pension, they assumed an extra statutory power of doing justice in the particular case. The Comptroller and Auditor General had questioned the exercise of this discretion, and the Public Accounts Committee had supported him. The Treasury, therefore, undertook that they would give up absolutely, once for all, any exercise of extra statutory discretion, the points which their experience showed them to have escaped previous statutes being embodied in the Superannuation Act of last session. The points were, first, the power to award pension or gratuity in the case of persons in public

employment, whether established or not, who were injured in the execution of their duty by accident specifically attributable to the nature of the duty; secondly, for the payment to the widows of such persons of some compassionate pensions; thirdly, to meet the case of persons who, having, in the first instance, been employed in a temporary capacity in the service of the State, were subsequently transferred to the established service. On the reading of existing statutes by the law officers of the day, it was held that you could take into consideration for pension purposes no service passed before a man had obtained a Civil Service certificate. It was occasionally found that it was necessary to appoint a man immediately, so immediately that it was impossible to examine him for some considerable time, or the rules for the examination of his particular office had not been settled, and therefore he lost his previous service for pension purposes. Next the Act dealt with the case of persons in the temporary employment of the State—hired men who had no claim to pension whatever. It had been found very difficult to retire those men when the work for which they were employed was at an end. That difficulty was sought to be removed by taking statutable power to give them small gratuities on the termination of their employment. The gratuity is not to exceed £1, or one week's pay, whichever is greater, for each year of the hired man's service. Finally, provision was made to meet the case of officers retired on the ground of their inability to discharge efficiently the duties of their office. Up to the passing of this Act, in practice such men had not been retired, because there was no provision to *break their fall*; and therefore, power was taken 'where a civil servant is removed from his office on the ground of his inability to discharge efficiently the duties of his office, and a superannuation allowance cannot lawfully be granted to him under the Superannuation Acts 1834 and 1859,' that is, in the absence of a medical certificate, or his being under sixty years of age, 'and the Treasury think that the special circumstances of the case

justify the grant to him of a retiring allowance, they may grant to him such retiring allowance as they think just and proper; but in no case exceeding the amount for which his length of service would qualify him under sections 2 and 4 of the Superannuation Act of 1859.'

In this way has the permanency-for-life idea been fostered and cultivated until it has taken such deep root as encourages civil servants to believe and to assert that it cannot equitably be taken away; but it is time that, alike in the interests of the State and of its servants, this erroneous impression be corrected once for all.

The House of Commons should insist on the Royal Commissioners resolutely facing this point, around which everything else revolves, as they evince an inclination to shirk it by leaving the "vested interests" untouched, and recommending alterations applicable to future entrants only. If a stand is not made on this question now, and a decision taken one way or another, all hope of reform may as well be given up, as great numbers of young men, from seventeen to twenty years of age, have been admitted to the service within the past few years whose "vested interests" will not expire for about another forty years. Were some high official of the incompetent or unsuitable sort summarily dismissed without a pension, *pour encourager les autres*, the official mind would be effectually disabused of the vested-interest idea; but a step of that kind could only be undertaken by a strong administrator, with the force of character so conspicuously absent from the modern type of Cabinet Minister, and with a case that he could justify to Parliament. Jealous of their privileges and tenacious of their power, the official classes require a master.

His difficulty would be to know where to begin the weeding-out process, as the service swarms with men who in any other calling would be rank failures. In Lord Palmerston's days inefficient men had a bad time of it; but such experiments are now confined to writers at tenpence per hour, boys at fifteen shillings a-week, and charwomen at two shillings a-day!¹

Moreover, it must not be forgotten that many private concerns which grant pensions do not guarantee continued employment to their servants, nor does dismissal carry with it any right to compensation beyond the return of the deductions (*plus* interest) that have been made from their salaries. Of course, the pension systems of railway companies, banks, and insurance offices, differ in some respects from that adopted by the Government, but the principle underlying them is the same. The railway official realises that his pension consists of deferred pay by the actual deductions from his salary, a fact that is not so clearly brought home to the civil servant. Sir Robert Hamilton, K.C.B., an official of great experience, whose views are always deserving of respect, has propounded an alternative scheme, which would be accepted, in all probability, by existing civil servants in lieu of the present system—though indeed, for them as for future entrants, there ought not to be any choice in the matter if the arrangement would benefit the State. The Commissioners took a considerable amount of evidence on the subject, and the consensus of opinion seemed to be in favour of the change. For the information of those who have not seen the

scheme, it may be as well to reproduce it in Sir Robert Hamilton's own words:—

“Assuming that for every £100 now paid in salaries there is £20 paid in pensions, and that this is a fair proportion to maintain; when a clerk is appointed at £100 a-year, £120 should be provided in the votes in respect of him. Of this, £100 would be paid to him, and £20 placed to his credit in the Government Savings Bank. On this amount he would have no claim whatever until his retirement. But when his service came to an end, he, or his representatives if he died in service, would receive his deferred pay, which would be accumulating to his credit at compound interest.

“The advantages attending such a plan, over and above the two main ones which I have pointed out, would be very great:—

“1. The proportions of deferred pay could be varied to suit the differences of service—*e.g.*, in services such as certain grades of the army and navy, and the police, in which physical energy is essential, and it is not desirable to retain men beyond 40 or 50 years of age, the proportion of deferred pay might be greater than in the case of clerks. It might also be somewhat raised to meet the case of what is called ‘professional qualifications’ under sec. 4 of 22 Vict. c. 26.

“2. So long as the service did not suffer from the withdrawal of the official experience of a clerk, and the office should of course always have the power of vetoing a retirement, it would not matter from a pecuniary point of view after what length of service a clerk might elect to retire.

“3. It would be much easier than it is at present for a department to get rid of inefficient men. Some small addition might be added for compensation when a clerk was required to retire before 60 years of age; but this would have to be provided for in the estimates for the year in which he retired, and would only be awarded if his record was very good. In other cases it would be a condition of

¹ *Vide* Lord Randolph Churchill's speech at Wolverhampton.

service that he must retire when required to do so by the head of his department, on his deferred pay alone. I attach great importance to this power. Men, especially towards the top of an office, should be judged by a high standard, and removed without hesitation if they fail or cease to come up to it.

"4. No trouble could arise about re-employing men who had been pensioned, for the cost to the State would be the same in all cases.

"5. The whole of the costly machinery for the payment of pensions might eventually be got rid of, and a large saving thereby effected.

"6. The heartrending cases which now constantly occur of good men dying in harness, without having been able to make any provision for their families, would be largely met.

"Not only would such a scheme enormously promote economy and efficiency, but I feel certain that it would be most acceptable to the civil servants as a body.

"I see no way of dealing satisfactorily with the question of superannuation short of such a complete change in the system. The present system is defective throughout. Clerks practically cannot be got rid of until they are 60 years of age, however inefficient they may be, except by making a shuffle of the cards, called a 'reorganisation of office,' and by giving them certificates that they have served with 'zeal and fidelity.' Even when they are 60, although they can themselves claim to go, there is no statutable power to get rid of them.

"I should extend commutation to all pensions. It costs the Government nothing, and is a benefit much prized by the service. From my scheme it will be seen that I attach no importance to the policy of the State securing a yearly provision for its servants in place of compensating them once for all, and leaving them to make their own investments. But if the regulations of the Treasury Minute of 28th October 1882 are maintained, which limit the commutation to two-thirds of the pension, or to such less proportion of it as

leaves an amount of not less than £80, I can see no reason that can, from any point of view, be urged against making all pensions commutable."

I freely admit that the question of pensions is beset with difficulties, but this scheme has so many obvious advantages to recommend it, to the State as much as to the members of the service, that it will in all probability receive the *imprimatur* of the Royal Commissioners, and it is to be hoped the Government will not allow any technical or other obstacles to stand in the way of its adoption. The benefit to the nation of being relieved of the enormous and ever-swelling weight of the present pension system is not less than the advantage to the civil servant of having his retiring allowance take the direct form of deferred pay which he can claim at any time, subject, of course, to the convenience of his department. Voluntary resignations would thus be encouraged, and men who felt that they had mistaken their vocations, or had become unsuitable to the necessities of the service, or saw better opportunities elsewhere, would be able to go away with some capital in their pockets, their own savings, instead of becoming burdens upon the taxpayers for the remainder of their days; and the further advantage pointed out by Sir Robert Hamilton, of having this deferred pay handed, in case of premature decease, to their families or other representatives, would, while lightening the burden of insurance, confer a greater sense of security, and consequent freedom from anxiety. The case of Matthew Arnold amply illustrates this. The public will do well to consider this scheme, and ask them-

selves whether it should not be given a trial. The alternative is the system of direct stoppages from the present salaries; but unless the deductions were on a very large scale, a solvent fund could not be created. It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that the ordinary retirements from year to year have brought the pension-list to its present proportions. What has really swelled it abnormally is, or rather was, the lavish distribution of "abolition terms"—a heavy premium on incompetence. Let us turn once more to Mr Mowatt's evidence on the subject:—

"Do you think the principle of abolition conditions is open to objection?—If it is admitted that the officer holds during pleasure it is of course within the power of his employer to remove him at his pleasure, and therefore the abolition of a man's office is one of the contingencies which attaches to his service. The difference between the position of a man retired by abolition and retired on ill-health is, that the former may be presumed to have the means of earning his livelihood in some fresh walk of life. I do not think, therefore, that on the equity of the case an increased rate should be given on abolition of office. I think the real defence of the section is to be found in the difficulty that you would find in re-organising offices if you could not break the fall of men whom it is necessary to remove for that purpose.

"Is that in your opinion such a real difficulty that it is necessary to have such a rule as this that you have taken this objection to?—Yes.

"As regards that, the principle upon which the compensation is assessed is the amount to which he would have been entitled under the scale of superannuation provided by this Act if ten years were added to the number of years he had actually served. Do you think a better principle might be substituted for that?—I think the principle of that system

of awards is not logical. You compensate a man for what he loses on his abolition—if I may so say, for the loss of his lease of office. The longer his lease of office to which he may look forward, the greater his claim to compensation; the shorter his lease, the less his claim. Abolition, therefore, immediately before the limit of age fixed for compulsory retirement, gives no claim to special addition of pension."

Another subject into which the Royal Commissioners have inquired is the position and prospect of the lower division clerk and the writer. These two officials, although employed under different schemes and at different rates of salary, approximate so closely in the duties they have to perform, that it is next to impossible to distinguish between them, and no valid reason exists for maintaining the distinction. Many members of both classes are engaged on higher duties than they were intended to undertake—several do the work proper to higher division men,—but the bulk of the two grades are employed side by side on the ordinary routine work of the departments, involving neatness and accuracy, and frequently responsibility, discretion, and the ability to direct others—their superiors occasionally included. Despite all precautions, it is almost impossible to prevent overlapping of work. Even if the structural deficiencies of our public buildings were not as great as they are, and these juniors were shut up in a cage by themselves, it would be more than human nature that a chief clerk should not take advantage of any special aptitude or ability displayed by his lowest subordinate. Sir Algernon West and other able administrators frankly admitted to the Commissioners that it would be a distinct

loss to the service if the young clerks of the present day are not allowed to rise as high as they can. One is amused, however, to read the evidence of some of the witnesses, that the training of these young men does not generally fit them—in fact, rather unfits them—to discharge, in the course of time, the more important functions which require the “practised intellectual capacity” of their superiors. When it is remembered that these high and mighty superiors themselves graduated in the same way, commencing with the simplest duties and working their way up step by step, we may be pardoned for venturing to inquire why, and in what respect, is the young official of to-day so vastly inferior to the young man of past generations? The university civil servant, as a clerk, is quite a modern institution, and to estimate the number at 100 would probably be to overstep the mark. The great majority of the remainder of the upper ranks of the service, who entered before lower-division clerkships were introduced in 1876, are of no better educational standing, nor do they spring from any higher social sphere, than their successors. The examination of the present day is certainly more severe, its range quite as extensive, and the standard of excellence just as high as it was eighteen years ago. It is true the examination does not of itself bespeak a high-class education, but it does not follow that the subjects set are the only ones with which the candidates are acquainted. In any case, if the educational acquirements of the modern clerk are to be gauged by it, their predecessors must be judged by the same test. “Some of our evidence,” said the

chairman, “and I think notably that of Sir Algernon West, has gone to the extent of saying that the higher division is hardly necessary at all in the public service, and that all the work could be done by lower-division clerks—that is to say, that there were men among them who would be fit for the highest offices, and Sir Algernon West went so far as to include the best places in the Treasury.” The House of Commons, taken altogether, is a keen judge of a good bargain, and its generous support of the writers and lower-division clerks, not less than its increasing hostility towards the overpaid and underworked higher-grade officials, is a fair index to popular opinion upon the subject. The duty of the Government to the taxpayers is clearly to utilise the services and abilities of these young men to the fullest possible extent. They are, and will continue to form, the backbone of the service; they are far less costly and far more useful than the average higher-division men; and it almost goes without saying that the Commissioners will recommend that every inducement be offered them to remain in the service and persevere with their duties. This they are not likely to do, at all events the best of them, unless a fair field is afforded them, and the Civil Service of the future is made radically different from what it is at present, which can be done with no loss of efficiency and a positive decrease of cost.

Assuming that the lower-division clerks and the writers serving permanently are consolidated, as they ought to be, there need only be one grade of clerks in future for the bulk of the work of the departments. A salary-scale of, say, £65 to £350 per annum,

would be amply sufficient, with a dividing line drawn at £150, beyond which those capable of mechanical duties only should not be allowed to pass. It ought also to be clearly laid down, that on arriving at the *maximum*, officials would have no presumptive right to further promotion, unless exceptional ability were shown. This is the more necessary, as much of the disorder that now reigns in the service may be traced to the fact that on reaching their *maxima* men immediately commence to clamour for further advancement, and "personal allowances" and "duty-pay" are granted which lead to endless jealousies, and always provide the successors of their holders with plausible grievances. The creation of a limited number of staff appointments would obviate this, rising, let us say, from £400 to £600 per annum, which is the outside value of 99 out of every 100 civil servants. The upper grades, as at present constituted, should be abolished and remodelled on these lines. Periodical increments, too, ought not to be granted as matters of course. The exercise of greater discrimination in awarding them appears to be absolutely necessary. They would thus become rewards of zeal and incentives to efficiency, if they were only granted after a thorough examination, from time to time, of a man's practical value to the State, as many men who start out well afterwards deteriorate from various causes.

One point cannot be too strongly impressed upon the public. The defective and disgraceful organisation of the Civil Service is sometimes attributed to the difficulties unavoidably attendant on the transition period through which

it is passing. It is nothing of the sort. It is really due to the gross bungling of its administrative rulers, whose badly conceived and unnecessarily frequent "reorganisations" have brought about an extraordinary state of chaos and confusion. "The great scandal of the pension-list having overgrown itself, so to speak, arises from the abolition of departments, or offices which have grown up, not by the fault of the individual clerks, but by the miscalculations of the chiefs, or by the accidents of the service, as a whole." These reshufflings generally end in one set of officials disappearing on to the pension-list, and another cropping up almost immediately in their places, possibly under different titles, but certainly with increases of salary. Here is a specimen of how the clever young men of "practised intellectual capacity" at the Treasury go about their "reforms." As everybody is aware, a great agitation, supported by considerable parliamentary influence, has been carried on for some years past by the writers. A committee of heads of departments, appointed by the Treasury to investigate their grievances, reported that about 500 out of a total of 1400 men were doing work superior to that for which they had been engaged, and recommended that a limited number of these should be elevated to lower-division clerkships. The heads of departments were then invited to nominate the eligible men, and about 160 names were accordingly submitted to the Treasury. Will it be believed that out of all these less than 60 names were approved by that department, and another forty are to have some slight increase of pay? But this is not the worst, for Sir Reginald Welby deposed

to the Commissioners that it is intended to take the unsuccessful men off the superior work, and confine them for the future to mere mechanical duties! Here, to say nothing of the positive injustice to a body of 400 public servants who have in the opinion of their chiefs as well as of themselves earned their right to promotion by their actual performance for many years of superior work (thereby proving their general ability), is a class whose capabilities will not be utilised to the fullest possible extent. Other men will have to be appointed to do this superior work—no doubt at higher salaries. It would be interesting to learn what the owners of a great commercial concern would say to administrators of this type. I have only given one instance out of many, but it shows how the service is managed, and how it has got into its present disorganised condition. One cannot wonder that there is agitation within against injustice, as well as discontent without against inexcusable extravagance. The limits of this paper preclude me from pursuing the subject further; but it must be evident that the administrators of the service are not what they ought to be, and their places also, as distinct from the clerical, require careful revision. Many are more or less sinecures, filled by incompetent mediocrities, on account of whom the taxpayer has to pay through the nose. In one department there are five commissioners—one at £2000, one at £1500, and three at £1200; two secretaries at £1200, four assistant-secretaries at £900, an ornamental receiver-general at £1000, an accountant at £1000 (both with well-paid deputies), two controllers at £1500 and

£1100 respectively, three deputy-controllers, ranging from £800 to £1000, a solicitor at £2000, and his two assistants at £1200 and £1000, and about a dozen principal clerks ranging from £700 to £850—all these to “administer” the department which, in the opinion of the Treasury, is a model and economical one! Surely there is room for the pruning-knife of the Commissioners here! A firm of contractors would “run” the entire concern for the sum of the figures indicated. In the Treasury, again, the number of overpaid posts is positively appalling, and a considerable portion of the clerks never do anything, as such, for their salaries, their time being exclusively occupied as secretaries and assistant-secretaries to Ministers, for which there are, of course, additional allowances! If it be said that the Civil Service is a profession, and that this high scale of salaries is necessary in order to attract the *élite* of the market, it may be pointed out that the service is not more a profession in England than it is in Germany or France, where things are managed far more economically, as may be judged from the fact that the salary of Prince Bismarck for administering the affairs of the great German empire is only £1500 per annum, or about the sum we pay an assistant-secretary in one of our Whitehall offices!

I have endeavoured to give a life-like and truthful picture of the service as it really exists, and what I have written applies more or less to every grade, though no doubt there are numbers of valuable officials who deserve every penny they earn. Upon the whole, however, it must be admitted by all impartial persons that the Civil Service is uncon-

scionably costly. The Royal Commissioners candidly state that the class of Government servants in receipt of salaries ranging from £350 to £1000 a-year is grossly overpaid, and that much of the work done by them is similar in character to work done in the Railway Clearing House and other commercial establishments at a tithe of the cost. The Commissioners have plenty of material upon which to show their calibre as reformers; but unless they make up their minds to face the difficulty of dealing with the present members of the service and the present pension-list, their inquiry will not be worth the expenditure of time and money it has involved. Nothing is so easy as to legislate for posterity, which ought, however, to be left to look after its own interests, as no doubt it will be quite capable of doing when the proper time arrives; but the higher order

of statesmanship and constructive ability is required to relieve the country of present burdens. Nor do we want any straining at gnats and swallowing camels. It is a matter of relatively small importance whether the pay of writers is tenpence per hour or twopence-halfpenny, while so many thousands are wasted and squandered; and those Commissioners who have carefully performed the high and honourable duties imposed upon them will deserve well of their fellow-countrymen if, while lightening the load of the taxpayer and removing with a strong hand all ground for internal discontent of a reasonable character, they make the service worthy of the great nation to which it belongs, by recommending for adoption a thorough and comprehensive measure of efficient, economical, and enduring reform.

MARCUS SOUTHWELL.

FRANCE VERSUS PARIS.

“Paris n'est pas la France.”—RENÉ MILLET (‘La France Provinciale’).

THE strange crisis through which the French nation is now struggling, and the mode (whatever it may be) in which it will emerge from it, the form it will assume, make France of more than usual interest to the rest of Europe. Whether she will partially revert to military despotism, or relapse into the barbarous confusion from which this so problematically “saved” her, are questions of as high import to her neighbours as to herself, for both imply to a certain degree civil war, and proclaim the utility of examining what constitutes the French nation as a *whole*—what is the value, what the cohesive element, of all its component parts.

Our modern world is rapidly coming to be divided between two contradictory principles—aggregation and disintegration.

Now what is France as an aggregate, as a whole?

She is, thus taken, perhaps the country of which England knows least. Of Paris we know something superficially; but of the world of France outside—of the provincial and of the *rural* world—we know absolutely nothing.

Paris is not France, and never was so, save and except during the one comparatively brief period of the Revolution; since the Second Empire it has gradually become less and less so; and for the last few years Paris seems likely to drift into a sort of hostility to France, or it may be rather that France is rebelling against the supremacy of Paris.

Now this “supremacy” was far more than is commonly supposed

an act of usurpation on the part of the Parisians, and in the beginning owed more to foreign influence than has been sufficiently recognised. Its establishment, whether in practice or even theory, is a purely revolutionary fact; and for nine centuries of history the Parisians themselves laid no claim to it. Paris, until it became the centre of mob-rule, was not necessarily even the permanent or the exclusive seat of government, for the spirit of decentralisation led the chief of the State, the king, to preside over the temporary working of the State machinery, now in this provincial city, now in that; and we have the Parliaments or the “États” of Rouen as of Bordeaux or of Blois, and of other cities, according to circumstances. The Crown may be said to have “gone on circuit,” as our judges do in England.

Nay, more, the first dawn of what was honest, useful, patriotic, in the pre-revolutionary epoch (namely, between 1786 and 1789)—the period when the need for reforms, and the right to defend the law against arbitrary government, were firmly proclaimed—was not connected with Paris, but with such towns as Besançon and Bordeaux, but above all with Grenoble. The sovereignty of the capital is coeval with the aberrations of the Revolution—with what in it became uncontrollable, prompted its crimes, provoked its lawlessness and loss of all sense of proportion, and in the end solicited the tyranny of the first Napoleon. But the self-asserted world-domination of Paris is main-

ly of foreign origin, and springs from the extraordinary importance attached to what was written there, by potentates whose glories were just then dazzling the civilised globe. The Empress Catherine, and, above all, the great Frederick, are answerable for a vast deal in this respect; and Voltaire's dictum of "c'est le Nord aujourd'hui d'où nous vient la lumière," induced the Parisian public to believe that the "North" was a manner of Olympus where the gods sat in conclave and decreed that Versailles was the sun of the intellectual solar system. Between Catherine "le Grand," the mighty "Fritz," and the "Sage de Ferney," there existed a most matter-of-fact Society of Mutual Admiration; neither could do comfortably without the other, as the vicissitudes of the relations between Frederick and Voltaire amply prove. Catherine shows her real superiority of character precisely therein, that of the three she is the only one who is at all independent or possesses the privilege of being even ungrateful.

But out of all this, it came to pass that the vanity of Paris—awakened in its enormity for perhaps the first time—grew, and burst all bounds; and from this time it was accepted that Paris was to set its foot on the neck of France, and absorb into itself whatsoever, beyond its confines, might aspire to any distinction. The provinces, drained of men, money, and energy by the wars of the First Empire, submitted to the despotism of "la Grande Ville"; and the Cæsar, for whom centralisation *à outrance* was a necessity, encouraged—enforced indeed—the abdication of the entire land before the metropolis. The effacement of France was

complete, and endured till the end of the war of 1870.

In the past may nevertheless be found visible signs of both organisms. Decentralisation lives in the pages of Fléquier and the *Grands Jours d'Auvergne*, as in those of Madame de Sévigné and her daughter Madame de Grignan; and Clermont and Marseilles and Rennes attest what a brilliancy of culture shone at the miniature courts that surrounded such *Intendants de Province*, as, for instance, the Duc de Chaulnes (brother to the dreaded Connétable de Luynes). But decentralisation was then flickering forth its last flame, and it died in the wars of the Fronde; for, pushed to its extremity, this Federal Republic, under a monarchy, contained irremediably civil war—above all, under the singular sway of a Queen-Regent who came from Spain and a priest who came from Rome. But even as decentralisation got its first definite home-thrust from Louis XIV. when he declared himself to be "the State"—thereby paving the way for all autocracy, whether of the Convention or of a military despot—even so did intellect and wit clear the course for revolutionary aggression, and the ultimate conquest of France by the arrogance of Paris.

Voltaire and Beaumarchais are the precursors of the Revolution, in its distinctly Parisian aspects. Rabelais and Molière are French; 'Figaro' is of Paris; and, what is far less generally recognised, Voltaire and Beaumarchais both proceed, indirectly if not directly, from the Palais Royal and the Regent; and the Scotchman, John Law, who, though driven later into quackery and even swindling practices by the foolish opposition he encountered, remains for all time indisputably the brightest inventive

genius of modern finance, — the creator of the principle of financial democratisation,—of Credit. Law and Beaumarchais are to a singularly high degree identical, but the real action of both is concentric: their sphere is Parisian. Voltaire leads to religious incredulity; 'Figaro' invents public opinion and the power of the Press, especially establishing the superior and unquestioned right of the "loose man about Paris" to despise and silence his brethren of the country that lies beyond. 'Figaro' inaugurates the reign of the "Boulevardier,"—only therewith is the climax reached. When the "Boulevardier" becomes absolute, the seed of revolt is sown. It may be long ere it put forth or flower or fruit; but its seed is in the womb of Time, and at a given moment birth will ensue. That "moment" is now approaching; there *is* rebellion against the rule of the "Boulevardier."

The strength of France, as represented by her independent component parts, was so well felt by the Revolution, that against *it*, more than against monarchy, were directed the first so-called "constitutional" attacks. The Revolution pactised with the Throne (pending the time when it should substitute its own for the latter's rule); but it laid at once an iron grasp on federation, and crushed to earth the principle of various united forces under the weight of the one central power.

France is now approaching the *revanche* of the "outer barbarian." She will take it peacefully; but

there are evident signs that she will take it.

The enmity of the two declared itself, as a matter of fact, on the eve of the war of 1870; and when the calmer and more sensible part of the French population during and after the war came to judge of events, the first thing they were struck by and incensed at was the mad frivolity and incredible ignorance that prompted the cry of *A Berlin!*

Before even realising the grievous, and in many cases incomprehensible, faults and crimes of the Government under the Empire, the large mass of floating opinion in France felt Paris to be the offender, and ascribed mainly to the silly boastful ways and habits of swagger of its corrupt population (of all classes) the unpardonable plunge into a war for which there was no pretext, save an official untruth, and of which the result was to be national disaster.

Paris had indeed need of the purifying fire through which it passed during the siege, and by which, under the hard pressure of infinite misfortune, many really noble qualities of endurance, and stoicism almost heroic, found expression. Paris sorely needed this frightful trial to win forgiveness for the manifest sins of its licence-loving, self-seeking prosperity. It was to pay for its self-affirmed sovereignty, for its undeserved luck—and it did pay severely. The great question is — Has it learnt much therefrom?

I.

The retaliatory spirit of the provinces did not make itself felt for several years, and remained

dormant as long as Parliament sat at Versailles.

With the return to the capital

as the "seat of government," the capital reverted (perhaps unconsciously) to its old assumption of contemptuous predominance. The mass of dissident outsiders became *les ruraux*, were mere *rustics*, reputed, as a matter of course, to be of no account.

At first, with the ever-succeeding struggles for existence—with the efforts to establish organic life out of a positive inorganic chaos of warring elements—the underlying fact of the dual antagonistic character of the population was naturally enough lost sight of; and once more, the importance of local interests or passions was merged in the impatient discussions over what are worshipped on the Continent under the name of "principles": abstract theories, forms of constitution, laws whereby human beings were treated as simply "quantities." These were the primary considerations, and here the Parisian had the advantage: the *rustic* was nowhere, neither did he much protest, for he humbly believed such lofty subjects to be beyond his comprehension: they passed over his head.

But with time, and a certain degree of organisation, the very achievements of modern science, and its abolition of time and space, brought the outlying forces to bear upon the central ones and *vice versa*; and the much-suffering, much-threatened fly grew to resist the attempts of the gorged spider to enthrall and suppress him. Local interests, and local vanities even, asserted their rights; and when definitively the *scrutin de liste* was decreed to be the basis of electoral law, it was soon perceived how irreconcilable were the two.

When Lord Beaconsfield in 'Sybil' gave to the differences caused by fortune the image of 'Two Nations,' he did not half so truly embody the antagonism in England between the two, as it is embodied in contemporary France, in nearly every incident of daily life.

"Two nations," observes one of the best living authorities on this point,¹ "have lived juxtaposed on the same soil, and have *not* amalgamated. . . . One accessible to all general ideas, philosophises and is attracted towards the far-off centre where the *untried* passes current; the other, massive and passive, dragged into conflicts not understood, gratified with liberties not desired, now accidentally inoculated by one of those fever fits that convulse and overthrow a world, and anon relapsing into brutish apathy! . . . To statesmen these 'rustics' constitute the 'unknown,' for the brain of the genuine rustic is not as the brain of the citizen. Physically and morally they are opposites: the townsman, spare, pale, thin of face and hand, light of gait, full of words, expatiating on what he ignores; the other, clumsy, stout, uncouth, solid of hands and feet, watchful, suspicious, and taciturn—apparently a listener, who, when he does speak, questions; his mother earth hangs to him on every side: he comes from the deep-sea mud, is *useful* as the rich *limon* left behind by the subsiding flood. The Parisian has a profession, the livery whereof he wears, and which shapes his soul; he is by circumstance a performer of some task set down by others—a banker, an attorney, a clerk, or shareholder, a functionary of some species—he is *rarely* a MAN!"

The singular fact to observe in all this is, that the race predominates over all other conditions; the climate tells, and (according to Michelet's theory) the atmospheric being remains invulnerable to culture.

An English "country gentle-

¹ La France Provinciale. By M. René Millet. Paris, Hachette: 1888.

man" may be a man of the world, and of social pleasures; short of a "man of fashion" (for that is a speciality), he can be as fitted for political town (or club) life as for the occupations entailed on him by his "broad acres." Not so the Frenchman—he is one or the other, either Parisian or peasant; for the French *gentilhomme campagnard* is a peasant or is a sham *campagnard*. Once realise this, and much is at once made clear; and the bitter hatreds (as foolish as bitter) raging between men of the same social status are explained. By birth, creed, education, even fortune, they may be alike; but their habits,—their habits whether of thought or of daily life—of the daily routine of life,—are different, and not alone different—inimical.

By no one has this been better demonstrated than by the writer above referred to, who has been amongst the first to register the incompatibility of the *Parisian* (not the mere *boulevardier*) and the *Rustic*, let what will be his rank or name.

"All their outward aspects," he writes, "are antagonistic. . . . The landed proprietor lives with the land

worker, and, for what he believes to be his interests, adopts the ways of the tiller of the soil. Here there is genuine equality; and so genuine is it that the inferior feels it is so, and has no secret misgivings, because he has hourly proof of how unreservedly the superior has sunk down to his level, and is narrow, covetous, *horny-minded as himself*. Both have browsed on the same intellectual pastures; and no peasant in France, whose landlord is of the true well-warranted type, will ever suspect the owner of the furrows he ploughs of being less dull or narrow-natured than himself."

After impartially recording the disadvantages of the unpolished *Rural* amongst the *raffinés* of the "great city," and the human deficiencies of the mere townsman in the midst of nature's bondsmen—witnesses to her dignity in their very drudgery—M. Millet gives the final touch to his picture by these words: "And on the blending together of these two hostile types depends the welfare of our democracy—its very existence; and what are not the obstacles to any possible understanding when neither ever enters into the other's thought, nor do their hearts for one instant beat in unison!"

II.

A melancholy picture, no doubt, yet not very much too highly coloured, and suggestive of the extreme difficulties (not to say impossibilities) of governing France, rather than of any methods whereby the "task of Rule," as Mr Froude terms it, may be lightened.

The chief trouble—never sufficiently appreciated by the foreigner—lies in the all but perfect equality of the two elements: the *vis inertiae* of the one is to the full as strong as the *impetus* of the

other; so that between France and Paris we are approaching somewhat closely to the same conditions of contest as those which, in matters military, exist between projectile and armour-plate. It is, after all, but a fresh phase of the eternal struggle 'twixt the old world and the new; but there is one peculiarity about it—namely, that the actors in the play are beginning to understand what is passing, and to foresee what the consequences may be. "France," remarks a

very keen-witted contributor to the 'Revue des Deux Mondes,'¹

"is the one country in the world where the capital presents the greatest dissimilarity to the remainder of the nation, and where a little metropolitan republic wedged into the commonwealth of the State opposes the aggressive humour of a comparative handful of citizens to the thirty-five millions of the whole land. Condemned by law, this predominance has been favoured by politics, and after inflicting three or four revolutions on the unwilling provinces, Paris is inconsolable at having to admit her loss of prestige, her privilege of decreeing the triumph of Disorder."

Were these things left to shape their own natural course unmolested, it might be easy enough to "leave them alone," as Lord Melbourne advised; and assuredly the actual state of matters social in France would, as elsewhere, modify itself under the "pressure of the age"; but the very inventions of modern science afford such facilities for unexpectedly hurling neighbouring nations one against the other, that in this epoch of armed peace havoc may replace quietude at almost any moment, and "things" be shaken out of the power of righting themselves in four-and-twenty hours. One must therefore try to seize the present as it is, for time may not be awarded for its normal development.

The mistakes made by foreigners in their estimate of outlying provincial France lie chiefly in the fact of their having so rarely "seen with their own eyes." The generality of the departments of France (unless those of the "sunny south," where travellers chiefly go in search of health, and which are

the least French of any) are not attractive. Even railroads do not bring to them visitors who stay; they pass through them, taking their passengers somewhere else, somewhere beyond. People curious in silks or velvets go to Lyons, as traders in wines dash across country to Dijon, Macon, Rheims, or Bordeaux; but Macon or Rheims, Bordeaux or Lyons, are their aim, the purpose of their flight, and it mostly happens that the goal long dreamt of by the untranslatable *Dahin* of the Germans lies somewhere beyond France; our countrymen, above all, mostly rush through France to attain it. When "Britishers" take a journey into Normandy or towards Anjou and the banks of the Loire, it is almost always to "see" some particular sight which has a historical or artistic attraction for them, or to follow some particular occupation to which they are addicted in their own country (fishing, for instance): it is, we may truly say, never in order to see what those do, or think, who in these regions have their permanent home.

Now of all the mistakes so frequently made, none is greater than the notion that French people do not like country life—that they do not "love the country" as we do. That they do not, as a general rule, enjoy it as do Britons, nor get out of it such rude health or boisterous satisfaction—are, in fact, not greedy of it as we are, that, we believe, must be admitted; but perhaps nowhere as in France are vast populations to be found whose whole being has been so markedly fashioned by rural routine, whose existence is so moulded by the secular habits and ways born of

¹ M. René Belloc, "Un Département Français"—Revue des Deux Mondes, 1886-87.

the earth, and inseparable from the earth's culture. The French provincial may not be a "man of prey," to quote Emerson's phrase; may not owe to nature's contact a more rapturous sense of physical expansion. To him woods, hills, and rivers may not "be as friends," nor is the earth the first playmate of the French, as of the British, child. But there are in France vast populations whose "use and wont" these constitute, nevertheless, and in whose mental development, however limited, they play a prominent part.

It is the townsmen who, in France, are principally to be found journeying towards other countries; it is the Parisian even who, bigoted though he be to his own "City of Light," indulges in the wish to note what is to be seen in other places; and for the last fifteen years the Parisians really have severed themselves from their own haunts, and gone abroad; but the "rural," whose mode of life is in the fields and along the hedgerows, does not migrate. The soil clings to him, holds him fast. The Parisian dislikes, and in his soul despises, the stranger; the rustic, whatsoever be his station, cannot conceive of him: he belongs not to such facts as can be brought home to the rustic mind.

But to the sincere student of the various sorts of men still increasing and multiplying in our world, there is not wanting a deep interest, if not an absolute charm, in the fellow-creature described in this passage from M. Belloc's Departmental Sketches. There is a melancholy about him to the full as poetical as that which surrounds the gaunt figure of a solitary Slo-

vack horse-herd outlined against the fiery sun as it sets on a Hungarian *puszta*, only we don't go so far to see him; and, being so near at hand, whenever we happen to cross his path we don't look at him.

"At the outskirts of yon forest," says our author, "a different country is to be observed. High hedges rise on either side of deep-rutted lanes, or are flanked by stunted oaks whose trunks are eaten hollow by time. How the unwieldy ox-drawn carts manage to circulate along these quagnires, where the ground never dries—tumbling down sharp inclines, and lurching as a ship at sea, yet in the end reaching the spot whereto they are tending! This might have seemed easy to *agents voyers* in the time of Louis IX., but would puzzle wood-pavement engineers in our day. The buff-coloured beeves with mud-stained coats, bony and lank, bowing two by two under their wooden yoke, march lumbering on with ever unvarying tread—nor quicker nor slower, but from year's end to year's end always the same. Neither is the heavy driver less solemn than his beasts. The *bouvier*, lance¹ on shoulder, trudges slouchingly on in front, silent and grave as though he bore the Holy Cross; and ever as he goes he chants a monotonous strain that, to his belief, keeps his cattle up to their work. It is hard to discern any sign of satisfaction on their parts; but any one would be sternly frowned down in the neighbourhood who should dispute the efficaciousness of this music. Does not the mere aspect of this equipage tell the spectator more than would a whole volume? Is it not plain that the dull-eyed being who can, from cradle to grave, drag his steps thus through life without once hastening them, or ever attempting to shorten his winding way, is one who has remained untouched by the unquietness of the age? . . . And

¹ The *bouvier* in France bears a long wooden goad or lance, with the point of which he touches the neck or "front" of his oxen, and which won for him in other days the surname of *Touche Bœuf*.

again, observe well that in tracts of country such as these there is *no horizon*. All is mingled in one: nothing rises, nothing spreads; no idea of altitude or breadth. For miles on miles, forest, field, road, and village lie confused, hidden, unguessed at from afar. In order to distinguish a church steeple you must climb to the top of a tree. . . . A soft and somnolent life, be it said, shorn of the sharpnesses as of the excitements of activity—peace-preserving; *une vie douce*, in fine, this existence without horizon! Thought does not wander far where the footstep is not free, and the meek desires conceived in such enclosures are of mostly possible attainment. The slow snail-like man is shut in, and fantastic yearnings are shut out; and so the barriers which in former centuries excluded the invasion of new ideas, have dowered the present occupant with a wellnigh invincible mail-shirt of resistance. For this manner of peasant, the *vis inertia* he is gifted with is still of impenetrable strength. He is still what he was; but what surrounds him is the very opposite to what it ever was."

Now this ox-herd, be it remembered—this kind of "Gurth the swineherd" (save that he consorts with horned beasts instead of swine)—is of the electorate! He holds in his hand a vote—namely, the right for his small part of the national will to send this individual rather than that, to represent the active beliefs, or wants, or ideas, or necessities of large bodies of his countrymen in the Parliament that sits in Paris. He to whom the sound of the word "Parisian" has a disquieting and disagreeable, though still vague meaning, is required to unconsciously minister to the predominance of that distant city, whence the sledge-hammer of centralisation is already being brought to bear with its formidable weight upon him. Well, if he knew what to do, or even what he actually

does, he would *not* help the supremacy of Paris. Only he does *not know* at present, and if he can he abstains—because of his in-born supineness—and throws away the mysterious, uncanny bit of pasteboard or paper—an unclean thing with hieroglyphics on it—which transforms him into a *citoyen*,—a name for which he has an unreasoning contempt. But one day, later on, he will "know," spite of himself, and then, with or against his old surroundings, he will rebel,—first with hidden malice mutely, but, in the course of time, with avowed aversion, and he—and his tribe are legion—will vote on all occasions against the selfish tyrannical abstraction that makes a tool of him, numbering him, and fitting him in as a "piece" in the *jeu Chinois* of its, and not his plans. He, Lord help him! never had, and never will have, a "plan," but he will not be made to "fit in" to any one else's. His inmost sense (one would avoid saying "soul") hates the name of Paris, that he has never seen, nor will probably ever see; but he is intimately convinced that from the wicked power thus named have come all the inconveniences, all the troubles of his existence. To his dim vision centralisation implies civilisation, and it is in truth civilisation against which he revolts. What is termed "life" is being inflicted upon him, and he does not want to be condemned to "life" in its modern significance. He is a vegetable and desires to vegetate. In the matter of displacing themselves to vote, there are—we must learn to realise the fact—countless legions of these saurians. It will be suggested that they obey others higher up in the scale. To a certain degree, yes! but less than might be imagined.

They are by nature isolated as they are short of speech; they remain what they are individually for want of sympathy. They are shut in, and horizonless as their native haunts, and too timid and suspicious to court or care for intercourse with others.

From the *bowvior* we are led to the dealer in beeves, to the *marchand de bœufs* himself—a very potent personage not only in the rural life of France, but an active element in the semi-rural, semi-urban centres of a French department; a sort of link between town and village, and between village and plain. The *marchand de bœufs* is essentially a “middle man” in politics; he stands midway in the cross-roads of civilisation—wood and wold are on one side, and the city with its denizens on the other. What he “raises” (the technical French term is *l’élève*) for the consumer, and what the consumer pays him for having “raised” it, are equally his sources of gain, so that perforce he requires to know as intimately the herdsman who tends his meat-producers as the *bourgeois* who eats them; and it is as necessary that he should be able to gauge the purchasing powers of the latter as the labour-capacity of the former. This drags him irresistibly into politics; he unites the often-warring interests of the elector and elected, but unless he happens to be of very exceptional constitution, he remains by the electorate, and rarely aspires to rank among the elect. His immediate master, the butcher, now and then, on the contrary, takes his seat among the lawgivers of the land, and between these two there is nearly always (as elsewhere) hostility—the butcher being invariably accused by the stock-raiser of sacrificing the agricultural to the mere

trading interests. For the provincial large (or small) town like *Élevour* has no particular dislike, for the “market cross” is the temple whereof he is the high priest, and there he is the absolute equal of even the great landed proprietor, who has taken to stock-farming on a wide scale. Besides, the large provincial *chefs-lieux* are considerable consumers, and generally regarded as very fair absorbers of “proper food”; whereas Paris is accused, not exactly of eating proportionately too little, but of eating a vast deal too much of what is outside this denomination. Bread and beef-eating are democratic, and should be practised to the highest possible extent; but the indulgence in fish, fowl, and garden-stuffs is regarded as unrighteous, and eminently characteristic of the “heathenish Parisian.” As to game, it is suspect of feudalism! It may be remarked that, as to what concerns “garden-stuffs,” the champion of the carnivorous is, individually speaking, somewhat justified; for the *maraicher* (the market-gardener) is expanding into perfectly phenomenal dimensions, and he is, as yet, specially developing his proportions within the area of Paris itself. He belongs pre-eminently to the patented *fournisseurs des riches*, the class best hated of all, as extortionate, and unduly prosperous by easily gotten gains. The *maraicher* is universally detested; for the envy and malice of the carrot, turnip, and onion, and other low-born roots (*légumes de champs!*) against the more refined vegetables and fruits, is quite as violent as the contemptuous hatred of the flesh-vendor for all food that is not *meat*.

The dislike of the stock-raiser for Paris is explicable enough—his

whole being centres in and evolves round agriculture alone. Beef, bread, and man are to him convertible terms, and he regrets to have to admit two out of the three, and would prefer, if it might be so, to take into consideration simply "beef" and himself alone—other "men" are an encumbrance! Paris, therefore, and above all the "Parisians," are a trouble to his mind, and he willingly moves them aside, to meditate only on his pastures, and the means of making outlying useless human-kind eat meat more plentifully, and pay dearer for what it eats.

The sameness of classes brought about by the sameness of calling is nowhere better exemplified than in the person of this devotee of the grass lands; and who does not recognise in the modern *herbager* of France, since the days of cattle-fattening, the counterpart of our burly north-country grazier of the pre-railway era, who under the most jovial externals dissimulated treasures of Machiavelian *finesse*, and claimed that the world contained nothing to be compared to "grass," unless, indeed, it might be the beasts it fed?

III.

But the notion of "France," as opposed to that of "Paris," is not complete by the study of the rural constituent alone. Provincial France has its villages, its small towns, and its large cities; and its largest cities, though they are agglomerations of men whose interests are those of citizens, are not "Parisian," any more than are the more uncultivated rustic centres. In the larger cities, on the contrary, a sort of rivalry feeds antagonism, and a Lillois or a Bordelais, a Lyonnais or Rouennais, or, above all, a Marseillais, would fain make you understand that the merits of his own distinguished town are too great to allow him to regard the "supremacy" of the capital as anything save an unjust caprice of fate. The real "provincial" centres are those of the second and third order, where the urban inhabitants have been all—with very few exceptions—drawn from the province itself, and have not yet lost its chief characteristics,—what might in a moral and political sense be denominated its "accent."

It must never be lost sight of that the two forces—the centralising and the centrifugal ones—are as nearly as possible equal. Hence the violence of the struggle and the difficulty of unwinding the tangled skeins of human life, wherein citizens and "rurals," Parisians and provincials, are often hopelessly mixed.

In trying to do this, there is an element to be counted that to the same degree exists in no other country in Europe—what is called "l'Administration."

Unless after long years of residence in France, it is utterly impossible to conceive of the full importance of *l'Administration Française*, for its complexity of nature and unity of power are inconceivable. French administration is a government alongside and underneath the Government, but not always one in spirit with it: it is always the agent of centralisation, but not always Parisian. Democratise the nation as you will, the administrators of her "regulations," rather even than of her laws, will always form a species of

aristocracy, and constitute a separate body of "superiors" (from the highest to the lowest), that never amalgamates with those over whom they exercise their not always "brief" authority. They, to a certain degree, and in an inferior order, resemble the *Tchinovnik* of Russia, and represent a class composed of all classes—an institution whose functions lead to oppression in infinite detail, but whose individual component parts are so various that they admit of separate antagonisms. Now this administrative element is naturally an urban one, as distinguished from the less compact one of the rural districts; but what is far too little noticed is, that it is as ancient in spirit (if not in substance) as it is traditional, and therefore as national as are the customs and ways that have sprung up out of the mere soil; and in many of its shapes even, it is more subsistent, more "long-descended of other days," than certain apparent vestiges of previous centuries.

The civic institutions of France, her existing departmental organisations, differ in reality less from the provincial ones of two or three centuries back than might be generally presumed. They have been modified, not created, by the Revolution, and this is an exceedingly important fact.

In the second part of his admirable volume on 'La France Provinciale,'¹ M. René Millet lays the utmost stress upon this particular point.

"There was a not distant time," he remarks, "when it was laid down as law that our famous system of centralisation sprang Minerva-like, all armed, from the brain of the First Consul and from the Revolution. It

cost Tocqueville but small pains² to prove its pedigree, and to show that it was, on the contrary, the direct offspring of the *Old régime*. . . . It is not even exact to say that the Revolution destroyed, or even tried to destroy, the autonomy or *particularism* of the towns. The French monarchy had contended against this very spirit so early as 1563 and 1579; and, by abolishing the criminal and consular tribunes of the Communes, had struck a powerful, though only a partial, blow at the communal jurisdiction: and when, in 1764, the Crown annulled the purchase system of municipal rights, it simply inaugurated a return to monarchical privileges, and did away with a manifest source of corruption. Later on, it is certain that the invasion of the centralising principle became general and oppressive, but it must also be admitted that the reverse was tending towards Federalism. *Particularism* in the interior threatened compact nationality; and downright Federalism was not a thing that could be endured in a country where everything rapidly converged towards the solid establishment of a *State*. . . . Still, although unity could not be sacrificed, tradition was never wholly vanquished, and the local laws and usages remained the indisputable basis of local government, and asserted the persistent authority of the past. The *Constituante* enacted the law formulated by Malouet, that 'in all places the administration of local affairs shall belong to the particular place itself;' and in our present day, as in 1790, does a conflict arise on, for instance, the boundaries of two communes, whence comes the decision?—from that which is discovered by consulting ancient charters; as also, if a milestone or frontier-post is to be moved, the removal can only be settled by having recourse to the archives of the Prefecture, or the mouldy parochial registers. Some discoloured parchment of antediluvian date, on which *the curé's hand* once traced the limits of his diminutive realm, is even now the sign of rule, and the proof of the venerable origin

¹ 2^{me} Partie—Les Mœurs Administratifs.

² In his work on 'L'Ancien Régime et la Revolution.'

and of the unchangeable character of the 'Commune' in France."

"Let us never confound administration with politics!" exclaims M. Millet: "*ne confondons jamais l'administration avec la politique!*" and in those words he touches on the real cause of most of the dissensions between Paris and France. We must recognise the political element as represented by Government—the Government of the nation—necessarily central, and condensed in an assembly of individuals (whatever their denomination), who are deputed from all the several parts of the territory to legislate for, decide upon, and guide the acts of the nation, as a nation, and in its relations to other nations, whether neighbouring or distant. The politics of the country are determined, therefore, by Government, and to this central power are legislators delegated from far-off provinces, even as the central power itself in turn delegates administrators who, in its name, control and direct and govern the outlying populations. Here we come at once to the antagonism, and above all, to the equality, of the two distinct forces.

A local functionary is despatched from the seat of Government; he may be a Parisian (which is rare), but at all events he administers in the name of the central authority, and almost immediately finds himself out of all harmony with provincial ideas and habits. Or he may be of the very spot he is called upon to rule over; or, at any rate, of a locality distant from the capital. He becomes rapidly *ultra-local* and *ultra-particularist*: and it is only his function (which he derives from the Executive) that keeps him from being at loggerheads with the power on which he depends, but which is too far off to know anything of the wants and

wishes of his surrounding townsmen, and too selfish not to be forever making mistakes and showing how little it cares for the traditions by which they are accustomed to be led.

Naturally through the progress of centralisation the tendency has been towards the over-rule of distant districts; and through the ever-increasing pressure of public business (quite as heavy on institutions as on men), the multiplicity of various or often conflicting kinds of public occupations, and the distracting hurry entailed by all, it has come to pass that the provinces have deemed themselves ill cared for or aggrieved, while the capital has, from the absorbing nature of its political anxieties, grown to treat the opinion of the provinces with impatience, if not with disdain.

One of the chief causes (if not *the* chief cause) which necessitated the centralising measures of the last century, is now mainly exciting the antagonistic feeling of the provincial populations toward Paris.

This cause is financial. When the purchase system of municipal offices was abolished, it was done, we have already stated, in order to combat corruption; but when, in 1771, it was resuscitated, and the principle of election was set aside, this proceeded entirely from the financial embarrassments of the State.

In no country of Europe is the vast mass of the population in all classes from highest to lowest so ignorant as in France, and so neglectful of the elementary questions and simplest problems and operations of finance; and (perhaps for that very reason) no country in modern times has suffered such cruel disasters from financial disorder, or been so directly or indirectly committed by the short-

sighted, all but childish, errors of its blindly, ill-organised finances, to a succession of revolutions and wars.

This is far too vast a field to enter upon in a magazine article; but in the present day, when such subjects are beginning to form a necessary part of general education, and when a certain degree of familiarity with the principles of political economy are the chief means of defence of the individual under the so-called Government of "each for all" (*tout pour tous*), it is impossible to leave unnoticed the action of finance upon politics and administration. The immediate cause of dissension growing into animosity and latent resistance between the State and the nation—symbolically the capital and the provinces—was the identification by authority of Government of the two. From the attempt at a too close union of interests arose one of the first reasons for disunion, and the direct reason for unceasing suspicion: centralisation put its hand into the provincial pocket!

It was a very knotty point, and, under the peculiar circumstances in which France was placed, and the inextricable embarrassments entailed by stupendous wars and long years of internal mismanagement, it was hardly feasible to allow any wide measure of financial decentralisation to subsist; so, perforce, the State had seemingly to deliver the Commune from many burdens which in reality emancipated more than surcharged it, and gave it more individuality than such a concentric system as that of modern France could allow. Let us listen to M. Millet:—

"The State and the 'Commune,' he remarks, "have contracted a financial union which still endures. Both take, in equal measures, their resources from the full udder of the 'Impôt direct' (direct taxation), and the Revolution itself did nothing to establish any line of demarcation between the two. . . . It may be said that the State went no further than its rights; but it, in every instance, encroached on the domains of local interests. Actual disorder disappeared, perhaps, but there ensued a woful confusion between the resources of the Communes and those of the Central Government. The evil is a subsistent one. In our present day the one first served is the Executive! It is only after all its exigencies are satisfied that the local necessities are thought of, and then it is made to appear as though a vast boon was vouchsafed them, when they are permitted to dispose of a centime of what is, in fact, *their own!* True, for this Paris sends them down their administrators! The perceptors, cashiers, and all the legion of tax-collecting agents who gather in their 'contributions' are paid by the Central Government! but does not this tend precisely to explain much of the universal dislike? . . . Look at the invariable consequences. Whenever it happens that any attempt may have been made to increase the importance or the freedom of the Commune, the partisans of centralisation have immediately raised an always victorious outcry against any attempt to '*compromise the balance of the Budget!*' This has been the invariable argument: any concession to local interests must '*compromise*' the Budget, since '*financial solidarity*' was the common law. The slightest local prodigality of a Commune must be felt as a shock to the credit of the State!"

As a matter of fact, what has been established is—to use our author's own words—"the inextricable confusion of all local rights with the rights of the Central Government of the 'State.'"

This never does and never can lead to union or solid amity between the two conflicting powers, for the very identity of interests

2 Q

which Government has sought to establish, creates eventual distrust as to the methods of administration; and while all local liberties are crushed out beneath the hated abstraction styled "le Règlement," the central power is never quite certain of being faithfully served by the agents whose business is well known to be the habitual enforcement of execrated decrees.

Since the adoption, however, of manhood suffrage, another element of confusion has been added on to already existing ones.

The defence of local freedom, or of local interests, or privileges, or traditions, offers an opportunity to every petty ambition to "make a stir" in the Legislative Chamber; a temptation either, as the case may be, to attack centralisation in the name of "time-honoured custom," or to ventilate frothy revolutionary eloquence in support of the demagogical tyranny of (heaven save the mark!) intelligence! The best drilled "functionary" sent down to "regulate" a country town is not proof against the possible attractions of a seat in the Chamber; and his more circumscribed public duties weigh but little in the balance against the chance of public notoriety, and the likelihood of becoming the representative of some theory, some "question" which—seized hold of by the press—may lead its champion to no end of renown—*et le reste!* Here are "under-secretary of state-ships" in view,—nay, far more—ministerial portfolios, embassies! The electoral career, organised as it now is, opens wide before all independent (!) appetites, and offers a premium to all absence of political conviction. It in no way diminishes the antagonism between Paris and France; but, on the contrary,

increases the strength of both parties, thus equalising the force of "projectile" and "plate," and resulting in a state of confusion, whence the issue is hard to foresee.

Another point, too, presents itself to view in the machinery of the elections, more complicated in towns (above all in the smaller rather than in the larger ones)—more complicated, let it be repeated, in the towns than in the rural districts, but yet even in the latter rarely escaping from noisy charlatanism or untiring underground intrigue. Of noisy, boisterous, organised charlatanism, probably nothing will ever be witnessed that will surpass Boulangism; but that is an accident, the result of a multiplicity of causes that may never, most likely never will, again "coincide." It has nothing to do with habitual permanent quackery—with the indigenous quackery of small centres. But an ingredient of electoral contests, properly so called, that is extremely curious to examine, is the species of occult influence that is more frequently found in France than anywhere else in Europe. In nearly all centres (not of the larger type) you will be sure to discover a sort of hidden authority permeating the public atmosphere, directing majorities on more than one point, guessed at by every one, unquestioned, but untraceable, and whose unostensibility is so absolute that its possessor is never even convicted of wire-pulling, but is implicitly obeyed by those whose profession it is to pull the wires. He is the inspiring medium of all the others; he is a swayer of others' wills—stronger even than "Monsieur le Maire" (only less strong than the chorus of "mothers," should they be called

into action!), but occult. Balzac is his historian, knows him, reveals him in all ranks—for he is a product of French civilisation, and springs from a peculiar stratum of the national mental soil. This love of the occult use of invisible power comes from the fierce desire for power without responsibility, that has been growing up in many countries for the last fifty years, but more in France than in any other land.

This "influence" is often served unconsciously by busier agents: the notary for instance, the doctor, and the innkeeper, or rather the *cabaretier*, for the genuine *aubergiste* is an aristocrat—a manner of "heavy father," and more or less set aside like all other even distant semblances of fatherly authority. The notary and the doctor *prepare* the electoral mind; but the *cabaretier* gathers in the result, — reaps what they have sown. He is a prodigious electoral agent.

Now none of these men are of necessity metropolitan, or champions of the "seat of Government"; for the very "exercise of their functions," as the French term goes, is departmental, provincial. M. Belloc distinctly advocates the gradual "ascendancy of the rural,"

which must perforce be slow, and give time for modifications that will endure.

"We shall probably," he remarks, "never want for learned men,—men of letters or artists; but what we want are men of action. You cannot attempt to organise or govern a tumultuous democracy like ours, by the members of five *academies*. You want men who can *see* for themselves and decide."

In reality, the outcome of what democracy in France has produced during the last twenty years, and what is apparently constituting the principle of rule, without which no society can attain to any degree of cohesion, is the sovereignty of knowledge. Those who can *act* must *know*; and M. Belloc humorously but practically enough puts the proof of superiority in contemporary France—the superiority consented to by the many—in the fact of knowing how to spell! The crowd of the illiterate, whom he describes at public gatherings as "dumb and voracious as fishes," recognise a right to administer in the functionary who "knows how to spell"!

It comes, then, to this, that some sign of elevation being needed, as a matter of fact, education will represent "*Les Carrosses du Roi*."

IV.

The unjustified pretensions of Paris to supremacy over the rest of France, and the overweening arrogance of the Radicals of different *nuances* in their attempts to refuse all political importance to *les Ruraux*, as they term them, have at last forced themselves upon the attention of the governing powers; and the two very significant speeches made in the month of June last, by M.

Carnot and M. Casimir Périer, upon the occasion of the Delegation sent from Dauphiné, were the first expressions given to the desire for a firmer bond of union between the capital and the provinces. Provincial feeling asserted itself strongly in the claim laid by Grenoble and Vizille to have first resisted the encroachments of arbitrary power in 1788; to have, as a matter of

fact, been the original founders of a constitutional *régime*¹ based upon parliamentary discussion and the freedom of the subject.

Many of the warmest admirers of the so-called *Grande Révolution* in France are of opinion that the real date that should be recalled and honoured by every one, and among all classes, was not 1789 but 1788. In June of that year the province of Dauphiné, represented by the town of Grenoble, affirmed its civic independence against the despotism of the Central Government of the capital and of the king. The conflict had broken out between the Parliament and the Crown. The latter resorted to assertion of arbitrary rule, annulled the right of registration, and put the ratification of royal decrees into the hands of judicial bodies of new creation. A more really "revolutionary" measure could scarcely be conceived, striking as it did at all the sources of legal tradition whence alone could it be hoped that gradual reforms might spring. The various Parliaments protested, and everywhere the *noblesse* of the district sided with them. The corps of officers took part with the remonstrants. Garrison and law courts, gentlemen, landed proprietors, bourgeois, and the crowd—all were as one against the autocracy of Government. The magistracy was banished, all parliamentary privileges infringed, and the very military commanders charged with carrying out the edicts addressed their humble excuses to the population for the necessity under which they lay of obeying orders. But the injustice was too flagrant; the spirit of resistance was too strong,

and swept everything before it. Grenoble recalled its parliament; the local Assembly of Vizille (distant about four leagues) was decided upon, and, in truth, the destinies of the province (and of constitutional freedom) committed to the care of one man.

Mounier, who had not aspired to, but was fated to lead, the reform movement, was then just thirty, and of indifferent health, for which reason he had retired from the Bar; but he had been promoted to the Bench, and was then Chief-Justice at Grenoble. Mounier, whom Madame de Staël designated as "passionately reasonable," was possessed by the idea that France, having, under the framework of her ancient monarchy, found the germs of the national liberties suited to the national temperament, ought to be capable of developing them, and ought, in short, to attain peaceably to the institution of her Magna Charta. And so, borne on by the successful opposition of 1788, it came about that Mounier, whose year-long studies had been Blackstone and Montesquieu, and the workings of the British Constitution, was called upon to lead the first attempt made in modern France to establish a limited monarchy.

This is not the place for a history of the Grenoble movement of 1788, but it is requisite that the reader should seize the significancy of its anniversary as celebrated in this present year.

When the famous Assembly of 1788 was convoked, it could not legally be so at Grenoble, but was so at Vizille, the residence, a

¹ In fact, the "Parliaments" of France did, so far as their powers allowed them, attempt a very dignified and noble defence of national rights against arbitrary rule. But the current of thought set then in the direction of State unity, and real freedom was sacrificed to the tyranny of the Jacobins, as it was later on crushed under the heels of a military despot.

century earlier, of the Connetable de Lesdignières. At the epoch of the rising of Dauphiné, the Chateau de Vizille belonged to Claude Périer, one of the wealthiest men of the province; and he it was who, on the 21st July 1788, placed its old feudal halls at the disposal of what was to be involuntarily the prologue of the Revolution.

Now we may see what was the true meaning of the ceremonies of this present year, and why M. Jean Casimir Périer was the host naturally pointed out to receive M. Carnot in the home of his ancestor, the owner of Vizille in the pre-revolutionary era.

The celebration of this important anniversary implies a recurrence to moderate statesmanlike principles of policy, to constitutional practices, as unmistakably as the occurrence of the previous century ushers in a series of *un*-constitutional acts, escaping as they do all guidance on the part of their unconscious precursors. It is eminently, however tacitly, a step in the direction of the past, if not a recognition of error; it is, above all, a so distinctly provincial incident, that the spontaneous efforts of all have tended to reassure the metropolis, and to affirm the unity, the indivisible identity, of Paris, with even the most distantly outlying French departments.

The danger has been felt, if not acknowledged; else, wherefore the oneness of expression in men so widely differing in origin and temper as Messrs Carnot, Casimir Périer brothers, and Madier-Monjau? All in their several speeches are chiefly actuated by the strong desire to promote union between Paris and the provinces. When

applauding the initiative taken by Dauphiné in 1788, they, each of them, seek to impress on the public mind that what is achieved by one section of the nation is for the honour and benefit of the whole; and above all, that whatsoever is laboured for and won by the Central Government, is for the immediate gain and good of the departments. That Paris and France are by nature one, and cannot be antagonistic, is the theory sought to be established in men's minds—the more strenuously that an incipient process of disruption is the fact dimly and instinctively recognised as constituting an imminent peril.

History, it has been said, "repeats itself"; it does so pre-eminently in countries where, as in France, political convulsions are of frequent if not regular recurrence. When the women of Grenoble rose in June 1788, conjointly with their male relations, against the manifest oppression of the Crown, and disabled the troops by projectiles hurled from the roofs, they enacted unconsciously a tale told long ago: the "day of tiles"¹ was a *bourgeois* Roncevaux, the Roncevaux of the streets; and the Dauphinese Amazons destroyed their antagonists by the very same mode of destruction resorted to in the ninth century by the Basque hillmen against the troops of Charlemagne. Loose rocks, on the one hand, tiles on the other—it was the same principle, and foreshadowed the "vertical fire" of our own days. And so, a few weeks ago, did M. Paul Casimir Périer reproduce in excellent terms the thoughts of a hundred years before, aiming then at national freedom joined to State unity, which was and is one of the unavoidable

¹ "La Journée des Tuiles" is the word used in history to designate this incident.

necessities of modern policy in its struggle against Federalism.

It is not between either provincial particularism or stringent centralisation—either “Paris” or “France” (which practically would inaugurate moral civil war)—that the choice rests. No; there is a mean term, but which, unluckily, is not the product of a day, but of long and gradual concessions, successive abdications of narrow prejudices, sacrifices of foolish ill-will attaching to small things—in short, a general process of mind-widening, that to many other nations is the fruit of experience, but which, to France, will probably be mostly that of education. To the majority of European peoples, railroads, steamships, and telegraphs have taught the higher lessons of internationality—as between the United States and Europe they have taught everything; even to belated Austria they have revealed something, and to Spain far more than is supposed; but to France they have brought less than to any other, for France is best taught by books or newspapers—by the printed word, in short. The lessons of life itself make less impression on Frenchmen than the judgments passed on life by other men, and tested by the largeness of their sale when contained in books, because the Frenchmen of our day are as wanting in self-confidence as in self-assertion.

And what wonder that it should be so? For nearly two centuries—from the days of Richelieu to the victories of the great Frederick—to what trials was not France exposed? and during the last hundred years, what cause of public demoralisation has she escaped? She is accused of having lost all faith: in what should she place any?—having been hustled as she has been through every conceivable

form of so-called “constituted society” and government, not one of which has proved its power or its right to endure! True force is generative; that which generates not is not force, but only accident. What wonder, then, that the Gaul, who has seen kingship and empire, and republic and military sway all pass, and, void of consequence, leave no trace, save disaster, to prove that it ever was—what wonder that the faith of Frenchmen should attach to accident alone—accident when successful, above all! Having no reasonable faith, he clings desperately to palpable gains, and all the nobler wealth of idealism comes unavoidably to be disdained as “illusion.” His evidently greatest defect becomes a total want of expansion, the incapacity for the generous self-sacrifice denominated imprudence.

What the Germans paint by the word *dahin* is ignored by contemporary Gaul. They have been necessarily narrowed down by the clash of hard facts, contradicting each other's significance, and destroying the far more real truth of the inspirations coming from “beyond” and from “above.” What remains is a quite marvellous capacity of privation, of renouncement of all satisfaction for the sake of one special form of acquisition. From the highest to the lowest, one idea rules all—that of the material possession of coin or land. Nor does the richest employer of labour escape this, more than the bond-slave of toil. All obey equally the law of greed, of acquisition at no matter what cost,—at the very cost of their own individual power of achievement,—as though the *more* could ever proceed from the *less*!

This not only narrows the man himself but isolates him, and in an age in which association is *the*

necessity, condemns him to the sterility of lonely effort, and the discouragement consequent upon it. Separation is growing into a fatal habit in France.

But whilst in the past the chief characteristic is the mutual enmity of opinions and classes, there has opened up, in the present case, a far wider field for division, and at the same time, a narrower subject for its aim. Individually and socially,

a department contains probably more warring elements than ever, but they unite in their repugnance to having the "law laid down" upon them by the capital; there is union in the tacit feeling of rebellion against Paris; in that "extreme distrust—that far *too* excessive distrust of the provinces for the metropolis," to quote the words used by the 'Journal des Debats.'¹

v.

It is undeniable that this "distrust" is a terrible element of weakness, for, physically speaking, Paris represents the head and France the body; and as the brain-power is no longer sufficient in the head, where is it to be sought for? Of communities it may be said, as of men, that few disobey, or even wish to elude, authority, if authority show itself wise and just; but Paris, since it began to exercise dominion, has never shown itself just or wise. Since it claimed to wield supremacy it has never proved its right to it.

On the other hand, where are the more or less concentrated forces of the national tendencies and desires to become manifest as the national will, unless in some one particular *form*, let alone some particular spot? The Revolution, as we observed at the outset, decreed that Paris should be the subsisting centre; that the abstraction called Government should undeviatingly reside there, and thence radiate arbitrarily, subjecting the entire rest of the country to its blindly exercised domination. Well and good; and under a monarchical rule—be it royalty or empire—this might possibly succeed; but under a democracy? Of

course, there are as many arguments in favour of Paris as a centre of administration, as the provincial world outside labours to adduce against it. It may be, as General Boulanger's "syndicate" affirms, that parliamentary Government is ended; only *till* the new form of power is established "by common consent." It is evident that in Parliament, as the nearest approach yet discovered to the principle of representation by delegation—in Parliament resides the concentration, outwardly visible, of the collective national will. As the present *sign*, therefore, of legal power, we must accept Parliament, and Parliament sits in Paris. This is precisely a point on which many shrewd lawgivers and unprejudiced citizens are minded to differ. That Parliament, say they, is and shall remain the palpable figure of national unity in Government, be it so; but why its arbitrary relegation to a fixed spot? why its permanence in Paris? Here is arising a question already thought, although relatively little talked of, but which, owing to the growth of education and its influence over general mental development, may ere long assume an unexpected importance.

¹ Journal des Debats, 26th August 1888.

The thought of a country expresses its very soul: in the universal Shakespeare there is perhaps now even *too* strong a tendency to recognise the nationality of England; but assuredly in both Goethe and Heine no one will refuse to see incarnated the German idea, nor in that of Calderon, the proud type of ancient Spain. Many more glorious names, such as Dante and others, prove the stamp of the race on the man; but in the example of France, it is Paris that has produced the fewest of her illustrious sons. Of the two, who guard the very gateway of her fame, to whom she owes her royalty of mind and of language, and who are among the great thought-lenders of the modern world—of Pascal and Montaigne, neither have anything in common with Paris. Pascal is from Auvergne, Montaigne from the Gironde; and, as far as “rights” go, it is fairly enough matter for debate, whether the volcano whence issued Danton and Robespierre is so imprescriptibly superior to Clermont or Bordeaux, as to put these and all other provincials out of court, and reign supreme.

The main query is whether—granting the present form of modern France (as derived essentially from the theories of 1789) to be that from which she is no more to depart—whether the arbitrary and exclusive rule of the capital is for ever implied by this admission; or whether the traditions and the spirit of what once was the collective France is to be to a certain extent revived, and to, as it were, permeate the entire body of the country, even as high up as the head?

Here lies the question of “Paris versus France”; and having some experience already of what the

omnipotence of Paris has brought forth, it is but just to examine what are the governing capacities contained in the various organisations of the departments evidently growing now discontented with their lot.

The floating elements of disagreement with Parisian autocracy we have tried to show in the foregoing pages, but “floating elements” are proverbially weak. There exists, however, already a partial condensation which, accepting representation as the principle of all, may show as practical a model for a future contending Power, as did the numerous corporate bodies and associations of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in England, for what was in process of time to become the “limited monarchy” of the present day, with the three “Estates of the realm.” The *Conseils Généraux* are in themselves as largely, though locally, representative as any political body that can be named; but as yet that conglomeration fails which would enable them to wield the vast power of so-called “common consent”; and it must never be forgotten, “common consent” is the “divine right” of democracy, as delegation is the instrument by which it legitimately works. It is only necessary to read M. Waddington’s recent treatise on the ‘County Councils of France,’ to grasp the entirety of the representative principle they embody.

“The Canton,” says M. Waddington, is the electoral unit for the election of the Council General,” and he adds: “The Canton is perhaps the most important element in the French territorial system, and lies at the basis of all the administrative arrangements.” Every single force, however small, is duly gathered together into this first body, which

may contain from fifteen to forty rural 'communes'; and here takes place the first cohesion of the "floating" particles so well described by the authors we have quoted in the earlier pages of this article. The officials who, in the name of the State, administer these localities are often, affirms M. Waddington, "the only representatives of authority which the vast majority of the French peasantry know, or have any dealings with. . . . The French peasant's horizon is limited to his commune and his Canton, with an occasional trip to the 'Chef-lieu d'Arrondissement,' generally the principal market-town within his reach."

M. Waddington completely confirms the assertions of M. Belloc in noting the mode of subsidiary elections in France, and the care taken only to elect "*men who live among the electors, and whom they can trust,*" and he sums up by giving this as a reason why, "although parliamentary institutions are now often violently attacked in France, no one ever thinks of calling in question the efficacy of the *Conseils Généraux*, or the excellence of the work they perform." There you have the key-note of the situation: the *Conseils Généraux* are manifestly "representative," for they are the outcome of several degrees of representation, in all of which a thorough knowledge of the individual who is to represent is the chief requisite. The Communes build up the Canton, the Cantons constitute the District Council (or *Conseil d'Arrondissement*) and the *Conseil Général* binds together all the various items of any importance that tend towards it through all the various local channels of the department.

It may be broadly stated, therefore, that these departmental councils constitute "France," for

Paris and the "Seine," as a county, are severed from them—stand outside. It may then be at once seen where and how the "floating elements" attempt condensation. But it is pure "particularism" after all. In each separate little "whole" there is an aggregation of various powers; but there is no cohesion between these unities, nothing to make them constitute *the* "whole," welding all into one. If there were, it is just conceivable that the revolutionary arrogance of Parisian supremacy might be characterised and resisted as a flagrant usurpation. But as it is, there is no cohesion between the eighty-six departments—no legal or official communication that can induce administrative alliance. And probably the Republic had a shrewd eye to its own interest when it forbade the *Conseils Généraux* to touch upon "politics"; confined their labours to the study of strictly *local* objects; and enacted the annulling of their "wishes" (*vœux*) whenever these strayed towards the regions of political speculation.

It has been often affirmed that the "homogeneity of France" rested on the centralisation of her singularly homogeneous administration. It may be so (Gambetta was inclined to support this theory), but this is not national; this concerns the Government, not the governed. It is, perhaps, a wise system, productive of a matter-of-fact unity; but it is a form of compression, not of development: it casts a vast network of authority over the nation, keeping individual tendencies "in their place," and unmistakably avoiding the supremacy of the capital, of the central authority.

Gambetta was fond of foreshadowing the activity of the Senate as that of a "grand conseil de la nation"; it has not

been entirely that, though very often its action has been a distinctly beneficent one, but looking to the past of France, to her capacity for following others' lead, and her still undiminished readiness for incarnating dominion in a human shape; reflecting on all this, it is by no means impossible that in the Executive Government might be found a means of closer communication between the two rival abstractions—a perfectly harmless link, drawing nearer to each other in amity the somewhat overbearing spirit of Paris, which would fain believe itself everything, and the discontented spirit of France, which, in her provincial vanity, rebels at the notion of being counted for nothing.

The Presidential Institution might yield more than it has been made to do hitherto, and though not endowed with such formidable powers as his brother of the United States, the President of the French Republic has more constitutional privileges at his disposal than is generally supposed.

In the case of danger threatening any one of the Powers appointed by "common consent" to secure liberty to the individual, and peace and order to the nation, the President exercises naturally, as does the chief of every civilised State, not alone the right of convoking armed defence—this is more even his duty than his right; but he has a considerable latitude of choice in the nomination of his Ministers when these fall under the adverse sentence of a parliamentary majority. Amongst the different members of the victorious party, on him alone, as a matter-of-fact, rests the responsibility of designating this one rather than that to undertake the formation of the new Cabinet. And as things have shaped themselves

now in France, the *nuances* between men of apparently the same colour are simply enormous, and the judgment and tact of the President might be put to a stronger test than they may be in any other European country. But all these are matters concerning the discharge of functions awarded legally and legislatively to the head of the State; they are not matters of dispute between these or those sections of opinion. If there is to be a President, he has to preside over the working of the executive Government; but there, where the extension of his power becomes largely possible (and might conceivably become preponderant), there begin his difficulties,—for this extension, if achieved for the general good and satisfaction, is certain to be precisely cavilled at by all the ungovernable elements in the land. Here we come to one of the mightiest factors of modern civilisation—personal influence, namely. Being undefined, it is unescapable; and, open to attack on all sides, it is scarcely susceptible of practical defence on any. It belongs to what, with his singular faculty of always giving the right name to everything, Prince Bismarck so aptly entitled the "*imponderable*."

Now this all but atmospheric influence is the peculiar attribute of the head of the State; he is absolutely free to wield it, and is sole judge of the limits of its applicability. In the question of the (above all moral) antagonism between Paris and France, the President may, if he be so minded, exercise in the long-run a sort of arbitrator's part. As matters are constituted politically, the eighty-six separate entities of the Councils General, which do undeniably, and often adequately, represent the interests and opinions of the several portions of the country,

bring (from their divisions and subdivisions) no corresponding weight to bear upon the centralised authority of the capital, and do not, to any sufficient extent, come into direct and familiar contact with it; but the—in this respect—unfettered President can, if he so wills it, be a powerful, though unofficial, link between the two. The provinces have no mode of direct appeal to the executive, for the executive can only execute the decrees of Parliament; but in his unlimited capability of locomotion, the President has the right of contact with provincial organisations. They cannot go to the Elysée, but the Elysée can go to them; and here lies a mode of conciliation too little studied either in or out of France, and which, in reality, depends upon the personal qualities of the President of the Republic, and on the more or less successful results of his visits to various parts of the country, and to the widely distinct populations that inhabit them.

In this respect it would be hard to find a more satisfactory choice than that made last year of M. Carnot, for he unites so many dissimilar attributes in his own person, that an unusual number of different sources of action are placed at his disposal. He is, strangely enough, both pre-eminently provincial, as springing from his very ancestral soil, and historically Parisian, as springing from his grandfathers. For four centuries the hills and plains of Burgundy claim him as their own, and there is no break in the essential Provincialism of his race; whilst, on the other hand, you might as well try to erase the memories of '88 and '89, as attempt to dissociate them from the fame of Lazare Carnot. Paris, enthroned by the Revolution, is inseparable from *le Grand Carnot*, and, at the same

time, the name remains, with equal indissolubility, symbolical of the Provincial spirit of France,—of *la vieille France*. Few people may have appreciated to the full this advantage, but in the present condition of things it is a great advantage, in which but comparatively few men share.

President Carnot unites, besides these, many other contraries: long descended from a line of honourable men, he possesses in his social status enough to satisfy the utmost exigencies of *gentlemen*, even supposing that they still constituted a "*Class*," and hereditarily to allay any fears of danger resulting from leanings towards anarchical encroachments. At the same time, his education and inborn unvarying convictions have stamped him a Liberal of the kind which British statesmen might even denominate "*advanced*."

In one of his speeches some months ago, President Cleveland laid down as an axiom that "if Democracy did not furnish a *better* type of man than preceding social forms had furnished, *democracy was a failure!*" It must be hoped for France that it may not be a "*failure*," for, whether under Monarchy or Republic, to Democracy she is doomed; the chief reason of all being, that the French aristocratic principle has ceased to believe in itself.

Civil war can never imply other than a state of transition: we have to look beyond. If the republican form is with relative permanency to become that of the French nation, it will be necessary to modify Montesquieu's dictum, *la Vertu est le principe des Républiques*, for *Vertue* is a term much disliked of our age. The utmost constraint the haters of Greek and Latin will consent to admit is what is called *Duty*, which each individual believes himself free to interpret as

he chooses. Words have come to exercise a formidable power in the land of Gaul; hence the necessity for education, and hence the indubitably universal worship of it, which, however vague and ill-refined it may be, is a downright cult, and is "universal" with the French.

All things considered, then, the uneasy feeling between France and Paris is not to be denied; but, the "one-man theory" of her past taken also into consideration, it would not be impossible that at some time or other a mode of conciliation might be discovered in a closer connection between the provinces and the Executive. The instinctive sense of this might even explain the determined animosity of the "perturbators" of all kinds to the Presidential Institution. More even than against the Senate is the blind rage of those who, like Mephistopheles, "deny everything" directed against the maintenance of a "First Magistrate,"—a "Head" of the State! and by this very hatred is the advisability of its maintenance best proved. If Henry VII. *did* say to the Irish Lords that, left to themselves, they "would crown apes," his words would be of singularly happy application to the rampant Radical minority in France. "Left to themselves," in the words of our wise and wily Tudor king, it is to "*ape-crowning*" on a wide scale that they would most probably resort; and though it be by no means unheard of, this has without exception shown itself to be the least commendable of all processes for aiming at decent government.

France is not so totally "different" from all other nations as her enemies, and she herself, may be disposed to think; but she has been oftener governed the "wrong way" than most others, and has, in a given space of time, gone through more suffering than almost any land, and she needs more than all others as large a number of "passionately reasonable men" as she can get. Experience costs sometimes too dear; education may, upon occasion, forestall it; and education and a little instruction in the history of foreign countries must help to guard against mountebanks and impostors (no nation can afford to spend its time in bewailing having been "taken in"). France has still much elementary schooling to go through, for some of her most astounding glories have been irrationally achieved, and at the expense of her fellow-men. She has, in M. Taine's words, "to learn that to the moral as to the physical laws of the world the human race is subjected. They may be ignored—they can never be eluded."

In the present crisis the French nation is passing through, and in the phase of dissension between the strong, through latent recognition of what once was, and the violent aspiration to what it is supposed *must* be, her refuge must be moderation. She has, as M. George Picot in his excellent study of 1788-89 says—"to believe in uprightness of character, calm firmness of will; for such qualities alone can save her from the worst of all her foes—*les héritiers des Jacobins et les coureurs d'aventures.*"

MNE. BLAZE DE BURY.

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VOL. CXLIV.

A STIFF-NECKED GENERATION.

CHAPTER XXX.—HAD ROSAMUND BEEN THERE!

“ If a daughter you have, she's the plague of your life;
No peace shall you have, though you've buried your wife!
At twenty she mocks at the duty you've taught her.
Sighing and whining,
Dying and pining,
Oh, what a plague is an obstinate daughter!”

—*The Duenna*.

“ IF Rosamund does not get well sharp, she will find herself, on her return home, provided with an embryo stepmother!”

Such a prediction was enough to chill any one's blood, and to attempt to depict Lady Julia's feelings on hearing it were useless.

This was now the third shock which Fate had thrust into her hitherto easy life within a few brief months. Her sister's death had cost her many tears and tender recollections, Rosamund's engagement had been a bitter and daily renewed disappointment of her fondest hopes; but neither event had roused half such a passion of amazement and horror as that which now shook her soul to its very depths.

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Of all people in the world, Theodore!

Her reliable, respectable brother-in-law, who, although he might count for nothing in the family, was presumed to fulfil all requirements in the eyes of the world, and to be as phlegmatic, and obtuse, and safe, as a man and a husband and a father could possibly be! That he should be the next rock ahead!

It had been such an understood thing that he would not be put out of his way by Rosamund's guests, since none but Lady Caroline had ever been suffered to interfere with any single one of his habits of gentle selfishness—and even her imperious ladyship had, as a rule, respected the motto,

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“Live, and let live,” with a spouse who gave her so wide a berth and so little trouble)—it had, we say, been so well understood that the Miss Gilberts would be nothing to their host, that he had not been taken into account at all.

It had been felt that only by their presence at meals would he know the girls were still in the house, and certainly no one had ever dreamed that he would so much as inquire in what manner they had passed the intervals.

When a man’s line of conduct is thus taken for granted, he is in a great measure hedged in by it; and had Rosamund, with her flashing eye and apt speech, sat in her mother’s seat, it may be confidently asserted that there would have been enough of the deceased Lady Caroline haunting the air to have turned aside the winged arrows with which it was now bristling. But no one had been by, and the affair had grown like magic.

On the first evening the widower had experienced a passive sensation of being pleased and amused; on the second he had exerted himself; and on the third and fourth no exertion had been needed.

It was known to none, scarce even to himself, how and why he had crept year by year into an ever smaller niche in life, and had shrunk and shrunk in order to avoid contact and friction, so that now his dead wife had only herself to thank if, in the elasticity of spirits consequent on the removal of a grievous pressure, he did not even outwardly affect to mourn her as he should have done, and if at the first pleasant thing which offered, the smile of a pretty face and the accosting of a merry voice, the dry, withered, unused nature, which had still a germ of life within, should feel the beatings of a new and delicious sensa-

tion. Hartland might be disgusted, and Lady Julia outraged, but had they known mankind better they needed not to have been so stricken with amazement as now they were.

“How odd, how unlike himself, Mr Liscard is to-night!”

Clementina Stoneby was the next person to note something that she had never seen before, on passing the following evening at King’s Common in company with her brother. It may be remembered that Lord Hartland had heard they had been bidden there. “I cannot understand Mr Liscard at all,” pondered she in perplexity, as she stood by the drawing-room mantelpiece after dinner. “I always thought he pretended to read, and really went to sleep, in the evenings. He does not seem at all inclined to sleep to-night. He is quite the host. A flower in his button-hole, too! All the times I have dined in this house, I don’t think I have ever seen him with a flower in his button-hole before.” She was looking at the object of her reflections as she made them. He was briskly stepping across the room, calling “Music! music!” as he went, while Catharine was bustling about the piano, attentive and dutiful, and cognisant of what was going forward, and a servant was placing a music-stand where no music-stand had ever been placed before, and arranging lights near.

In front of this stand the astonished Stonebys now beheld their host take up his position, while his daughter and the Miss Gilberts with animation surrounded and encouraged him. What was going to happen next?

Clementina could scarcely credit her own vision when she perceived the outcome of all the preparation—namely, the dignified, abstracted

scholar of former days screwing together and putting to his lips a silvery flute, from whence presently emanated somewhat tremulously a sweet, old-fashioned, almost-forgotten melody.

He had, it appeared, already delighted the young ladies; they had had a concert after tea, and he had been promised an accompaniment on the next occasion. He now claimed fulfilment of the promise, and Emily Gilbert sat down to the piano.

"I really think they get on wonderfully well together," said Henrietta, quitting the group and rejoining the Stonebys after the first duet, "and they will do still better after a little practice."

"Oh yes, we must practise, we must practise," came at the same moment from the performers themselves; and "You must practise that run, if you please, Miss Gilbert," and "You that shake, Mr Liscard," awoke simultaneous flattery and merriment.

Should they try the difficult passages again? No, not then,—not before an audience; they must do it in rehearsal—by themselves—when no one else was present to criticise and complain. The morning was best for rehearsing, the evening was scarcely the time. It would now be preferable to proceed to something else, and agree to meet and overcome all difficulties at a more convenient season.

"I shall be quite out in the cold once this sort of thing begins," cried Etta. "I know what I have to expect when two music-mad people get together; it is all up with the third person. I reckon these two are going to give me a pretty time of it, what with rehearsals and all the rest. Do, Miss Stoneby, have compassion on poor me, and come up and keep me company when

they are at their practising to-morrow morning."

"I am afraid I shall be busy to-morrow," quoth little Clemmy, very coldly.

"Oh, never mind, I daresay Lord Hartland will be over."

Miss Stoneby was mute.

"Perhaps he will look after Catharine and me, when he finds us left in the lurch," continued Etta; "he has been here both yesterday and the day before, and stopped dinner both times. We half expected him to-night"—(it had been more than "half," and she had donned her smartest frock in consequence)—"but I suppose he did not like to leave poor Lady Julia," continued she. "Poor Lady Julia; it certainly would have been too bad to desert her three times running, and, if I were she, I know I should have been in a huff as it is."

"It is no new thing," observed Clementina, briefly. "Lord Hartland is always here. He looks upon King's Common as a second home."

"Does he? But why? They are not near relations."

"As near as any he has."

"La! how strange that must be, Miss Stoneby. We have such heaps and heaps."

"Have you indeed?"

"Thirty-six first cousins on father's side, and twenty-two on mother's. We do make a to-do when a lot of us get together."

"I daresay."

"I never was in any house full of children where they made so little noise as they do here," proceeded Etta confidentially. "To think that there are nine still in the house, even with Rosamund and the two big boys away? If Lord Hartland comes here to be cheerful——" and she laughed expressively. She and Emily had had their own opinion on the mat-

ter, and had agreed upon it perfectly. They did not think Lord Hartland came over to be cheered by the children, nor yet because the place was his "second home."

"You do not see King's Common to advantage now," said Clementina, who reflected that at any rate she did not. "It is not always so melancholy as this."

"Is it not? La!" cried Etta. "Mr Liscard told a different story yesterday. He said to Em that the old place was not like itself with us two about, and I don't know all what about sunbeams and rays of light. He has been making Em ever so many pretty speeches. And as for her, she thinks him quite a dear. For my part,"—and the young lady sank her voice, and languished behind her fan,—*"for my part, I prefer Lord Hartland. I own I do like young men better than old—don't you?"*

(*"Good gracious, what next?"* cried Clementina to herself.)

"I have no doubt we should have seen Lord Hartland here to-night, only that I scolded him so for leaving Lady Julia twice before," proceeded the speaker, inviting an attack in vain. "I told him that really——"

—"Really I think it must be our time to go," cried Clemmy, starting up; and she actually did manage to effect an exit, and carry Jack off with her, a full hour before they would otherwise have gone.

"I could stand it no longer. I really could not have contained myself another minute," fumed the little steam-engine, panting away homewards. "That impudent, impudent girl! Oh, you should have heard her insinuations and her affectations! It is by way of being herself and Lord Hartland, and her sister and Mr Liscard. But, oh, Jack, the worst, by far the

worst, is that I fear there really is—is some truth, some horrible, degrading truth in the last idea. In the first I do *not* believe, but in the second—oh dear, oh dear—I shall never forget this evening. Oh, Jack, did you see—did you hear—but I know you did; I could tell by your face that you both heard and saw."

"Go on. Tell what you saw."

"It dawned upon me towards the end of dinner. I began to think that Mr Liscard was wonderfully sociable and wonderfully cheerful; usually he is neither, you know—at any rate, until the dessert is on the table. He looks neither to right nor to left while he eats. And I felt that he might have remembered to be a little more particular not to have laughed quite so much, and been so very full of anecdotes and jests, before the servants—because servants do talk, and of course Lady Caroline has not been three months dead yet; but it was not till there was all that drinking of healths and clinking of glasses at the end, that I began to feel how very disagreeable it was becoming. That was why we were asked, I suppose? To take off Henrietta and Catharine, and leave those two to each other. Horrid old man! I feel as if I could never speak to him, never look at him again."

"To be sure he has been rather quick over it," replied Jack, coolly, "but I always thought it would come. He is not altogether the pensive student whose part it suited Lady Caroline to have him play. I daresay you will open your eyes, but I have not much faith in his being a scholar at all. I fancy he saw it was his only chance of being anything—and, moreover, it secured him a quiet life. He is indolent, and selfish, and if he had not taken up the line he did, he

would have found himself endlessly embroiled, and to very little purpose. Lady Caroline would have had her own way in the long-run, and he had the sense to see it."

"Sense!" cried his sister. "He is showing his sense now, is he not? Tooting on a flute, with a camellia in his buttonhole, to a girl scarcely older than his own daughter!"

"It is hardly decent just yet, I own," assented Jack, moderately, "but, upon my word, I scarcely know how to blame him. Recollect, my austere Clementina, that this is the first temptation of the kind which has probably ever befallen the poor gentleman——"

"Temptation!" cried the little, busy, workaday, parishing woman, who had no corner in her heart for so much as a weakness, save in the straight, legitimate, prosaic, matrimonial form. "Temptation! A man between fifty and sixty, who ought never to be thinking of such things! If he did mean to have a second wife——"

"Pooh! that is not the question. He is merely basking in a bit of sunshine now."

"How *can* you talk of it like that?"

Jack laughed. Men do laugh at such questions.

"Well, all I know is," proceeded Clementina, hot and angry, "that as long as Emily Gilbert remains at King's Common, I, for one, shall not set foot within the house again."

Jack laughed afresh.

"What is it? What amuses you?"

"Because we are going there again to-morrow," said he.

He had been invited point-blank by Mr Liscard himself, who had been very well satisfied with the way in which his convenient neighbours had done their part, fulfilled

the end for which they had been invited, kept clear of the piano, and maintained the chat at the other end of the room. In the plenitude of his good-humour he had caught the rector and engaged him and his sister for the next evening—they were the only people he could so invite; and Jack, not seeing the affair in the light Clementina did, had accepted with tolerable alacrity. Like Hartland, he required distraction at this time.

Besides, it was such fun to make Clemmy really wroth, and wroth to the last degree she now was, and she was clattering and chattering along as fast as her little feet and her little tongue could go, when they turned in at their own gate, and beheld a figure in the clear moonlight before them. It was Lord Hartland, who had strolled down for a smoke and a consultation, the rectory being, as we know, but ten minutes' walk from his own house.

"Well, what did you see, and what did you think?" was his greeting. "I knew where you were to be to-night, and that you would be home about now. Well?"

The brother and sister glanced at each other.

"Oh, it's all right; I know all about it," continued Hartland. "Queer idea, isn't it? Of course it would never do. Imagine a Miss Gilbert succeeding Lady Caroline Verelst! No, no; it can't be done. We must conspire to defeat it. If poor Rosamund were only about——" but then he stopped, for one and all were thinking the same thought—namely, that poor Rosamund had enough ado to manage her own affairs, and had not succeeded so perfectly with them as to warrant her being intrusted with those of others.

But since all had been equally behind the scenes at King's Common, there was obviously now no need for reticence, and the driving, and flirting, and fluting now going on in the house over whose portico the black escutcheon was still fresh, was discussed through all its length and breadth.

"Rosamund ought at any rate to know of it," concluded Hartland, with much decision. "And I shall certainly tell her. I shall see her on purpose. To-morrow afternoon she is coming into the boudoir—it is a dead secret, but she is—and I shall see her, and tell her."

No one had any objection to make, and he prepared to depart.

"How is she, Hartland?" said Jack, softly.

"She is—just what Aunt Julia chooses to call it, Jack."

"You don't think the illness serious?"

"No, I don't."

"Is Gilbert admitted to see her yet?"

"No."

"But you are?"

"I am nothing of the kind, but I mean to admit myself. After what we have agreed to-night, I consider it is my duty to see Rosamund and put her on her guard. My aunt is not to be trusted; and with Rosamund's temper——"

"I don't know what you all mean by speaking of Rosamund's temper," suddenly blazed forth a little shrill voice. "Rosamund would have as good a temper as any one, and be as kind and good and sweet as any one, if she were only let alone. She likes having her own way—oh, I know why you look so; you think she has got it, and no good has come of it. There is something wrong about this engagement, and you both blame Rosamund. Now, how can

you possibly know that Rosamund is to blame? I am sure she is unhappy—perhaps she sees she has made a mistake—perhaps Major Gilbert, nice as he is, does not quite, altogether satisfy her, and—and—and—oh, I don't know anything about it, I may be quite wrong, only I cannot bear to hear my dear, dear Rosamund spoken of so unkindly, and you ought not to do it, and you *shall* not before me," further cried the valiant little creature, darting away into the porch with a suspicious tremble in her voice, and a resolution that neither Jack nor any one else should have a chance of answering.

In a sort of maze, Lord Hartland's eyes followed the retreating figure. Then he turned, and in the clear moonlight faced his friend. "God bless her for the words," he said. "See here, Jack,—we—I—I don't know how you feel, but if I dared, I would tell your sister that—God help me—Rosamund needs no champion with me. I have learned—too late—that I—I must not dare to take her part;" and he turned his head aside.

A hand was laid on his shoulder.

"I have been a fool," continued the speaker, brokenly. "I had my chance, and I did not think it worth the picking up. Another, a better, a braver, and an honest man came by, and saw the value of the prize. He won it, and—heaven pity him, Stoneby—he thinks he has it, and it is all a mockery and illusion. She does not love him; she had almost ceased to care for him the moment he was in her power; she would fain have spurned him from her feet afterwards. And now——" and a too significant silence supplied the rest.

There was a long pause, and at

length Stoneby spoke. "I understand," he said, in clear, deliberate tones, "and this is not altogether new to me, though I had hoped, almost against hope, that I might have been mistaken. There is then but one honourable course for your cousin to take; she must confess all to Gilbert, and throw him over."

"And that she will not do."

"Has any one tried her?"

"Do not ask me," said Hartland. "Before heaven, Stoneby, I was innocent of any other motive than that of indignation at Gilbert's wrongs, when I—I—yes, I did it: I urged her to tell him the truth. I thought then, I think now, that an open, unflinching confession of the injustice she has done him, would be the only means of preventing her doing him a greater. Besides, there is another course, and sometimes, I fear, she is trying it."

"You mean, to disgust him."

"Something of the kind—yes. But this is only the merest, vaguest conjecture. She may never have thought of it; and her petulance and coldness *may* only be the result of her own disappointment,—but I have thought—I have wondered at his patience under it. Most men—I myself—would not have endured such treatment for a moment. I should have seen, known that it could proceed from but one cause."

"Gilbert sees nothing?"

"He is too noble to doubt her," said Hartland, in a low voice.

"And you say you admonished your cousin?"

"I did, in the plainest terms. She thought me cruel and unfeeling, and I think I played the calm observer well. But I fear to look into my own heart, Stoneby: I dread to find what I know is there. Rosamund's happiness is dearer, far dearer to me than it ought to

be, and what is the result? When I see her unjust and contemptuous towards the man she has made her own, it maddens me with a kind of pain I delight to feel. I could reproach her, torture her, almost tear her in pieces for her cruelty, and yet love her a thousandfold the more because of it. I could clasp her in my arms, and crush her, at the same time. She cannot be Gilbert's wife. He deserves a better fate. . . . She shall not be sacrificed to him. She has suffered already enough. . . . It is a sin to treat a man as she does her lover. He has done nothing to merit it. He . . . She . . ."—he passed his hand over his brow. "I don't think I quite know what I am saying," he murmured.

"It does not matter with me, you know," said his friend, very kindly.

"Oh, I am such a fool—such an utter fool!" groaned Hartland, afresh. "Look here now, I say; what do you suppose I care about my so-called uncle and his idiotic flirtation? It is very beastly of him, but I don't suppose anything real or tangible will come of it; but here have I set my heart on going to Rosamund with it all, and she will break her heart anew over it, that's what she will do—because—because—can't you see, Jack?—because I must see her, and I must have an excuse to see her, and to make her see me; and then, perhaps, who knows?—something—somehow—may be said—ah, don't look at me so, I say," throwing him off with a fling; "I know all that you would say. Just hold your tongue, will you? I am going to see Rosamund, and all you can say or do shall not prevent me."

"I am not seeking to prevent you, dear Hartland."

"You—you—oh, I know well enough what you are saying to yourself. It is what I should say to myself also, if I were not a scoundrel and a hypocrite. I have been shamming, Jack—I tell you, shamming: I have been imposing upon you all—and upon myself, more than any, heaven forgive me! Oh, I have been so impartial and superior, and have looked down from such heights upon the poor foolish pair entangled in their own net, and have discussed the situation so paternally, while all the time——! You would not have thought it of me, would you, Stoneby? I think even a few days ago, when we were all at that merry luncheon-party, and Rosamund was so playful, and every one so pleasant—I think even then none of you guessed what I was feeling. I did it well, on the whole. Aunt Julia thought me harsh towards her spoilt darling, and almost melted my obdurate heart by her representations. I was to be kind to poor Rosamund, forsooth! I was not to think so hardly of her Rosamund, her own dear Rosamund! Little she guessed that every tender epithet she used, and every plea she put forward, gave me a new delight. They were brands thrown upon a fire that was already burning. I have deceived you all—yes, you too, Stoneby, you whom I pretended to take into confidence, and have been as false to you as to the rest."

"This is not being false."

"There are no secrets between us now, at any rate," proceeded Hartland, with a bitter laugh; "you have got to the bottom of the well at last, and I hope you like what you find there. It is a fine mixture, is it not?"

Stoneby said nothing.

"I suppose you are shocked?"

There was another pause.

"Hartland," said Stoneby at last.

"Well?"

"If I were to tell you that I feel for you as I never did for any other man,—that I think, I know you have manfully struggled to overcome a terrible calamity, and that, whatever you may accuse yourself of, no one else will ever find you chargeable in this matter, or feel for you anything but the purest honour and esteem—would you believe me?"

"Do you—mean that?" said Hartland, slowly.

"I do, indeed."

"I thought—I thought—I seemed to myself such a coward, almost a liar——"

"Why? Because you sought to hide, even from yourself, a feeling which you were powerless to prevent, but which, coming as it did, at such a time, was torture? What was there false or dishonourable in that? You have never breathed a word, never sought by word or deed, to undermine Gilbert's rightful influence——"

"Never—never. If she had been happy, or even if she had *not* been happy, so that she had played him fair, I would have stifled the very earliest breath of another feeling." The words shook and faltered—but not from hesitation—on his lips.

"I am sure you would,—I know you would."

"But still it arose," said Hartland; "and, what is more, it thrives apace. I know not what it feeds upon. I have not seen my cousin since that day when you were there,—how, and why do I love her already ten times more than I did then? The night before, I had been very angry with her, very unsparing towards her,—on that day we met almost as strangers, we never addressed each

other, we avoided each other's eyes,—and now, I can think of nothing and of no one else. By night and day she is before me, with those mournful, hunted, stag-like eyes turned now on one, now

on another, as they were on that wretched day. I saw them, though they were never once lifted towards me. I must see them again—I tell you, I must see them again.”

CHAPTER XXXI.—HARTLAND'S MANŒUVRE.

“ And I have acted well my part—
Have made my cheek belie my heart—
Returned the freezing glance she gave,—
Yet felt the while that woman's slave.”

—BYRON.

All the next day Hartland hung about restless and unsettled, sharply demanding the reason of every sound, or bell, or wheel, and watching the opening of every door.

His cousin was not to leave her room until four o'clock, but he began to prepare for that hour long before.

In the first place, he despatched a note to Major Gilbert, for the ostensible purpose of conveying Lady Julia's bulletin of the patient, but whose real object lay in a casual line to the effect that if he should be in Longminster that afternoon, he would look Gilbert up on the chance of finding him in between four and five o'clock.

Such a hint would, he knew, be amply sufficient to keep the hospitable soldier in quarters until after all hopes of its fulfilment had passed,—by which time he was welcome to go where he would. It was a shabby stratagem, for which the writer heartily despised himself,—nothing being further from his thoughts than to appear either at Longminster or at the barracks that day,—but he felt that the Abbey must be secured from invasion at all hazards, and could think of nothing else likely to accomplish the desired end. Gilbert was invariably attentive to him, and proud of any attention received in return, and he

had not called often enough to make the civility common. He could reckon on the effect the note would produce.

The next person to be disposed of was his aunt. With Lady Julia hovering round, intercepting every remark, answering for Rosamund at every turn, betraying every thought of her limpid bosom, and effectually preventing his discovering and observing anything for himself, the hour would be shorn of half its wealth. She must be amicably put out of the way; and to that end, he ordered her carriage at a quarter past four, and went in search of her with a scheme in his head.

“Have you any objection to driving over to King's Common this afternoon?” he inquired, carelessly; “it might be as well to go, might it not?”

“This afternoon, my dear? My feeling just now is, that I must keep as far away from King's Common as ever I can.”

“But your influence, Aunt Julia—”

“My influence, my dear—what is *my* influence?” cried the little spinster with the utmost vivacity. “I never had any influence,—I never shall have any. Theodore and I have always agreed very well—though I do think he rather likes to talk to me of dead-and-

gone people in books, because he knows I have never heard of them—but on the whole we are good enough friends. Only I feel that he despises me, and that if Caroline had let him, he would have shown it long ago."

He opened his eyes.

"Oh, I did not in the least mind," continued she. "Caroline never would have permitted him or any one else to be rude to me, and while she and the dear children loved me——" she stopped, with watery eyes.

"And now my only reason for mentioning this," presently resumed the speaker, "is to prove that nothing I can do would have the slightest effect upon my brother-in-law. If it were you"—she paused—"if you were to remonstrate, he might listen to you; he certainly thinks a great deal of you, and he is easily frightened, easily managed by those of whom he is in awe; poor Caroline had no trouble with him——"

—"Just so," said Hartland; "the trouble comes afterwards. When a man has been in leading-strings all his life, he hardly knows what to do with his liberty when he is turned loose at fifty-five."

"He ought to think of his family, his connections, his reputation," cried Lady Julia.

"He will think of nothing, and stick at nothing, if once he is in love," said Hartland, with a strange look on his face.

"In love!" Lady Julia almost screamed. "In love! Oh, you would not, you could not degrade the sacred name of love by applying it to such an infatuation. In love! A man whose wife is not yet three months dead! Who has twelve children! Some of them nearly grown up. Who—who—who—oh, the whole idea is degrading and preposterous."

"Degrading and preposterous undoubtedly—but none the less a possible fact. He is certainly giving rise to remark by his behaviour, and that is bad enough. The very servants were tittering behind the screen during dinner the night I was there."

"It is shameful—shameful."

"And his being seen driving the girls about—a thing he has never done before—will set the villagers' tongues wagging."

"Yes indeed."

"They will have come in by half-past four, Aunt Julia."

"Am I really to go, Hartland?"

"I have already given a conditional order for your carriage, ma'am; they will bring it round unless you send word to the contrary."

"Thank you, my dear," said poor Lady Julia, humbly: she was never better pleased than to be thus played the tyrant to, and he had the grace to feel ashamed as, soon after, he saw her go cheerfully up-stairs to get ready, having no notion why she was being sent, nor what she was expected to do, nor indeed with any understanding of the case at all, except that he had willed, and she must obey.

He met his deserts when she came down again.

"It is as well that you proposed this for me, my dear," she cried at once. "Rosamund has given up the idea of coming into the boudoir to-day; she thinks she will not venture. I told her I thought of going to King's Common, and she was quite pleased—anxious, indeed, that I should. Poor dear, she has not yet confided in me, though every day I hope she will. But we must first get all these Gilberts out of the way——"

—"If we can."

"Dear me, Hartland, how gloomy you look. You were much brighter

a little while ago, but you have clouded over again since I came down. What is the matter? Nothing new? Nothing more?"

"Nothing, ma'am," shortly.

"You were not thinking of going with me, I suppose?"

"You will get on better without me, Aunt Julia."

"*That* I shall not; but, however, there is no occasion for your being dragged over. It is not an agreeable visit——"

"And there is no need to make it too complimentary."

"Certainly not. And were you to go, it would be decidedly too complimentary. You are quite right, as usual. I shall set off by myself, then, and you will stop here to mount guard."

("A thankless guard," muttered he, to himself. "And when all had turned out so luckily! I shall never again be able to manage as well. Next time, things may take their chance, for me.")

The embassy returned in part baffled—but in part enlightened. Lady Julia had seen nobody, but she had learned a good deal. The whole party, consisting of Mr Liscard, his daughter Catharine, and Emily and Henrietta Gilbert, were over at Longminster, lunching at the barracks, and spending the afternoon in viewing the various objects of interest in the town, according to Badeley, who had added that they were not expected home till dinner-time, and that Major Gilbert was, he believed, to return with them. An orderly had ridden over in the morning with a note from the major, directly on receipt of which, orders had been sent to the stables, and the young ladies had run to get ready,—he did not think there had been any talk of the project before the arrival of the orderly. The party had started soon after twelve.

("He had just had time to get my note, and send for them," concluded Hartland, perceiving it all at a glance. "So if my plans have been knocked to pieces, there is the satisfaction of knowing that others too have had theirs disconcerted.")

It would hardly have amused him to have walked about Longminster with Etta Gilbert, preceded by Em and Mr Liscard, and followed by Catharine and her big brother-in-law-to-be. He could see the party now, in his mind's eye, and a faint smile stole over his face.

Lady Julia had next, she said, driven on to the Waterfields', and Mrs Waterfield had told her a vast amount of tell-tale.

The whole neighbourhood was agog about the past week's doings at King's Common. How two handsome young ladies in the smartest of blue and red cloaks had been each day trotted through the village in Mr Liscard's own particular mail-phaeton, the widower himself handling the ribbons, and one or other of the gay visitors on the box beside him. How they had been seen going and returning, and had evidently been long distances. People had remembered that Mr Liscard had never driven Lady Caroline. He had either been alone, or accompanied by some elderly male friend, when he had had the phaeton out in former times. The change had been taken note of instantly, and servants' gossip had supplied all that was required for further predictions.

"I said I did think that a great deal more had been made of it than need have been." Lady Julia had done what she could for the family credit, and thus reported her efforts. "After hearing all, I told Beatrice Waterfield that although I could

not defend my brother-in-law from the charge of thoughtlessness and want of respect to poor Caroline's memory, yet that it should be remembered that he had lived so entirely his own life, and been so much out of the way of hearing public opinion, that he probably never gave appearances a thought in the matter. What the outside world thought never did have any weight at King's Common. Indeed, my poor sister was a little, if anything, *too* unconscious of it. It often distressed me, I know, to hear her talking away of doing this and that, as if it were quite the right thing, and in the most complete ignorance of its having any other aspect, when it had perhaps come round to my ears that the poor dear had given dire offence by the self-same act! Oh, one may be quite too independent, I really do think——"

——"Very true, Aunt Julia, but that you will never be. You love to consider every one. Now then, about Mrs Waterfield. What did she say? How did she look upon your line of defence? Did she go in with you, or with the village folks? Did she—had she—I suppose she had drunk it all in, and was ready for more? Every one will be glad of a fling at King's Common now, Mrs Waterfield at their head," he added, bitterly.

"My dear, I do not think you should quite say that. Beatrice was poor Caroline's friend, and naturally she was shocked and grieved. I own I did think that perhaps she entered on the subject rather eagerly, and rather perhaps dwelt upon it more than she need have done; but——"

"Ha! ha! ha!" burst out Hartland. "I thought our kind friend would not be far behind the rest. So she 'dwelt upon it,' did

she? Fully and lengthily? Missing out nothing? Not she,—oh dear, no. It is a rare piece of fun for them all. Oh, but King's Common will afford them better sport yet. They are not half done with us yet."

"Hartland!"

She looked at him in amazement. One moment all kindness and gentleness, the next all mockery and derision. It even seemed at times as though he absolutely gloated over the havoc of all the old customs and traditions, in the wreck of what once had been.

But the laugh had been unreal, and its unmirthful tones jarred painfully upon her ear. She could not, she would not blame him for it. If only she could understand him?

And he? He felt that he had let her understand too much, and the mask fell on the instant.

"Seriously, my dear aunt, we must consider what is to be done. To-day's jaunt will not do much towards silencing the talkers, and to-morrow being Sunday, there will be a good attendance at church, I should say. The good souls will flock thither to see what is to be seen in the King's Common pew. What do you propose to do, ma'am? Shall you be there? Shall you go in the morning, as usual, or"—with a happy thought—"shall I represent you, while you stay at home with Rosamund, and I can relieve you in the afternoon?"

"When she could come into the boudoir, instead of to-day," assented Lady Julia, in her own little easy way. "Yes, my dear, that would do nicely; that would be by far the best way. She would like to see you, I know; and no one else need know anything about it."

He could not help feeling that

all his former *finesse* had been wasted. Had he simply suggested in the morning what he did now, he might even at this moment have been by Rosamund's side; and though reanimated by the new prospect, he wished he had not been so clever before.

"She will not come down to-night?" he ventured.

"Oh, my dear, no; you have no idea how much she dreads a change of any sort. And you can understand that were she once to appear down-stairs, we could not make her out to be unfit for more—I mean,—we could not quite put the same face upon her illness,—and really, a little management—I would not be untruthful for the world, but in a case of illness, you know, management and firmness are absolutely necessary. She *shall not* see those Gilberts,"—and Rosamund's plump little guardian angel looked as red and determined as she had ever been seen in her life, and drew up her small roundabout person until it positively grew in height before Hartland's eyes.

He felt he could safely trust her when in this mood.

With infinite pains she now planned the next day's campaign, decided who was to be in and out at church and chapel, interviewed the clumsy Joseph, a new-comer, whose first Sunday at the Abbey it was, and who was to be porter for the afternoon (an office as often as not a sinecure, but which on this particular Sunday had risen to importance), and at the appointed hour on the morrow, betook herself off down the avenue, prayer-book and hymn-book in hand,—but her bodily presence, it is to be feared, ever getting farther and farther away from the spirit which had been left behind.

Ah, if those had but been two lovers she had left there! Even

as matters stood, there was enough of doubt and uncertainty about them to afford a gleam of hope, and even a gleam in those dark days was something. She now knew for certain that Rosamund had ceased to care for Gilbert, and she knew—at least she thought she knew—that this fact had a strange interest for another.

Wisely she wished to know no more. Time must work out its own problem.

Still it was delightful to think of her own two sitting together in the cosy boudoir, and of Joseph's strict orders to exclude all others; and feeling that such a state of things could not be improved upon, the service, even with a christening in addition, seemed all too short, and the rector and his sister were favoured with her ladyship's company for a good half-hour after its conclusion.

So long indeed did she linger, that the swift approaching darkness rendering an escort advisable, obliged Mr Stoneby to offer his own. He was not sorry, thinking he should see Hartland; but Hartland was nowhereabout, and though Lady Julia made sure of finding him with his cousin, she was told he had been gone from the boudoir some time previously. Rosamund looked fatigued and pale, and her aunt felt sure she had been in tears, and that more had passed than she was to hear of. This was a little, just a little, hard to bear, and almost any one else, even the kindest and tenderest of nurses, would have pressed for a confidence, or, at any rate, have sought to beguile one.

Not so Lady Julia. With a loving tact which only the purest unselfishness could have prompted, she seemed to see and observe nothing, while she ran cheerfully on about the weather, the sermon,

the collection, and the congregation, as if these alone occupied her mind.

Next she went down to dismiss her escort, and see him off the premises, with an instinct that he was not wanted at this crisis; and finally, despatching the trusty Charlotte to attend to the patient, she did not even indulge herself by returning to the boudoir, but betook herself off to her own room, as was her habit at that hour.

There we will leave the kind soul, and see for ourselves the scene to her mortal vision denied.

Hartland on being admitted to his cousin's presence was inexpressibly startled at the change which a few days' illness had wrought in her. He had not realised that this change had begun some time before; that the fragile form now before him had been drooping and wasting for some weeks past, and that the strength had been by swift degrees also waning. Accustomed as he had been to seeing Rosamund almost daily, the gradual alteration had been invisible; it had been obliterated by the feverish flush upon her cheek, the fire in her eye, the agitated voice and restless movements—there had been a false brilliancy thrown over all—and it was not till he perceived her divested of all stimulus, and every motive for effort and exertion, that he was convinced that Lady Julia's demonstrative anxiety had not been overdone.

At the first sight, indeed, he felt as if his aunt had scarce been anxious enough.

His step involuntarily slackened, and his accents grew tremulous as he drew near the large arm-chair in which the invalid reclined, and made the inquiry, "Are you better, Rosamund?"

"I think so, Hartland."

He sat down. "Tell me if I am in the way, you know."

"Oh yes, I'll tell you." She smiled, then flushed and paled, and a sense of embarrassment began to creep in. Was it to be an interview of ordinary commonplaces and small-talk, or one fraught with the deepest significance and purport? Each seemed to know that if nothing were now to be breathed of that which was causing alike each heart to beat, one would be as grievously discontented as the other: and yet, who was to speak? who was to begin it?

"I hope you do not feel this room too warm," murmured she at last.

"Oh no; it is very comfortable."

"Aunt Julia would have the fire made up before she left."

"She was quite right. We need large fires now;" and he shivered slightly, looked out of the window at the gathering mists, looked again at the brightly blazing fire, and finally looked at her. The last glance was hurried, and almost stealthy—and she knew it was so.

"What have you been doing since I have been up here?"

It seemed as if something must be said by one or other to prevent a blank, awkward silence; and, as usual, the woman was the quicker.

"Nothing that I know of—nothing at all, that I can think of."

"Have you seen anybody? Have you been anywhere?"

"I have not been anywhere, except to King's Common."

"Well?"

He was silent.

"I must say you are not a lively companion," observed poor Rosamund, at her wits' end; and, moreover, a little exasperated

that all the task of taking the initiative should be laid upon her. "Come, think of something to say—something to tell me; and let it be amusing and interesting, if you please. Exert yourself for my entertainment. You were sent here to entertain me; and now, when——" then she suddenly met his eyes, and broke off.

He was looking her full in the face; and, struck afresh by her paleness, her feebleness, the dark rims round her eyes, the poor attempt at gaiety—the whole so touching in its pitiful appeal—he could no longer repress evidence of the emotion with which his breast was charged.

"I see," said she, in an altered voice. "I see. You are sorry for me."

He nodded.

"If I thought I could speak about it, and—and—if you would have patience, and—be—a little kind," continued the speaker, her own breath beginning to come and go, "I should like to say something. Could you come a little nearer?—no, not so near as that," smiling, as he instantly placed a chair at her side; "now you frighten me. It is only that I—I am not very strong, and my voice goes away sometimes, so that I cannot make people hear. There, that will do," as he moved a pace or two farther off. "Hartland, I daresay you can guess what it is that I want to say. I was very angry with you that night."

"So I saw, Rosamund."

"I want you, first of all, to forgive me."

"You mean you wish to forgive me, dear,"—the word slipped out, he did not know when he said it.

"I mean nothing of the kind," said Rosamund, firmly. "I mean that I know now that I was wrong, and that I knew it then—though

my proud, miserable heart would not acknowledge it; and that it was right and true of you to speak as you did, if it was a little—a little hard to bear;" and her lips quivered. "I have been very wicked. I have been acting a cruel part; and I am frightened and ashamed when I look back upon it," continued she. "It was worse, worse than even you knew, Hartland. You don't know what a dreadful, dreadful temptation I had, and how I gave way to it when we two, Major Gilbert and I, were alone together; and I thought, I fancied no one would ever know how it had come about if we separated, nor whose fault it was. If you had seen how odious I sought to make myself! How I would repel his kindest advances, and refuse his most trifling requests—why need I go into it all? No other man would have borne it for an hour; and *you*—you would never have come near me again."

He murmured something, she could not catch what.

"You knew nothing of this," she repeated, mournfully.

"I saw enough to—to——" stammered he.

"I had fancied no one about me saw anything, till you spoke. Oh, how astonished I was! Well," after a pause,—“well, it is past. I have had time to think of it all;” she covered her face with her hands. “I have thought, and I have tried—to pray. God will help me now to do what is right. I think I see my way clear. I hope it is—I will try to love him——”

Hartland started.

"I will do my best to make up for all these weeks of unkindness, and he will learn to forget them," continued the speaker, endeavouring to be calm. "And you, dear cousin, must learn to forget them

too, and that you ever had to give me that evening's warning. It ought to have opened my eyes. I think it did. Only I was so unhappy. But I am happier now—my mind is clearer. I wish to do my duty; and surely to be the wife of a kind, good man like Major Gilbert is no great punishment for all that I have been, and done. I deserve that my self-will and stubbornness should have brought a far, far greater one upon me. If I can only make up to him for all—be to him all that he thinks me——” here again voice failed.

“You mean this, Rosamund?” He spoke at last.

“Indeed I do, Hartland. I have thought it all out, as I have lain in there hour after hour, by night and by day,—you don't know what long, sleepless nights I have had, hearing the hours chime one after another,—and even when I have been sleeping, I have had the one thought working in and-out of my dreams, till sometimes I could scarcely bear any more. I shall see Frederick to-morrow, if—if I am well enough”—and again her faltering accents betrayed the effort,—“and when he comes, I shall beg him to overlook all my foolish petulance and coldness. I hope he will put it down to illness—I think he will. It would be best, because I could not explain——”

“Why not?” said Hartland, in a deep abrupt tone.

“Tell him that I had—had——”
——“Ceased to care for him.”

“For shame,” said Rosamund, indignantly; “you know that I could not do that. For his sake,

I could not. If I did, it would be—it would be—oh, you know as well as I what could be the only result of that. I must—yes, I must let the past alone, and in the future he shall have nothing to complain of.”

“Can you do this, Rosamund?”

“I can:” she clasped her hands—“I can.”

“Your mind is quite made up?”

“Quite, quite; nothing can alter it now. I look upon myself already as Frederick's wife, and what I could have done then, I can now. I feel myself as much bound to him by what has passed between us, as if I wore the wedding-ring. Am I not right? You do—you must think I am. And as I knew that you have always liked Frederick, and have always done him justice, I felt that I wished myself to tell you this, because you had been vexed and pained with me on his account. You will never need to be vexed with me again, Hartland,”—and her voice was inexpressibly low and sad,—“believe me, I shall not vex you any more.”

He laid his hand on hers, and felt that she was weeping.

The gathering dusk had settled over the little room, and hid the faces of its occupants; the blaze of firelight had died down, and betrayed no secrets.

Silently the two sat for a few moments, thus.

She thought that he had accepted her promise, and that she had his approval,—he felt all further speech to be useless.

Neither spoke again, and presently he rose, and went softly out.

CHAPTER XXXII.

“Even yet she is not willing to give it up? She actually intends

to go on with those Gilberts even now?” cried Lady Julia in the ut-

most consternation, when time and pains had elicited at length as much from Hartland.

He was standing with his back to the speaker, leaning heavily against the mantelpiece in an ungracious, uncommunicative attitude; and as she watched him, all the little flutter of hope and expectancy until now half-unconsciously cherished, sank and faded away.

It was by watching rather than by listening that she gathered she had now nothing either to hope for or expect.

"My dear," she proceeded mournfully, "do bear with me for once, and—look round and tell me all. Is Rosamund—do I understand that her mind is made up to *go on* with those Gilberts?" Rosamund's engagement had now, it will be seen, become in her aunt's eyes no longer a thing by itself, but was merely one portion of a fell scheme on the part of a marauding trio now occupied with their other prey, and who, if not prevented, would presently swallow up father and daughter alike. "They are such dreadful, dreadful people!" moaned she.

"There is not a word to be said against him!" exclaimed Hartland, almost fiercely. "Believe me, Aunt Julia, your best policy is to give up all this hostility and reconcile yourself to the inevitable. You will do Rosamund an infinitely greater service by cheerfully accepting the position, receiving Major Gilbert as her future husband, and, for her sake, overlooking whatever to you is not agreeable about him and his, than by seeking to dissuade her from doing what she believes to be her duty. You know Rosamund. She is more hard to move when she is calm and collected than in the heat of battle. She is perfectly

calm now, and what she says she will do. She may be right—I do not know. But this I am sure of—she is not to be moved. Therefore——" He paused, drew in a long breath, and dropped his head again upon his hands.

"She will have a bad night after this," reflected Lady Julia, relapsing into the patient's nurse. "And I had so hoped she was to be better, not worse, for the little change. I had thought that you might reason with her; and that if she could be once prevailed upon to put an end to this odious affair——"

—"For heaven's sake, ma'am, no more of that! Forgive me, Aunt Julia," said the young man, letting go his hold and coming towards her, "I am not fit to talk to you about it—that is the truth. But if I could only bring you to see that—that this sort of thing must be stopped, that these expressions are of no use—in short, that the marriage is as good as consummated now in Rosamund's mind—you would surely understand to talk differently. When a thing has simply *got to be*——"

"So you say, Hartland; but," replied Lady Julia with quiet persistence, "there is time yet. It cannot possibly take place before some months have passed."

"It ought to take place at once."

Her jaw fell.

"My dear aunt," continued Hartland, more gently, "I know this is hard on you. Perhaps it is on me too. I am not eager for the alliance. But what I said before, I repeat—that for good or ill, Rosamund will now keep her word; and if you had seen her as I did this afternoon—feverish, hurried, tossed, and yet immovable—you would know that it is no kindness to prolong this state of suspense. Once the thing is done, I think

she will be happier,—God knows, I hope so.”

“But you still think she does not love him?”

A spasm crossed his face.

“What do you think?”

Still no reply.

“Do you think she ever can, or ever will?”

With a sort of convulsion the answer came at last.

“No. God help her, *no!* No . . . no . . . no.” And a groan, which could no longer be suppressed, forced itself from between his parted lips as the last word died away.

Lady Julia fell back in her chair. For once in her life power of expression was denied her; and though she remained still and motionless where she was for a long time, only every now and again glancing uneasily round at her companion, she never once addressed him further, and they separated for the night without any attempt at reopening the conversation.

“Yes, she has had a bad night, as I feared she would, Dr Makin,” she announced to the little doctor the following morning. “She was over-excited in the afternoon, talking and seeing people——”

“Major Gilbert was over, I suppose?”

“No, not Major Gilbert. No, he has not seen her yet. But—but others. And they talked as young people do, and forgot that she was an invalid, and could not bear much. If I had been at home—but I was at church, at the afternoon service, and she came into the boudoir, and Lord Hartland joined her there,” proceeded the simple lady, who invariably undid her own infantile efforts at diplomacy the instant after they were made,—“Lord Hartland was with her all the time——”

“Ah!”

“And I found her quite tired out when I came home.”

“That was a pity.”

“And she has been very much exhausted ever since.”

“No breakfast, eh?”

“A cup of tea. Hardly anything besides.”

“Medicine suiting her?”

“She will tell you that best herself. I think her head aches, but it may not have had anything to do with the medicine.”

“Probably it has, though. If a composing draught is not allowed to take effect, it is apt to produce headache. Revenges itself, as it were. Well, we must have no more exciting conversations. Lord Hartland will please to remember that. And as he is not Major Gilbert——”

“She is determined to see Major Gilbert to-day, however,” said Lady Julia. “And I cannot stop it, unless—unless you——” and she regarded her kind old friend and adviser wistfully.

“Suppose we go up and have a peep at our patient first, my lady. I will not let her see any one, nor do anything that is to harm her—you may be sure of that. If Major Gilbert is to prove as bad a companion as Lord Hartland,” smiling, “we must just close the gates, and pull up the drawbridge.” Saying which, he held open the door with his little air of old-fashioned courtesy, and followed his conductor up the staircase.

But his face was longer when he came down again. “She really is by no means so well as on Saturday,” he pronounced very gravely, directly he and Lady Julia were again alone in the drawing-room. “Pulse and temperature both unsatisfactory. No appetite, and a good deal of fever. Colour too bright. Restless eye. I do not

understand all this nervous excitement"—then he raised his head, which had hung down as he ruminated, and cleared his throat with the look of a man who has taken a sudden resolution.

"Lady Julia, I am going to be very plain with you, and you must excuse my saying that I expect you to be equally plain with me. It is no possible good my coming and going and prescribing for my patient, unless I am put in full possession of all the facts of the case. I cannot undertake to benefit your niece in the slightest degree, if anything, any mental disquietude, any undermining source of trouble, is kept back from me. That something of the kind exists, I cannot help surmising. I feel nearly sure that there is something or other weighing on Miss Rosamund's mind, and counteracting all our care. If that be the case, I may as well discontinue my prescriptions, for they will do her no good. Unless we can strike at the real evil——"

——"Oh, if we could!"

To his surprise, Lady Julia made the above ejaculation with an amount of fervour for which he had been unprepared.

"Well, my lady," he began.

"Hush—sh—sh!" rejoined she, in a whisper so imperative and prolonged, that it seemed as if the echo of the final "sh!" would never die away; and then she looked round the large, many-windowed apartment, cautiously and fearfully. "These rooms are so very unsafe," she murmured. "It is almost impossible to be sure of not being overheard in a great room like this, with all these pillars, and stands, and statues. Is that door shut? No. But the sound could hardly have been carried so far. Still, would you oblige me by coming this way?

The library is usually empty at this hour, and Hartland is out, I know, this morning. There we may speak freely; and I own, Dr Makin, I do wish to speak freely. I must have a little unreserved conversation with you. Follow me, if you please." And she led the way to a smaller apartment, yet stately in its own fashion, lined with bookcases, and comfortably supplied with lounging-chairs, writing-tables, and light literature. A fire was burning brightly in the hearth, and its blaze was not the less welcome that the light from the large mullioned window was partially obscured by a heavy folding-screen, drawn midway across to keep out possible draughts. The softest of Turkey carpets completed the luxury of the whole, and rendered a footfall almost inaudible.

Lady Julia advanced nevertheless with a stealthy tread, as though conscious of being on an unusual errand; and it was not until she had first seen that no Lord Hartland was in his usual chair by the fire, that she beckoned her companion to follow, and noiselessly slid the bolt of the door after him.

That done, however, courage appeared to return, and in her wonted quick, energetic tones she plunged at once into the heart of the matter.

"Dr Makin, you are right. Something is preying on Rosamund's mind; and it is this most unhappy, most unfortunate engagement to Major Gilbert which is the cause of her illness. She——"

A look—what was it? A gleam of horror and affright upon the face in front of her! The eyeballs starting from her companion's head! His lips falling apart! His raised, warning, imploring hand! What could it

mean? Upon what was his terrified gaze fixed, above and beyond her?

Upon something, or—oh, heaven!—*some one*? She turned. It was even so. She found herself confronted by Gilbert himself!

At the first sound of her voice he had awakened from a musing fit in the window embrasure, and although he had advanced on the instant, he had not been able to present himself, before he had distinctly caught every syllable uttered in Lady Julia's clearest, most emphatic accents. His movements had not been able to keep pace with her rapidity, and all could now perceive what had been done.

A frozen minute succeeded, grim to look back upon, terrible to experience.

Dr Makin was the first to recover himself. "I will look in again this afternoon," he said, hastily; and the door opened and shut after him, leaving two motionless figures within, breathing silently in each other's faces.

"I heard something so strange just now," said Gilbert at last, speaking slowly, and looking steadily at his companion, "that if I had been in any other house, or if it had been said by any other speaker——"

Lady Julia sank down upon a seat, and covered her face with her hands.

"But you," continued the voice, which should have been familiar to her, and yet was one the like of which she had never heard before—"you, who have been ever a kind friend, a true woman; you, whom I respect and esteem, whom I have ever had cause to be grateful to; you, who alone in this unfriendly neighbourhood have shown me frank hospitality and kindness, have welcomed me to your family hearth——"

"Stop—stop." She put out her hands as though to deny his words, but he took no notice.

"You, I know, would not deceive me, would not resort to such a method——"

"Oh, no—believe me—indeed, indeed——" She wrung her hands in anguish unbearable: no moment of her life had ever been like this.

"And yet I hear you say such words, and say them, too, in such a way, that had they been uttered by any one else—by any man at least—I would have dashed the lie from his lips," proceeded the speaker, with a calm that was far more appalling than tempest. "I hear you tell another, and him no subject for a jest—I hear you make an announcement to him that is so—so strange—that concerns me so nearly, that I can only bid myself to remember you were once my friend, and ask if you were not dreaming—not wandering—when you thus spoke?"

She shook her head. She durst not look at him.

"*Not?*" said he. He paused, and watched her for a few seconds.

"Have you any right—any authority—that you thus dare to make a statement which——" He paused again.

Still no word, no sound emanated from the bowed form at his side.

"Lady Julia, I am entitled to a reply."

"If Hartland were only here!" moaned she at length.

"Lord Hartland!"

"He knows that it is the truth, only the truth; but oh! that you should have heard it thus!"

"If it be the truth, what matters how it is heard? But let me understand you, Lady Julia, and, I beseech you, no trifling. This is life and death to some of us. You spoke of this

‘most unhappy, most unfortunate engagement.’ To whom is it unhappy and unfortunate?”

She winced visibly.

“I have a right to know,” he said. He did not move from where he had taken up his stand by a hair’s-breadth, and the very muscles of his face were rigid.

“It is her I have to think of—my only sister’s own child,” whimpered the frightened, timid woman at last. “Oh, Major Gilbert, you do not know what Rosamund is to me. If she has made a mistake, and has not acted towards you quite as she ought to have done, let me put in one word for the poor child, the poor darling, too young to know better, not able to run alone, and so bitterly, bitterly punished.”

——“Punished!” The word escaped him.

“Punished indeed. Oh, she has suffered—no one knows how she has suffered. Could you not see it? Will you not believe it?”

“When you can explain your meaning, Lady Julia,”—but in spite of the assumed firmness, he was shaken.

“It was a mistake from the very first,” she almost whispered. “You know how closely those poor children had been kept, and, as a matter of fact, you were the first person who had ever been bold enough to pay my poor Rosamund any attention,—lovely as she was, she had scarcely been seen, and she had never seen any one—hardly any one, in return. She admired you—you became a sort of hero in her eyes—indeed in all our eyes, for your noble, your courageous conduct,—and then she thought, she fancied,—in fact, she mistook that feeling for another. My poor sister saw this, and would have saved her; but unhappily her interference roused all

Rosamund’s generous nature. She would not hear the absent attacked. She supposed then that she cared for you, but she did not know herself. She did not know what she was doing. Major Gilbert, will you, can you, have pity on my child? She is so young. And oh, forgive her. She is so miserable.”

He had not, by word or sign, attempted to stem the current of her words. He hearkened attentively, drawing long breaths, but without movement or exclamation; and she felt that if she could only move him, reach him, break through this terrible self-control, it would be worth all the risk and effort.

She began to plead afresh. “What I only saw the other day,” she said, “there was one of us saw long ago——”

——“Who?”—— Like a bolt from a cannon-mouth.

“Hartland warned me it was so——”

“Hartland did, did he?” There was rising passion in the tone. “This is Hartland’s doing, is it? He saw—he whispered—he sympathised—perhaps he even suggested,—oh, I think I see the light now. A peeress?—A coronet?—— She would have been an angel if she had not been tempted. And yet I could have trusted Rosamund,” softening—“I could have believed in Rosamund——”

“Believe in her still. Oh no, she has not been tempted, and he has never tried to tempt her. Would it had been so!” sighed poor Lady Julia, unable to resist the aspiration. “It was what we all wished——”

“And he has been in league with you?”

“He has not—he never would. Oh, long ago, long ago, if they could have—have cared for each

other, we should have been so pleased, so glad,—but it was not to be. No, Major Gilbert, you are altogether wrong about Lord Hartland,” with a fragile attempt at dignity; “there never was anything between them—never.”

“Why, so I thought,” said Gilbert, gloomily. “But what the devil—your pardon, Lady Julia, but what, then, is a fellow to suppose? You tell me he was the first to—to perceive this alteration in my future wife, and what am I to understand from that, but that he had a special motive for such discernment? I suppose Rosamund has confided in you?” he added abruptly.

“No, I cannot say that she exactly has.”

“Not asked advice, nor besought your intercessory good offices—that sort of thing?” scornfully.

“Never, by a single word,” averred Lady Julia, with the utmost solemnity, and not perceiving the extent of such an admission.

“Not!” exclaimed he: his surprise was evidently great, and was followed by a look of doubt and perplexity. “But I thought—I thought—you came straight from Rosamund’s room; I never doubted but that you had her warrant —”

“I had nothing of the kind. She and I have never let one word upon the subject pass between us.”

“More and more strange,” muttered Gilbert, but the cloud upon his brow obviously lifted. “You must allow me to observe then, Lady Julia, that you were hardly justified—though what matters it?” he suddenly cried, with a reaction to joy and relief alike touching and frightful to behold. “My dear lady, I excuse you; I know you mean well; but I believe, from my soul, you are in error. You have been misled by this illness.

You have been upset, and have hit upon a false scent. You have not been all day, and every day, with your niece, as I have of late, and seen this coming on, the result of grief, a shock, a nervous depression all at once. Your own medical man vouches for this attack being one of pure nervous depression. Take my word for it, you have been dwelling on it with exaggerated apprehensions, until they took this form. Possibly you had noticed, and misunderstood, some trifling irritability—Rosamund has been unable to help a little irritability of late—and you connected this with your present fears. Oh, I was a fool, a madman, to take for granted what I did. I will not so wrong her and myself again. Unworthy suspicions of Hartland too! But I scarce knew what I was saying. Let me now go up to Rosamund. I am impatient—can you wonder at it?—to put this misconception straight, although I promise you that I do not fear the result. No, I do not doubt her—not for a moment. She must never know that I once did—it would hurt her too much.”

“Major Gilbert, I cannot let you go up.”

“Is she in a nunnery—is she locked up behind prison bars?” cried he, half angry, half jesting. “Come, Lady Julia, trust me. I will do Rosamund no harm. I am not a boy with no experience of sick-rooms, and I will be as tender as a woman with your charge. She shall not suffer through my seeing her, but see her I must,” he added, in a tone that none would have dared to trifle with. “This is too serious a matter—I had almost said an accusation—to be altogether dismissed, and your good doctor must not be left labouring under a delusion, neither. From Rosamund’s own lips——”

—“She will not give you up,” cried Lady Julia, in an agony.

“I shall not ask her to give me up.”

“Are you going to question her? Oh, Major Gilbert, it was the truth, the solemn truth, you heard from me—”

—“I hardly think it was.”

“Oh dear, oh dear! I cannot say more. I cannot convince you—”

“If it be the truth, Lady Julia, Rosamund can convince me: one word from her—” and he moved towards the door.

“One moment—one moment. I know she will say she will marry you. If that is the question you mean to put to her—”

—“It is not the question.”

“I have not come to torture you, my dear, nor to blame you. You have told me truly, as in the sight of heaven, the one thing I cared to know, and why need I remain for more? You no longer love me. All is over between us.”

The brave soldier knew the worst, and faced it thus.

“I should never, never have told you. Frederick, God knows I meant to be—to be a good wife to you,” faltered the pale, death-like lips before him. “I have been so miserable, so ashamed”—between heavy sobs—“and I had been going now to be so different. Let me try. Only let me try. Frederick, there is still time, and I can, I will—if you will bear with me, if you will but have a little patience, and—and trust me once again.”

“Do you and myself a great wrong, Rosamund?”

“Oh no—not now. Not now that you know all. I ought to have told you myself, ought I not? They said so, but—but I was such a coward, and I thought, I fancied

things might come round without that. You have forgiven me, haven’t you? And you will let me try, won’t you? None but ourselves need ever know, nor guess about—about to-day. Let it be so, Frederick. Let it be between us two. You will help me to—”

—“Deceive the world? Is that my proud, pure, spotless Rosamund? Would she go with me before the altar with a lie in her mouth? Would she let me place a lie upon her finger? Give me her fair cheek to press a lie upon?”

“Oh no! Oh, not that!”

“No, not that. You could not do that, Rosamund. You could not carry it through, even if you were to try. Many a woman could—but not you. See now, you have broken down already, broken down at the very outset, and that so palpably that others have seen it, though I was blind. Do you really think that you could vow in the sight of heaven to love, honour, and obey me—”

—“But I would, I *would* do them all.”

“Your will is strong,” he said sadly, “but it has been beaten in the fight already. You do not love me, you could not—”

—“At least I could honour and obey.”

“The words are nothing,” said Gilbert, with a momentary impatience, “the spirit would not be there—it is dead already. Do not press me further, Rosamund; I am not a hasty man. You have no cause to fear that I shall ever reconsider this decision, or impertune you further. Here we part, and part for ever. There is no ill-will between us.” His chest heaved. “I think I shall always care for you,” he said.

“Oh, stop! Oh, this is dreadful!”—she caught his hand.

He smiled drearily. "Not so dreadful as it might have been. Be thankful it has not come too late for both of us. You will grow well, and forget, and be happy. If you should marry Hartland——"

——"Marry Hartland!" Her surprise was evident and genuine. He looked keenly at her. "It was a mere idea; I ought not to have given it utterance. Still, I am glad I did; glad to know——"

"Good heaven! you did not suspect me—or him—of such a thing?" cried Rosamund, in new agitation. "Yet what right have I"—with a fresh burst of tears—"to feel insulted by any suspicion? But Hartland, what has *he* done?"

"I will tell you, Rosamund. Lady Julia let fall that he had been the first to penetrate the secret of your altered looks, and such quickness——"

"But it was on your account, Frederick, indeed it was. If you had heard how coldly, how harshly he spoke to me, if you had seen how little he seemed to care for *my* pain! He was kinder afterwards; but even now,"—and her lip trembled afresh.

"Yes, I believe he has acted a fair and honourable part by me," said Gilbert, after a pause; "he——"

——"He has—he has."

"So be it. Bid him 'farewell' from me, and assure him of my—of every kind feeling. Tell Lady Julia I pray her to forgive anything I may have said unkind or disrespectful just now, when I was hardly master of myself. I shall see your father, and personally acquaint him with the truth. I will save you all I can. And now,"—he took her hand,—“and now, my one, my only love—the time is passing—and we may

never meet again upon this earth—say one kind word—give me one look—one kiss,"—she sobbed aloud, but there was no moisture in his eye,—“do not let it trouble you; but if you could say it,” he murmured, “let me have this one assurance to carry through life, that whatever may be the present state of your heart, you loved me *once*—you loved me that one happy day?”

She tried to speak, but could not.

"Nay, then, I will not press it." He misinterpreted the evident struggle. "I see I was in a fool's paradise——"

——"No." The answer came in a hoarse, quivering whisper at last. "No. You were not. Not then. Not at that time."

"Was I not? You *did* care?" A gleam stole over his brow.

"I did. Believe me. I truly did."

"You did love me—or at least you thought so?"

"Yes; indeed, yes."

"That, then, at least, is still my own. Thank God for that. I may dare to treasure that one remembrance—that broken spar from off the wreck. All the rest is gone—gone." He put his hands before his eyes for a moment, removed them, gazed long and earnestly upon her face, then turned to go.

"Farewell," he said, "farewell. I shall leave this neighbourhood as soon as possible, and England likewise. You shall not be troubled with me. Farewell, Rosamund,"—he stood still for a moment, then, as if impelled by an irresistible agency, stepped to her side, lifted the moist tresses from her cheek, kissed it once again, raised his eyes, as though praying heaven to bless her as he did so—and was gone.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—“JILTED! IT’S AN UGLY WORD.”

“What signifies breaking some scores of solemn promises? All that’s of no consequence, you know. To be sure, people will say that Miss didn’t know her own mind, but never mind that. Or, perhaps, they may be ill-natured enough to hint that the gentleman grew tired of the lady; but don’t let that fret you.”—*The Rivals*.

“What has happened? What has been going on here? What have you been doing?” cried Hartland, in burning accents, as he burst in upon his aunt a few minutes after. “Something has been done. I met a man going out—a man with a death-blow written on his face—as I came in just now. Speak! what has Gilbert heard? And who has told him?”

“Oh, my dear, it was not my fault. Do not look at me like that. I have done nothing—or, at least, I did not mean to do anything; but by the strangest, the most extraordinary mischance, he heard——”

——“He heard! Heard from whom?”

“I hardly yet know how it was. But it is done——”

——“Done? Yes. I should say so. But how? Quick—for heaven’s sake, be quick, and tell me how.”

“He was in the library, waiting, I suppose, for you. No one had told me he was there, or, indeed, that he had come over at all. I suppose he had not been shown into the drawing-room because the doctor was there. Dr Makin had just told me plainly that he could do our dear Rosamund no good, unless he were made acquainted with all her secret trouble——”

——“What did he know of Rosamund’s secret trouble?”

“A medical eye, Hartland——”

——“Confound his medical eye! He has had the chance of hearing and seeing, and has put two and

two together. So *he* informed Gilbert?”

“Indeed, no. It was *I* who was informing *him*——”

——“Him—Makin?”

“I had no choice. When a doctor insists upon it——”

——“And Gilbert overheard you? But——” He could not understand such overhearing. “I had always thought him the soul of honour,” he muttered.

“It was not Major Gilbert’s fault: he could not avoid it. Unluckily—though I can hardly say ‘unluckily,’ for we must be thankful——”

——“Well, ma’am, well? Wait a bit to be thankful. Be thankful at another time,” cried Hartland, beside himself with anxiety, and the dread that anything had been done unworthy of their name. “You were in the act of telling Makin about the engagement—no doubt with all your own comments and interpretations. May I ask if you had proceeded far? Had you mentioned names?”

“I had hardly said a dozen words; but, unfortunately, or rather——”

——“Oh, fortunately or unfortunately—anything. He heard the fact?”

“Yes.”

“How? In what words? Can you remember? Pray try to remember.”

“I remember only too well, for during all that dreadful silence which followed the disclosure, I kept repeating them over and over in my mind, to make sure what it really was that he had heard——”

—“Well, what were they?”

“I told Dr Makin that he had been right in supposing a trouble was weighing on Rosamund’s mind, and that this trouble was her unhappy, unfortunate engagement to Major Gilbert. I had scarcely named his name, when I saw by Dr Makin’s face that something was wrong, and there stood Major Gilbert himself behind me. Just here,” pointing to the spot. “I have not left the room since. I have not dared to stir, for fear of meeting him again.”

“How had he allowed you to proceed so far?” said Hartland, frowning.

“It was impossible for him to make known his presence sooner. He had to get out from behind the folds of the screen; and probably he had not realised the presence of any one until after I had begun to speak. Even then, he would not suppose there could be anything very private in an opening sentence.”

“True,” said Hartland, thoughtfully.

“No, he was not to blame,” proceeded Lady Julia, who could afford to do her vanquished foe such justice. “It took but a few seconds for me to say what I did, and then—there he was.”

“I suppose he was terribly shocked and—and overcome?”

“My dear Hartland, I was so frightened I could not look at him. But his voice—his tone—” She shuddered at the remembrance.

“Did he believe in it?—I mean, at once?”

“I think so—at first; and then again he did not. He hardly seemed to know how to take it. He was very quiet—very self-restrained; but every moment he seemed to me to increase in a kind of dreadful power as long as

he stood over me, piercing me through and through with those great, hungry, raging eyes—”

“There—that will do!” cried Hartland, with a sickened look; “I know. I can see them. Good God! that a woman should have dared to inflict such anguish!” And he turned away, his own face working in strong emotion.

“He is gone now,” almost whispered Lady Julia.

“Gone—and for ever. I tell you he has left this house—our house—cursing it in his heart. He has been befooled and betrayed among us. Among us he has been led into a snare that may be his ruin. What do you care? What do you think about the end of all this? You women—you don’t know how hard it goes with a man to be held up to pity among his comrades—to pity, and to ridicule; to being talked about, and laughed about, and told there are others, and instructed to forget, and bidden to begin again. Jilted! It’s an ugly word. Can a man pardon it? I think, hardly. And he loved her—loved her, and trusted her. His faith in her was so perfect that it undid all her reckless attempts to undeceive him. He could not disbelieve. What it must have cost him to disbelieve at last!”

“I am afraid I have not thought enough of that,” said poor Lady Julia, her better nature asserting itself. “Certainly I ought to remember how very sad and painful this must be for poor Major Gilbert.”

“Sad and painful!” almost shouted Hartland; “I—I—better not speak of it, ma’am: I doubt if you know what pain is. I did, once. I don’t like to think of that time. We need not discuss this further, I think: you had better go to Rosamund; and I, to—the

devil," he muttered between his teeth, distracted by shame, and a dim and lurking sense of guilt.

Lady Julia, only too thankful to be released from a second interview, little less inferior in its terror to that which had preceded it, flew like the wind—or, to be more exact, panted up the broad staircase as fast as she could—to the boudoir, and scarcely waiting to have her tap at the door answered—for not to tap at such a time would have seemed ungenerous—she entered, and found her niece, not, as she had expected, excited, impatient, tearful, ready to be comforted and caressed, and at heart inexpressibly relieved—but in a state requiring immediate physical attention.

Pale as death, spent with weeping, unable to utter a sound or raise a limb, Rosamund half lay, half crouched among the cushions of the little settee upon which she had sunk when Gilbert left her. A feeble moan, a raising of the heavy eyelids, which fell again instantly, and a nerveless, ineffectual effort to stretch forth a hand which also dropped at once, were the only indications given of her being conscious any one had entered.

She seemed as one in whom all powers of thought and feeling were for the time suspended, leaving only an agonised sense of utter weakness,—as one so bruised, and crushed, and numb, that the very life itself was fast ebbing away.

Lady Julia stood still, her own heart turning cold at the sight.

All inquiry had been answered and expression checked by that mute, stricken figure, those swollen eyelids: even now as she looked, a watery thread trickled down the cheek, on to the soft pillow beneath, and was left to dry itself.

"Not even strength to care

about that," murmured the beholder. "I am well punished. I little thought that when I gave out she was so ill before, it was so soon to be the simple truth. This has half killed her. Oh, God, spare the child!" and with the cry she fell upon her knees, and prayed as she had never prayed before.

And Rosamund was very ill.

Day and night succeeded each other, and week after week likewise, while she still lay on that bed of sickness, mind and body alike prostrate, knowing nothing, and caring for nothing, beyond what passed within the four walls around her, the dim workings of her overclouded brain never going beyond the little events of the sick-room's daily routine, and all the outer world a blank.

No one ever spoke hardly of Rosamund, even when her tale came to be told. It was felt that, however great might have been the mischief she had wrought, and the wrong she had inflicted, she had nearly expiated all with her life.

Let us now return to others.

Gilbert, on passing out into the raw chilly air of that December morning, with all his dearest hopes blasted and his future in ruins, was too much under the stimulus of strong excitement to give even a passing heed to anything beyond the exigencies of the immediate present. By the aid of this spur, he was enabled, without hesitation, to proceed upon what his clear resolute mind decided must be done on the instant, and allowing himself no time either for doubts or repentance, he strode along towards King's Common at a pace which brought him there before it seemed that he had well started on his way.

Mr Liscard was out—but the

young ladies were at home. They were going in to luncheon.

Luncheon! A faint pang just made itself felt at the word. Luncheon is a cold and awkward meal, contrasting unfavourably with the cosy tea, or the glowing, genial dinner,—but it had suited his military arrangements to come over at that hour, and with it was connected as much or more than with anything else, the dead past.

To go in now as before! To sit in the accustomed spot! To look round the accustomed room, and mark all the old arrangements and habits, and feel that he was seeing these for the last time, and that even now, even while there, it was another than the Frederick Gilbert, who had been wont to fill that place, who was present at this time! And he himself—where was he?

Pulling himself together as well as he could, he looked at the footman who had answered his summons, wondering if aught amiss in his speech or appearance had been visible, and repeated the word "Luncheon?" as an excuse for taking a moment's time to think. Could he endure it, and go through with it?

"The gong has just sounded, sir."

"No one else is there, you say?"

"No one but the young ladies, sir," and the man stood aside with so evident an expectation, such an air of "It is all right. You are one of us. Pray be quick," that it was irresistible.

Loathsome as was the vision of food, and fuss, and talk, and laughter, the ordeal must be gone through; and it began, as might have been foreseen, with the sisters' first sight of his face. They sprang forward.

"Frederick! What is wrong? What is the matter? Why do you look like that?"

He kissed them both.

"Now, look here," he said, taking a firm, determined grip of each one's hand—"look here. Listen. There *is* something wrong. There *is* something the matter. But I can't tell you what till afterwards, and do not say one word about it till I can. Don't remark upon me—nor take notice of anything—nor ask a question. We must come in now, and keep still before the servants. Now, remember," and he unlocked their hands. "You will know soon enough," he added under his breath.

"One thing, brother, only one," implored Emily. "Rosamund? Is it about her?"

"Yes." His mouth shut as if it were a vice, and he turned on his heel, and walked through the open door into the dining-room, leaving them to follow.

"She must be worse, and the marriage is put off, I suppose," whispered the one to the other. "I know he has been there. He was to see her to-day. Poor Frederick, he seems regularly to feel it."

"And after all, it is no great matter; it is all very nice as it is," nodded back the other.

They saw that Frederick poured himself out a glass of wine, and suffered food to be placed before him, and made a feint of eating for as long as the servants remained in the room, but it took little observation to perceive that no morsel in reality crossed his lips; and, as they further noted that from time to time he glanced impatiently at their plates and then at the clock, they understood to hasten their own proceedings to a close.

"Are you ready?" he asked, perceiving this.

"Yes, brother," replied both, simultaneously.

"That's well. We shall just do it," taking out his watch, and comparing it with the timepiece in front of him. "Yes, we have half an hour. I suppose they can bring a carriage round in half an hour."

"A carriage has been ordered for half-past two as it is," said Henrietta. "We are going in to Longminster to fetch Mr Liscard, and we were to start early, in order to have the whole afternoon before us."

"For Mr Liscard is going to take us a long delightful drive," added Emily, with animation, "through a part of the country we have never seen before."

"At what time did you say? When was there a carriage ordered?" demanded Gilbert, waving aside with a frown the superfluous communication. "At what o'clock?"

"At half-past two."

"That will do; but what carriage was it to be? It must hold four."

"The mail-phaeton, if the weather kept clear."

"It *is* clear," glancing out; "we must have the phaeton. But it must be punctually here at the time, or as soon as we can get it now," and he rang the bell.

"If we are not going for Mr Liscard, brother," suggested Emily, "ought not some one to meet him and tell him so? He expects us, and will wait——"

——"The phaeton can go on after it drops you at the station; I will take it on myself."

"At the station?"

They had not anticipated this: they had severally conjectured, in the brief time given them for conjecture, that something was amiss at the Abbey, and that they had been sent for thither,—but they were altogether thrown out by this

new revelation. They now glanced mutely at each other while Gilbert, in curt, imperative tones, gave the orders; and on his next motioning them in silence towards the room they had quitted, he was obeyed with ever-growing uneasiness. His set face, the stern forbidding air, so unlike the gay spirits which usually characterised their light-hearted brother, brought an increasing conviction that they stood on the brink of a precipice from which he had already plunged.

"What are we now to do, Frederick?" inquired the elder at last; "shall we——" and she looked for commands.

"Yes, you must get yourselves ready, and as quickly as you can. But wait—just a moment first;" he stopped, then began again, and was again unable to proceed.

"Look here," he said at last, in a strained, husky undertone; "it is of no use, I can't do it. I meant to tell you all, but I find I can't—yet. You must not mind. You must do as I bid you without knowing why, for the present. I think you would—you will, when you know what I—what we all have to bear."

"Yes, brother." And they came close to him at once.

He looked at one, and then at the other; but they knew that he hardly saw their faces—that he was lost in something different.

"This is what you have to do," he said, presently. "I know it is hard on you, but try not to mind. Go up-stairs and put on your things for a journey. You are going home to-day. You are going by the three o'clock train."

Both uttered an ejaculation.

"You would not yourselves wish to stay, if you did but know," muttered Gilbert. "Now listen. You are going straight home, as I said. You will tell our father and

mother that I am writing to explain why. I will write by this evening's post——"

——"But, Frederick——"

"Well?"

"Our luggage. Our trunks cannot be packed in the time."

"They must be sent after you. Leave word. Drop a pencil line to Catharine."

"But what are we to say? What reason are we to give?" The two doleful voices roused a sense of irritation in their listener, to whom it seemed as if they could have nothing to grieve for, and might have spared him.

"You have nothing to do with reasons," he replied, sharply. "I will myself see Mr Liscard, and give him the true one. But stay," he added, after a second's reflection; "for the look of the thing, tell Catharine that you were called home suddenly, and had no time to say 'Good-bye.' By the way, where is she to-day?" suddenly missing her.

"Miss Penrose has a sort of examination, and gives prizes for the half-year, and I believe Catharine hoped to get one. She did not wish to miss it——"

"Well, well, never mind. It was lucky it happened so, that's all. Now, be quick, and"—here he once more looked fixedly at each,—"and be silent. Do not be overheard talking and conjecturing. Walls have ears." And he flung himself into a new attitude, as though stung by a sudden recollection.

They took their departure.

"Emily, Emily, what is it? What can it be? Oh, Em, I am so sorry; it is so horrible. To be packed off like this, just when we were so happy, and were having such a delightful, delightful time! And Frederick seemed as pleased as we, only last night, and laughed

at you about—you know whom. It is too bad. . . . I shall travel in my best hat—I shan't go away a dowdy from a place like this. . . . Oh dear, oh dear, to be going away at all!"

"It will make Mr Liscard very angry," said Emily, sitting gloomily down to lace her boots. "I should not in the least wonder if he was to send after us, and bring us back. If only he had not been away from home to-day!"

"Do you really mean that?" cried Etta, brightening with the idea. "Why, then, we need not hurry about the luggage. Em, let us say nothing about it. Forget it, you know. Then we could just slip quietly back again, as if nothing had happened."

"We must just mention it. Frederick is sure to ask if we have, or not. Frederick never overlooks anything, and we must do what he says, Etta, whether we like it or not. But I can say,"—scribbling as fast as she could,— "I can say that it does not signify about sending it for a day or two, as we have plenty of things at home, and do not want to trouble any one. There, that will give us a little more time. And if it be as I suppose, that Rosamund is in for a long illness, and that people have been disagreeable, and telling Frederick that it is not nice for us to stay on here, and have made him declare in a huff that we shall go home, why, if he had only not been in such a hurry, we could soon have put things straight. Mr Liscard would not have heard of our going. He needs us all the more if Rosamund is going to be ill, and stop on at the Abbey. And now that we have got Catharine, and have made all proper——"

"Only listen to that dear old sheep-bell!" cried Etta, running to the window and opening it. "Oh,

to think that we are never perhaps to hear it again! And I do love this view of the lovely park, with its great trees, and the deer, and the beautiful, broad avenue. I had got to feel quite at home here, hadn't you? And I am sure I had never thought I should. And I don't mind the men-servants a bit, now that I am used to them, nor all the grandeur. Oh, how happy we were only an hour ago, planning out every day this week, and—oh, Em, the Waterfields—what are we to do about the Waterfields?"

"We must leave cards to be sent," said Em, profoundly. "Mr Liscard will see to it, I am sure."

"You always think first of Mr Liscard," observed her sister, with a smile. "I declare, Em, I wonder whether our going like this can possibly have anything to do with Mr Liscard."

"Nonsense!" said Emily, who had already been wondering the same thing. "But I am very sure he will be vexed about it," she added, "and I do think he ought to have been told. There—that's my brooch pin gone! I knew it was loose yesterday. And where *are* a pair of gloves? All our things are in such a muddle. I had meant to tidy them up only to-day. We never seem to have a moment when we come in to put things by, and I do think Rosamund's maid might have helped us more than she has." The truth being that Rosamund's maid had not helped at all. The pampered domestics of King's Common, accustomed to judge of every one by the standard of their late mistress, had speedily left the Miss Gilberts to shift for themselves, as soon as they found that their first formal tenders of assistance had been rejected. Young ladies who brought no maid, and dressed their own hair, could do anything.

"I daresay half our things won't come," quoth Henrietta now; "I don't at all like leaving them."

Emily felt as if she hardly cared whether they came or not; and the first stroke on the gong, telling of the carriage being round, struck on her ear as the knell of doom. They hurried down, and found their brother in the hall. "Have you left any money?" he said aside.

They had not thought of it.

"Here,"—he took some gold pieces from his purse. "Give these: you know best how. Look sharp."

"Brother! Sovereigns!"

"Give them, I say. No, stop, there is no time to lose. Give them to Badeley here, and ask him to see they go to the right persons."

She did so, and returned. Henrietta was already in the carriage.

"Get in, quick," said her brother, impatiently, and was by her side on the instant, Etta having humbly taken the back seat.

"To the Abbey, sir?"

"To the station."

The sisters glanced at him. He bit his nether lip as he spoke. He was looking straight in front. His arms were folded.

There was something so stern, so hopeless in his air, a resolution so immovable in his countenance, that involuntarily they shrank and quailed before it.

He sat, an iron figure, with front of adamant, and eyes deep-set and burning beneath lowered brows, as one who neither sees nor hears aught of the passing scene;—and beholding him thus, they themselves scarce durst move or breathe,—realising more and more that they were in a presence all unknown before—the presence of an awful sorrow.

ON THE DARK MOUNTAINS.

I.

WHAT is written here belongs to the experiences of a woman whose humble career had terminated in great yet modest promotion in another world than ours. This traveller between life and death, this little pilgrim, had been in her further development very curious to see and hear all that could be learned in the wonderful country in which her abode was fixed concerning the race of men; and all the wonderful ways of the Father in respect to those children of His who were not as His children in the other worlds, but exposed to adversity and sorrow and trouble, which are but as names to the others—those things which the angels desire to look into, and which are the subject of story and of song not only in the little world below, but in the great realms above. She had seen what the dealings of the Father were in the hearts of men, and how till the end came He did not cease to send His messengers to plead in every heart, and to hold a court of justice that no man might be deceived, but each know whither his steps were tending, and what was the way of wisdom. And it had been permitted to her to read in the archives of the heavenly country the story of one who, neglecting all that the advocates of God could say, had found himself, when the little life was completed, not upon the threshold of a better country, but in the midst of the Land of Darkness—that region in which the souls of men are left by God to their own devices, and the Father stands aloof, and hides His face and calls them not, neither

persuades them more. Over this story the little pilgrim had shed many tears: for she knew well, being enlightened in her great simplicity by the heavenly wisdom, that it was pain and grief to the Father to turn away His face; and that no one who has but the little heart of a man can imagine to himself what that sorrow is in the being of the great God. And a great awe came over her mind at the thought, which seemed well-nigh a blasphemy, that He could grieve: yet in her heart, being His child, she knew that it was true. And her own little spirit throbbled through and through with longing and with desire. “And oh!” she said, “if I could but go! There is nothing which could make a child afraid, save to see them suffer. What are darkness and terror when the Father is with you? I am not afraid—if I might but go!” And by reason of her often pleading, and of the thought that was ever in her mind, it was at last said that one of those who knew might instruct her, and show her by what way alone the travellers who come from that miserable land could approach and be admitted on high.

“I know,” she said, “that between us and them there is a gulf fixed, and that they who would come from thence cannot come, neither can any one——”

But here she stopped in great dismay, for it seemed that she had thus answered her own longing and prayer.

The guide who had come for her smiled upon her and said, “But

that was before the Lord had ended His work. And now all the paths are free—wherever there is a mountain-pass or a river-ford: the roads are all blessed, and they are all open, and no barriers for those who will.”

“Oh,” she cried, “dear friend, is that true for all?”

He looked away from her into the depths of the lovely air, and he replied: “Little sister, our faith is without bounds, but not our knowledge. I who speak to you am no more than a man. The princes and powers that are in high places know more than I; but if there be any place where a heart can stir and cry out to the Father and He take no heed—if it be only in a groan—if it be only with a sigh—I know not that place: yet many depths I know.” He put out his hand and took hers, after a pause, and then he said, “There are some who are stumbling upon the dark mountains. Come and see.”

As they passed along there were many who paused to look at them, for he had the mien of a great prince—a lord among men—and his face still bore the trace of sorrow and toil, and there was about him an awe and wonder which was more than could be put in words; but those who saw him understood as he went by, not who he was, nor what he had been, but that he had come out of great tribulation, of sorrow beyond the sorrows of men. The sweetness of the heavenly country had soothed away his care, and taken the cloud from his face; but he was as yet unaccustomed to smile—though when he remembered and looked round him, and saw that all was well, his countenance lightened like the morning sky, and his eyes woke up in splendour like the sun rising. The

little pilgrim did not know who her brother was, but yet gave thanks to God for him she knew not why.

How far they went cannot be estimated in words, for distance matters little in that place; but at the end they came to a path which sloped a little downwards to the edge of a delightful moorland country, all brilliant with the hues of the mountain flowers. It was like a flowery plateau high among the hills, in a region where are no frosts to check the glow of the flowers, or scorch the grass. It spread far around in hollows and ravines and softly swelling hills, with the rush over them of a cheerful breeze full of mountain scents and sounds; and high above them rose the mountain-heights of the celestial world, veiled in those blue breadths of distance which are heaven itself when man’s fancy ascends to them from the low world at their feet. All the little earth can do in colour and mists, and travelling shadows fleet as the breath, and the sweet steadfast shining of the sun, was there, but with a tenfold splendour. They rose up into the sky, every peak and jagged rock all touched with the light and the smile of God, and every little blossom on the turf rejoicing in the warmth and freedom and peace. The heart of the little pilgrim swelled, and she cried out, “There is nothing so glorious as the everlasting hills. Though the valleys and the plains are sweet, they are not like them. They say to us, Lift up your heart!”

Her guide smiled, but he did not speak. His smile was full of joy, but grave, like that of a man whose thoughts are bent on other things: and he pointed where the road wound downward by the feet of these triumphant hills.

She kept her eyes upon them as she moved along. Those heights rose into the very sky, but bore upon them neither snow nor storm. Here and there a whiteness like a film of air rounded out over a peak, and she recognised that it was one of those angels who travel far and wide with God's commissions, going to the other worlds that are in the firmament as in a sea. The softness of these films of white was like the summer clouds that she used to watch in the blue of the summer sky in the little world which none of its children can cease to love: and she wondered now whether it might not sometimes have been the same dear angels whose flight she had watched unknowing, higher than thought could soar or knowledge penetrate. Watching those floating heavenly messengers, and the heights of the great miraculous mountains rising up into the sky, the little pilgrim ceased to think whither she was going, although she knew from the feeling of the ground under her feet that she was descending, still softly, but more quickly than at first, until she was brought to herself by the sensation of a great wind coming in her face, cold as from a sudden vacancy. She turned her head quickly from gazing above to what was before her, and started with a cry of wonder. For below lay a great gulf of darkness, out of which rose at first some shadowy peaks and shoulders of rock, all falling away into a gloom which eyes accustomed to the sunshine could not penetrate. Where she stood was the edge of the light—before her feet lay a line of shadow slowly darkening out of daylight into twilight, and beyond into that measureless blackness of night; and the wind in her face was like that which comes from a great depth below of either sea or land

—the sweep of the current which moves a vast atmosphere in which there is nothing to break its force. The little pilgrim was so startled by these unexpected sensations that she caught the arm of her guide in her sudden alarm, and clung to him, lest she should fall into the terrible darkness and the deep abyss below.

"There is nothing to fear," he said, "there is a way. To us who are above there is no danger at all—and it is the way of life to those who are below."

"I see nothing," she cried, "save a few points of rock, and the precipice—the pit which is below. Oh, tell me what is it?—is it where the fires are and despair dwells? I did not think that was true. Let me go and hide myself and not see it, for I never thought that was true."

"Look again," said the guide.

The little pilgrim shrank into a crevice of the rock, and uncovering her eyes, gazed into the darkness; and because her nature was soft and timid there came into her mind a momentary fear. Her heart flew to the Father's footstool, and cried out to Him, not any question or prayer, but only "Father, Father!" and this made her stand erect, and strengthened her eyes, so that the gloom even of hell could no more make her afraid. Her guide stood beside with a steadfast countenance, which was grave yet full of a solemn light. And then all at once he lifted up his voice, which was sonorous and sweet like the sound of an organ, and uttered a shout so great and resounding that it seemed to come back in echoes from every hollow and hill. What he said the little pilgrim could not understand; but when the echoes had died away and silence followed, something came

up through the gloom—a sound that was far, far away, and faint in the long distance, a voice that sounded no more than an echo. When he who had called out heard it, he turned to the little pilgrim with eyes that were liquid with love and pity—“Listen,” he said, “there is some one on the way.”

“Can we help them?” cried the little pilgrim: her heart bounded forward like a bird. She had no fear. The darkness and the horrible way seemed as nothing to her. She stretched out her arms as if she would have seized the traveller and dragged him up into the light.

He who was by her side shook his head, but with a smile. “We can but wait,” he said. “It is forbidden that any one should help. For this is too terrible and strange to be touched even by the hands of angels. It is like nothing that you know.”

“I have been taught many things,” said the little pilgrim, humbly. “I have been taken back to the dear earth, where I saw the judgment-seat, and the pleaders who spoke, and the man who was the judge—and how each is judge for himself.”

“You have seen the place of hope,” said her guide, “where the Father is and the Son, and where no man is left to his own ways. But there is another country, where there is no voice either from God or from good spirits, and where those who have refused are left to do as seems good in their own eyes.”

“I have read,” said the little pilgrim, with a sob, “of one who went from city to city and found no rest.”

Her guide bowed his head very gravely in assent. “They go from place to place,” he said, “if haply

they might find one in which it is possible to live. Whether it is order or whether it is licence, it is according to their own will. They try all things, ever looking for something which the soul may endure. And new cities are founded from time to time, and a new endeavour ever and ever to live, only to live. For even when happiness fails and content, and work is vanity and effort is naught, it is something if a man can but endure to live.”

The little pilgrim looked at him with wistful eyes, for what he said was beyond her understanding. “For us,” she said, “life is nothing but joy. Oh, brother, is there then condemnation?”

“It is no condemnation, it is what they have chosen—it is to follow their own way. There is no longer any one to interfere. The pleaders are all silent: there is no voice in their hearts. The Father hinders them not, nor helps them: but leaves them.” He shivered as if with cold; and the little pilgrim felt that there breathed from the depths of darkness at their feet an icy wind which touched her hands and feet and chilled her heart. She shivered too, and drew close to the rock for shelter, and gazed at the awful cliffs rising out of the gloom, and the paths that disappeared at her feet, leading down, down into that abyss—and her heart failed within her to think that below there were souls that suffered, and that the Father and the Son were not there. He the All-loving, the All-present—how could it be that He was not there?”

“It is a mystery,” said the man who was her guide, and who answered to her thought. “When I set my foot upon this blessed land I knew that there, even

there, He is. But in that country His face is hidden, and even to name His name is anguish, for then do men understand what has befallen them, who can say that name no more."

"That is death indeed," she cried; and the wind came up silent with a wild breath that was more awful than the shriek of a storm: for it was like the stifled utterances of all those miserable ones who have no voice to call upon God, and know not where He is nor how to pronounce His name.

"Ah," said he, "if we could have known what death was! We had believed in death in the time of all great illusions, in the time of the gentle life, in the day of hope. But in the land of darkness there are no illusions, and every man knows that though he should fling himself into the furnace of the gold, or be cut to pieces by the knives, or trampled under the dancers' feet, yet that it will be but a little more pain, and that death is not, nor any escape that way."

"Oh, brother!" she cried, "you have been there?"

He turned and looked upon her, and she read as in a book things which tongue of man cannot say—the anguish and the rapture, the unforgotten pang of the lost, the joy of one who has been delivered after hope was gone.

"I have been there: and now I stand in the light, and have seen the face of the Lord, and can speak His blessed name." And with that he burst forth into a great melodious cry, which was not like that which he had sent into the dark depths below, but mounted up like the sounding of silver trumpets and all joyful music, giving a voice to the sweet air and the fresh winds which blew about the hills of God. But the words he said were not

comprehensible to his companion, for they were in the secret tongue which is between the Father and His child, and known to none but to them alone. Yet only to hear the sound was enough to transport all who listened, and to make them know what joy is and peace. The little pilgrim wept for happiness to hear her brother's voice. But in the midst of it her ear was caught by another sound—a faint cry which tingled up from the darkness like a note of a muffled bell—and she turned from the joy and the light, and flung out her arms and her little voice towards him who was stumbling upon the dark mountains. And "Come," she cried, "Come, come!" forgetting all things save that one was there in the darkness, while here was light and peace.

"It is nearer," said her guide, hearing, even in the midst of his triumph song, that faint and distant cry; and he took her hand and drew her back, for she was upon the edge of the precipice gazing into the black depths, which revealed nothing save the needles of the awful rocks and sheer descents below. "The moment will come," he said, "when we can help—but it is not yet."

Her heart was in the depths with him who was coming, whom she knew not save that he was coming, toiling upwards towards the light; and it seemed to her that she could not contain herself, nor wait till he should appear, nor draw back from the edge, where she might hold out her hands to him and save him some single step, if no more. But presently her heart returned to her brother who stood by her side, and who was delivered, and with whom it was meet that all should rejoice, since he had fought and conquered, and reached the land of light. "Oh,"

she said, "it is long to wait while he is still upon these dark mountains. Tell me how it came to you to find the way."

He turned to her with a smile, though his ear too was intent, and his heart fixed upon the traveller in the darkness, and began to tell her his tale to beguile the time of waiting, and to hold within bounds the pity that filled her heart. He told her that he was one of many who came from the pleasant earth together, out of many countries and tongues; and how they had gone here and there each man to a different city, and how they had crossed each other's paths coming and going, yet never found rest for their feet. And how there was a little relief in every change, and one sought that which another left; and how they wandered round and round over all the vast and endless plain, until at length, in revolt from every other way, they had chosen a spot upon the slope of a hill, and built there a new city, if perhaps something better might be found there. And how it had been built with towers and high walls, and great gates to shut it in, so that no stranger should find entrance. And how every house was a palace, with statues of marble, and pillars so precious with beautiful work, and arches so lofty and so fair, that they were better than had they been made of gold; yet gold was not wanting, nor diamond stones that shone like stars, and everything more beautiful and stately than heart could conceive.

"And while we built and laboured," he said, "our hearts were a little appeased. And it was called the city of Art, and all was perfect in it, so that nothing had ever been seen to compare with it for beauty: and we walked upon the battlements and looked over

the plain and viewed the dwellers there, who were not as we. And we went on to fill every room and every hall with carved work in stone and beaten gold, and pictures and woven tissues that were like the sun-gleams and the rainbows of the pleasant earth. And crowds came around envying us and seeking to enter. But we closed our gates and drove them away. And it was said among us that life would now become as of old, and everything would go well with us as in the happy days."

The little pilgrim looked up into his face, and for pity of his pain (though it was past) almost wished that *that* could have come true.

"But when the work was done," he said: and for a moment no more.

"Oh, brother! when the work was done?"

"You do not know what it is," he said, "to be ten times more powerful and strong, to want no rest, to have fire in your veins, to have the craving in your heart above everything that is known to man. When the work was done, we glared upon each other with hungry eyes, and each man wished to thrust forth his neighbour and possess all to himself. And then we ceased to take pleasure in it, notwithstanding that it was beautiful; and there were some who would have beaten down the walls and built them anew—and some would have torn up the silver and gold, and tossed out the fair statues and the adornments in scorn and rage to the meaner multitudes below. And we, who were the workers, began to contend one against another to satisfy the gnawings of the rage that was in our hearts. For we had deceived ourselves, thinking once more that all would be well: while all the time nothing was changed, and we

were but as the miserable ones that rushed from place to place."

Though all this wretchedness was over and past, it was so terrible to think of that he paused and was silent a while. And the little pilgrim put her hand upon his arm in her great pity to soothe him, and almost forgot that there was another traveller not yet delivered upon the way. But suddenly at that moment there came up through the depths the sound of a fall, as if the rocks had crashed from a hundred peaks, yet all muffled by the great distance, and echoing all around in faint echoes, and rumblings as in the bosom of the earth. And mingled with them were far-off cries, so faint and distant that human ears could not have heard them, like the cries of lost children, or creatures wavering and straying in the midst of the boundless night. This time she who was watching upon the edge of the gloom would have flung herself forward altogether into it, had not her companion again restrained her. "One has stumbled upon the mountains; but listen, listen, little sister, for the voices are many," he said,—“it is not one who comes, but many; and though he falls, he will rise again.”

And once more he shouted aloud, bending down against the rocks, so that they caught his voice—and the sweet air from the skies came behind him in a great gust like a summer storm, and carried it into all the echoing hollows of the hills. And the little pilgrim knew that he shouted to all who came to take courage and not to fear. And this time there rose upward many faint and wavering sounds that did not stir the air, but made it tingle with a vibration of the great distance and the unknown depths; and then again

all was still. They stood for a time intent upon the great silence and darkness which swept up all sight and sound, and then the little pilgrim once more turned her eyes towards her companion, and he began again his wonderful tale.

“He who had been the first to found the city, and who was the most wise of any, though the rage was in him like all the rest, and the disappointment and the anguish, yet would not yield. And he called upon us for another trial, to make a picture which should be the greatest that ever was painted. And each one of us, small or great, who had been of that art in the dear life, took share in the rivalry and the emulation, so that on every side there was a fury and a rush, each man with his band of supporters about him struggling and swearing that his was the best. Not that they loved the work or the beauty of the work, but to keep down the gnawing in their hearts, and to have something for which they could still fight and storm, and for a little fight.

“I was one who had been among the highest.” He spoke not with pride, but in a low and deep voice which went to the heart of the listener, and brought the tears to her eyes. It was not like that of the painter in the heavenly city, who rejoiced and was glad in his work, though he was but as a humble workman, serving those who were more great. But this man had the sorrow of greatness in him, and the wonder of those who can do much, to find how little they can do. “My veins,” he said, “were filled with fire, and my heart with the rage of a great desire to be first, as I had been first in the days of the gentle life. And I made my plan to be greater

than all the rest, to paint a vast picture like the world, filled with all the glories of life. In a moment I had conceived what I should do, for my strength was as that of a hundred men: and none of us could rest or breathe till it was accomplished, but flung ourselves upon this new thing as upon water in the desert. Oh, my little sister, how can I tell you—what words can show forth this wonderful thing? I stood before my great canvas with all those who were of my faction pressing upon me, noting every touch I made, shouting, and saying, ‘He will win! he will win!’ When lo! there came a mystery and a wonder into that place. I had arranged men and women before me according to all the devices of art, to serve as my models that nature might be in my picture, and life: but when I looked I saw them not, for between them and me had come a Face.”

The eyes of the little pilgrim dropped with tears. She held out her hands towards him with a sympathy which no words could say.

“Often had I painted that face in the other life,—sometimes with awe and love, sometimes with scorn: for hire and for bread, and for pride and for fame. It is pale with suffering, yet smiles; the eyes have tears in them, yet light below, and all that is there is full of tenderness and of love. There is a crown upon the brow, but it is made of thorns. It came before me suddenly, while I stood there, with the men shouting close to my ear urging me on, and fierce fury in my heart, and the rage to be first, and to forget. Where my models were, there it came. I could not see them, nor my groups that I had planned, nor anything but that Face. I called out to my

men, ‘Who has done this?’ but they heard me not, nor understood me, for to them there was nothing there save the figures I had set—a living picture all ready for the painter’s hand.

“I could not bear it, the sight of that face. I flung my tools away. I covered my eyes with my hands. But those who were about me pressed on me and threatened. They pulled my hands from my eyes. ‘Coward!’ they cried, and ‘Traitor, to leave us in the lurch. Now will the other side win and we be shamed. Rather tear him limb from limb, fling him from the walls!’ The crowd came round me like an angry sea; they forced my pencils back into my hands. ‘Work,’ they cried, ‘or we will tear you limb from limb.’ For though they were upon my side, it was for rivalry, and not out of any love for me.” He paused for a moment, for his heart was yet full of the remembrance, and of joy that it was past.

“I looked again,” he said, “and still it was there. Oh, face divine—the eyes all wet with pity, the lips all quivering with love! And neither pity nor love belonged to that place, nor any succour, nor the touch of a brother, nor the voice of a friend. ‘Paint,’ they cried, ‘or we will tear you limb from limb!’—and fire came into my heart. I pushed them from me on every side with the strength of a giant. And then I flung it on the canvas, crying I know not what—not to them but to Him. Shrink not from me, little sister, for I blasphemed. I called him Impostor, Deceiver, Galilean; and still with all my might, with all the fury of my soul, I set Him there for every man to see, not knowing what I did. Everything faded from me but that face—I

saw it alone. The crowd came round me with shouts and threats to drag me away, but I took no heed; they were silenced, and fled and left me alone, but I knew nothing; nor when they came back with others and seized me, and flung me forth from the gates, was I aware what I had done. They cast me out and left me upon the wild without a shelter, without a companion, storming and raving at them as they did at me. They dashed the great gates behind me with a clang, and shut me out. And I turned and defied them, and cursed them as they cursed me, not knowing what I had done."

"Oh, brother!" murmured the little pilgrim, kneeling, as if she had accompanied him all the way with her prayers, but could not now say more.

"Then I saw again," he went on, not hearing her in the great force of that passion and wonder which was still in his mind—"that vision in the air. Wherever I turned, it was there,—His eyes wet with pity, His countenance shining with love. Whence came He? What did He in that place, where love is not, where pity comes not?"

"Friend," she cried, "to seek you there!"

Her companion bowed his head in deep humbleness and joy. And again he lifted his great voice and intoned his song of praise. The little pilgrim understood it, but by fragments—a line that was more simple that came here and there. And it praised the Lord that where the face of the Father was hidden, and where love was not, nor compassion, nor brother had pity on brother, nor friend knew the face of friend, and all succour was stayed, and every help forbidden—

yet still in the depths of the darkness and in the heart of the silence, He who could not forget nor forsake was there. The voice of the singer was like that of one of the great angels, and many of the inhabitants of the blessed country began to appear, gathering in crowds to hear this great music, as the little sister thought; and she herself listened with all her heart, wondering and seeing on the faces of those dear friends whom she did not know an expectation and a hope which were strange to her, though she could always understand their love and their joy.

But in the middle of this great song there came another sound to her ear—a sound which pierced through the music like lightning through the sky, though it was but the cry of one distraught and fainting,—a cry out of the depths not even seeking help, a cry of distress too terrible to be borne. Though it was scarcely louder than a sigh, she heard it through all the music, and turned and flew to the edge of the precipice whence it came. And immediately the darkness seemed to move as with a pulse, in a great throb, and something came through the wind with a rush, as if part of the mountain had fallen—and lo! at her feet lay one who had flung himself forward, his arms stretched out, his face to the ground, as if he had seized and grasped in an agony the very soil. He lay there, half in the light and half in the shadow, gripping the rocks with his hands, burrowing into the cool herbage above and the mountain flowers; clinging, catching hold, despairing, yet seizing everything he could grasp—the tender grass, the rolling stones. The little pilgrim flung herself down upon her knees by his side,

and grasped his arm to help, and cried aloud for aid; and the song of the singer ceased, and there was silence for a moment, so that the breath of the fugitive could be heard panting, and his strong struggle to drag himself altogether out of that abyss of darkness below. She thought of nothing, nor heard nor saw anything, but the strain of that last effort which seemed to shake the very mountains; until suddenly there seemed to rise all around the hum and murmur as of a great multitude, and looking up, she saw every little hill and hollow, and the glorious plain beyond as far as eye could see, crowded with countless throngs; and on the high peaks above, in the full shining of the sun, came bands of angels, and of those great beings who are more mighty than men. And the eyes of all were fixed upon the man who lay as one dead upon the ground, and from the lips of all came a low murmur of rapture and delight, that spread like the hum of the bees, like the cooing of the doves, like the voice of a mother over her child; and the same sound came to her own lips unawares, and she murmured "welcome" and "brother" and "friend," not knowing what she said; and looking to the others, whispered, "Hush! for he is weak"—and all of them answered with tears, with "hush," and "welcome," and "friend," and "brother," and "beloved," and stood about smiling and weeping for joy. And presently there came softly into the blessed air the ringing of the great silver bells, which sound only for victory and great happiness and gain. And there was joy in heaven,—and every world was stirred. And throughout the firmament, and among all

the lords and princes of life, it was known that the impossible had become true, and the name of the Lord had proved enough, and love had conquered even despair.

"Hush!" she said, "for he is weak." And because it was her blessed service to receive those who had newly arrived in that heavenly country, and to soothe and help them so that like newborn children they should be able to endure and understand the joy, she knelt by him on the ground and tried to rouse him, though with trembling, for never before had she stood by one who was newly come out of the land of despair. "Let the sun come upon him," she said; "let him feel the brightness of the light,"—and with her soft hands she drew him out of the shade of the twilight to where the brightness of the day fell like a smile upon the flowers. And then at last he stirred, and turned round and opened his eyes, for the genial warmth had reached him. But his eyes were heavy and dazzled with the light, and he looked round him as if confused from beneath his heavy eyelids. "And where am I?" he said; "and who are you?" "Oh, brother!" said the little pilgrim, and told him in his ear the name of that heavenly place, and many comforting and joyful things. But he understood her not, and still gazed about him with dazzled eyes, for his face was still towards the darkness, and fear was upon him lest this place should prove no more than a delusion, and the darkness return, and the anguish and pain.

Then he who had been her guide, and told her his tale, came forward and stood by the side of the new-comer. And "Brother,"

he said, "look upon me, for you know me, and know from whence I come."

The stranger looked dimly with his heavy eyes. And he replied, "It is as a dream that I know you, and know from whence you came. And the dream is sweet to lie here, and think that I am at peace. Deceive me not—oh! deceive me not, with visions that are sweet—but let me go upon my way and find the end: if there is any end, or if any good can be."

"What shall we do," cried the little pilgrim, "to persuade him that he has arrived and is safe, and dreams no more?"

And they stood round him wondering, and troubled to find how little they could do for him, and that the light entered so slowly into his soul. And he lay on the bank like one left for death, so weary and so worn with all the horrors of the way that his heart was faint within him, and peace itself seemed to him but an illusion. He lay silent while they watched and waited, then turned himself upon the grass, which was as soft to the weary wayfarer as angels' wings; and then the sunshine caught his eye, as if he had been a new-born babe awakened to the light. He put out his hand to it, and touched the ground that was golden with those heavenly rays, and gathered himself up till he felt it upon his face, and opened wide his dazzled eyes, then shaded them with trembling hands, and said to himself, "It is the sun, it is the sun." But still he did not dare to believe that the danger and the toil were over, nor could he listen, nor understand what the brethren said. While they all stood around and watched and waited, wondering each how the new-

comer should be satisfied, there suddenly arose a sound with which they were all acquainted—the sound of One approaching. The faces of the blessed were all around like the stars in the sky—multitudes whom none could count or reckon; but He who came was seen of none, save him to whom He came. The weary man rose up with a great cry, then fell again upon his knees, and flung his arms wide in the wonder and the joy. And "Lord," he cried, "was it Thou? Lord, it was Thou! Thine was the face. And Thou hast brought me here!"

The watchers knew not what the other voice said, for what is said to each new-comer is the secret of the Lord. But when they looked again the man stood upright upon his feet, and his face was full of light; and though he trembled with weakness and with weariness, and with exceeding joy, yet the confusion and the fear were gone from him. And he had no longer any suspicion of them, as if they might betray him, but held out his trembling hands and cried, "Friends: you are friends? and you spoke to me and called me brother? And am I here? And am I here?" For to name the name of that blessed country was not needful any longer, now that he had seen the Lord.

Then a great band and guard of honour, of angels and principalities and powers, surrounded him, and led him away to the holy city, and to the presence of the Father, who had permitted and had not forbidden what the Lord had done. And all the companies of the blessed followed after with wonder and gladness and triumph, because the great love of the Lord had drawn out of the darkness even those who were beyond hope.

II.

The little pilgrim saw them depart from her with love and joy, and sat down upon the rocky edge and sang her own song of peace; for her fear was gone, and she was ready to do her service there upon the verge of the precipice as among the flowers and the sunshine, where her own place was. "From the depths," she said, "they come, they come!—from the land of darkness, where no love is. For Thy love, O Lord, is more than the darkness and the depths. And where hope is not, there Thy pity goes." She sat and sang to herself like a happy child, for her heart had fathomed the awful gloom which baffles angels and men, and she had learned that though hope comes to an end and light fails, and the feet of the ambassadors are stayed on the mountains, and the voice of the pleaders is silenced, and darkness swallows up the world, yet Love never fails. As she sang, the pity in her heart grew so strong, and her desire to help the lost, that she rose up and stepped forth into the awful gloom, and, had it been permitted, in her gentleness and weakness would have gone forth to the deeps and had no fear.

The ground gave way under her feet, so dreadful was the precipice; but though her heart beat with the horror of it, and the whirl of the descent and the darkness which blinded her eyes, yet had she no hurt; and when her foot touched the rock, and that sinking sense of emptiness and vacancy ceased, she looked around and saw the path by which that traveller had come. For when the eyes are used to the darkness, the horror of the gloom was no longer like

a solid thing, but moved into shades of darker and less dark, so that she saw where the rocks stood, and how they sank with edges that eut like swords, down and ever down into the abysses,—and how here a deep ravine was rent between them, and there were banks and scours as though some one had caught the jagged points with wounded hand or foot struggling up the perpendicular surface towards the little ray of light, like a tiny star which shone as on immeasurable heights to show where life was. As she travelled deeper and deeper, it was a wonder to see how far that little ray penetrated down and down, through gulfs of darkness, blue and cold like the shimmer of a diamond; and even when it could be seen no more, sent yet a shadowy refraction, a line of something less black than the darkness, a lightning amid the gloom, a something indefinable which was hope. The rocks were more cruel than imagination could conceive—sometimes pointed and sharp like knives, sometimes smooth and upright as a wall with no hold for the climber, sometimes moving under the touch, with stones that rolled and crushed the bleeding feet; and though the solid masses were distinguishable from the lighter darkness of the air, yet it could only be in groping that the travellers by that way could find where any foothold was. The traveller who came from above, and who had the privilege of her happiness, sank down as if borne on wings, yet needed all her courage not to be afraid of the awful rocks that rose all above and around her, perpendicular in the gloom. And the great blast of an icy wind swept upward like

something flying upon great wings, so tremendous was the force of it, whirling from the depths below, sucked upwards by the very warmth of the life above, so that the little pilgrim herself caught at the rocks that she might not be swept again towards the top, or dashed against the stony pinnacles that stood up on every side. She was glad when she found a little platform under her feet for a moment where she could rest, and also because she had come, not from curiosity to see that gulf, but with the hope and desire to meet some one to whom she could be of a little comfort or help in the terrors of the way.

While she stood for a moment to get her breath, she became sensible that some living thing was near, and putting out her hand she felt that there was round her something that was like a bastion upon a fortified wall, and immediately a hand touched hers, and a soft voice said, "Sister, fear not! for this is the watch-tower, and I am one of those who keep the way." She had started and trembled indeed,—not that she feared, but because the delicate fabric of her being was such that every movement of the wind, and even those that were instinctive and belonged to the habits of another life, betrayed themselves in her. And "Oh," she said, "I knew not that there were any watch-towers, or any one to help, but came because my heart called me, if perhaps I might hold out my hand in the darkness, and help where there was no light."

"Come and stand by me," said the watcher; and the little pilgrim saw that there was a whiteness near to her, out of which slowly shaped the face of a fair and tender woman, whom she knew not, but loved. And though they could scarcely see each other,

yet they knew each other for sisters, and kissed, and took comfort together, holding each other's hands in the midst of the awful gloom. And the little pilgrim questioned in low and hushed tones—"Is it to help that you are here?"

"To help when that may be; but rather to watch, and to send the news and make it known that one is coming—that the bells of joy may be sounded, and all the blessed may rejoice."

"Oh," said the little pilgrim, "tell me your name, that I may do you honour: for to gain such high promotion can be given only to the great who are made perfect, and to those who love most."

"I am not great," said the watcher; "but the Lord who considers all has placed me here, that I may be the first to see when one comes who is in the dark places below. And also because there are some who say that love is idolatry, and that the Father will not have us long for our own: therefore am I permitted to wait and watch and think the time not long for the love I bear him. For he is mine; and when he comes I will ascend with him to the dear country of the light, and some other who loves enough will be promoted in my place."

"I am not worthy," said the little pilgrim. "It is a great promotion; but oh, that we might be permitted to help, to put out a hand, or to clear the way!"

"Nay, my little sister," said the watcher, "but Patience must have its perfect work; and for those who are coming help is secret. They must not see it nor know it; for the land of darkness is beyond hope. The Father will not force the will of any creature He has made, for He respects us in our nature, which is His image. And when a man will not, and will not till the day is over, what can be done for him?"

He is left to his will, and is permitted to do it, as it seems good in his eyes. A man's will is great, for it is the gift of God. But the Lord, who cannot rest while one is miserable, still goes secretly to them, for His heart yearns after them. And by times they will see His face, or some thought of old will seize upon them. And some will say, 'To perish upon the dark mountains is better than to live here.' And I have seen," said the watcher, "that the Lord will go with them all the way—but secretly, so that they cannot see Him. And though it grieves His heart not to help, yet will He not; for they have become the creatures of their own will, and by that must they attain." She put out her hand to the new-comer, and drew her to the side of the rocky wall, so that they felt the sweep of the wind in their faces, but were not driven before it. "And come," she said, "for two of us together will be like a great light to those who are in the darkness. They will see us like a lamp, and it will cheer them though they know not why we are here. Listen!" she cried. And the little pilgrim, holding fast the hand of the watcher, listened and looked down upon the awful way; and underneath the sweep of the icy wind was a small sharp sound as of a stone rolling or a needle of rock that broke and fell, like the sounds that are in a wood when some creature moves, though too far off for footstep to sound. "Listen!" said the watcher, and her face so shone with joy that the little pilgrim saw it clearly, like the shining of the morning in the midst of the darkness. "He comes!"

"Oh, sister!" she cried, "is it he—whom you love above all the rest?—is it he?"

The watcher smiled, and said, "If it is not he, yet is it a brother; if it is not he now, yet his time will come. And in every one who passes, I hope to see his face; and the more that come, the more certain it is that he will come. And the time seems not long for the love I bear him. And it is for this that the Lord has so considered me. Listen! for some one comes."

And there came to these watchers the strangest sight; for there flew past them while they gazed a man, who seemed to be carried upon the sweep of the wind. In the midst of the darkness they could see the faint white in his face, with eyes of flame and lips set firm—whirled forward upon the wind, which would have dashed him against the rocks; but as he whirled past he caught with his hand the needles of the opposite peaks, and was swung high over a great chasm, and landed upon a higher height, high over their heads. And for a moment they could hear, like a pulsation through the depths, the hard panting of his breath. Then, with scarcely a moment for rest, they heard the sound of his progress onward, as if he did battle with the mountain, and his own swiftness carried him like another wind. It had taken less than a moment to sweep him past, quicker than the flight of a bird, as sudden as a lightning flash. The little pilgrim followed him with her eager ears, wondering if he would leap thus into the country of light and take heaven by storm; or whether he would fall upon the heavenly hills, and lie prostrate in weariness and exhaustion, like him to whom she had ministered. She followed him with her ears, for the sound of his progress was with crashing of rocks and a swift movement in the air: but she was called back by the pres-

sure of the hand of the watcher, who did not, like the little pilgrim, follow him who thus rushed through space as far as there was sound or sight of him, but had turned again to the lower side, and was gazing once more, and listening for the little noises in the gulf below. The little pilgrim remembered her friend's hope, and said softly, "It was not he?" And the watcher clasped her hand again, and answered, "It was a dear brother. I have sounded the silver bells for him, and soon we shall hear them answering from the heights above. And another time it will be he." And they kissed each other, because they understood each the other in her heart.

And then they talked together of the old life when all things began, and of the wonderful things they had learned concerning the love of the Father and the Son, and how all the world was held by them, and penetrated through and through by threads of love, so that it could never fail. And the darkness seemed light round them, and they forgot for a little that the wind was not as a summer breeze. Then once more the hand of the watcher pressed that of her companion, and bade her hush and listen. And they sat together holding their breath, straining their ears. Then heard they faint sounds which were very different from those made by him who had been driven past them like an arrow from a bow,—first as of something falling, but very far away, and a faint sound as of a foot which slipped. The listeners did not say a word to each other; they sat still and listened, scarcely drawing their breath. The darkness had no voice; it could not be but that some traveller was there, though hidden deep, deep in the gloom, only betrayed by the sound.

There was a long pause, and the watcher held fast the little pilgrim's hand, and betrayed to her the longing in her heart; for though she was already blessed beyond all blessedness known on earth, yet had she not forgotten the love that had begun on earth, but was for evermore. She murmured to herself, and said, "If it is not he, yet is it a brother. And the more that come, the more certain it is that he will come. Little sister, is there one for whom you watch?"

"There is no one," the pilgrim said,—*"but all."*

"And so care I for all," cried the watcher; and she drew her companion with her to the edge of the abyss, and they sat down upon it low among the rocks to escape the rushing of the wind, and they sang together a soft song,—*"for if he should hear us,"* she said, *"it may give him courage."* And there they sat and sang; and the white of their garments and of their heavenly faces showed like a light in the deep gloom, so that he who was toiling upward might see that speck above him, and be encouraged to continue upon his way.

Sometimes he fell, and they could hear the moan he made, for every sound came upward, however small and faint it might be; and sometimes dragged himself along, so that they heard his movement up some shelf of rock. And as the pilgrim looked, she saw other and other dim whitenesses along the ravines of the dark mountains, and knew that she was not the only one, but that many had come to watch and look for the coming of those who had been lost.

Time was as nothing to these heavenly watchers: but they knew how long and terrible were the moments to those upon the way.

Sometimes there would be silence like the silence of long years: and fear came upon them that the wayfarer had turned back, or that he had fallen and lay suffering at the bottom of some gulf, or had been swept by the wind upon some icy peak and dashed against the rocks. Then anon, while they listened and held their breath, a little sound would strike again into the silence, bringing back hope. And again and again all would be still. The little pilgrim held her companion's hand, and the thought went through her mind that were she watching for one whom she loved above the rest, her heart would fail. But the watcher answered her as if she had spoken, and said, "Oh no, oh no; for if it is not he, it is a brother: and the Lord give them joy!" But they sang no more, their hearts being faint with suspense and with eagerness to hear every sound.

Then in the great chill of the silence, suddenly, and not far off, came the sound of one who spoke. He murmured to himself, and said, "Who can continue on this terrible way? The night is black like hell, and there comes no morning. It was better in the land of darkness, for still we could see the face of man, though not God." And the muffled voice trembled at that word and was still suddenly, as though it had been a flame, and the wind had blown it out. And for a moment there was silence, until suddenly it broke forth once more—

"What is this that has come to me that I can say the name of God? It tortures no longer, it is as balm. But He is far off, and hears nothing. He called us and we answered not. Now it is we who call and He will not hear. I will lie down and die. It cannot be

that a man must live and live for ever, in pain and anguish. Here will I lie, and it will end. Oh Thou whose face I have seen in the night, make it possible for a man to die!"

The watcher loosed herself from her companion's clasp, and stood upright upon the edge of the cliff, clasping her hands together and saying low, as to herself, Father, Father! as one who cannot refrain from that appeal, but who knows the Father loves best, and that to intercede is vain. And longing was in her face and joy. For it was he; and she knew that he could not now fail, but would reach to the celestial country and to the shining of the sun: yet that it was not hers to help him, nor any man's, nor angel's. But the little pilgrim was ignorant, not having been taught. And she committed herself to those depths, though she feared them, and though she knew not what she could do. And once more the dense air closed over her, and the vacancy swallowed her up, and when she reached the rocks below, there lay something at her feet which she felt to be a man; but she could not see him nor touch him, and when she tried to speak, her voice died away in her throat, and made no sound. Whether it was the wind that caught it, and swept it quite away, or that the well of that depth profound sucked every note upward: or whether because it was not permitted that either man or angel should come out of their sphere, or help be given which was forbidden, the little pilgrim knew not: for never had it been said to her that she should stand aside where need was. And surprise which was stronger than the icy wind, and for a moment a great dismay, took hold upon her, for she understood not how it was

that the bond of silence should bind her, and that she should be unable to put forth her hand to help him whom she heard moaning and murmuring, but could not see. And scarcely could her feet keep hold of the awful rock, or her form resist the upward sweep of the wind; but though he saw her not nor she him, yet could not she leave him in his weakness and misery, saying to herself that even if she could do nothing, it must be well that a little love should be near.

Then she heard him speak again, crouching under the rock at her feet, and he said faintly to himself, "That was no dream. In the land of darkness there are no dreams, nor voices that speak within us. On the earth they were never silent, struggling and crying: but *there* was all silent, silent within. Therefore it was no dream. It was One who came and looked me in the face: and love was in His eyes. I have not seen love, oh, for so long. But it was no dream. If life is a dream I know not, but love I know. And He said to me, 'Arise and go.' But to whom must I go? The words are words that once I knew, and the face I knew. But to whom, to whom?"

The little pilgrim cried aloud, so that she thought the rocks must be rent by the vehemence of her cry, calling like the other, Father, Father, Father! as if her heart would burst; and it was like despair to think that she made no sound, and that the brother could not hear her who lay thus fainting at her feet. Yet she could not stop, but went on crying like a child that has lost its way; for to whom could a child call but to her father, and all the more when she cannot understand? And she called out and said that

God was not His name save to strangers, if there are any strangers, but that His name was Father, and it was to Him that all must go. And all her being thrilled like a bird with its song, so that the very air stirred, yet no voice came. And she lifted up her face to the watcher above, and beheld, where she stood holding up her hands, a little whiteness in the great dark. But though these two were calling and ealling, the silence was dumb. And neither of them could take him by the hand nor lift him up, nor show him, far, far above the little diamond of the light, but were constrained to stand still and watch, seeing that he was one of those who are beyond hope.

After she had waited a long time, he stirred again in the dark, and murmured to himself once more, saying low, "I have slept and am strong. And while I was sleeping He has come again: He has looked at me again. And somewhere I will find Him. I will arise and go—I will arise and go——"

And she heard him move at her feet, and grope over the rock with his hands. But it was smooth as snow with no holding, and slippery as ice. And the watcher stood above and the pilgrim below, but could not help him. He groped and groped, and murmured to himself, ever saying, "I will arise and go." And their hearts were wrung that they could not speak to him, nor touch him, nor help him. But at last in the dark there burst forth a great cry, "Who said it?" and then a sound of weeping, and amid the weeping, words. "As when I was a child, as when hope was—— I will arise and I will go—to my Father, to my Father! for now I know."

The little pilgrim sank down into a crevice of the rocks in the weakness of her great joy. And something passed her, mounting up and up—and it seemed to her that he had touched her shoulder or her hand unawares, and that the dumb cry in her heart had reached him, and that it had been good for him that a little love stood by, though only to watch and to weep. And she listened and heard him go on and on; and she herself ascended higher to the watch-tower. And the watcher was gone who had waited there for her beloved, for she had gone with him, as the Lord had promised her, to be the one who should lead him to the holy city and to see the Father's face. And it was given to the little pilgrim to sound the silver bells and to warn all the bands of the blessed, and the great angels and lords of the whole world, that from out the land of darkness and from the regions beyond hope another had come.

She remained not there long, because there were many who sought that place that they might be the first to see if one beloved

was among the travellers by that terrible way, and to welcome the brother or sister who was the most dear to them of all the children of the Father. But it was thus that she learned the last lesson of all that is in heaven and that is in earth, and in the heights above and in the depths below, which the great angels desire to look into, and all the princes and powers. And it is this: that there is that which is beyond hope, yet not beyond love. And that hope may fail and be no longer possible, but love cannot fail. For hope is of men, but love is the Lord. And there is but one thing which to Him is not possible, which is to forget. And that even when the Father has hidden His face and help is forbidden, yet there goes He secretly and cannot forbear.

But if there were any deep more profound, and to which access was not, either from the dark mountains or by any other way, the pilgrim was not taught, nor ever found any knowledge, either among the angels who know all things, or among her brothers who were the children of men.

THE CAREER OF AN INDIAN GENERAL.

SIR CHARLES MACGREGOR, K.C.B.

CHARLES METCALFE MACGREGOR came of a true, brave, and martial Highland stock. His father, Major Robert MacGregor, was a distinguished officer of the old Bengal Artillery, who lost the use of his leg at the siege of Bhurtpore, under Lord Combermere, in 1827. His grandfather was also a major-general in the East India Company's service, and took part in the storming of Seringapatam, under General Harris, in 1799. His great-grandfather fought, as a captain of the 60th Foot, in the American War, under General Murray; whilst the grandfather, again, of this last-named officer, was the celebrated Rob Roy whose memory Sir Walter Scott has perpetuated in the Waverley novels.

Charles was born at Agra in 1840, and passed his childhood mostly in the Scottish Lowlands. After some preliminary schooling at Glenalmond, in Perthshire, the lad was sent to be educated at Marlborough College. Here he appears to have been a strong, powerful boy, shy, silent, and known intimately to but few. One of his comrades, named Connelly, was his particular "chum," and this gentleman has furnished Lady MacGregor with some characteristic reminiscences of his friend's schoolboy days.

In 1856 Charles and his elder brother, Edward, to whom he was devotedly attached, received commissions in the Indian army, the former being appointed to the

57th Bengal Native Infantry, then stationed at Ferozpur, whilst the latter was posted to the 41st Native Infantry at Sitapur, near Lucknow. After this separation the brothers never again met in this world.

Of the terrible scenes during the Mutiny of 1857 the young ensign's letters afford some vivid glimpses. The sepoy's of the 41st Regiment rose and murdered those of their officers who fell into their hands, Edward MacGregor barely escaping from death at Sitapur, only to meet his fate in the Residency at Lucknow, where he died during the siege soon afterwards.

The 57th, Charles's regiment, was disbanded in the early days of the rebellion, before the junior ensign had even time to learn his drill, after an outbreak at his station, which followed close upon the massacres at Meerut and Delhi. We may quote his own account of an encounter with the rebels.

"August 20.—Yesterday morning, about one o'clock, I heard a gun fired, but didn't think anything of it, as I thought they were only knocking down a portion of the Sudder Bazaar. About three minutes after, I heard another gun and a roll of musketry, also the bugles sounding the alarm. Well, thinks I, there's something up, evidently. Just at that moment one of my guard rushed in and said that the *risalah* [cavalry] had tried to take some of the guns—in fact, had mutinied. 'Bearer!' I holloaed out, 'my white jacket and sword'—shouldered a couple of double-guns, and,

telling the *syce* to get my pony ready, I rushed off to Mrs Shaw's house to get her into the buggy. I rushed into the room (it was no time to stand on ceremonies), found her in an awful state of *déshabille*, and told her to get ready immediately. She did so, and we started for Captain Smith's compound. His house is a large *pukka* one, in which you might keep any amount of Pandies off. Just as, or rather before, we got on to the course, we heard a noise as if a lot of horses were trotting—these were some fifteen or twenty *sowars*. There was no time to be lost, so I told Mrs Shaw to run on with the baby, while I tried to keep the rascals off. I waited till they were within twenty yards of me, and then let blaze a couple of barrels at them, and had the pleasure of seeing a couple of them fall to rise no more. I then took the other gun and blazed both barrels, but this time only wounded one man. I turned round and saw that Mrs Shaw was all right in the compound, and taking my sword in my hand and shouldering the guns, I am not ashamed to say I fairly hooked it, with a score of *sowars* at my heels. The beggars did not come into Smith's compound, not liking the idea of taking their chance against some twenty barrels on the roof of the house—so, after all, I arrived safe and sound on the top of the house."

After the break up of his regiment, young MacGregor fretted at remaining inactive at Ferozpur, whilst all his former comrades were seeing active service in the field. He longed ardently to be at the front, and whenever another officer was wanted for the Delhi force he volunteered to go; but he was so youthful that his seniors were chosen before him, greatly to his disgust. "What an awful young fire-eater you are!" said Brigadier-General Innes to him; "I only wish I could let you go: we should take Delhi in no time." At last his chance came, but he did not arrive in time to take an actual share in the assault of the

city. The gallant Nicholson and many other brave fellows had fallen during the storming of the place, and Ensign MacGregor was only able to do some of the hard street-fighting which ensued before the town was wholly cleared of the enemy.

MacGregor was now attached to the 1st European Regiment of Bengal Fusiliers, with which regiment he served under Colonel Gerard, and saw his first action at Narnul, where he particularly brought himself into notice by the pluck which he exhibited in personal combat with more than one sepoy, and he was mainly instrumental in capturing one of the enemy's guns.

Shortly afterwards, at Patiali, he again enjoyed the excitement of a hand-to-hand fight, in which he broke his sword, nor could he replace his weapon until he subsequently obtained the much-indented blade of his brother, who, whilst a companion of Sir Henry Lawrence, had (as before noticed) died during the defence of the Residency at Lucknow. He was determined, as he wrote to his parents, to make a name for himself in India.

It was just after this last event, when encamped near Fatehgarh, in January 1858, that MacGregor made the acquaintance of Frederick Sleigh Roberts (now Sir F. Roberts, Commander-in-Chief in India), then a subaltern of Bengal Artillery, a few years older than himself. Roberts's brother happened to be in command of a picquet of the Fusiliers, which the lieutenant of artillery had occasion to visit. Introducing his subaltern to his brother Frederick, Captain Roberts said: "I have a strange companion here. He seldom speaks except when fighting is going on; then he brightens up and becomes quite agreeable."

“At that time,” Sir Frederiek Roberts tells us, “MacGregor was extremely reserved, and had more than the usual shyness of a boy straight from school; but under the excitement of battle his true nature asserted itself, and neither reserve nor shyness could, even in those early days, prevent his soldierly qualities from showing themselves.”

The Fusiliers soon afterwards joined Sir Colin Campbell's force, and at Lucknow MacGregor got his full share of fighting, and in his letters home repeatedly expressed his intention of winning the Victoria Cross. In August MacGregor, who was now a lieutenant, and had exchanged into the 68th Native Infantry, was appointed to Hodson's Horse, with which corps he was to be long associated.

On one occasion, when commanding a squadron of this dashy regiment, near Daryabad, in Oudh, Lieutenant MacGregor led the irregular horse across the Kala Nadi river, the water being well over their saddles, and turning the position of the rebels, who occupied rifle-pits, forced them out of their shelter into the open plain, and there charged them, as the despatch says, “most steadily.” The infantry which should have crossed to co-operate with the cavalry were not sent, and thus the young officer was left to his own resources. “I had no choice,” he writes, “but either to retreat towards the Nadi or charge them, so I formed line and charged.”

Lord Wolseley has lately given his ideal analysis of the sensations of a brave officer leading a storming-party across the open in full view of the enemy: “All maddening pleasures seem to be compressed into that very short space of time.” Here are young MacGregor's, when he was but eighteen years old, after his first trial of a

cavalry charge. It must be remembered that he was unaccompanied by any other European officer.

“Partabpur was my first trial of a cavalry charge, and, as I thought, it was one of the most exciting things in the world. After I gave the word *Charge!* I forgot everything, except that there was a slashing, digging, and yelling for a few minutes, and then I found myself with a cut across the leg, and my horse with three.”

Major Butler, V.C., writes of his gallant subaltern:—

“His long boots were all slashed to pieces, and his horse had to be shot. He had charged well ahead of all his men right into the thiek of the enemy. After this, the Sikhs and Pathans of Hodson's Horse would follow MacGregor anywhere. Out of the sixty men with him on this occasion, twelve men and ten horses were killed and wounded.”

In 1859 MacGregor was appointed adjutant of the third regiment of Hodson's Horse, and saw plenty of hard work under Brigadier-General Horsford in the Oudh jungles, across the Rapti and the Gogra rivers, and along the frontier of Nipal. In a skirmish, whilst he was endeavouring to lure the enemy out of some dense cover at Maharaganj, near Tulsi-pur, he again got wounded, receiving a bullet in the thigh, but he made light of all his wounds, and by October he was acting as second in command of the 3d Regiment of Hodson's Horse.

What the young hero aimed at now was to command a regiment of his own. He writes:—

“I have improved in riding considerably, and now I don't mind riding any horse. It is the only kind of exercise I am really fond of, and I always take plenty of it. How I would like to raise a regiment of my own, about 350 strong, which is quite

enough for a cavalry regiment. . . . If I could get one grand chance at the rebels, in which I could cover myself and detachment with a mixture of wounds and glory, I would propose to Government as a reward that I might raise three troops of 100 men each for service all over the world, and when nothing is going on elsewhere, to be stationed on the frontiers. . . . What a dreamer you must think me! To say the truth, I do dream, but my dreams are not improbable, I think. I look forward to the day when I shall get the order to raise a corps."

How chivalrous were the aspirations of this youthful Don Quixote may be gathered from the following extract from a letter written in January 1859, from camp at Lalpur, on the Nipal frontier:—

"On the 5th we took fifteen guns from the Pandies; but, can you believe it? without firing a single shot, notwithstanding that every advantage of position and numbers was on their side! . . . All the officers of the irregular cavalry do a thing which seems to me anything but right: they wear steel gauntlets, and steel down their arms and legs. Now I should say that officers already have advantage enough over their enemies without resorting to armour. They have good horses, good swords, and a revolver, whereas the Pandies have only a *tulwar*, or at most a *tulwar* and matchlock; besides, their own *sowars* must think it so strange—they see their officers go into action covered with chain-armour, when they have nothing but their *tulwars*. What can their thoughts be?"

No wonder the *sowars* would follow such a gallant young leader, who scorned to use the extra protections of his brother officers.

In 1860, when it was settled that an expedition would proceed to China, of course MacGregor at once volunteered for service in the irregular cavalry corps which were to form part of the force.

"Go to China," he says, "I will, if it possibly can be done. If they

will not let me go in the cavalry I will go in the infantry, and when once there, I'll manage somehow to get in the cavalry. . . . Once in China, if they only fight, I shall have another chance of the Victoria Cross. Fancy Lieutenant MacGregor, V.C.! You can form no idea, and I cannot describe to you, how I look forward to the day when I shall see my name in orders for the Victoria Cross."

"The fiery spirit," writes Lord Wolseley, "who will volunteer for all services of danger, and go straight to the point to which he is ordered, is often worth a king's ransom to an army and to the nation whose cause it is fighting." Such a spirit was Charles MacGregor's when he accepted his appointment to Fane's Horse, although only offered the post of a lieutenant low down in the list, with many names over his. He never hesitated to throw up his appointment as second in command of Hodson's Horse, now that all fighting was over in India, in order to win his spurs in the field; and his value to his new commanding officer may be, in some measure, estimated from the fact that his first act on joining the newly-raised corps, which existed only in name, not having a single man or horse, was to induce 170 tried *sowars* and native officers of Hodson's Horse to join the ranks with him—all good men, who had followed their officer in many a hard day's march on raid and in skirmish, and appreciated his gallantry and cool sagacity in trying circumstances.

Walter Fane, who commanded this new regiment (the present 19th Bengal Lancers), had a fine reputation—a sort of Admirable Crichton—for he was as good an artist and musician as he was an accomplished swordsman and athlete; but he lacked some qualities as commander, and he failed to ap-

preciate the invaluable services of his subaltern. As before observed, MacGregor in his youth was somewhat reserved and brusque in his manner, and Fane, who was remarkably polished, with tasteful love of elegant arts and accomplishments, unfortunately was never in accord with the fiery irreconcilable spirit of his junior lieutenant.

The expedition sailed for China in the spring of 1860, and during the voyage MacGregor carefully studied the methods of transporting horses, of embarkation, disembarkation, the care of horses on board ship, &c. Wherever he was, the young officer spared no efforts to fully acquaint himself with all the practical *minutiae* of military economy. He had already printed some letters on irregular cavalry, and now he made voluminous notes for a future paper on the transport of cavalry. Whatever he did, he did with his whole heart: he put his back into it, as he expressed it, and, always with the view of some day becoming the commander of an army in the field, he never lost a single opportunity of placing on record everything which he thought might conduce to the perfecting his knowledge of the art of war.

The story of the Chinese war of 1860 need not be told here. In Lady MacGregor's work the main outline of the operations is sketched sufficiently to connect the various *lacunæ* between her late husband's letters written at the time. It is enough to state here that Fane's Horse was disembarked at Pehtang on the 5th of August, and on that day week (the 12th) took part in the general advance made by Sir Hope Grant's force, in concert with the French, against the entrenched camp of the Tartars at Sinhò, outside the Peiho Forts.

The first engagement which then

took place exerted considerable influence upon the after part of the campaign. The Chinese force consisted principally of hordes of cavalry, which, as Lord Napier (of Magdala) has stated, nearly surrounded the whole of his division in skirmishing order. The number of these Mongol horsemen was very large, and they showed not the slightest fear or hesitation in meeting the allied troops.

Lieutenant MacGregor had been told off with a detachment of Fane's Horse, thirty Sikhs, as escort to a half battery under Captain William Stirling (now Major-General Stirling, in command of the Artillery, Southern District), when suddenly a large body of some ninety Tartars galloped down on the guns. The affair which followed was happily witnessed by Mr Bowlby, the 'Times' correspondent, who has graphically described the incident:—

"On the Tartars came," he wrote, "with the most wild and unearthly cries. So unexpected was this attack that Captain Stirling had barely time to fire two rounds of case, when they were within one hundred yards of the guns. There was no infantry near, but a guard of twenty-five of Fane's Horse, under the command of Lieutenant MacGregor, was attached to the battery. Now was the time, now was the chance to test the Sikhs against the Tartars. Without a moment's hesitation, and regardless of numbers, Lieutenant MacGregor gave the word to charge, and away went the Sikhs in most gallant style. No flinching, no craning; every spur was well in the horse's side, when one-half the Tartars met them in full shock. The effect was instantaneous. . . . Lieutenant MacGregor singled out his man, and was in the act of spearing him, when another Tartar fired his matchlock within ten yards point blank. The slugs hit the lieutenant in five places—three lodging in the chest, two in the forehead. For a moment he was blinded by the fire, which burnt his

face; but the work was done. The Tartars dispersed in every direction. . . . Nothing could be more gallant than Lieutenant MacGregor's conduct, for he had no supports, and but a handful of men. The Sikhs were delighted with the result, which naturally inspired them with the greatest confidence, and proved their unquestionable superiority over the Tartar cavalry."

Lord Herbert afterwards said in the House of Lords—

"This was an important achievement. The Chinese cavalry were numerically vastly superior to our own, and it was important to solve the problem whether the Sikh horsemen could cope with them under such circumstances. Lieutenant MacGregor and his troopers answered the question most satisfactorily."

This happened on Charles MacGregor's twentieth birthday. He writes to his father a few days afterwards: "Don't let my mother get into a fright about me. I am all jolly, and if the Tartars will only go on fighting, I'll pay them out for this." When he was lying wounded, the Commander-in-Chief and many officers came to see him, and told him that he deserved the Victoria Cross for his action; but he was doomed to be disappointed. "Strange to say," he writes, "Fane was the only one who said nothing." Fane, as his commanding officer, was the only one who could commend him for the Cross, but unfortunately he had not witnessed his subaltern's exploit.

Before his wound was healed, MacGregor rode 50 miles on to join his corps at Tungchow, where the treachery of the Chinese, and the capture of Sir Harry Parkes, Loch, and others, and the murder of Brabazon, Bowlby, and their comrades, led to a brief renewal of the fighting. Peace was soon after proclaimed, and MacGregor

returned to Calcutta sadly disappointed.

On his arrival in India, Lieutenant MacGregor was appointed by Sir Hugh Rose (afterwards Lord Strathnairn) second in command of the 10th Bengal Cavalry (late Hodson's Horse), and he set to work to study practically and minutely everything connected with the professional duties of cavalry, regular and irregular, heavy and light. As a means of carrying out his intentions of perfecting himself as a cavalry officer, he obtained the permission of the Commander-in-Chief to be attached to the 7th Dragoon Guards, for instruction in the routine and economy of an English regiment.

At this time he gives the following account of his occupation and exercise:—

"I have for the last few months been practising hard at spear and sword exercise on horseback, and can now beat any man in our regiment at either. I have also mastered several other feats of horsemanship. I can jump off a horse at full gallop, and jump on again without stopping him (this only requires nerve). I can jump on to a horse fifteen hands three inches high without catching hold of anything; and only yesterday I jumped on to a horse standing, off the ground on which I was—seventeen hands in one spring—without help from any one. . . .

"For the last two months I have never used stirrups, and can sit any horse over a jump without them. To give you an idea of my skill in spear and sword exercise. The other night, when the *élite* of the regiment were out at this practice, I got a spear and fought with three of them together, and was not once hit, but hit them all, one after the other. With the single-stick I can beat any two men, be they armed with spear or sword. With the spear, riding without a saddle or a blanket, I can beat the pick of the whole regiment, he riding in a saddle. This is nothing to what

I hope to do in another year. In the hands of a man who can use it, the spear is a terrible weapon. I should like to have a bout with some of your lubberly, pipe-clay Lanceers."

In fact, he was the beau-ideal of a partisan cavalry leader. During his commanding officer's absence MacGregor brought his regiment to a great state of efficiency, which was fully acknowledged by his superior officer when he returned, and he thoroughly remodelled the "standing orders" of the corps, for which purpose he was given *carte blanche* by his chief.

All of a sudden a crushing blow (as he thought) fell on the young and zealous soldier; for an order arrived in India from England that all "seconds in command" were to be disestablished. This brought about the premature end of MacGregor's rôle as a cavalry officer; but the training he had undergone only served to fit him the more for his future service on the staff.

The Bhutan business was at this time (1864) in contemplation: the ill success of Mr Ashley Eden's mission to Panakha was followed by the annexation of the Bengal Dwars; and Charles MacGregor was appointed brigade-major on the staff of Brigadier-General Dunsford, who was in command of the column ordered to take possession of the Bhutanese forts nearest to Sikkim and Darjiling.

At the capture of Fort Daling Lieutenant MacGregor, as can be imagined, was not behind-hand. Wherever hard knocks were being given and received, he was sure to be foremost in the fun, and this time he nearly received his *quietus*, for a bullet went through his *solah topee* (hat), and carried a portion of his scalp away with it. Nevertheless, he was not laid up long with this wound, but continued throughout the first phase of the

campaign at his post, and did right good service.

The slight resistance encountered during the occupation of the Dwars seems to have lulled the British commanders into a feeling of false security from which they were speedily awakened, for suddenly in January 1865 the Bhutias surprised the various English garrisons, and the posts were abandoned in a somewhat shameful manner. At Diwangiri two guns were lost, and operations were resumed to retrieve the disaster.

MacGregor acted in the Quartermaster-General's department during this second campaign, and his rare qualifications for this branch of the service were speedily made manifest. His proper vocation had now been found—the duties of reconnaissance and intelligence were his especial *forte*. All the same, fighting came also within his idea of the departmental duties, and accordingly we speedily hear of him again at the retaking of Bala, and again being severely wounded. He writes:—

"Bala. . . . To-day we attacked the enemy's stockade, and I had a charge requiring great energy, judgment, and pluck. In carrying it out I was severely wounded in the left hand. A bullet hit me on the back of the hand, and by this means saved my life, for at the moment I had just put up my hand in front of my body, and it struck me then. I do not quite know the extent of the injury, but the doctors believe that the bone which runs down the back of the hand, in extension of the forefinger, is broken: they say it may heal, and that at the worst it may only be a crooked hand; but if it is very badly broken, they will have to cut off the forefinger. . . . This is my *sixth* wound."

After his wound was healed, MacGregor, indefatigable as ever, made a reconnaissance from Datma to Chirang through a most difficult country, and collected information

regarding this portion of the north-east frontier, which he subsequently embodied in an exhaustive report on Bhutan.

During 1867 MacGregor proceeded to England on furlough; but before his leave of absence had anything like expired, the expedition to Abyssinia was organised. He at once offered his services to Sir Robert Napier, who remembered his gallantry at Sinho, and appointed him as D.A.Q.M.G. of cavalry, and he landed at Zulla at the beginning of January 1868. Advancing with the pioneer force in the front, MacGregor—still a subaltern, it must be remembered—ever sought an opportunity to distinguish himself, and he projected a plan of effecting the release of the prisoners at Magdala by a raid in front of the general advance of the army, which was thought by the Chief, however, too hazardous to risk.

Here is an extract which gives an idea of the sort of work reconnoitring was up to Magdala :—

“We advanced carefully up the ravine which leads to Magdala for two and a half miles, and then found a path which took us to the crest of the heights overlooking it, and went to within two miles of the foot of the Falla hill; here we waited till Sir Charles Staveley came up with some troops, and the ground in front being pretty open and unoccupied, we pushed on to the King's road, to about half a mile of the Selassie hill, without seeing an enemy below. We then came back and chose a position for our camp, and sat down to rest—having been then walking, almost without intermission, for eleven hours. I confess I was then very nearly played out. . . . The sun was fearfully hot; we had had nothing to eat, and we got not a single drop of water the whole day, and we had to climb up some extremely stiff places. Several men and officers gave in, regularly done; and if you had seen the way the men straggled—with that painful distressed look, their tongues cleaving

to the roof of their mouths for want of moisture, and yet all that was in them pouring out in big drops of perspiration—you would have said: This has evidently been a hard day, yet a good one, one to be cherished up as a standard of comparison when more hard days shall come.”

Then came the battle of Arogee, whilst they were still distressed by this toilsome march :—

“During the whole fight it was pouring with rain, so we were all wet through; and as the troops had to march back and stand by their arms the whole night, I think I am not saying too much when I say that, as far as actual hardship goes, that twenty-four hours has not often been surpassed. I had to go to see about the water and the camp, so that I did not get away till 11 p.m., having been on my feet, with a short rest, since 5 a.m., *eighteen hours*, and then General Merewether gave me some cold beef and a *chupattee*, and I lay out in the open, for no tents were up.”

Not until the end of October 1868 was MacGregor promoted captain in the Bengal Staff Corps; but he at once obtained a brevet majority for his services in Bhutan, and he was also at this time selected to write a ‘Gazetteer of Central Asia’ for the Quartermaster-General in India.

In the following September, Major MacGregor married the youngest daughter of Sir Henry Durand, then a member of the Governor-General's Council; and the young couple proceeded, after the wedding, down the frontier, collecting materials for the ‘Gazetteer.’

Lieutenant-Colonel MacGregor's labours on this ‘Gazetteer’ lasted throughout 1870-71-72-73. They involved prolonged wanderings over the debatable ground beyond the Indus, and an immense amount of research in the records of the Government. Whilst still at work, completing the publication of these

important volumes, Lieutenant-Colonel MacGregor was nearly heartbroken by the loss of his young wife, who died on her passage to England, leaving behind her a little daughter, who henceforward was the one bright spot in her father's affections.

The drought and consequent scarcity in North Bengal, which occurred in 1874, obliged extraordinary efforts to be made by Government to anticipate the most disastrous famine. Sir Richard Temple, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, has fully told the story of this threatened famine, and of the means taken to avert it. He found an able coadjutor in Lieutenant-Colonel MacGregor, who was appointed on this occasion Director of Transport for the relief operations.

The magnitude of his charge may be estimated from the following facts. He had at one time about 50,000 two-bullock carts and 15,000 pack-animals working under his supervision, carrying, from first to last, 280,000 tons of grain, equivalent to over 4,000,000 bags. He had to distribute this mass of grain among the numerous granaries, with the help of two companies of Sappers and four companies of a pioneer regiment.

Sir Richard Temple bore testimony to the value of his services during this critical period, saying—

“In the discharge of these duties, he [Colonel MacGregor] displayed many of those qualities which make up the character of an administrator—intelligence in mastering facts, skill in adapting means to the ends in view, aptitude in raising resources against difficulties, power of combining and concentrating efforts from many quarters on particular objects, and persistency in carrying measures to their termination.”

When this duty had concluded, Lieutenant-Colonel MacGregor

was appointed member of the Special Ordnance Commission, then sitting, to determine the necessary arrangements for a reorganisation of the distribution of ordnance *matériel* and stores throughout the Indian dominion.

“Whatever Colonel Charles MacGregor applied himself to,” writes Lady MacGregor, “he did thoroughly—put his heart into it, and never flinched until he had put things through in his own practical straightforward fashion. No work was too hard for him; but he expected his colleagues to work with a will too, otherwise he had no mercy on them.”

“E'en do and spair nocht” was the motto of his ancestors, and he abode by it.

In 1875 Colonel MacGregor contemplated a journey to Persia, and thence to Russia. He wanted, he said, something stirring to do, as he could not stand the prospect of enforced idleness at Simla. His friend, General Roberts, warmly supported his schemes, one of which embraced a visit to Herat; but the Foreign Secretary placed obstacles in the route through Afghanistan. Meeting Colonel Ross at Bushire, MacGregor was informed by that officer that there was a useful route from Shiraz to Yuzd which required exploration, and, acting on this hint, Colonel MacGregor determined to proceed thither, and then work his way to Herat *via* Khorassan. After some eventful episodes, Colonel MacGregor approached within a few miles to the west of Herat; but the Wali of Herat, making sure that the traveller was a Russian spy, despatched an officer with a party of horsemen with orders to escort the foreigner beyond the Afghan frontier. Accordingly, Colonel MacGregor was unable to carry out this part of his programme. However, he proceeded to Mashad (where, by

the way, he met Ayub Khan, then quite a young fellow, biding his time for a dash at Herat), and thence took the opportunity of joining a Persian force which was on the march to relieve the garrison of Sarakhs. Subsequently, MacGregor visited the Daragez, the Atak district, and the valley of the Atrak, riding inside the Russo-Persian frontier to the Caspian, which he crossed from Bundur Gez to Resht, and then made his way to Teheran. He reached England before the end of the year.

Colonel MacGregor was, perhaps, the first to point out to the English people the great strategic importance of Sarakhs in the forthcoming question of the Perso-Afghan frontier in this neighbourhood. He wrote:—

“Placed at the junction of roads from Herat and Mashad, by the Hari-rud and Ab-i-Mashad valleys respectively, and at the best entrance to the province of Khorassan from the north, it cannot fail to exercise a very serious influence on the momentous issue of the above question. This must happen whether it falls into the hands of the friends of England, or into those of her foes. Whether Russia uses Sarakhs as a base for offensive measures against Herat, or England, as a defensive outpost to defeat any such operations, that position will be heard of again. And if my feeble voice can effect a warning ere it is too late, let it be here raised in these words: *If England does not use Sarakhs for defence, Russia will use it for offence!*”

In 1876 Lord Salisbury was Secretary of State for India, and took a deep interest in the Central Asian question, which was then approaching an acute stage. In the course of several interviews with his lordship, Colonel MacGregor suggested Makran as a useful field for exploration, and possibly, as a no-man's-land,

for annexation at no distant date. It was pointed out to Lord Salisbury, that from Quetta across the northern desert of Baluchistan, a practicable route for troops could be found as far as Sistan, south of the Helmand river, whilst by the acquisition of a base near the entrance of the Persian Gulf, as well there existed an accessible route which only required exploration, by which a force could be brought within a few days' march of Herat without infringing the frontiers either of Persia or Afghanistan. Lord Salisbury fully appreciated the value of all information respecting the above routes, and despatched Colonel MacGregor on a secret mission to visit these localities, to make friends with the local chiefs, and Captain Lockwood was also attached as an assistant to Colonel MacGregor's expedition. These two officers were to proceed, in the first instance, through Armenia, and thence—of course with their eyes wide open as to future eventualities, for the war between Russia and Turkey was then imminent—to traverse the valley of the Tigris to the Persian Gulf. The remaining portion of the programme was left to Colonel MacGregor's discretion. The two friends set out on their adventurous trip in September. The journey through Asiatic Turkey was safely and comfortably accomplished, and by the end of December Colonel MacGregor had made the best use of his skill in reconnaissance, whilst passing through the country shortly to be invaded by Russia, and not unnaturally penned a suggestive memorandum on the 'Theatre of War in Armenia,' which afterwards caused no little controversy. It need not be discussed here. Harder work lay before the travel-

lers when they landed at Gwadar on the 1st January 1877. After encountering many difficulties, the country was closely reconnoitred as far as Shah Godar, in the old bed of the Helmand river, and then the routes to Quetta and Kalat were critically examined and mapped under trying circumstances of danger, fatigue, exposure, and want of proper supplies. Their task was well accomplished. Both MacGregor and Lockwood were seasoned travellers, in hard, good condition, but the hardships they endured told severely, if not mortally, on both. Lockwood survived but a short time; and Sir Frederick Roberts lately said, that he had often thought it was during this time of extreme privation that MacGregor sowed the seeds of the disease which ultimately carried him off.

The present Commander-in-Chief in India writes:—

“All this time MacGregor’s reputation was steadily increasing. His grand record of service, his indefatigable industry, and his determination to bring to a successful issue any kind of work intrusted to him, had made him a marked man; and when the Second Afghan War broke out, he was selected for special duty on the Khaibar line.”

After the capture of Ali Masjid by Sir Sam Browne, Colonel MacGregor assisted Major-General Maude in the expedition to the Bazar valley; and later, he was appointed to superintend the communications along the Khaibar to Jalalabad, and then served as Chief of the Staff to the general at Gandamak, from whence he made the arrangements for the retirement of the British force at the conclusion of peace.

At the commencement of the second phase of the war, after the massacre of Sir Louis Cavagnari

and his suite at Kabal, Colonel MacGregor was, at the particular request of General Roberts, appointed Chief of the Staff to the Kabal Field Force; and, says that general, “it is impossible for me to say how much I owed to him. His experience of war, and his many military instincts, peculiarly fitted him for such a responsible situation, and it was fortunate for me that I had so tried a soldier with me at a time of such difficulty and danger.”

Lady MacGregor gives, in her volumes, extracts from the private diary kept by her husband during this campaign; and they cannot fail to deeply interest all who wish to glean an insight into the daily life of an officer, on whom rest the heavy responsibilities of ordering all the details of administration connected with the direction of an army during its advance, its victories, its doubts, its anxieties, its difficulties of defence, on the march, and in retreat—war, in fact, in almost all its varied phases in field, in fortress, in camp and cantonment.

Nineteen years previously MacGregor had saved, as already related, the half-battery of Captain Stirling at Sinho by charging a Tartar horde; now as a colonel he was able to perform another feat, by which he again earned the thanks of the Royal Artillery. During the operations which took place before General Roberts was finally shut up within Sherpur, it may be remembered that whilst retreating through the village of Baghwana, on the 11th December 1879, Major Smyth-Windham was forced to abandon four 9-pounder guns and limbers. Already the gallant Colonel Cleland had been mortally wounded whilst striving to cover the retirement of the Horse Artillery. The guns, whilst still in action, were surrounded,

and, marvellous to relate—the only instance on record in the annals of the Royal Regiment—the gunners did not die round their guns. One of the lieutenants, it is true, a fine young fellow named Hardy, was shot through the head, and was the only one of F Battery, A Brigade, R.H.A., that was killed; none other was even wounded. Whilst the gunners and drivers, or most of them, rode back to Sherpur, MacGregor, then Chief of the Staff, kept his eyes on the abandoned guns, and bided his opportunity to recapture them. As soon as the ground was partially cleared by the advance of MacPherson's troops, he collected a small body of staff-officers and spectators, amongst whom was Mr Durand (his brother-in-law) and Captain Deane; and calling together some Lancers and a few of the dismounted gunners, for seven of the horses had been killed, he sallied down upon the enemy, who speedily took to flight, and extricated the guns and limbers from the ditches into which they had been thrown. Sending back for their teams, Colonel MacGregor had the pleasure of bringing back the four 9-pounders, but little the worse for what they had gone through, and handing them over to Major Smyth-Windham within the square of Sherpur.

MacGregor's own account of what he did is very modestly alluded to in his journal, and as Lady MacGregor expressly states in her preface that she has suppressed all passages which in any way reflect on the conduct of officers, the public have no means of learning what the opinions recorded by the Chief of the Staff were on this eventful occasion. It is possible that several reputations might suffer were all that is to be found in General Sir Charles MacGregor's diaries published. Indeed,

such a publication would possibly excite a sensation in Simla and at army headquarters, not dissimilar to the electric shock which has been lately discharged by the disclosures of the Emperor Frederick's day-book in the 'Deutsche Rundschau' at Berlin.

When Sir Donald Stewart arrived at Kabal from Kandahar, after the battle of Ahmed Khel, and took supreme command of the Northern Afghanistan Field Force, MacGregor joined him as Chief of the Staff. But the news of Maiwand totally changed the face of affairs, and admirable as he was as a staff-officer, MacGregor sighed for a command and a chance of distinguishing himself, and showing his skill as a commander; so that when General Roberts's force was ordered to proceed from Kabal to the relief of Kandahar, MacGregor begged to be allowed to resign his appointment, and he was given charge of the 3d Brigade, which he led during the famous forced march.

"This staff work," he wrote, "does not suit me; it cramps and cabins one's energies, and leaves me no initiation. It has played the devil with me, and if I can only escape, I shall do so; if we go to Kandahar, and on to Herat" (he was ever harping on an advance to Herat) "I might possibly end by getting a V.C. after all. . . . Oh! if I can only go, and if with the 3d Brigade I can have the devil's own fight, I shall do."

He was greatly disappointed that, at the battle of Kandahar, his brigade had not to bear the brunt of the battle; but it was fated that he should serve his country far better by his pen than he, brave as he was, could possibly accomplish merely by the sword.

The 3d Brigade, commanded by MacGregor, was composed of regiments which had been among the first to enter South Afghan-

istan in 1878; and now that the permanent occupation of Kandahar by the Bombay troops was contemplated, and Northern Afghanistan was handed over to Abdul Rahman, the Bengal troops were no longer required, and accordingly MacGregor's was the first brigade on the roster for return to India. Sir Frederick Roberts, leaving at the same time to become Commander-in-Chief of the Madras army, accompanied the brigade in its homeward march.

Before arrival at Quetta, however, the friends, who had been serving so long together, parted, and Brigadier-General MacGregor was selected to carry out the onerous duty of reoccupying the posts along the Harnai route, where the railway track from Dadur had been in course of construction when the disaster of Maiwand, and the consequent break-up of the line of communications between the Khojak and Kandahar, had taken place, and had forced General Playre to abandon the railway depots and plant, in order to concentrate all his force for the relief of Kandahar.

After carrying out this service satisfactorily, General MacGregor was ordered to collect a force at Kach for a punitive expedition into the Mari country, and to enforce the submission of Mehrulla Khan, and other unruly chiefs, who had presumed, on the strength of Ayub's advance and threatened destruction of the Feringhis, to defy the British authorities, and to recommence their lawless raids and plundering along the frontier.

MacGregor carried out this difficult business most successfully, and it was no easy matter to march a force of cavalry, infantry, and wheeled artillery through this wild mountainous tract. Some of the passes were formidable in the extreme, and the hardships suffered

from want of water supply, and the long distance traversed in order to reach the springs or wells, were sometimes very great.

Such difficulties were, however, made light of by one of MacGregor's temperament, and the object of the expedition was fully attained, with only the loss of a few straggling followers and animals, victims to the desultory firing maintained by some of the hill tribes on the rear of the British column; and the force reached the frontier and the banks of the Indus, practically intact, after many weeks' severe work and exposure.

On his return to India, Colonel MacGregor was appointed Quartermaster-General, and, *ex officio*, given local rank as Major-General. His services in Afghanistan gained for him the well-deserved decoration of K.C.B., and Sir Charles now occupied a conspicuous position in the Indian Army.

The Intelligence Branch of his Department had been, in some measure, established by his predecessors, but the stricter organisation and fuller development of it now especially occupied his attention; but he found it, he says, very uphill work, trying to get this, the transport, the commissariat—in fact, the whole interior economy of the army in India—into good working order for really serious active service in war with a great power like Russia.

He thus writes to General Hardinge, the Commander-in-Chief of Bombay:—

“I hope in time to get the Intelligence Branch into good order, but we are much underhanded, and Government treats us as if we were trying to do something wrong in wishing to get information of possible theatres of war, and there are all sorts of obstructions from different Government departments not interested in the scheme.”

Lady MacGregor has substituted blanks for the names of certain officials whose obstructive tendencies are mercilessly condemned, but the names can be easily filled in by most Indian officers, who can readily guess who most deserved being thus pilloried with a deserved stigma.

In 1882 Sir Charles MacGregor went home on furlough, inspecting *en route* the inadequate defences of Bombay and Aden. It may be remembered with what difficulty Parliament was induced to grant some money for the defence of our coal-depots and harbours in the Greater Britain beyond the seas; and how much this proper defence was wanting is clearly manifested by Sir Charles's letters.

The defences of Bombay, he declared, then rested solely on the two monitors, which were without gunners qualified to fight them; and he jocularly proposed that the engineer who constructed the fort of Marbut, at the entrance of the Aden anchorage, should be hung, if only in effigy, for his ridiculous and inane design.

As soon as he reached England, Sir Charles examined attentively into the practical working of the Home Intelligence Branch of our War Office in Pall Mall, then under Colonel Cameron, V.C., the present Commandant of the Military College at Sandhurst; and then, by way of relaxation, he took a trip through the Highlands of Scotland, and visited the scenes of his ancestors' exploits and misfortunes. The revival of the old Clan Gregor Society, which had become almost dormant, was the outcome of this journey to the north. It was during this period of furlough, also, that Sir Charles married Miss Jardine—he and his bride starting for India a fortnight later.

All this time, however, the domi-

nant preoccupation in Sir Charles MacGregor's mind was the actual peril of our Indian Empire. His anxiety was unceasing at the *insouciance* of the Government, and he constantly dwelt on the urgent necessity of awakening the careless people at home, as well as the officials in India, to the fact of the imminence and reality of this danger.

No one was better qualified to judge of the real situation on the frontiers; no one else, in an official position, was bold enough to lay bare the exact facts of the case. No one else had the indomitable perseverance and industry to grapple with the mass of figures, statistics, and ways and means, and evolve a practical scheme for the defence of India; to marshal in array the prodigious forces against us, and the only means of bringing an adequate number of men to garrison our advanced line of resistance. His experience of Central Asia, his knowledge of India and of frontier affairs, and his long and careful study of the subject, enabled him to treat it, said Sir Frederick Roberts, as no other officer could have treated it.

The policy of "*masterly inactivity*" and withdrawal had succeeded the forward policy of Lord Lytton in the Indian Council; and meantime the strides made by Russia in the Trans-Caspian region were redoubled in length and activity under the guidance of Generals Komaroff and Annenkoff, in proportion as British prestige declined in Central Asia. Some of the letters written on this subject by MacGregor to Sir Donald Stewart and to Sir Frederick Roberts are given by Lady MacGregor, and cannot fail to excite much interest throughout India.

"It is a *d-d* big question," he writes, "notwithstanding — and suchlike, and I should be glad to

think only two or three were gathered together to think it out; but no one seems to care a 'twopenny dam.' It will not come in their day, but I think it will come in yours and mine, and I can't help seeing its magnitude and our carelessness."

At last 'The Defence of India' appeared, in 1884 — a study of the great interesting problem, to the consideration of which the Quartermaster-General brought the whole of his energy, great talents, and mastership of detail. It was printed and circulated through the hands of all leading men, members of Council, and officers of position in the army; but not published or made public, each copy being stamped "*confidential*," and accompanied by a notice that it was for private information only. How extracts were published by certain editors in the face of this communication, will probably never be known. It is certain that advantage was taken by some indiscreet (to say the least of it) individuals, and in consequence the vials of official wrath were outpoured on the General's head.

It seems hardly possible to believe that any Government could have had the face to resent such a convincing statement of fact as was brought to their knowledge by Sir Charles's book. Nevertheless such was the case; for although Lord Ripon appears to have seen the preliminary issue (made at an early date to the members of the Government in India), no notice was taken, or word of caution uttered, until prominence was given to the *brochure* by the English press. At the end of October 1884, some articles appeared in certain of the London newspapers, quoting at length textual passages from MacGregor's book, which apparently alarmed, or irritated, some of Mr Gladstone's Cabinet.

The then Secretary of State for India, Lord Kimberley, thereupon telegraphed instructions to Lord Ripon to crush the offending author, and it was generally supposed that MacGregor would be forced to resign his appointment as Quartermaster-General. The facts placed on record in the volume admitted of no controversy — they were incontestable, the figures and details unanswerable; the fault lay in the circulation of the facts, and in the official designation of the author. An urgent telegram, requesting steps to mark disapproval, was despatched from the India Office, where great excitement was especially aroused by a certain passage which suggested the expulsion of Russia from the Caucasus.

Lord Ripon at this time was on the point of leaving his Vice-royalty. Sir Donald Stewart loyally backed up his staff-officer, with whose views he thoroughly concurred, and Sir Charles MacGregor's *apologia* was, almost perforce, accepted. Lord Dufferin, on his arrival, took the more generous view of the matter, and thoroughly appreciated the action taken by Sir Charles. The Duke of Connaught afterwards, as Commander-in-Chief of Bombay, expressed the general opinion of the Indian Army in regard to this business, when he said—

"MacGregor's books were standard works on military policy in India, and he deserved great credit for his courage in pointing out the risks on the frontier, and the system that ought to be adopted for strategic fortifications. The Government of India had been greatly strengthened by his advocacy, and he had helped them to push on the frontier railways and other means of strategic communication."

Lady MacGregor tells us how,

despite the ominous cold shoulder presented to her patriotic husband by the lukewarm officials of the Viceregal surrounding, who confidently expected his degradation for the *exposé* of the danger to which India was open, the general "pursued the even tenor of his way with unshaken purpose. His great idea was to prepare, as far as in him lay, for whatever crisis should arrive, and the events he had foreseen were not long in making their advent apparent even to the most blinded of Government officials. Before Sir Charles vacated his appointment, his precautions and advice were fully justified."

It will be remembered how Komaroff's Cossacks attacked the Afghan force at Panjdeh at the end of March 1885, and how war was all but precipitated, almost exactly as General MacGregor had foretold. Eight months previously Sir Charles had written to Captain Gordon one of those characteristic curt notes, in which he was wont to express so much with the simplest language. In reference to the Boundary Commission he writes:—

"I have nothing to do with the Boundary Commission. A great luminary here, who lately distinguished himself by the introduction of a bill for the transfer of power to the Babus, has been still dropping pearls of wisdom. If he saw your letter (the spirit of which I commend much) he would say,—'How very indiscreet! it might provoke the Russians.' So now, if you cough too loudly up here [Simla], we say, 'How very indiscreet! it might provoke the Russians!' Never mind, my boy! I always say the politicals are the soldiers' best friends, and they are now preparing for us as pretty a kettle of fish as the most ardent could desire, and you and all of us will get our chance yet."

The kettle of fish had now indeed been upset, and it was a case of "out of the frying-pan into the fire"; but Sir Charles MacGregor had well forecast the probability of war, and taken his measures accordingly. Without any fuss or blowing of the trumpet, the arrangements for the instant mobilisation and advance had been so perfected, that within twelve days or a fortnight of a telegraphic signal, two columns, the first line of a *corps d'armée*, would have been on the move *vid* Kandahar, well on to the Helmand, and so on to Herat, without a hitch, whilst the line of the Indus in rear would also have been garrisoned, and, in fact, the first moves of a splendid game would have been pushed forward successfully without deranging the interior defence of India until reinforcements arrived from England. This was all kept dark at home, and little or no credit has been awarded to the prime mover of this great evolution, which was arranged with so much skill and forethought.

"The game we have to play," wrote the quartermaster-general, "is very difficult, but all the more honour to us if we win."

Lady MacGregor has done well to prefix to her book Sir Edward Creasy's standard of a good general, which surely applies fitly to her late gallant consort:—

"We thus learn not to judge of the wisdom of measures too exclusively by the results. We learn to apply the juster standard of seeing what the circumstances and the probabilities were that surrounded a statesman or a general at the time when he decided on his plan: we value him not by his fortune, but by his *Προαίρεσις*."¹

Now, judging Sir Charles by this

¹ Προαίρεσις, εως, ἡ, a choosing one thing before another, preference, choice, will, purpose; plan, mode of proceeding, policy, intention, &c.

measurement, where can we find a more fitting example of a general's *Ἡρωϊσμοῦ* than the moral effect exercised by MacGregor, in conjunction with his prescience and practical working out and putting into practice, to the best of his ability, with the scanty materials, of men and means, his grand scheme for the defence of India during this crisis? The very knowledge obtained by Russia of this capability of mobilisation, now first acquired by the Indian army under a British Skobelev, did more in reality to accomplish the pacific termination of the Panjdeh incident than the so-called arbitration submitted to the King of Denmark.

But little remains to be told. The fortunes of the general's career had passed away, and dark days alone were in store.

At the expiration of his five years as Quartermaster-General, MacGregor had conferred upon him the command of the Panjab Frontier Force—a post which he hoped might have given him further opportunities of distinction in the field; but it was only as a brigadier-general that he held rank. His rank as major-general might surely have been continued, in recognition of his unusual services; but although he applied for this concession, it was denied him—a slight which rankled in his breast until the day of his death. His health, which had hitherto been robust, now broke down. The wear and tear of mind and body by perpetual strain during more than a quarter of a century at length told upon him so severely, that he was advised to recruit in England. After a period of sick-leave he was forced to give up his

command, and although he fought with all his might against the increasing illness, there was no hope of recovery.

“Had he only been permitted to die in battle,” said Sir Frederick Roberts, “at the head of his troops, he would have wished for nothing better. It was in the hope that he might be spared for such a glorious death that he made his great struggle for life. It was not for life's sake, but that he might some day lay it down on the shrine of a soldier's duty. Alas that his wish was not fulfilled!”

Sir Charles MacGregor died at Cairo on the 5th February 1887, nine months after he had resigned his appointment. His promotion to the rank of major-general, to which he became entitled on the 22d January, was not gazetted until a fortnight after his decease.

“Though he died of sickness in Egypt,” said Lord Dufferin at Simla, “he had as undoubtedly sacrificed his health and life to the service of his country as did any of those of his brave countrymen who have fallen on the field.”

By the premature death, at the age of forty-six years, of Sir Charles MacGregor, the Anglo-Indian Army was deprived of one of its bravest soldiers, and Great Britain had to deplore the loss of a loyal and lion-hearted commander. His body was carried home and laid to rest in the obscure graveyard of his clan at Glengyle; but his memory will remain green, and his deeds of daring be discussed throughout the Indian Empire, for many long years to come. Like Goethe's Arab chief—

“Head to plan, and heart to try,
Hand to do, and steadfast will,—
'Twas a chief. Alas! for aye
Head and heart and hand are still.”

SCENES FROM A SILENT WORLD.

BY A PRISON VISITOR.

It is well known, of course, that there exists in most of our large cities, behind all their din and traffic and ceaseless energy of human existence, a silent world where life, as vivid and eager as that which teems in the busy streets, is pent up, for ever unheard and unseen. But the full significance of that fact, with its dire import on some of the most complex problems of our time, can only be rightly apprehended by those who are allowed to enter there as habitual visitors, and to hold unrestrained intercourse with its inmates. This is a privilege which can only be granted by the highest authorities, and is not always easily obtained; but in the case of the present writer it has resulted in a ten years' most intimate acquaintance with the very peculiar population which is to be found in those criminal establishments. Persons who pay a mere visit of curiosity to a prison, and are conducted by an official along rows of immaculately clean cells, where orderly prisoners are at work in perfect silence, cannot have the smallest conception of the extraordinary revelations in human nature, and in possibilities of human destiny, which are made known to those who are allowed to penetrate into the unveiled realities of the strange life that writhes within the impervious prison walls. Hidden there are elements of the deepest tragedy: abnormal facts, which raise the most intricate questions in moral responsibility and other psychological problems; true histories, equalling the wildest romance the imagination could picture; while on the other hand the

daily routine is constantly enlivened by incidents that are irresistibly comic. Volumes might be filled with illustrations from all the various phases of prison life, but in the limited space at our command we desire especially to bring forward those which, besides their strong human interest, have an important bearing on a question that has always roused much diversity of opinion—that of the *Lex talionis*.

The capital penalty enforced by the existing law of England on all who, under any circumstances short of self-defence, destroy the life of a fellow-creature, stands on a totally different footing from any other legal punishment, inasmuch as it is one of which no human being can gauge the meaning or the extent. Sentences which are to be carried out within the limits of this mortal life can be exactly proportioned to the crime, dealing with a man's visible existence only, and leaving wholly untouched his possible destiny in other unknown spheres; but once commit him to the great mystery of death, and the living spirit passes from the hangman's hands into conditions absolutely impenetrable to us, and with which, therefore, it may well be doubted if we have any right to tamper. The usual arguments in favour of capital punishment—that it is a deterrent from crime, that it is necessary for the public safety, that it is the only penalty dreaded by the criminal classes—were all met in a rather remarkable manner by certain cases which occurred in the prison with which the writer is connected. Three men, at short intervals of time,

were brought to that goal charged with precisely the same crime—the murder of their wives; but the individuals were in character and antecedents and in many other respects so entirely dissimilar, that the deductions to be drawn from their histories are very different in their nature. The case of the first we shall record illustrates very strikingly the difficulty of holding the scales of justice evenly in those momentous decisions, where the lives of persons more or less criminal hang in the balance, and also some other considerations which will be sufficiently obvious from a simple recital of the facts.

Ted Brown, whose real name only is not given for necessary reasons, was an elderly man, and when his age came to be questioned, he declared that he was upwards of eighty—but he was generally believed to be about sixty years old. His family, which had originally consisted of fourteen children, numbered then only three—a grown up daughter, and a quite young boy and girl. We have had a good deal of insight lately respecting the very low state of civilisation which obtains among the poorer classes in our large towns, but it is scarcely possible to realise a life so completely on a level with that of the beasts of the field—if not below it—as was the normal existence of Ted Brown and his family. The man himself was not only absolutely illiterate, but of so low an order of intelligence that he was very happily characterised by one of the prison officials as the missing link which Darwinism seeks to find between our race and the *Ascidians*. It may really be doubted, however, whether any respectable gorilla would have demeaned himself to Ted Brown's level.

At the time when the event took place which brought him under the grasp of the law, Ted in-

habited a mansion of his own construction on an open common in the vicinity of a large town. It consisted of two or three old blankets suspended over upright sticks, so as to form a species of tent, in which he burrowed with his wife and two younger children. The eldest daughter had long before abandoned this uninviting family home to get her living in a manner far from conducive to even the lowest standard of morals. The income of the whole party was limited to such pence as could at irregular intervals be obtained by the manufacture of wooden pegs for clothes-lines, which were sold by Mrs Brown in the streets of the town, to which she was daily sent by her husband for that purpose. Ted himself meantime reclined luxuriously on a heap of straw in his airy abode, smoking the short black pipe which was the one possession in the world that was truly dear to his soul. His wife was therefore eminently useful to him. She did all the work, and procured the means of subsistence for the entire family, toiling from morning till night, while the life which he was enabled to lead by her labour might have been compared to that of a Turkish Pasha in reduced circumstances. The woman was a poor simple creature, harmless enough, but with the mildest possible conception of the difference between right and wrong. She had lived with Ted for more than thirty years, and been the mother of his fourteen children, but she had not always been his wife; that dignity had been conferred upon her at a much later period, in the interests of the higher morality, by a benevolent clergyman who had come across them in the course of their wanderings from place to place. The couple had lived more or less harmoniously together till a few years previously, when Ted

had been laid aside for a time by an attack of rheumatic fever—a malady which, considering the nature of his abode, might have been expected to fasten permanently on the whole family. During his compulsory retirement in some pauper hospital, he believed that his wife had acted in a manner to arouse his jealousy. For this offence, real or supposed, he never forgave her; and when any circumstance recalled it to his memory, he was in the habit of beating her in a very violent manner.

On a certain cold winter's night the family went to bed as usual—that is, they lay down on the ground of the open common, sheltered only by their blanket tent—the two children sleeping, one on each side of their mother. Ted had bestowed high-sounding appellations on his progeny, which contrasted very oddly with their circumstances. The boy was invested with the titles as well as the name of a royal personage; and the girl, with probably a designation taken from that of a ship, which was equivalent to the word *Britannia*. It was from her account that the events of that fatal night became known. She was apparently about ten or eleven years of age, though said to be older, and in her the resemblance to the gorilla tribe was quite as strongly marked as in her father. In all her ways and movements she was exactly like a monkey, with the one exception, that she could speak with a human tongue, in the lowest dialect of her native country. According to her statement, she awoke that night to find that her “dad”—stung probably by some sudden recollection of his grievance against his wife—was stretching across her in order to reach her “mammy,” whom he was “hitting,” as she expressed it, with great fierceness. *Britannia* lay still and watched

the proceedings,—it was only what she had witnessed many times before; but on that starlit night Ted went further than he intended or knew. When at last he desisted, and turned round to go to sleep again, the poor woman, who is not said to have uttered a single cry or complaint, “*scrawled*,” to use *Britannia*'s peculiar phraseology, out of the tent, apparently with the intention of getting some water to drink at a little streamlet which ran through the common at a few yards' distance. She did not return, and presently the child went out to see what had become of her. She found her lying quite dead, with her feet in the water. *Britannia* went back to her father and told him that her mother would not move or speak. Ted rose and followed her to the spot. There, in the dim starlight, he looked down into the dead woman's face, and having satisfied himself that life was extinct, he dragged her back into the tent with the help of his little daughter. Then the remaining members of the family composedly lay down by the side of the corpse and slept till morning. So soon as the daylight dawned, Ted went out to gather sticks wherewith to kindle his fire, and being apparently somewhat embarrassed by the lifeless burden of which he had become possessed, he told *Britannia* to go to the cottage of a labouring man who had sometimes passed through the common and spoken to him, and tell him that he wished to see him.

This neighbour presently arrived, and Ted went cheerfully to meet him, carrying the sticks with which he was about to prepare his breakfast. He at once announced the tragic event of the preceding night in the following terms: “We have got a dead 'un here this morning.” The labourer went into the tent, and what he saw there

decided him to go for the nearest policeman, without any intimation of his intention to the family. That night Ted slept within four stone walls, sheltered from the wind and weather, the first time for many a year.

In due course he was brought to trial; and the judge, having heard Britannia's account of the tragedy, practically directed the jury to find him guilty of the wilful murder of his wife.

Now, as a matter of fact, Ted had been guilty of wilful cruelty to an extent which no doubt deserved severe punishment; but of wilful murder he was not either legally or morally guilty. To kill his wife was the very last thing he either wished or intended: not that he had any love for her,—his pipe being, as we have said, the sole object of his affections,—but because the loss of her useful services would have rendered her death, even from natural causes, a most disastrous calamity to him. However, the usual grim sentence followed the verdict; and Ted—such as we have described him in his mental and moral characteristics—was left to face within little more than a fortnight what Carlyle was wont to call “the eternities.”

The duty of preparing him for this tremendous change necessarily devolved on the prison chaplain, and all that zeal and earnestness could effect, that good man would undoubtedly have brought to bear on the task; but he was met at the very outset by a serious difficulty. Ted, in his cogitations over his terrible position, which was quite inexplicable to himself, had evolved out of his gorilla-like consciousness a very peculiar explanation of the whole affair. He became convinced that his impending doom, instead of being appointed by the law, was really a commercial transaction harmoniously ar-

ranged, for their own pecuniary benefit, between Jack Ketch and the chapel-man, by which names he designated the executioner and the clergyman. He imagined that they would be given an equivalent in money for value received, so soon as they could deliver up the strangled body of Ted Brown to the authorities; and as his life was decidedly precious to himself, he fixed in his own mind what he considered to be the very high sum of £5, as being the price bargained for by the two partners in the arrangement. When the chaplain, therefore, proceeded to the condemned cell to commence the course of theological training which was to fit Ted in seventeen days for an entrance on the eternal mysteries, he was dismayed by the very unexpected greeting with which he was received. Poor Ted fell prone upon his knees before him, and holding up beseeching hands, implored of him generously to forego the £2, 10s., which would be the gentleman's share of the price to be paid for himself when he should have been effectually done to death by the hangman's rope. If the chapel-man would thus give up his half of the gratuity, it would be of no use for Jack Ketch to try and hold on to his fifty shillings, and Ted would be ready to make any amount of wooden pegs for them both in the course of his future career, so as to liquidate the debt he would owe them. The unfortunate chapel-man was left to grapple with the difficulty of raising Ted in one fortnight, from this level of intelligence respecting his position, to a fitting state of preparation for his departure into the realms unseen.

Meantime another person connected with the prison was occupied with the fate of the little Britannia.

It had been this child's evidence, and hers alone, which had brought her father to the scaffold; and as it had not been at all to Ted's mind that the girl who had been his small slave all the days of her life should give a detailed account of his manners and customs in open court, he had glared upon her from the dock with a look of fury which she could not easily forget. In spite of her great affinity in many respects to the monkey tribe, Britannia had one prominent human trait, in her strong power of affection. The manner in which she attached herself with an absolutely blind trust to the person who took an interest in her was very touching; and it was evident, from her references to the scene at the trial, that in after years, if her intelligence were developed by education, the recollection of her own share in her father's fate, and his consequent rage against her, might be to her a source of lasting pain. Her friend was anxious, therefore, to win his forgiveness for her before the end, and arranged to have an interview with him for that purpose within a few hours of his execution. It seemed that the near approach of death was rousing some feelings of natural affection in Ted's darkened mind, and that it might afford him a gleam of comfort in his sad position, to hear that the child had been placed in a home where she would be kindly treated and provided for. To procure him this consolation, therefore, the arrangements for sending her to an orphanage a long distance from the city where he was waiting his doom were hastily concluded, and her friend went to visit her there, in order to receive from her some kind messages to be conveyed to the rapidly dying man. These plans were, however, instantly overthrown by that which is the

bane of many of our modern schemes of benevolence—a species of moral red-tapism that surrounds otherwise useful charities with a number of petty stringent rules, so despotically maintained as often to frustrate entirely the good objects for which the institutions were founded. Instead of being able to receive Britannia's last messages to her father, the visitor was ushered into a committee-room, where a formidable circle of portentous-looking females announced that the poor half-monkey child had infringed certain small regulations, and must be instantly dismissed, to find another home as best she could. The head and front of her offending appeared to be, that she had, with other reckless statements, informed a small companion her father was about to be hanged, which information she had been ordered not to impart to any one.

Of course, if she were to be thus summarily expelled, all hope seemed at an end that the poor father, on the brink of death, could have the comfort of hearing she was safe in a permanent home, and this plea for her being retained was anxiously pressed on the redoubtable committee. The painful facts were heard with sphinx-like imperturbability, and the order was repeated. The child must go, and the money which had been paid for a year's maintenance would be returned, deducting her board for the few days she had inhabited the house.

Fortunately a person of more liberal mind than this "charitable" committee volunteered to give the poor child a home under the sad circumstances, and thus afford the unhappy man a last consolation. Britannia's friend was therefore allowed to go to the condemned cell very shortly before the execu-

tion, to tell Ted that she was definitely provided for, and to beg him to send her some kindly words of forgiveness, which would be a comfort to her in after years. It was somewhat like a bad dream to sit beside that strong, stalwart man, full of life and energy, and to know that in a few hours he would be lying stiff and stark under six feet of earth in the prison yard—and his own remarks, which reverted perpetually in a very curious manner to the fate awaiting him, did not tend to lessen this impression.

When the conversation was forcibly brought round to the subject of Britannia, he indulged at first in a fierce burst of passion against her for having brought him to the gallows; but he soon saw that this was very distasteful to his visitor, and poor Ted seemed to have come to the conclusion, that in his critical position it would be his wisest policy to try and please every one all round—so he changed his tone, and meekly agreed to do whatever was required of him with regard to the child.

"Yes, I'll forgive her," he said. "I'll not think no more of them lies she told, for all I never did no-think more to my wife nor she deserved—a hussy! Just you think of it—me lying crippled up with the rheumatics, and her agoing flaunting out with that there fellow—"

"But about Britannia," interrupted the visitor, stopping these reminiscences—"you will send your love to her, will you not?"

"Yes, yes; you can tell her I bears no malice, and as how I hopes she'll grow up a bright woman;" and then he suddenly interpolated his paternal good wishes with the peculiar question—"Do you think, now, it will take them five minutes to kill me?"

The visitor was not experienced

in details of the hanging process, but answered as soothingly as possible, and after a little time led him gently back to his child's message of love to him. This was at last quite effectual in reconciling him to her, and he even volunteered to "make up a letter," as he expressed it, to be given her on the day of his death. Ted could neither read nor write, so this could only be done by dictation to one of the warders who watched him night and day, to prevent him from forestalling the hangman's work by any private proceedings of his own; but as it was likely to be a valuable document to the poor girl in the future, the offer was gladly accepted. A most extraordinary letter it proved to be: he had evidently thought it desirable to make it highly ecclesiastical, so that it consisted of the most curiously metamorphosed fragments from the chapelman's teaching, interspersed with amazing reflections of Ted's own, and scraps of hymns heard in the Sunday services, inverted in such a manner as to become the most ineffable nonsense. The whole sum of Ted's religious knowledge when he first entered the prison had consisted in the following four lines, which he had quoted triumphantly as containing the entire body of sound doctrine taught by the Christian Church:—

"There are four corners to my bed,
And four angels at my head—
Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,
Bless the bed that I lie on."

After a fortnight's instruction, however, he had got hold of the idea of a lost sheep, and he put that unfortunate quadruped through its paces in his letter in a truly remarkable manner. Nevertheless, poor little Britannia, who is at this date gradually being educated into the semblance of a human being,

will one day value very highly that strange message from the dead.

The end of the tragedy for poor gorilla-like Ted came in the shape of a fainting-fit, so complete as to produce total insensibility, into which he fell on the scaffold, from sheer terror of the death that overtook him before he recovered—and so terminates the history of the application of human justice to his individual case.

It is one of the peculiarities of the silent world—where men and women have sometimes to expiate their offences by a dreadful death at the hands of their fellow-creatures—that the other criminals located there remain in total ignorance of the tragedy being enacted in their midst. The officers are never allowed to hold any communication with the convicts except such as may be necessary for the enforcement of discipline; and even the appointed visitor who is privileged to talk to them freely of their own concerns, is bound to adhere to the same rule with regard to all other subjects. Thus it is that the only prisoners who can have even a suspicion that an execution is going to take place under the very roof which shelters themselves, are the men who are told off to dig the grave of their yet living companion, on the day before his death.

It chanced, therefore, that the visitor had very soon to pass from the ghastly associations of the condemned cell to the female prison, where the officials were being kept in a state of lively excitement by the proceedings of one of the inmates. While strange aspects of human nature and most pathetic histories are brought to light in intercourse with convicted women, it often happens that eccentric characters appear among them, whose fantastic careers cannot be accounted for on any known prin-

ciples of human action. Such an individual was No. 26, who was undergoing a long sentence in the same prison with Ted Brown at the time of his compulsory exit from it. She was a tall handsome woman, with fine features and brilliant black eyes, which were for ever flashing restlessly from side to side. She had been well educated, and carried herself with the air of a princess—maintaining in her quiet days a haughty demeanour, which she seldom relaxed, except in the case of the prison visitor, of whom she was graciously pleased to approve.

No. 26 shared in one invariable characteristic of female prisoners whose crimes have not been of the gravest type, that she was, according to her own account, a model of all the virtues. Women who are committed on a charge of murder or manslaughter or attempted suicide, are generally in too despairing a frame of mind to attempt any denial of the charge; but where their offence has been theft, or assault, or other minor misdeeds, they systematically invent the most plausible explanations of the misadventure which has consigned them, in their perfect innocence, to the prison cells. Sometimes, according to their statement, it has simply been the dense stupidity of the benighted judge who sentenced them, which has led to the catastrophe; but more frequently it has been a false friend who has taken advantage of their confiding docility to shelter all manner of misdeeds behind their own immaculate virtue. The perpetual appearance of this stereotyped false friend, soon taught the visitor to dismiss the phantom very summarily; and the imaginary deceiver of No. 26 having been so dealt with, she ceased any attempt to set aside the grim evidence given by the judicial record of her

former convictions, and was fain to admit that she had been incarcerated many times before, for offences of various kinds. It soon became known that in every one of these prisons she had made the lives of the officials a burden to them, and some of her freaks were certainly of a very exasperating nature. On one occasion, when she was inhabiting the convict establishment of a large city, she announced that she had a complaint to make respecting the prison authorities, and demanded to be taken before the magistrates for that purpose. This is a request which is never denied to a prisoner who desires to bring forward any serious charge against the governing officials—and as No. 26 preserved an imperturbable silence on the subject of her grievance, it was concluded that it must be of a formidable nature. There was, therefore, quite an array of magistrates assembled to hear her statement, and the governor, chaplain, and other superior officers of the prison were summoned to be present. No. 26 was conducted before them, and solemnly ordered to proffer her accusation against those to whose custody she was committed. She at once replied, in stately measured tones, that she felt it her duty to bring a charge against the chaplain, the reverend gentleman there present, for the criminal dulness of the wretched sermons to which he condemned his ill-used congregation Sunday after Sunday. They were not only quite worthless, she said, in style and composition, but also extremely illogical, inasmuch as he was perpetually attacking the female prisoners for their slight misdemeanours, while he passed lightly over the offences committed by the persons of his own sex on the male side of the prison. She requested that the

magistrates would order an inquiry into his preaching powers, when she believed it would be found that he was possessed of none whatever. The countenance of the chaplain was seen to assume various shades of blue and green during this address, delivered much after the fashion of a counsel for the prosecution, until the magistrates could sufficiently overcome their smothered laughter to reprove the critical prisoner with befitting sternness, and order her immediate removal to her cell.

When No. 26 came under the visitor's notice in her new compulsory retirement, she manifested so strong a desire to listen to advice and reform her ways on all points, that it was resolved to make a great effort to effect a radical change in her mode of disposing of her existence. It was known that her relations were highly respectable people, who had done their utmost for her many times, only to see her fall back into her wild lawless life more recklessly than before, and they had finally given her up in despair, and refused to recognise her at all. Plans were made, however, for placing her in a position where she could begin a new life, and gain her own livelihood in an honest and suitable manner. She professed herself much pleased with the arrangement, which she knew involved considerable outlay, and the demons of passion and unrest with which she had been formerly possessed appeared to be completely laid. She went on thoroughly well till within a short time of the day when she was to obtain her discharge from prison, and then there was a lamentable change: she had scented the breath of freedom approaching speedily, and became simply intoxicated with it. One morning the visitor was met, on arriving at the gaol, with the

information that No. 26 had "broken out"—the prison term for a wild fit of seeming madness which from time to time seizes on the women confined within its walls. What had been the cause of this sudden attack?—there was literally no cause. The regulation breakfast had been brought as usual to No. 26, being absolutely identical with that provided for all the other women, when she had instantly burst into a wild fit of fury, declaring that her bread was less in weight than that destined for her companions. She tore off her cap, always an object of abhorrence, sent her long black hair flying out on the wind, and dashed like a maniac into the courtyard which separated her from the men's side of the prison, wrenching herself out of the hands of the officers who tried to control her. She announced her intention of scaling the wall,—a feat that at any other time would have been absolutely impossible, but did not at that moment seem beyond the preternatural strength with which her passion had endowed her; and once on the other side, she declared she would make her way to the kitchen, take violent possession of the cook, a stout man some six feet high, and then and there boil him to a pulp in his own copper. These were her precise words, shouted out at the top of her voice; and although it had been found possible to prevent her from carrying out this unusual culinary operation, she could not be hindered from spreading ruin and devastation round her in the punishment-cell, to which she had been conveyed by the united efforts of a considerable number of prison officials. She had not been many minutes securely locked in there, when ominous sounds of a very violent description were heard to proceed from the cell, and a view of her position

being taken through the inspection grating, she was seen standing clothed in dilapidated garments, and surrounded not only with everything the place contained smashed to atoms, but with quantities of the plaster and lime from the walls. She must have sprung at them like a wild cat to a considerable height, and she had succeeded in laying the actual stones bare to a very great extent. Enveloped in the clouds of dust she had raised, No. 26 poured forth such a volley of threats and blasphemous invectives against the officer, whose presence she detected behind the grating, that the visitor was strongly recommended not to go to her—it was thought to be decidedly unsafe. That, however, was not the opinion of the individual in question, whose experience had shown that even the most lawless spirits can be tamed by kindness when once their affections have been roused. The idea of leaving the unfortunate No. 26 in the deplorable condition to which she had reduced herself was not to be entertained for a moment. By dint of obstinate insistence, the visitor had the door of the punishment-cell opened, and entered it alone, knowing well that the presence of an official would have been fatal to any hope of quieting the woman. Certainly there proved to be no need for any exercise of courage. The moment No. 26 saw her friend, she stopped short in a renewed attack she was making on the walls, let her hands fall by her sides, and opened wide her great black eyes in a look first of amazement, then of distress.

"You!" she exclaimed at last,—"is it really you come into this horrible place! I could not have dreamt that you would come here! If I had only known it, I would never have made such a frightful mess—for you to have to stand in

the midst of it! Stay; you must not set your feet in all that rubbish,"—and quickly tearing off a handkerchief which covered her shoulders, she went down on her knees and spread it on the stone floor of the cell—insisting that the visitor's feet should be placed on it, so that they might avoid all contact with the heaps of lime and dust she had accumulated there. It was a touching instance of the good feeling which underlay poor No. 26's fiendish temper, and which generally does exist more or less even in the most brutalised prisoners.

A quiet conversation followed, during which she became perfectly meek, and really remorseful for her conduct. Unfortunately she could not always be under influences of this description—prison rules required the infliction of penalties for her insubordination, and poor No. 26 went from bad to worse, till the day of her discharge arrived. By that time she had succeeded in inventing serious charges against every one of the prison authorities, from the governor downwards, including even the once-favoured visitor; and she announced her intention of making their various iniquities fully known to the world, by proclaiming them aloud during her very first moments of freedom in the public streets of the city in which the prison was situated.

As it was decidedly desirable to prevent such a proceeding, if possible, No. 26 was told that her railway fare would be paid to a place at a distance, where it was known she really wanted to go, and an elderly warder was desired to accompany her to the station and see her safe off. He did not relish his task, but scarcely anticipated the extent of his difficulties. The moment No. 26 found herself outside the door of the prison, she knew that she was a perfectly free

woman, and that the authorities had no longer any power over her, whereupon she gave the reins to her capricious temper, and declared that she would not go to the station till she had carried out her purpose of marching through the streets of the town, and there publicly announcing that the once respected officials of the gaol were arrant villains, one and all.

At that moment the chaplain, most unfortunately for himself, came in at the outer gate, and instantly darting towards him, No. 26 collared him, metaphorically, and violently demanded instant redress for her injuries, while the officers still remaining safely within the walls looked out from the windows, and, it is to be feared, greatly enjoyed the scene. The elderly warder was, however, equal to the occasion. He blandly approached the woman while she was executing a species of fancy dance round the passive form of the dismayed clergyman, and reminded her that if she carried out her plan of a public denunciation of the prison authorities in the open streets, she would thereby reveal the disagreeable fact that she had herself been a denizen of that unsatisfactory abode; whereas, if she accompanied him to the station with all the airs and graces she could so well assume, it would be concluded that she was simply a fascinating lady, being escorted by an admiring gentleman on a journey of pleasure.

These tactics prevailed. No. 26 released the chaplain, whom she, like the Ancient Mariner, had been holding with her glittering eye, and departed elegantly for the station. Thither she arrived, after having had one or two renewed outbursts on the way, which the warder afterwards declared had sent a cold tremor through him; but he at last succeeded in getting

her into the train, and returned home in an exhausted condition.

It might seem at first sight as if this system of periodical "breakings out," which is largely adopted by the lower class of female prisoners, were a mere unreasoning indulgence in temper; but it is not so—it has a distinct *rationale* of its own, illogical enough, no doubt, but a well-considered method in the apparent madness. The object of it is simply one of deliberate revenge for the pains and penalties to which their imprisonment subjects them. The women are perfectly aware that by these paroxysms of violence they give a great deal of trouble and annoyance to the officers, whose duty it is to carry out all the unpleasant conditions of the sentence they have brought on themselves by their offences against the law. And it is really extraordinary what an amount of extra punishment they will willingly undergo in order to have the gratification of thus revenging themselves. We had a curious instance of this on one occasion. A woman who had frequently been imprisoned for small offences was brought before the magistrates, on a charge which would only have involved the detention of a few weeks. She prided herself on her elegance of manner and diction, having in former times been a governess; and nothing could be more meek or graceful than the way in which she pleaded with the magistrates to let her off for once: if they abstained from sending her to prison she would immediately retire into a virtuous seclusion, and enter on a course of the highest morality. They were deaf to her entreaties, however, and felt bound to inflict on her what was really a very lenient sentence. No sooner was it pronounced, and the police were approaching to remove her,

than she executed with amazing dexterity the plan which had been in her mind from the first. During the very time when she was mildly pleading for indulgence, she had managed, by a subtle unseen movement, to remove one of her shoes, and hide it under her shawl: and the moment the chief magistrate ceased speaking she drew it out, as quick as lightning, from its concealment, and flung it at his head with such precision of aim as effectually to land it in the position she most desired. Of course the result of such an outrage on the judicial dignity was the immediate doubling of her sentence under severe conditions. But that was simply nothing to her in comparison with the exquisite enjoyment of that moment, when she saw her muddy old shoe flying through the air to lodge on the magisterial cranium. Even when she spoke of it afterwards in the presence of the visitor, to whom she wished to be abnormally respectful, she had difficulty in repressing her shrieks of delight at the recollection of that ineffable moment.

These are merely the lighter aspects of prison life; but they can only afford a very passing relief, to the sadness and pain which must habitually weigh on those who are brought in contact with all the dark and tragic episodes that usually mark the records of that strange silent world.

We purpose, on subsequent occasions, to give some illustrations of the more serious conditions of convict existence; and we venture to hope that what has been learned by practical experience as the appointed visitor of a model gaol, may prove usefully suggestive to some of those who are concerned in the administration of the law and the general treatment of criminals.

THE DEATH OF ANTHONY.

CAN it be? Are you living, my queen?
 I thought I had lost you for ever;
 I was hurrying on to seek you
 O'er Acheron's dark river.
 I was rushing down Death's dark way,
 For this world is nothing without you;
 But you live, you live, and for one last time
 I can throw my arms about you.

Mine again—for a moment—no more,
 For swiftly my life is flying;
 All your love cannot hold me here,
 I am dying, Egypt, dying.
 Ah! Death would be only a triumph
 If we together were going,
 But alone, alone, and so alone,
 Is beyond all telling, all knowing.

Never—ah, never, never,
 Even in Elysian meadows,
 Can bliss be mine, if you are not there,
 'Mid that throng of thin cold shadows.
 Ah, let me not go alone!
 'Tis so easy life's knot to sever;
 One pang, and it all is over. Come,
 Let us fling off the whole world for ever!

We have had our golden days,
 Our triumph, our power, and our glory,
 And our life, and our love, and our death
 Shall be long remembered in story.
 We have not hid from men's gaze,
 Nor rotted in life's dull corner,
 But the world has wondered and stared at us,
 And the world will be our mourner.

There is nothing in life to regret,
 We have plucked all its myrtles and roses,
 We have seen, we have done, what no others have done,
 And if death now the triumph closes,
 Let it come! let us welcome its coming,
 Since it loosens life's tedious tether.
 Fate frowns on us both; let us go, dear love,
 Let us die as we lived, together.

Is it Cæsar's triumph to swell,
That you hesitate now and linger?
His kisses to take, his gifts to accept,
To be pointed out by Scorn's finger?
To be jeered at by Rome's foul rabble?
You, to cringe and to shrink to a master;
You, to eat the dust of his chariot-wheels;
And is death, then, a worse disaster?

Ah! you shudder! Your cheeks grow pale!
I can say no more; I am dying.
This world's growing dim. Lift my head!—One more kiss!
Oh! at least on your bosom lying,
My spirit takes flight—all is over
This life had to give, and it gave us
Its best and its sweetest; but now death is best,—
Death, that comes from life's horrors to save us.

Farewell! We shall meet again soon,
I feel it, beyond the dark river.
If you stay, it will be but a moment,
For life cannot last for ever.
On that farther shore I shall wait,
With a love that knows no abating,
Till you come—and come soon—and remember,
I'm waiting there, Egypt, waiting.

W. W. STORY.

PROFESSIONS FOR DOGS.

WHEN we speak of "Dogs," our thoughts naturally revert to dogs as we know them in Britain—the sportsman's perfectly trained companion and most obedient servant—the shepherd's most wise and trusty auxiliary—the faithful loving friend of most men and women. We think of dogs great and dogs little, dogs smooth and dogs rough, dogs gentle or dogs surly, dogs solitary or hunting in couples, or hounds in pack; but in any case we think only of the dogs in their natural condition, free from harness or burden of any sort. Perhaps we may say we value our doggie friends for their moral worth and sympathetic companionship, but certainly not as being peculiarly intelligent beasts of burden or traction.

Yet in various countries these are the canine qualities most highly prized, while in others the dog is either systematically fattened for the table (as formerly in many of the Pacific Isles, and at the present day in China), or else, as in Mohammedan lands, is regarded as an outcast; yet even the pariah, accepting the inevitable, unconsciously returns good for evil, and proves man's true friend by acting as the scavenger of his streets.

In the great Dog-world professions are generally as rigidly hereditary as are those of Indian tradesmen whose caste predestines their life-work. Blood-hounds, Fox-hounds, Stag-hounds, Greyhounds, Otter-hounds, Retrievers, Coach-dogs, St Bernards, Newfoundlands, Collies, and others, are each born with definite instincts inherited from a long train of ancestors. Cerberus, indeed, has representatives of every degree,

our watch-dogs being recruited from every conceivable variety of the race; and of course individual dogs have been trained to the exercise of all manner of talents; but nothing in the whole range of canine education has proved so curious in its results as that to which we owe the race of odd little Turnspits and Dachshunds, descendants of the professional dog-cooks whose whole lives were devoted to roasting the game pursued by their swifter brethren, the professional hunters.

Some of these quaint doggies have the fine silky skin and long drooping ears of the hound, others are rough and wiry as terriers, but all have the singularly long body and short crooked legs, which seem to have originated in the daily toil of *their* ancestors in working an endless treadmill on behalf of *ours*. This treadmill was a wheel whose revolutions kept the great kitchen-spit for ever turning, turning. The dog was placed within the wheel, which when once set in motion forced him to continue running, and to this constant pressure on the fore-paws is doubtless due the eccentric out-turning in those of their descendants, which is so peculiar a characteristic of the family. Till very recently a genuine Turnspit might have been seen thus employed in an ancient kitchen at Caerleon, in Monmouthshire.

I doubt whether any amount of good fare could have atoned to these slaves of the scullion for the dreary drudgery of their dull days. Yet they at least had the satisfaction of being useful during their lives, which (unless dogs know something in favour of "a short

life, but a merry one") was perhaps preferable to such a profession as dates only from the hour of death. Yet such is the sad destination of a multitude of the noblest of the race.

To us it seems strange indeed to learn that in Manchuria and Mongolia a young woman's wedding-portion consists not always of so many head of cattle, but frequently of so many dogs, which are to form the nucleus of a dog-farm,—these being reared for the sake of the thick fur with which the dogs in these bitterly cold regions are so excellently endowed, as indeed they would need to be, seeing that in mid-winter the thermometer (Fahr.) sometimes falls to 25° below zero—*i.e.*, 57 degrees of frost.

This business is as systematically carried on as is that of sheep-farming in Australasia, the rate of reproduction being estimated at ten per annum;¹ so, reckoning the increase by geometrical ratio, it is evident that the bride who receives a dower of a dozen of these very large long-haired dogs is well started in life. But of course the majority of these fine animals are not destined to survive their first year, as they are full grown when about eight months old, and their fur attains perfection in winter, so that only those required for breeding are allowed to see the spring.

All over the northern part of these vast Mongolian and Manchurian territories these dog-farms are scattered, and there are thousands in which a few hundred dogs are annually reared for the market, while others merely raise enough to supply robes and mats for home use. There are a good many cases in which one can scarcely afford to think of antecedents, and certainly

this slaughter of perhaps the handsomest race of dogs in the world, for the sake of their coats, is peculiarly unpleasant.

We have to accept the fact that our fisher-folk find it very hard to resist the chance of securing the skin of any unwary dog who strays within their reach, as if offering himself to supply a peculiarly airtight buoy for the fishing-nets. But to bring the matter very near home, though we all accept kid gloves as naturally as we do roast lamb, is it not just a little jarring to recollect the origin of our driving and gardening dog-skin gloves? It is the one item which brings us actually in touch with the subject, and our loyalty to those faithful members of the race who honour us with their personal devotion revolts from the thought of so utilising their brethren. Indeed, looking at it in the light of sentiment, it seems almost as shocking as the human tanneries in the French Revolution! But the civilisation which requires a never-failing supply of *pâté-de-foie-gras*, with full knowledge of the horrors involved in its production, can certainly find no place for sentiment in the matter of dead dogs.

As regards training members of the canine family to work in harness as draught-animals, this practice, which we now deem so cruel, was common in England till about the middle of the present century, when it was declared illegal. Till then the barrows of the "cat and dog's meat" men were drawn by dogs, some of whom were proved to have such very rough times that a law of emancipation was enacted, and now no free-born British dog can be compelled to draw weights, that being obviously work

¹ See report on the trade of Newchwang (China), by Acting Consul Holland, 1888.

for which Nature never designed him.

Yet, in the far North, in the frozen lands where horses would perish were it only for lack of fodder, dogs are the sole substitute, and man is dependent on dog-trains for whatever comfort he contrives to find in existence. He reckons that a team of six dogs should be able to draw ten cwt. at the rate of seven miles an hour. Kane, the Arctic traveller, tells us that in a fortnight six Esquimaux dogs dragged him and his baggage in a sledge for eight hundred miles, averaging fifty-seven miles a-day. Throughout the region which has been so aptly described as *The Great Lone Land*, the traveller, wrapped in warm furs, settles himself cosily in his sledge, which is drawn by from five to thirteen well-trained dogs, harnessed together with leathern straps. (Among the Esquimaux the harness is generally of sealskin, and the sledge itself is often constructed of whale's bones covered with sealskin.)

The foremost dog acts as leader, and takes the word of command from his driver, lending his own unerring instinct to guide the others across the oft-times trackless snows; and so the whole train scamper over the ice-fields or the dreary barren steppes, often, alas! in pain and hunger. The accounts of the cruel treatment to which these useful creatures are in too many cases subjected is truly sickening: they are said to be frequently compelled to work in a state of semi-starvation, and to run till they are utterly exhausted, even when so footsore that the snow is reddened with their blood.

Throughout the vast solitudes of the far North-West, dog-trains are still indispensable to man. They are the letter-carriers on

whom depends the whole postal service, and they afford the sole means of communication between the outlying posts of the Hudson's Bay Company and the civilised world.

In the Canadian Court, at the great Colonial Exhibition in London, there was exhibited a stuffed team, which, could they have but spoken, would have thrilled all hearers with regret at so sad a requital of faithful service; for those very dogs had brought to Winnipeg from Port Nelson (on Hudson's Bay) a party of engineers who were surveying a route from Lake Winnipeg to the great inland sea of the North. This distance of six hundred miles was accomplished by the dogs in a little over ten days. As their reward for this good service, the feast which awaited them on reaching their destination was seasoned with prussic acid, and they were then stuffed for exhibition in the Canadian Court. Dogs which had travelled sixty miles a-day for ten consecutive days seemed worthy of a better fate, forty to fifty miles a-day being considered very fair work.

The swiftest and most powerful dogs for this service are a cross-breed, half wolf and half collie, which happily retains no trace of the savage temper of the wolf father: on the contrary, these dogs are singularly docile, yielding implicit obedience to whoever feeds them. This is apparently the only secret of influence, for should a man sell a team which he has driven and fed regularly for four or five years, the new owner has only to feed them himself, and straightway their allegiance is transferred, and they obey him only. In winter, the dogs in the far North are fed largely on frozen fish, which are stored for their use

at the various stations to which they habitually run:

Till a few years ago, dog-trains were still common in all the country around Winnipeg, but they have now been superseded by steam-engines and railways. Till very recently they were largely employed in drawing to the town the fish caught on Lake Winnipeg, but now they are only seen when the Indians come to claim their Government allowances. On high festivals, such as the occasion of a great Sun-dance, certain tribes, such as the Crees and Sioux, indulge in the luxury of a roast-dog—the oldest and most worthless of the train being selected for the purpose, and a tough and sinewy morsel he must prove after a life of such severe toil.

From the hardships endured by dogs when compelled to pull heavy weights, it is pleasant to turn to another phase of canine employment—a special service for which they are chiefly trained by kindness, although their intelligence is unfortunately enlisted in aid of an illicit traffic. Probably few persons in Britain have the smallest idea of the number of dogs employed in contraband trade along the frontier between France and Belgium. The smugglers have adopted a special breed for this purpose, in which upwards of a hundred thousand are said to be engaged; and so wary are these loyal helpers that, notwithstanding the vigilance of the French Custom-house officers, and their efforts to intercept the four-footed smugglers, only an average of one per cent is ever captured.

These dogs seem to accept this work with much the same intelligent interest as is exhibited by sheep-dogs of divers breeds and in many lands, from our Scottish Highlands to their counterpart in

New Zealand or the Himalayas: the latter owns the noblest sheep-dog in the world—one both able and willing to defend his flock from the attacks of leopards. It is perhaps somewhat remarkable that in those wild mountain regions, where transit is so toilsome, dogs should not have been enlisted as carriers, that service being performed by flocks of mountain-sheep and goats, each of which is laden with a small pack, like two saddle-bags, containing in all sixteen pounds of wool or salt brought from the high steppes of Thibet, to be bartered for products of the lower lands. On the steep and narrow mountain-paths one sometimes meets a flock of perhaps a thousand goats thus laden, and led by a little child, though of course responsible goat-herds are in attendance, and these occasionally (only every second or third day) unload the tired creatures, and allow them to rest wherever they can find anything approaching to green pastures beside “waters of comfort.”

But the Thibetan goats are only required mechanically to follow their little leader, whereas in the French smugglers' dogs, intelligence of a very high order is essential, for it is not enough that they should cross the frontier without any human leader,—they must also keep watch as they travel, lest they be waylaid by Custom-house officers or their equally well-trained Excise-dogs, whose special mission in life is to track smugglers and their canine accomplices, and confiscate the precious packs borne by the latter. When a party of Excise-dogs do fall in with a pack of smugglers' dogs, then, indeed, comes the tug of war, and a sore rending of lace and scattering of coffee and tobacco, and the other contraband treasures.

The smuggler trains his dogs one by one, and always at night. In the day-time he walks across the frontier, accompanied by one of his pupils, and goes to visit his accomplice, in whose house he leaves the dog. It is detained till after dark, when it receives a sufficiently smart beating to make it glad to scamper home to its master, who welcomes it to an excellent supper. This routine is repeated several times, till the dog can find its way home on the darkest night without hesitation. It is then promoted to carrying a small light pack, containing articles of trifling value, but by degrees the weight is increased, till the dog is accustomed to carry many pounds.

When each dog knows its duties thoroughly, it is taught to work in company with others, the most intelligent in each pack being exempt from carrier service, and taught to act as scouts, to ascertain the whereabouts of possible foes, and so enable the main body to avoid the danger of falling into ambush.

The method of training the Customs dogs is, of course, quite different. From their earliest puppyhood they are taught to play hide-and-seek with pieces of tobacco, and small bags of coffee, or rolls of lace. When six or eight months' old, their education in these matters is taken seriously in hand, and they are taught to sit quietly in ambush, never barking, but merely giving a very low growl, or cocking their ears to attract the attention of their master whenever they detect any unusual sound. Should they be guilty of barking, they are, of course, punished, but a wise dog is rewarded with lumps of sugar. After some practice a well-trained Excise-dog will scent out even one solitary smuggler-dog at a dis-

tance of 200 yards, and he soon becomes wonderfully expert in tracking the law-breakers, human or canine, and in giving notice of their approach.

Sad to say, the French smugglers are not the only law-breakers who contrive to make their four-footed comrades subservient to their nefarious purposes. A Parisian ruffian of the worst type has for long been the terror of the Tennes district, where he was wont to prowl about at night accompanied by a ferocious but perfectly trained mastiff. At a word from his master, this huge brute would fly at the throat of any solitary wayfarer, and never relaxed his hold till the prisoner had been effectually despoiled of whatever the robber considered worth appropriating. Then the pleasant pair made off, leaving their victim half dead. Finally, last September, these companions in iniquity attacked a man who happened to be in Government employment, and the dog injured him so seriously that his recovery seemed improbable. Thereupon "The Butcher," as he was commonly called, was apprehended, together with his savage accomplice, the latter being condemned to be shot after the trial of his master.

With such experimental knowledge of the capabilities of dogs, we need not wonder that France should be foremost in the movement for once again reviving the practice, so long in abeyance, of training dogs for Military Service. That they were so used in ancient times is a well-known historical fact. It was even recorded by Pliny that a certain king of the Garamantes was indebted to his fighting dogs for the recovery of his lost throne; and six hundred years before the birth of Christ,

when Alyattes, King of Lydia, invaded the Chersonesus to make war on the Cimmerii, his troops were accompanied by many trained war-dogs. Again, we learn that at the battle of Mantinea, fought B.C. 362, between Spartans and Thebans, each party was assisted by its own dogs. The Cimbrī likewise enlisted the services of dogs so savage, that the brave soldiers of the Roman Legion dreaded their bite more than the spears of the foe; and we learn that on one occasion, when the Cimbrī had been vanquished by Marius, the dogs stood by the women, and, by the vigorous use of teeth and nails, these faithful allies contrived to defend the camp.

But the Romans also, as well as the Greeks, knew full well how to turn canine sagacity to good account, and Shakespeare's well-known line, "Let slip the dogs of war,"¹ was assuredly no merely figurative expression, as is so commonly supposed. A remarkable illustration of this subject may be observed among the sculptures excavated from Herculaneum, one of which, a basso-relievo, shows dogs clad in chain-armor defending a Roman citadel against barbarian foes. In addition to coats of mail, both Greek and Roman war-dogs wore large spiked collars, like those which in the present day form the Himalayan sheep-dog's sole defence against leopards. It is also recorded in a military treatise dedicated to the Emperor Valentinian II., that dogs endowed with a "fine and subtle smell" were sent out with Roman soldiers on outpost duty, in order that, scenting the advancing foe ere they became visible to human eyes, they might give timely notice of their approach.

That their vigilance should lead to their employment as sentinels seems natural, and in some cases the dogs have been left as sole watchers, as on one occasion when the city of Corinth was beleaguered. While the foe were preparing for the final onslaught, all the garrison lay sunk in deep slumber, the only wakeful sentinels being a band of fifty watch-dogs who guarded the ramparts, and, detecting the silent approach of the foe, kept them at bay, fighting savagely till all were slain save one, which barked so furiously, and ran round so energetically to awaken the sleepers, that these were aroused in time to repulse the enemy, who, but for the dog, would most assuredly have captured the city.

On the other hand, it appears that when the Gauls sought to surprise the Capitol, the Roman war-dogs stationed at the outposts slept on undisturbed by their approach, and so it was reserved for the celebrated geese to cackle the alarm. This failure on the part of the dogs was attributed to magic, for it was said that the Gauls threw green toads to the dogs, which caught them in their mouths, and were thereupon struck dumb. The Romans do not seem to have considered this plea of magic as sufficient excuse for the canine failure, for so late as the time of Plutarch they kept up an annual commemoration thereof by publicly flogging a number of dogs, and then hanging them in various parts of the city; whereas the admirable conduct of the geese was celebrated by carrying a silver goose on a cushion in triumphant procession.

Like those cannibal tribes of the Southern Ocean who, while

¹ 'Julius Caesar,' Act iii. sc. 1.

giving reverent burial to their own dead, feasted freely on the corpses of the foe, so the well-trained dogs of war, however hungry they might be, never molested the slain of the nation in whose service they were enlisted, but savagely devoured those of the enemy. Thus it is recorded that in the later wars of the Greeks and Romans the Grecian dogs sought out the dead Romans, but were never known to touch a Greek. And in recent times the bloodhounds of Poland, after the battle of Hundsfeld, near Breslau, sated their thirst for blood in that of the dead foe, but not one Polish soldier was touched.

It is certainly singular that, when two races so warlike as the Greeks and Romans had decided in favour of enlisting dogs for military service, the practice should not have been more generally adopted by other nations. As it is, we only hear of it occasionally, as for instance in the case of the Knights of Rhodes, who trained dogs to guard their outposts and to precede their patrols. They also employed them to carry despatches—in short, to do exactly the work which in 1888 is being experimentally tried in France and Germany.

Philip V., King of Spain, seems to have accidentally secured the services of a pack of dogs whom he observed hungrily gnawing the gates of Mont-Philip, and to whom he desired that rations of bread should be served. Faithful to the hand which fed them, these dogs attached themselves to the army, and thenceforth rendered valuable service as patrols and sentinels, always preceding their human comrades, and scouting to ascertain and give notice of the position of the foe. Often as the Austrians planned a silent sortie from Orbittello, the vigilant dogs gave notice

of their movements, and saved their friends from sudden surprise. Never were a few loaves of bread more judiciously bestowed. Charles V. of Spain likewise employed dogs as war-scouts, and so did Francis I. When their armies met before the walls of Valentinia, the rival dog-corps fought *à l'outrance*, those of Spain being grievously worsted.

Undoubtedly education works wonders for other folk than doggies, but those whose ears fail to rejoice in the music of average kennels must marvel at the discipline which could secure absolute silence from such a regiment as that pack of three hundred dogs which garrisoned St Malo. These, however, shrink to quite an insignificant company as compared with the eight hundred dogs which, in the middle ages, met on the plain of Grandson. On either side were ranged the battalions of their respective masters, Charles the Bold and the Swiss, to whom the obedient dogs looked for the signal to engage in mortal combat. The moment that permission was given, the dog-legions dashed furiously to the fray, and for a brief period the horrible battle raged, with such barking and biting as good Dr Watts never dreamt of in his worst nightmare. But after ten minutes the Swiss dogs remained masters of the field, the survivors of the enemy slinking away in dire distress, leaving the ground strewn with the corpses of their companions. But it was a dear-bought victory for the Swiss, whose dogs were so maimed and mangled, that even of the survivors most had only strength to crawl to their masters' feet to receive one last caress.

There is still extant the Royal grant, dated 28th January 1475, whereby Louis XI. decreed that

the sum of 24 *livres turnoïs* was annually to be paid from the revenues of the Vicomté of Avranches for the maintenance of the great watch-dogs who, from time immemorial, had guarded the old Norman castle of the Mont-Saint-Michel. By days they were kept chained up, but at night were turned loose to wander around and prevent the approach of strangers. In the quaint language of the old grant,—“On a de tout temps accoustumé avoir et nourrir au dit lieu certain nombre de grands chiens, lesquelz sont par jour attachez et liez, et par nuyt sont menez tout détachez hors la dite place et à l'entour d'ycelle pour au long de la nuyt servir au guet et garde d'ycelle place.” It is thought probable that to these faithful watchers was due the security of the old fortress from surprise by the English in times of war. But this special recognition of their services was due to King Louis having twice gone in person on pilgrimage to the Shrine of the Archangel—first in 1462, and secondly in 1473; and it was after the latter visit that, at the request of the Capitaine de Batornay, Seigneur du Bouchage, he made the grant aforesaid.

Amongst the individual dogs which have earned a good name in their country's history, was one which in A.D. 1702 shared the cares of his master, General de Mélac, who was besieged by the French in Landau. He not only escorted his master on every sortie, but contrived to ascertain all the mining proceedings of the besiegers, and to reveal them to the general, who thus, thanks to the dog's sagacity, was able again and again to ward off impending dangers.

Probably, however, no dog has ever rendered such signal military service, or been so honourably re-

cognised, as the celebrated poodle Moustache, who shared the victorious fortunes of the French army through most of the wars of the Consulate and of the French Empire. He won special honours at Marengo, and was decorated on the battlefield of Austerlitz by Marshal Lannes as a reward for having rescued his regimental standard from an Austrian soldier when in the act of snatching it from the grasp of the standard-bearer, as he fell mortally wounded. The plucky poodle drove off the assailant, and then seizing the tattered colours in his teeth, dragged them triumphantly till he reached his own company.

Many are the incidents recorded of the bravery and sagacity of this prince of poodles. In the van of scouting-parties he detected many an Austrian ambush, and on at least one occasion he drew attention to the presence of a disguised spy in the camp. Moreover, to his vigilance was due the failure of a night-attack by a body of Austrians, of whose vicinity in the Valley of Balbo the French were apparently ignorant.

That Napoleon fully realised how important a rôle might be assigned to dogs is well known. In 1799 he wrote to Marmont: “There should be at Alexandria a large number of dogs, which you ought to be able to employ by massing them in groups at a short distance from the walls.” The marvel is that, after so plain an expression on the subject from such an authority in the art of war, the employment of dogs should not have become a matter of course, instead of which eighty-nine years later it is still regarded as a tentative measure.

Yet from time to time the French have remembered Napoleon's counsel to Marmont, as in

the conquest of Algiers, when good service was rendered by military dogs. Possibly, however, their use was suggested by the fact that the French there received very practical lessons on the subject from the Arabs of Kabylia, who trained their savage hungry dogs to inveterate hatred of the French uniform: indeed these African dogs, like those of Burmah, seem possessed of an invincible abhorrence of all Europeans.

But here we touch one of the most remarkable characteristics of canine fealty to human masters—namely, its strongly marked nationality. The trained dog not only detects the approach of a stranger while yet a great way off, but gives very plain indications as to what manner of stranger he is. In very remote days the priests of Minerva in her temple at Danbia always received early notice from the temple dogs of the approach of any “barbarian” visitors—that is to say, of men who were not Greeks by birth. And so in military training, dogs are found so keen of perception that when a stranger is still so far away that his uniform is indistinguishable, they seem able to scent to what nation he belongs.

One such dog rendered good service to the French in the South Tunisian campaign of 1881, repeatedly giving the alarm ere his human comrades suspected danger, and plainly indicating whether the far-distant stranger was a Turk or an Arab. And when hostilities were renewed in Tunis in 1886, another dog, Zourbi by name, did equally good service to the 119th French regiment, to which it was attached, and to whose sentries it rendered invaluable aid.

Now at length both France and Germany have taken up the subject so much in earnest, that it is

probable that henceforth highly trained dogs will be deemed an indispensable adjunct to every body of troops when on active service. It is evident that if one nation provides itself with a dog-corps, others will follow suit. The Russians did so, because by no other means could they cope with the unexpected moves of the Turkomans. Austria, profiting by the sharp lessons taught by France in the Italian campaign of 1800, likewise enlisted dog allies; and now the civilised world watches the experimental training of French and English dogs with much the same interest that attaches to well-accredited cases of salvation from shipwreck by pouring oil on stormy waves, though the power of oil was as well known in the days of the old Greeks and Romans as was the value of dogs as faithful allies in war.

Now the various points under consideration are—*first*, the use of dogs as auxiliary sentinels; *secondly*, as scouts; and *thirdly*, as safe letter-carriers, warranted to swim bridgeless rivers, and to give the enemy as wide a berth as possible. It is evident that the habitual companionship of a reliable dog would prove an invaluable safeguard to the solitary sentinel, and would greatly diminish the danger of night-surprises, with all their ghastly consequences. The French especially find that in almost every instance of defeat their failures have been distinctly traceable to sudden panics arising from this cause.

As regards scouting, the same qualities so admirably developed in the French smuggler’s dog may well be turned to account in detecting ambuscades, and scouring hilly or wooded country, thereby saving human patrols much weary and arduous toil. Recent experi-

ments prove that the well-trained dog will give notice of the presence of a man, dressed in the uniform of the foe, at a distance of a thousand feet. And just as the Custom-house dogs pass quietly by honest peasants, and only call the attention of their masters to law-breakers, so these wise regimental dogs ignore the movements of unattached civilians, but seem to develop a strong personal antipathy to any person whom they intuitively recognise as being in the service of the enemy.

As *estafettes* — *i.e.*, bearers of military despatches — dogs have fully proven their merit both as regards speed and fidelity. Hitherto troops on the march or on outposts have kept up communication with headquarters or with each other by means of cavalry orderlies, or by systems of heliograph and flag signalling, to say nothing of balloons. These have been largely supplemented in German tactics by the use of velocipedes and carrier-pigeons. Now dogs are likewise enlisted, and in the variousst experiments the two last are found to head the competitive lists, both in point of speed and of accuracy, the latter being due to the necessity of writing the message instead of trusting to verbal transmission.

In respect of speed the pigeons rank first, especially in mountainous regions, where, of course, their direct flight gives them an immense advantage over the dogs, which have to toil up and down steep hills, over stony and difficult ground, perhaps thrown out of their course by precipitous crags, or delayed by having to swim flooded rivers. But on level ground, where the chances are more evenly balanced, the dogs take a very good second place. Thus in recent experimental races

in France, for the purpose of proving how military despatches could be most quickly transmitted, the given distance being one kilometre — *i.e.*, three-quarters of a mile — the carrier-pigeons delivered their message in one minute, the dogs in two minutes, cyclists in three minutes and twenty seconds, light cavalry at the gallop, three minutes, and the same at quick trot, four minutes.

On another occasion, when the competition was only between dogs and men, the length to be traversed was six kilometres (equal to four miles and a half) on level ground — the cyclists travelling by road, the dogs and cavalry cross-country. At the outset the dogs had much the best of it; but having lost half a minute by stopping to drink at a tempting pool, they reached their destination simultaneously with the first bicycle rider, taking fourteen minutes. The horsemen arrived ten minutes later. On a two-mile course the dogs had decided advantage, as they accomplished the run in seven minutes, while the wheelmen took nine and the horsemen fifteen minutes.

As regards carrier-pigeons (which, like the dogs, have been enlisted for this purpose from very early ages), they are now largely used by the Italian troops in Abyssinia, where a most systematic pigeon-service has been organised. A military dovecot has been established at Massowa, whence pigeons are supplied for the use of all patrols. Each detachment sent out to reconnoitre carries a light basket containing several pigeons, and one of the party carries the needful supply of grain and water for their use. In wet weather, or if the despatches to be sent back are confidential, they are enclosed in a goose-quill and sealed; but more frequently they are simply

written on a page torn from a pocket-book and tied to a tail-feather. Certain private messages are conveyed by the use of coloured marks—a rough-and-ready sort of cipher.

In case of sudden attack, when there is no time to write, several pigeons are set free, each having been deprived of one or more tail-feathers. When the birds reach their dovecot, they have to enter through a sort of cage which detains them, and sets an electric bell ringing, so as to give notice to the sergeant of the guard, who takes the despatches and forwards them to headquarters at Saati.

The dogs in some instances carry the concise despatch in a small metal case fastened to the collar, and this certainly seems to have the advantage of security, as attracting the least possible amount of attention; whereas the leather letter-case hanging from the collar, or the two leather pockets attached to a strap passing under the body, and kept in position by a second strap across the chest, though, of course, available for bulkier documents, is undoubtedly more conspicuous, and more liable to render the dog an object of suspicion and a mark for a bullet. By a similar arrangement of straps the war-dog is enabled to carry a small case of ammunition, and is thus made useful on the outward march, ere he is despatched on his solitary journey as military postman. Some sanguine trainers even hope that dogs may be trained to return to the munition-waggons during the heat of battle, to bring fresh supplies to the fighters, regardless of all danger from shells and bullets. It would seem more natural to enlist their services as water-carriers to bring drink to the wounded and dying.

When the subject of raising dog-corps was first seriously mooted, great discussions naturally arose as to what class of animals should be preferred for military purposes. The Austrians employ Dalmatian dogs, and in the Civil Wars of America the armies of the South are said to have enlisted the ferocious blood-hounds trained in relentlessly tracking fugitive slaves. These, by the way, are employed in the Frontier States in the more legitimate task of tracking highway robbers, and especially those daring bands who occasionally stop even the express trains on their journey across Texas, relieving the passengers of their purses, and the mail agent of whatever treasure may be found in his van. Now, blood-hounds are with all possible despatch laid on the trail of such robbers, with most satisfactory results. And in our own metropolis we have just seen the necessity in our police administration of promoting the blood-hound over the head of the less sagacious human detectives.

But for military work which is rather *preventive* than *consequent*, the most essential qualities are canine wit and wisdom, and so much has been said in France in favour of the native shepherd's dog, which is a purely French breed, and endowed with very remarkable intelligence. It is a powerful rough-haired animal, singularly silent, but ever vigilant, and quite superior to all the temptations offered by game of any sort, none of which are ever known to tempt him to swerve from the path of duty. With conscientious care he guards the flock intrusted to him, and, moreover, compels them to respect their neighbour's rights of pasture, and resist all allurements of the most verdant meadows. Evidently it will be

desirable to enlist a certain number of these peculiarly talented dogs.

On the other hand, it is evident that were military dogs to be exclusively chosen from any special breed, all animals of that race would become targets for the foe, whenever seen, therefore dogs are to be selected on account of individual merit—or rather promise of merit, as it is necessary to begin their tuition in early youth, and canine education should be commenced in good earnest at six months of age. So the dogs now to be seen in training at certain German and French military stations are of all sorts and sizes—“dachshunds” and poodles, retrievers and collies, greyhounds, foxhounds, fox-terriers, and others, male and female. The Italians prefer the latter, as possessing keener senses of hearing and scent. All are trained to rigid silence—a result only to be obtained after long and patient tuition: indeed it is at all times difficult to ensure obedience when music strikes up, so great is the temptation to give vocal accompaniment!

Dogs selected for this service are emphatically children of the regiment: they are never allowed to associate with civilians, nor to allow any such, or any man wearing an unknown uniform, to approach them. They must not attack strangers, but are to keep at a respectful distance from all such. Thus their fidelity as letter-carriers is secured. When on sentry duty, they are taught to warn their human companions of the approach of any stranger within 300 yards.

In order to perfect individual training, it is deemed desirable not to congregate dogs in kennels

(which of itself would render “golden silence” almost unattainable), but to allot them to such men in each regiment as care for dogs, allowing these volunteers regular rations of soup and biscuit, as also the necessary sugar wherewith to reward intelligent obedience.

It might naturally be feared that dogs so trained would obey only those soldiers who had special charge of them. This, however, is not found to be the case. The dogs become emphatically “regimental,” and will accompany and obey any man wearing the uniform which they recognise as their own. Each dog has his regimental number on his collar. They can even be taught to obey men of other regiments in the same service, though an “infantry” dog could scarcely be expected to obey a “cavalry” master, or *vice versa*.

In order to ensure a proper abhorrence of national foes, the Germans furnish their dog-trainers with French and Russian uniforms, and the French, in like manner, now propose supplying their trainers with German uniforms, to be worn at every dog-drill by men thus attired to represent the foe. These rushing out of ambush endeavour to beat the dog, and so arouse his hatred.

Hitherto the existence of the military dog has been permissive only, but now that the advantages accruing from his service are fully proven, he begins to obtain official recognition from various War Offices. The Germans first began a systematic organisation of his training about two years ago, at the military station of Goslar, and have now established successful “schools for dogs” in many other garrisons, the whole dog-service

being placed under the supervision of the general commanding the 4th Army Corps.

After the manœuvres of 1886, the dogs so effectually proved their value that they were promoted from the permissive to the obligatory stage, orders being issued to the 3d Battalion of Jäger, then quartered at Luben, that dogs should be attached to every regiment. In the following year General Von der Goltz inspected the dogs trained by the 3d Jäger Regiment, and reported in the highest terms on the unerring fidelity with which they worked and delivered despatches in the face of every obstacle which could be laid in their way.

In France, likewise, the "*chien militaire*" is now a recognised institution, and is the subject of special regulations issued by General Ferron, the French Minister of War. The initiative was there taken by Lieutenant Jupin of the 32d Regiment of the Line, who is himself a most successful trainer of dogs, and possesses an almost unlimited confidence in their latent talents. His book, '*Les Chiens Militaires dans l'Armée Française*,'¹ contains a very full statement of all that he has to say on the subject, as bearing on French reverses in recent years, and how to prevent their recurrence, all of which may be summarised as "Retain all recognised methods of watchfulness and signalling, but enlist canine intelligence to supplement the human wherever it is practicable."

Last year Lieutenant Jupin's dogs were called upon to take part in the manœuvres of the 9th French Army Corps, and the results exceeded the most sanguine

expectations. Upon vedette duty, or when in company with single sentries, their importunity never once failed to call the attention of their human companions to any movement of strangers within a radius of 300 yards. Not a single despatch or report intrusted to their care, in their leather wallets, miscarried or was delayed in transmission, and by their means communication was efficiently maintained between the outposts and the main-guard.

Now the headquarters of the French "dog-corps" is established at Belfort, where daily lessons in patriotism, and in the development of national antipathies, are given to most apt pupils. At Montpellier likewise, the 53d Regiment relieves the tedium of garrison life by similar dog-training, and great pride is taken in the *esprit de corps* exhibited by the four-footed orderlies. Idlers in the Bois de Boulogne at Lille have likewise latterly been greatly interested in watching the daily movements of six full-grown dogs and two young ones, all of different race, each led by a soldier, under command of a sub-lieutenant of the 43d Regiment of the Line. These disperse themselves through the wood, and by the encouragement of judiciously administered sugar, backed by an occasional sharp admonition from a very small stick, the dogs are taught the lessons in military hide-and-seek, into which they soon enter with full appreciation.

The description of these six animals, as given in a French newspaper, may be of interest, although to what branches of the great dog family they belong is not specified.

¹ Paris : Librairie Militaire. Berger-Levrault et Compagnie.

"*Diane*, gentille bête à la tête fine et pointue, l'œil vif et doux, robe noire, les quatre pattes fauves.

"*Comtesse*, chienne noire de grande taille, naseau court; intrépide galopense.

"*Zite*, au poil fauve, de force moyenne, très bien coiffée, ardente, marchant nez au point.

"*Fanchette*, de petite taille, poil noir.

"*Miss*, grande chienne, au naseau noir, poil fauve, les oreilles droites et assez longues.

"Enfin *Fox*, chien de haute taille, l'œil mauvais, caractère peu sociable, mais plein d'ardeur, ayant du flair.

"N'oublions pas deux tout jeunes élèves, noir et blanc, qui regardent leurs aînés au travail.

"Ce sont les futures estafettes de nos avant-postes.

"Silencieuses toujours, on croirait que ces bêtes sont aphones; jamais un aboiement, jamais un grognement."

That the dogs are thoroughly in earnest was proved by the energy

with which the resolute "Fox" contrived to scramble some distance up a tree in pursuit of a soldier disguised as a foe; while a foolish young collegian, who had wantonly struck another dog with his cane, found himself seized by his raiment, and, "regardless of his cries," was forcibly dragged off to the lieutenant.

In addition to the daily drill in the forest, and in crossing the river, these dogs are twice a-week taken out for night-work, from ten o'clock till midnight, so as to accustom them to work as effectually in the dark as in noonday.

So this ancient feature in the game of war may now be considered to be fairly renewed, and it is probable that henceforth the history of every little war will include some record of the brave deeds done by military dogs.

C. F. GORDON CUMMING.

ON THE WALLABY TRACK: A TRUE STORY.

CHAPTER I.—PREPARING TO START.

WAKING from a pleasant after-dinner snooze, I was startled by an astounding query from my hopeful eldest-born, "Can you cut hair, father, and were you ever a barber?"

"Can you get a Charterhouse scholarship, you young rascal! and where do you get your cheek from? I'm sure it isn't from me; it *must* be from your mother," said I.

"I wish, my dear, you would not drink port; I'm sure it's not good for you," said a gentle voice. "It always makes you talk in your sleep, and you *have* been talking about cutting hair and 'humping your swag,' whatever that delightful occupation may be; but there is the gong for prayers."

I fear my thoughts wandered, and that on that night even a glorious chapter of Isaiah, breathing the divine spirit of poetry of an inspired and enraptured prophet, moved me but little: my thoughts wandered,—

"My heart, my heart beat back
On the dead year's shadowy track,"—

and I was leaving Melbourne by night, "humping my swag" in company with poor Frank Terry, on the Wallaby track—

"Viator vacuâ crumenâ."

I could not go to bed—a train of thought of days long ago, of memories almost forgotten, had been aroused. I went to my sanctum, and from the recesses of a long-unopened drawer pulled out a dingy photograph of Jack the shepherd. Could this rough in moleskin trousers, Cookham

beetle-squashers, and a ragged shirt, be the highly-respected squire of Marlingscote, chairman of the Harbury Board of Guardians, and of a host of local committees, a magistrate for two counties, an owner of broad acres—in a word, could it be myself?

Ah, but myself it was, sure enough; and as I turn to the glass and compare the present with the past, I cannot say that the squire has it all to the good compared with the rough. Reckless as the old portrait of twenty years ago looks, there is more determination in the face, more strength in that chin, now waxed so double—above all, there is the hopefulness of youth, and a certain fire in the eye, which I fear is sadly lacking in the somewhat smug, easy-going visage of the comfortable-looking, middle-aged gentleman reflected by the faithful looking-glass.

How vividly the old days come back to me to-night! Shall I let this spirit move me? Shall I break my rules and for once take a few hours from the night, and jot down some of my own colonial adventures? or shall I keep up the dull routine, one pipe, and a skim over the local paper (where my name figures so often, and I am such a "worthy chairman," "energetic magistrate," and "good type of a country gentleman"), and to bed before eleven? or shall I have a night with Jack the shepherd, very hard up, not at all unlike a tramp to whom I gave twenty-one days this morning for the heinous crime of sleeping in an outhouse? To be sure he lit his pipe, and lit the straw too, and the police-constable

swore he was drunk. Jack never slept in an outhouse (there were but few in the bush). Did he ever get drunk? *Nosce teipsum*, good reader, and don't inquire too much, and I will tell you how he carried his swag over a hundred miles in a burning December sun, with the glass over 100° in the shade, and got work at last, though the hardest work he ever did before was a good pull up to Monkey Island in Old Eton days, or when only half-trained stroked a heavy Torpid on the Isis.

We ought not to have been in Melbourne, Frank and I; but there we had been some three months doing no good, to put it mildly, and varying nightly dissipations by a daily attendance "under the Verandah"¹ in Collins Street, where we thought to make our fortunes speculating in mining shares.

How well we did at first! What rare old times when we were bulls of Band and Albion Consols, and they were running up half-a-crown every five minutes. And how sadly we crept back to our lodgings when the tide had turned, and we possessed a pile of scrip in some of the most nefarious swindles that ever deluded weak-minded adventurers. What boots it to tell the old tale? Youth must learn experience—young fools, ah! and old ones too sometimes, have been gulled, and will be gulled so long as man continues a money-getting animal. *Nimum ne crede colori*. Lots of colour, though, and solid gold we saw in the specimens from our mines in the brokers' offices, but when they washed up for sale, where was it all gone? The crash came. "Let us sell out, and cut this beastly Verandah," said Frank one bad morning, "and start up the bush. I have all our scrip in my pocket."

"My word," said I, proud of my newly acquired colonial slang, "I'm your man."

We entered the office; our broker—once so smiling—barely said "Good morning," and turning his head, cursed his clerk.

"We want to sell out," said Frank.

"What's the lot?" said the broker.

Fumbling in his pocket, he produced a pile—Great Eldorados, Little St Mungos, Lucky St Blaizes—what a sum they meant at par!

"Fifty shillings for the lot, and I don't care to have them at that," said the broker,—“rubbish all of them.”

Frank cast a ghastly look at me, and met a sympathetic eye. "They weren't trash when we paid you over £200 for them, Mr Butters," said I, indignantly.

"Well, take it or leave it, sharp's the word, and I'm very busy this morning, so——"

"Take it, Frank," said I, "and let us get out of this swindling hole." So he took it, and two sad dejected souls walked out of that office—never, oh, never again to speculate in Eldorados,—deaf, thank heaven, evermore to the bland voice of the promoter, blind to quartz specimens budding all over with gold. Urged alike by an irresistible impulse, we bent our steps swiftly to the Criterion, and strove in nobblers oft renewed to drown our hapless fates.

And in less than an hour ten shillings of our all—our poor £2, 10s.—was gone.

"Henceforth I cease to be a gentleman," said Frank, as we emerged from that prince of restaurants slightly flushed with fiery draughts.

"A spade, a rake, a hoe,
A flail, or what you will;
And here's a ready hand,
To ply the needful tool,"—

¹ Where brokers "most do congregate."

said I, bravely; "but hanged if I know how to ply it. Still, here goes. Let's pawn our clothes, pay for our lodgings, and start to-night on the Wallaby track."

"What's the good of pawning?" said my mate, mournfully. "We shall never want gentleman's clothes again: let us sell them outright." And so we did; and if Poole only knew how a gentleman of Jewish race ran down his works of art, and compared them un-

favourably with the moleskins for which we changed, he would weep tears of just indignation.

"The shades of night were falling fast," when, *sans* coats, *sans* collars, but with our blankets skilfully rolled up like horse-collars, and swung in colonial fashion over our right shoulders and under our left arms (our Jewish friend kindly showed us the way), two unhappy outcasts slunk by back streets out of Melbourne.

CHAPTER II.—ON THE ROAD—HE WOULD AND HE WOULDN'T
BE A BARBER.

We did not get far that night. A continued course of *noctes cœnaque delm*—exercise limited to "doing the block" in faultless attire, in those unexceptionable tight-fitting habiliments once the envy of every Collins Street swell, now the property of a dirty Jew—was not calculated to bring us into good training, and we had made but very few miles out of Melbourne when we were fain to unburden ourselves of our swags, pull off our heavy Cookham boots, and prepare to pass our first night *sub Jove*. We lay down in a paddock supposed to be grass, but burnt to the colour of a ploughed field, and as we *had* paid for our lodgings before we left, slept, let us hope, the sleep of the just,—at any rate Frank did, but my couch was an ant-hill, and their kind attentions, added to the unceasing barking of the dogs at a neighbouring farm, forbade all rest to me.

Hot as the night had been, a cold dew just before dawn chilled us to the marrow, and we quickly rolled up our blankets into swags, somewhat "tokening" of the "new chum," and started on the road to Castlemaine. First, however, we counted out our possessions, and

found in our joint purse the grand total of seven shillings and sixpence, chiefly in fiddlers' money. Then we made mutual vows that we would stick to each other through rough, through smooth, and never either of us take a billet unless the boss would take us both together. "Together we swim, Jack," said Frank; "you as a new chum will probably have some difficulty in obtaining work. I shall get it easily; but never mind, I'll stick to you through thick and thin." Ah! Frank, old man, how long did your words hold good? I refused a good berth the third day out of Melbourne, as help to a mineral-water manufacturer at 15s. a-week and my "tucker," because he wouldn't take the pair; but by the time we reached Castlemaine it was each for himself with you, and the devil take the hindmost. And now a few words as to my mate. A very good-looking fellow he was, but not nearly so good-looking as he thought himself. The son of a clergyman of very good family in one of the home counties, he had been sent out to New Zealand as a cadet on a sheep-station, and was going on steadily when his

father died, and being of age, he inherited his share of the few thousands the old parson had laid by for his family. To cut the station even before his letters of credit had arrived, to knock his money down in Melbourne, Sydney, and "The Island,"¹ was only colonial; and to do him justice, he did not simply wallow in mire, like so many of "the old colonial school," but took his run of illegitimate pleasure with all the gentlemanly taste of a refined voluptuary. He had come to the last £100 just before I met him in Melbourne, and had begun to think it was time to pull up. So he inserted the following advertisement in the 'Argus': "£100 bonus.—A gentleman of good birth, position, and appearance, will give the above sum to any one who will procure him permanent remunerative employment."

This handsome offer only brought three replies. One was from a company starting to fit out a vessel to get birds'-nests from certain islands (for the Chinese, who make soup of them), asking him to go with the vessel as supercargo, and take a sixteenth share in the venture. He was always sea-sick, and hated the sea, so this was thrown aside.

The second was from a new building society, offering him the secretaryship if he would take shares to the amount of £100. A friend told him that if the building society got such a wind-fall as £100 it would infallibly wind up, and where would be the permanent secretary?

The third was from a widow lady, to join her in boiling down mutton. This looked like business, though possibly matrimonial. He called on the lady, and a pretty little widow she was, and when

she had seen Frank she was quite ready to enter on a life partnership. So far he would not go—a boiler-down, a tallow-merchant, ah! even a lover he would be, but a husband, not for Joseph!—and so, after several meetings, in which they talked more tender nonsense than business, negotiations were broken off. "If only she had not dropped her h's, I might have come down to Mrs Chandler," said Frank to me one day, "for she was pretty enough; but fancy being addressed 'Dearest 'ubby, 'ow I dotes hon *you*?'"

Finally, he had joined me in mining specs, with what result the reader knows, and now he had no expectations beyond a dreary life of awful dull monotony in the bush as a shepherd or stockman, varied with the annual run down to Melbourne or the nearest town to knock down his cheque. At least that was his first idea, and very gloomily we tramped along the burning track. We bought a loaf at a little shop on the road, and some strong cheese, and this was our daily food all our journey.

At first I carried the bread, he the cheese, in our swags under our blankets close to the sweating skin. What a state our "tucker" was in at sundown! I could eat my bread but not his cheese. He swallowed his cheese with a relish, but could not stomach my bread. So, wiser grown, we bought and ate in future on the spot, and very hungry we sometimes were before we reached a blissful spot where we could buy, borrow, or, with the rights of an Australian swagger of early days, insist on "tucker."

From some rising ground we looked back on Melbourne. There lay the pleasant city, there was the forest of masts beyond, and

¹ Tasmania, called also "Sleepy Hollow."

Hobson's Bay stretching far away into the distance. As Lot's wife might have looked back on the cities of the plain, with a hankering after their pleasures—sinful but delightful—so we looked back, and then strode manfully forward under the scorching sun. Onward, onward, onward, day after day, striking off a little ever and again to some farm and asking in vain for work. Lying down at night under some huge gum-tree, wakened every morning by the eerie cry of the laughing jackass, as one bird would start into its wild laughter close to us, and another and another would take it up till it faded away with an echo in the far distance. Surely no bird in the universe has such a cry as this. It is like the mocking laughter of Holy Writ; it is as if unearthly and unhappy spirits were jeering at their fellow-sufferers on earth. One evening, more tired and footsore than ever, we drew near to Castlemaine. For nearly a mile we had passed rows of wooden shanties on our left, diggings, many of them worked out, on our right, when, after a long silence, my mate broke out with a bright idea,—“Jack, have you noticed we've passed houses for over a mile, and shops, but not one hair-cutter's? I'll start one.”

“But can you cut hair?” said I.

“No,” was the prompt reply; “but I can shave.”

I smiled a sickly smile, but never a word spoke I.

“I'm dead beat,” said Frank; “let us put up at the next shanty; we've got a bob or two left.”

We entered a tidy-looking little inn, with the sign of “The Welshman's Home,” and a kindly, home-looking woman welcomed us.

“Are you Welsh?” said she.

“All Welshmen on the swag pay us a visit, and there's a whole colony of Welshmen just round here.”

We could only say that we had not the honour to belong to the land of bards and toasted cheese, but were two swaggers, hardish up, and begged to be allowed to shake down, and we could just pay for our supper. What a kindly soul she was! We asked for water with our bread and cheese, and she gave us a foaming tankard of ale apiece; and Frank was moved to consult her as to his grand project of starting as a haircutter.

“Just the very thing that is wanted here,” she said; “our diggers go into Castlemaine to get their hair cut, and once there, they get on the spree, and come back flyblown.¹ Now, if you will stay here, I'll recommend you, and, what's more, you may begin at once on my little girl.”

She was a woman of decision: out she went, and returned in a few minutes with a towel, a pair of scissors, and a little girl with the most awful shock head of hair it has ever been my fortune to set my eyes on.

“Now I'll leave you to begin,” she said, as she handed Frank the towel and scissors with an encouraging smile, and left the room.

Frank took the girl between his knees, adjusted the towel, snapped the scissors, and touched the girl's head with dainty fingers. One touch was enough. Shoving the child away with one hand, he threw the scissors at my head with the other.

“Hang it! I can't, and I won't,” he cried.

The poor child fled, not knowing what to make of it, and I roared

¹ Colonial for “without a rap,” “cleaned out.”

with laughter. And never again did Frank Terry attempt to start in the haircutting line. Notwithstanding this *contretemps*, we slept there that night rolled up in our blankets on the kitchen-floor. The good woman accepted Frank's rather lame apologies, shrewdly guessing, no doubt, that we were not much used to work of any kind. Good-natured, hearty Welsh diggers thronged in, and were willing to "shout"¹ for us as long as we would drink, and talked to each other in their strange native tongue, like croaking "hoodies," or people with bad colds clearing their throats. In a Castlemaine paper we found an advertisement for an assistant miller, and the next morning Frank said if I would give him the chance he would apply. We couldn't get work together, sorry though he was, and so let us each take the first billet that offered. What could I say? I knew that I was not fit for an assistant miller, perhaps *he* was—let him try. So in we walked to Castlemaine, and I lay down on some open ground while he interviewed the miller. A long time he was, and eagerly I asked him when he came back—"Well, what luck?"

"That miller, Jack, is a true gentleman."

"But have you got the billet? What did he say?"

"Well, he perceived at once that I was a gentleman, and spoke so kindly. I told him that I was an Oxford man——"

"One lie," said I.

"My dear fellow, when you have been in the colonies as long as I have, you will learn that you lose nothing by making the most of yourself," said my mate, angrily.

"All right. I bow to your

greater experience; but do tell me, have you got the billet?"

"Well, no," he replied, slowly; "he said that not knowing the work, glad as he would have been to have me, he was afraid I might get killed by the machinery."

I was rather sore at his eagerness to desert me, and I fear I laughed a scornful laugh. However we tried the town without success till late in the evening; and though Castlemaine streets are literally "paved with gold," there is none visible to the naked eye. But we did see a curious sight—half-a-dozen Chinamen with long-handled brooms sweeping the streets, which are metalled with quartz, and carefully collecting the dust in cradles, in which they carried it off, and washed it out, and now and then found some very small bits of gold left at the bottom of the cradle. Some time afterwards I heard that the authorities had stopped this practice, on the ground that the Chinamen swept all the streets away!

Poor persecuted Mongolians! cleanest of cooks, steadiest of servants, always sober, willing, and active, patient under abuse, never bearing malice, is it simply a question of fear of cheap labour, or is it that the steadiness and sobriety of the "heathen Chinese" puts to shame the Australian Christian, that the colonies are now going to close their ports against you?

But to return to my story. I had parted from my mate for a while, as it was now settled each should try for himself; so we hunted in a couple no longer, but tried different streets alone, when suddenly he overtook me, with a jubilant face, and announced that he had engaged himself as a billiard-marker. A billiard-marker! of all

¹ Stand drink.

hopeless occupations for a "broken-down swell" surely the most degrading. Never away from the great curse of Australia, the weary drink, seeing nightly the *worst* specimens of poor human nature at their worst. What a deadly pit-fall! how few ever get out of it!

Poor Frank! a little selfish, perhaps, but a good mate on the whole: amusing enough when in the vein, but, like all people of sanguine temperament, prone to fits of deepest melancholy. I only saw you once again, and in good faith the billiard-room had not improved you. And you, too, sleep under the gum-trees. Ah, well

may I say with poor Gordon's sick stockrider, slightly altering the words—

"Ah! nearly all my comrades of the old colonial school, My ancient boon companions, long are gone; Hard-livers for the most part, somewhat reckless as a rule; It seems that I am left here all alone."

Well, we parted friends. We went to the billiard-room, and spent the last whole shilling in drinking to each other's luck. And I tramped out of Castlemaine all alone with fourpence-halfpenny in my pocket.

CHAPTER III.—JACK THE SHEPHERD.

The first night alone in the bush must be a curious sensation to any man. To me, sick at heart, doubly lonely from having lost my mate, utterly uncertain how long I might have to tramp on like the Wandering Jew, the future a blank, the past a remorseful recollection of folly—it was a night never to be forgotten, to be marked with the blackest chalk. How vividly at such a time do all one's past errors come back to us! What a fool I've been! What chances I've thrown away! How I've wasted all my talents! Such and such-like thoughts crowded my brain in gloomy succession; and, to add to it all, it was a black dark night, and great drops began to fall, and then it began to pour with rain—no gentle shower, but sheets of water coming down as if all the clouds of sea and land had burst over my devoted head. Then the thunder, at first grumbling in the distance, then nearer and louder, while the forked lightning played in the forest, and lit up the huge trunks of the gum-trees. Then a

crash, and a mighty tree, not a hundred yards away, was struck, a huge limb fell off, and the great trunk stood out black and smouldering. A night or two like this and I should lose my head, wander off into the bush, lie down and die—unwept and unburied, till some shepherd or bushman should come across my glittering bones, and say to himself, "Another poor fellow lost in the bush. Well, I'll put him under ground at any rate; perhaps it may be *my* turn next."

But the sun came out again in the morning; the water-magpies carolled sweetly; flights of cockatoos with their harsh notes, and chattering green parrots, crossed my path; and I tramped on down-hearted, but not utterly despondent. I got a lift in a dray as far as Sandhurst (the Bendigo of old, renowned for lucky nuggets and gigantic piles—where are those lucky diggers now?); but I was far into the Marong district before I got a billet. A swagger, going down the track to knock down in Bendigo a cheque which it had

cost him twelve months to earn, in about as many days, told me that at a neighbouring station they wanted a shepherd badly—the last chap had gone “cranky,” and had to be sent down to the lunatic asylum. My feet were one mass of blisters, my Cookhams had worn into holes, when I, a wretched object, crawled up to Sylvester’s station, and entered the workmen’s hut. Only the cook was there; but a right good fellow was he, though an “old hand”¹ of very questionable antecedents. “The boss is away,” said he, “but we want a shepherd bad enough; he’ll be home to-morrow, so just shake down here,—you look pretty well sewed up. Now I’ll boil the billet, make some tea, and cook you some devils on the coals. The damper ain’t ready yet.” How good those “devils on the coals” were! At a City dinner last year my next neighbour asked me what I thought of the turtle-soup. “Not half so good as devils on the coals,” said I. He looked astonished and disgusted, and, as he never spoke another word to me during dinner, doubtless wondered whether I was mad or drunk. The hands came in, but I was coiled up in one of the bunks fitted up round three sides of the hut, too tired to move or speak.

“Who have we here?” said Jim the bullock-puncher; “let’s lug him out, and look at him.”

“Oh, stow that,” said the kind old cook,—“he’s dead beat, and I’m real sorry for him; *has* been a swell by the look of him. He’s going to ask the boss for cranky Joe’s billet, and I’m hanged if I won’t be right glad if he gets it.”

“Right you are,” said a burly log-feneer, with a bushy beard; “I knows what it is to be down on one’s luck well enough.” Strange oaths garnished every speech in those days—rough hands they were, and no mistake. A regular devil was Jim the bullock-driver when on the spree, and like

“Quiet Mr Brown,
On several occasions he had cleared out
the town;”

but I’ll always swear by him, for didn’t he come many a night after his work to my hut five miles away to bake my damper for me—an art I never thoroughly acquired. My first damper turned out green with too much baking-powder; I gave it to my dog, and it made *him* sick.

Well, the next day back came the boss. Recommended with more goodwill, I fear, than truth by the cook, I got the billet—was taken out to my hut, provided with rations, shown my flock, told my duties, and with a thankful heart became for the next twelve months your humble servant,

JACK THE SHEPHERD.

¹ “A lag,” one who has left his country for his country’s good.

THE CATRAIL, OR PICTS' WORK DITCH.

AN OLD PROBLEM REVIVED.

THE most important, and perhaps most mysterious, relic of remote antiquity in the Border counties of Selkirk and Roxburgh, is the singular rampart or earthwork known as the *Catrail* or *Picts' Work Ditch*, which runs from Torwoodlee, on Gala Water, southwards to Peel Fell on the Cheviots, overlooking the English frontier. All who have read Lockhart's 'Life of Scott'—and who has not?—must remember Sir Walter's frequent references to this venerable relic of the days of "Reged wide and fair Strathclyde," more especially in his spirited letters to George Ellis, written in those years when he was at his very best, physically and intellectually; ready, with his friend Shortreed, to ride by hill and dale over all the wide Borders, collecting snatches of ancient song and legend from the lips of every aged crone who had a memory—entertained everywhere with Border hospitality, "never putting hand in pocket for a week on end," sleeping in farmhouses and eating homely fare at farmers' tables,—ay, and drinking too of the inevitable punch-bowl, often deep into the night; for "he aye did as the lave did—never made himself the great man, or took any airs in company." Who would not wish to have been, like Shortreed, the companion of his wanderings? And, later on, one of his joys in building Abbotsford was the circumstance that from its windows part of the *Catrail* could be seen, at the point where its mounded rampart skirted the Rink Hill, near the confluence of the *Ettrick*

and the *Tweed*. Yet his last association with this remnant of old time has a touch of sadness in it. One day towards the end of 1825, after a hard run with the Abbotsford Hunt on Scott of Gala's grounds, he ventured to leap the ancient fosse, but failed in the attempt, and was much bruised and shattered. He never hunted on horseback again. It was just before the great commercial disaster in which he was involved; and afterwards, says Lockhart, "he often talked of this accident with a somewhat superstitious mournfulness."

Holding still by the magic skirts of Sir Walter, we may further refer to an incident in the first meeting between young Lovel and the Laird of Monkbarns in Edinburgh. While both were waiting on the High Street pavement for the dilatory *Fly*—the Antiquary not as yet at his full pitch of grotesque impatience with Mrs Macleuchar—a little boy put into the elder gentleman's hand a parcel, containing apparently a large folio. It was not till the coach had started, and both were a mile or two on the road to Queensferry, that Oldbuck cooled down enough to undo his parcel and produce his folio, which he proceeded to examine and admire with the silent fervour of confirmed bibliomania. "His fellow-traveller took the liberty of inquiring the subject of his studies. He lifted his eyes with something of a sarcastic glance, as if he supposed the young querist would not relish, or perhaps understand, his answer, and pronounced the book to be Sandy Gordon's '*Itinerarium Septentrionale*.'" This

book, which served thus to introduce Lovel and the Antiquary to each other's personal friendship, serves also to introduce our subject to the reader: for it is in the pages of Alexander Gordon's 'Itinerarium' that the Catrail is first described—that the Catrail was first indeed made known to the literary and antiquarian world. Since then the ancient earthwork has had many exponents. Almost every writer on the subject of Scottish Border antiquities has touched upon it with more or less of fulness. Pennant, and Whitaker, and Maitland had each his theory. The voluminous Chalmers attacked the question with his accustomed industry and acerbity, failing not to reiterate how "absurd" were the opinions of most of the previous writers on the subject. Scott, in his 'Antiquities of the Borders,' entered upon the question after his wonted calm and sagacious fashion; others followed; and so the battle rolled on, till it came within the scope of local combatants, whose zeal was frequently in an inverse ratio to their knowledge, hence the much shedding of ink, and occasional loss of temper. But the institution in the south of Scotland of such societies as the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club has had the effect of greatly raising both the tone and the intelligence of those interested in local antiquities, and within the last thirty years we have had some valuable contributions towards the elucidation of the vexed and stubborn question of the Catrail. The more important of these will be referred to later on; meantime it is necessary to begin with some account of the plan and structure of the Catrail, of the route which it describes across country between the points already indicated, and of the vari-

ous opinions which have been advanced as to the date and the ultimate purpose of its construction. This done, we shall then be in a position to reconsider the whole subject.

The peculiar name by which this earthwork is known—the *Catrail*—is presumably Welsh, and may consist of *cad* = war, and *rhill* = trench—although it must be said that other etymologies have also found currency. Its English name is the *Picts' Work Ditch*, of which the earlier form was probably only *Picts' Work* or *Wark* (Saxon, *weorc*). *Wark* was used to signify a fortification or strength, and is still so preserved to us in such names as Southwark (the fort protecting the southern end of London Bridge), Newark, Birrenswark, Carlingwark, &c. When this older use of *wark* came to be forgotten, *ditch* may have been added as an explanatory vocable. In a deed of 1304, the Catrail is called "*the fosse of the Galwegians.*"

From the long period, the many centuries, during which the Catrail has been subject to the destroying influences of time and change—to the denuding agencies of rains and frosts and other forms of natural decay, and to the active hand of man, which is ever converting the things of yesterday to the uses of to-day—it is not to be expected but that its external appearance has undergone much and serious modification. Many parts of it have indeed entirely disappeared. In places, however, where the nature of the soil or other favourable accident has preserved its form more completely, it is seen to be a broad and deep fosse or trench, flanked on each side by a rampart of varying height.

The ramparts have been formed of the turf and stones or other

THE CATRAIL, OR PICTS' WORK DITCH.



natural soil dug out of the ditch between. Gordon, who published his folio in 1726, describes it as it was seen by him, now more than 160 years ago. At that time its breadth varied from twenty to twenty-six feet, while its general depth within the ramparts is given as six or seven feet, and occasionally as much as ten feet.

Its present condition will be better understood by describing the route which it follows from north to south, and for this purpose we shall make use chiefly of an excellent paper on the Catrail, contributed to the Proceedings of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club for 1880, by Mr James Smail, F.S.A. Scot., who exercised much diligence and research with the object of tracing out every existing portion of the old earthwork, from its northern to its southern extremity, a distance of fifty miles.

"The northern end of the Catrail," Mr Smail observes, "is on the wooded hill fully half a mile above Torwoodlee mansion-house, two miles from Galashiels. There has been a large camp on the spot, and the deep trench of the Catrail partly encircles the camp, which is itself circular; and many stones belonging to it, and deep indentations connected with it, may still be seen. This camp, with the accompanying part-circles of the Catrail, has long been locally called 'The Rings.'" From this place the earthwork descends towards Kilnknowe, passing Knowepark, which was, until built over, the site of a fort or camp; and, skirting the brow of the high ground to the west of Galashiels, runs in a south-westerly direction, till it reaches the great fort on Rink Hill. The remains found on the portion described measure in one place 20 feet in width and 6 in depth; but much of the track

has been removed by cultivation within recent years. The Rink Hill is on the north bank of the Tweed, and immediately overlooks it; but that part of the earthwork which ran from the Rink down to the river has long ago succumbed to plough and harrow. On the south side of the Tweed, however, the ditch is again found, running through the grounds of Sunderland Hall till it reaches Linglee Hill. The Catrail here suddenly changes its course, which, had it continued in a straight line, would have led it down from the high ground into the lower valley of the Ettrick, and strikes due west by north along the high mountain-ridge between Ettrickdale and the Tweed, keeping on the southern brow of this ridge till it almost reaches the great hill of Minchmoor, seven miles distant, when it again resumes its southerly course. This striking deviation from its general line of route we shall have occasion to comment upon afterwards. During those seven miles of its westerly course it is well marked in some places, though in others it is but faintly indicated. Where the ground is soft it has altogether disappeared.

After resuming its southerly course the Catrail enters the vale of Yarrow, and here the hand of the husbandman has done its work. The trench is not now visible for some miles, but a tenant-farmer pointed out to Mr Smail the course which it followed from the southern declivity of Minchmoor to where it crossed the Yarrow, and its route thence across the hills between the Yarrow and the Ettrick, till it crossed the latter river. Gordon in his time, however, was able to trace the course of the mounds from Minchmoor to the Yarrow. Between the Yarrow and the Ettrick the ground is

partly soft and yielding, and Mr Smail was unable to find here any certain remains of the Catrail. But Professor Veitch, who examined the route of the Catrail previous to 1878, says "it appears on Sundhope Hill," a height midway between the two streams. Not long after crossing the Ettrick it is again found, and is traceable until it enters Roxburghshire at Hoscoat Burn. "From Hoscoat Burn," says Mr Smail, "along the lands of Girnwood, the trench is wider than on any other part of its course. It is fully twenty-eight feet wide, including the ramparts or ridges on each side. This part of the Catrail has been long in use as a drove-road, and from this cause it has perhaps become broader than it was originally made." Except in two newly reclaimed fields at Girnwood homestead, its course can be traced without a break for a mile and a half. To the east of Broadlee Loch it is again very distinct, broad and deep, for upwards of a mile on Woodburn farm. From this point it cannot be traced till it has crossed the Teviot, when it is found in good preservation on Doecleugh Hill, measuring here in width from the centre of each side-ridge eighteen feet, with a depth of four and a half feet. It is next well seen where it ascends Whitebrae Hill, and passes within half a mile of the strong fort on Penchrise Pen.

After passing through some flatish soft land for about a mile, on which it is only traceable here and there, the Catrail ascends the Pike Hill (called by Gordon the Carriage Hill) in a broad, deep, straight line, passing over its highest point, and descending on the other side in the same way. "This is by far the best part of the Catrail at the present day. It

is so deeply marked, and from this and the Pike Hill being so high, it can be seen distinctly six or eight miles off." Gordon says of it here: "It mounts the Carriage Hill, and is more conspicuous here than throughout its whole track, being twenty-four and twenty-six foot broad, and very deep; the ramparts on every side six or seven foot in perpendicular height, and each of them ten or twelve foot thick, the whole being great and visible." Gordon has here evidently made some mistake as to his figures; for, as Mr Smail remarks, these measurements are "much too large for this part of the Catrail at the present day." But, errors as to measurement apart, Gordon's description of the earthwork at this point is not exaggerated. The Pike is what is known as a "hog-back" hill, and stretches longitudinally at right angles to the course of the Catrail. When the earthwork touches the north base of the hill, it proceeds to take the ascent of 600 feet in a perfectly straight line till it reaches the top, where, the ground being swampy, the ditch is lost. But when the soft ground is passed, the ramparts are again found standing out clear and prominent, and so descending on the south side of the hill. The Catrail will probably long remain well marked on the Pike Hill; although it is obvious to the observer, from the rank growth of ferns and other vegetation in the bottom of the ditch, and from the frequent gaps caused by the bursting of water from the sloping sides of the ridges on either hand, that the inevitable process of "filling-up" is here also going slowly but surely on.

After descending the southern slope of Pike Hill, the trench with its double rampart is clearly marked

for many miles, going boldly on with a south-easterly sweep in the direction of the Liddel. Before reaching that stream, however, it has entered the range of the Cheviot Hills, passing the northern base of the Maiden Paps, at an elevation of 1000 feet above sea-level. Shortly thereafter it reaches the Waverley line of railway, which cuts through it about a quarter of a mile beyond the north end of the Shankend tunnel. It can here be seen from the windows of a passing train. For a mile or so after crossing the railway it is plainly marked, though shallow, and only from twelve to fourteen feet broad. For the next few miles it is only seen at intervals; but it is easily traced, "for along its whole course the bent-grass is lighter in colour than the surrounding grass." At Cliffhope, on the northern base of Saughtree Fell, it is very probable, says Mr Smail, that the Catrail has been turned for some distance into what is known as the "Galloway Road," and the same on Dawstane Rig; for that road is on the track of the Catrail. At a place called the Abbey, the Catrail is once more "visible and broad," and the Galloway Road is on its exact line. It was not found on Dawstane Rig, but it appears at the southern end of that Rig, where it dips into the Liddel water. "Here it makes an abrupt curve, and runs to the north-east, up the land called Wormesleugh, and crosses the burn of that name on to Wheel Rig, where it is strongly marked for a few

hundred yards." Here it terminates, in the neighbourhood of the Wheel Church, and under the shadow of the high Peel Fell, but not before it is crossed by the Wheel Causeway, a Roman road which runs northwards from this by Needslaw and Wolflee, and south into England by the Dead Water Stank. "Where it ends, there are several curves and lines of a peculiar kind, the lines resembling the Catrail in form, and the whole much like the lines and curves—'The Rings'—at the northern end of the Catrail at Torwoodlee."

So far we have followed, though somewhat briefly and hurriedly, Mr Smail's careful and lucid description.¹ The route of the Catrail, which forms a kind of rough semi-circle, with the concavity facing the east, extends, as already remarked, to a distance of fifty miles; but a straight line drawn between its northern and southern extremities measures only twenty-five miles. It maintains a high level throughout, generally about 1000 feet, occasionally rising to nearly 1700 feet, above the sea. Even where it dips into the valleys of the Yarrow and the Ettrick, it crosses these streams at a level of 700 feet. Throughout the greater part of its course it hugs the high range of hills to the west; while the southern half of its route, when marked on a small map, will be found to run almost parallel with the watershed of that range. The elevated curve of the southern uplands thus overlooks the Cat-

¹ Those who would wish for further details may be referred to Mr Smail's paper *in extenso*, as already cited. We would also mention an interesting paper on the Catrail, which appears in the Proceedings of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club for 1882, by Miss Russell of Ashiesteel, where, in this and other papers, she makes many striking suggestions as to the nomenclature of the district, seeking to connect place-names on Yarrow and Ettrick with the Welsh names of the heroes and heroines of Arthurian legend and romance.

rail, just as the Catrail overlooks the numerous glens and water-courses that sweep down to the great plain on the east, watered by the Teviot and the Tweed.

In the above description of this long earthwork we have treated it as having been from the first a continuous and, so to speak, homogeneous structure. It must be said, however, that while, since the time of Gordon, the Catrail has by most writers and antiquaries been so regarded, there yet have been others who, arguing from the many gaps in its existing route, and other circumstances, have contended that the work never could have been continuous, but only fragmentary, and probably serving as a local line of boundary or division. In 1862 the late Mr Norman Kennedy of Hawick, who has been described as "an intelligent and shrewd observer," read a paper before the Scottish Society of Antiquaries,¹ in which he supported this view. He held that it was merely a territorial boundary, and only made in the absence of any natural boundary, such as cleuchs and water-courses, "which it is invariably found to take when these occur in the line of it." This latter statement is too wide. While in one or two cases the line of the Catrail does appear to fall in with the line of such cleuchs and water-courses, it is impossible to overlook the much more numerous and prominent instances in which it crosses these obstructions at right angles. Its whole route, indeed, seems to have been originally laid down with the intention of cutting off the upper from the lower sections of the principal river-valleys trending downwards to the Tweed and the Teviot; and the few instances in which its route

coincides with that of some small hill-burn or streamlet may be regarded as merely accidental, and cannot be held as materially affecting the general design. Besides, it may be asked, who ever heard of so immense a ditch and double rampart as those that distinguish the Catrail being constructed as a line of division between two estates, or even parishes? A turf-dike or a few upright stones would have done the work as effectively, and been more consistent with general usage. And even admitting that this laborious structure was a line of local division, what were the names and conditions of the places so painfully divided and kept apart? No answer can be given to the question.

In favour of the argument for discontinuity based upon the numerous gaps in the existing line of route, there is, it must be admitted, more to be said. Some of these gaps or breaks are undoubtedly serious. For instance, we should naturally expect that on a high and in general firm surface, such as that from Linglee Hill to Minchmoor, a distance of seven miles, the line of the Catrail should be better preserved than it is; while the fact of its alleged entire absence, even in Gordon's time, across the ridge of hills between the Yarrow and the Ettrick,—although Professor Veitch claims to have recognised it there,—is sufficiently perplexing, and not quite explicable on the existing theories as to the purpose and design of the Catrail. These, the only serious breaks in the line of the earthwork, we hope to be able to account for when we come to state the theory which it is the object of this paper to advance. In the meantime, it may be said

¹ Proceedings, vol. iii. p. 117.

that the mere existence of gaps or breaks in so comparatively perishable a structure as an earthwork must always be, should not be pressed too far as an argument for discontinuity. Watling Street, the greatest Roman roadway in the kingdom, with a causeway of stones firmly bedded together, is not now continuous; for where it has been laid across boggy or soft surfaces, it is found to have sunk out of sight. What has happened in the history of a stone causeway may still more be looked for in that of an earthwork, which, when it crossed a moss, must have been to a great extent constructed of materials from the moss itself. Hence it is that where the Catrail crosses firm ground, and the mounds have been formed of earth and stones, the ramparts, where not subject to human interference, still stand in good preservation; but it is different where turf and peat-moss have formed the chief materials—for these, being mostly made up of organic matter, and therefore more subject to natural decay, have almost disappeared, leaving only a slight residuum of earthy material. To argue, therefore, from the disappearance of some parts, and the low mounds and shallow ditch in other parts, that the Catrail could never have been a work of strength or of continuity, is to exhibit a want of consideration as to the natural properties of the soil over which it passes, and which must necessarily have entered into its original construction.

What the form of this construction primarily was is also evidently overlooked by many who have put forward the arguments which we are here considering. We should not only ask, what is

to be inferred as to the original character of this earthwork from the remains of it as these now exist?—we should also ask, what would the original appearance of this earthwork be? The Venerable Bede, who, born in the seventh century, must have been familiar with such structures, very clearly describes their appearance and mode of erection. "A wall," he says, "is made of stones; but a vallum or rampart, by which camps are fortified for repelling the attack of enemies, is made of turf cut regularly out of the earth, and built high above ground like a wall, having a ditch before it out of which the turf has been dug, above which stakes made of very strong timbers are fixed."¹ These stakes would, as in palisaded earthworks of a later date, have an outward projection, so as to form a greater impediment to an attacking party. Bede's description of a vallum or earthwork assists the imagination in realising to itself the original appearance of the Catrail; for if Professor Tyn-dall's doctrine be sound, that the imagination plays a distinct part in the bridging over of scientific difficulties, it is equally true that the same mental faculty has an office to perform in difficulties that are historical. We are not, therefore, to form our conceptions of the Catrail from the appearance which in many places it now presents—simply a shallow ditch flanked on each side by a rampart of earth which a schoolboy might overleap; we must think of it as a structure of firmly-mounded turf, or of earth and stones, rising on either hand above the fosse or trench to a height of ten or twelve feet, broad and strong, both ramparts surmounted by a fence of

¹ Hist. Ecc., book i. chap. 5.

bristling stakes deeply embedded in the structure, the whole affording to its possessors a strong protective barrier against enemies who had no missile arms save the bow-and-arrow and the sling, and whose principal weapons of attack were the sword and spear.

If, then, we are to assume—for anything like absolute certainty is not to be thought of—that the structure of the Catrail was originally continuous and homogeneous, the more important questions naturally follow: (1) Who were the people who made this great earthwork? (2) To what period in history may its construction be referred? and (3) What purpose was its construction intended to serve?

To these questions various answers have been given, differing both in weight and complexion. Gordon, the first to speculate on the subject, regarded the structure as a Pictish one, marking the limit of the territory yielded up to Severus by the Caledonians as the condition on which that emperor granted peace to them about A.D. 210. This theory was, in consistency with the rancorous tendencies of the antiquaries of last century, abundantly ridiculed by succeeding writers; but, if we bear in mind that Gordon was one of the now obsolete school of historians who regarded the country between the two Roman Walls as the scene of Severus's campaign, the theory was not so much amiss. What really now serves to push Gordon's theory out of the field is the fact,—long ago made clear by Dr Collingwood Bruce in his great work on 'The Roman Wall,' substantiated by the later researches of Dr Skene and Professor Rhys,—that the campaign of Severus was not in the country to the north of the Wall between the Tyne and the Solway, but in the farther district to the

north of the Wall between the Forth and the Clyde. When, therefore, the scene of that emperor's peace-making with the Caledonians is transferred from the Border country to the regions of Perthshire and the north, Gordon's theory has no longer any historical basis on which to rest.

The next important reference to this great earthwork is in a quarter where one would, *primâ facie*, little think of finding it—namely, in a 'History of Manchester.' This book, published in 1775, was written by the Rev. Mr Whitaker, an excursive and prolix antiquary, for whom our modern Cottonopolis served as a text on which to pile a whole history of ancient Britain. He also has his theory of the Catrail—a theory which long met with much acceptance, and that too from distinguished writers. The period in which he places its construction is the fifth or sixth century of our era. He says: "The kingdoms of Dunbriton and Whitem"—otherwise Strathclyde and Galloway—"not being guarded, like that of Cumberland, by a rampart of mountains on the east, seem to have united together for their common safety, and to have supplied the defects of nature by an artificial barrier. Alarmed probably by the inroads of the enemy [the Saxons] from Northumberland and Lothian, and their successive encroachments on the dominion of the Selgovæ and Gadani in Liddesdale and Tweeddale, they threw up that great and strong entrenchment [the Catrail] for the protection of their common country" (vol. ii. p. 93). It is difficult to understand on what grounds this theory ever received acceptance. So far from the kingdoms of Strathclyde and Galloway not having between them and their Saxon enemies "a rampart of mountains on the east," a

glance at the map of Scotland will show that this is precisely what they did have. The Lanarkshire and Lowther range of hills, uniting with the great mountain rampart bounding Dumfriesshire on the north, and this again with the long barrier of the Cheviots, formed a natural defence of the first order. What purpose it would serve, then, for the dwellers in Galloway and Strathclyde to cross the watershed of this great mountain rampart—its higher peaks rising to nearly 3000 feet above the level of the sea—and to scratch, so to speak, a line along its eastern declivity, and call it a defence, it is impossible to conceive. Chalmers, however, after “demolishing” the theories of Gordon and Maitland—the latter holding that it was a Roman road—declares his own agreement with Whitaker, who, he says, “was the first who applied the Catrail to its real purpose, by referring it to its proper period.”¹ Scott lent to the same theory the weight of his approval.

To later theories we can only briefly refer. Jeffrey, in his ‘History of Roxburghshire,’ says: “This gigantic undertaking was carried through by the Otadini and Gadeni people after the Romans left, to protect themselves and possessions from the Saxons, who were advancing upon them from the north and east” (vol. i. p. 197). There appears to be some confusion of ideas here. The Otadini are believed to have inhabited the eastern district of the country south of the Forth; hence it is difficult to understand why they should raise a defence on their *western* frontier to protect them from an enemy advancing upon the *east*. If these

people did construct the Catrail, it must have been against an enemy from some other quarter. Professor Veitch, with more historical consistency, regards the Catrail as a remnant of the Pictish power in the district, and suggests that it was probably raised by them “as a protection to their territory from the Cymri of the west, and when they were dispossessed or subjugated, it became the boundary-line of the new Angle Kingdom.”² The objection that occurs to this theory is much the same as to that of Whitaker, namely, why any people who had between them and their enemies the great natural defence afforded by ranges of high hills, should have troubled themselves to construct what is, by comparison, so futile and insignificant an artificial defence. Dr Skene does not enter into the question of the Catrail—he only refers to it as “the rampart which separated the Anglie Kingdom from that of the Strathclyde Britons.”³ Mr Smail, in the paper already cited, offers no theory as to the origin of the Catrail, but he expresses disagreement with Gordon and others as to its being a boundary-line between either kingdoms or tribes: he is inclined to think it would be used much oftener as a road than a defence, although, from its construction, he also thinks it might “in many places and cases have answered well for both.” To other theories, many of them distinguished by an entire absence of historical perspective, and hence mere guesses, it is not necessary to refer in detail.

To revert to the older and more generally received theories of the origin and purpose of the Catrail,

¹ Caledonia, vol. i. pp. 241-243.

² History and Poetry of the Scottish Border, p. 96.

³ Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 162.

which chiefly agree in regarding it as a boundary or defensive barrier between two hostile provinces,—we have already said that it is difficult to conceive of it as such. It was obviously, on the other hand, not a merely temporary work: its extent, and the enormous labour which its construction must have involved, point to some purpose of a permanent kind. Again, its form—the broad fosse or ditch, with a high rampart on both sides—is rather against any theory which would represent it as having been made by the inhabitants of one district to ward off the inhabitants of an adjoining district: it would seem rather to have been formed with the object of meeting the possibility of those who held the earthwork being attacked from either side. The older theories, moreover, are wanting in precision: they are too vague; they fit into nothing; they fail to explain the topographical and structural peculiarities involved; they do not bring us face to face with a sufficiently appreciable historical situation. It is true that with respect to a period in our history so distant and obscure as the fifth century, and to a remnant of antiquity of which so little is to be learned except by inferential processes, it would be too much perhaps to expect that any theory should be wholly satisfactory and conclusive. Still, the subject will bear reconsideration, there being, as we think, one or two aspects of the question which hitherto have not received due prominence.

Previous to the final departure of the Romans from Britain in A.D. 410, the territory lying between the two Roman Walls—that is, the modern Lowlands of Scotland with Northumberland added—was the scene of a fierce racial

conflict, embittered by long continuance. The two great opposing races in this conflict were the Picts and the Britons. The Scots and Angles also had their part in it; but at the time we speak of, they had not yet become predominant factors in the dispute. The Picts and the Britons, or Brythons, were both Celtic races, the former speaking Gaelic and the latter Welsh. The Picts represented the older body of Celtic immigrants—those who first landed in the isle of Britain and displaced the aboriginal inhabitants. The Britons, or Welsh-speaking Celts, were a second or later race, who in their turn dispossessed the older or Gaelic-speaking Celts, driving them into Galloway and the Scottish Highlands, and over into Ireland. The Picts, therefore, naturally regarding the Britons as supplanters, fought against them and invaded their territory at every opportunity, with the result that a bitter hereditary animosity was engendered between them. The chief territory of the Picts lay beyond the Wall of Antoninus—in other words, they occupied almost the whole country north of the Forth and the Clyde; but there was a large body of them, known as *Niduari*, or Men of the Nith, who occupied the south-western district of the Lowlands, corresponding to the modern counties of Kirkeudbright and Wigton. They are more usually known in history as the Picts of Galloway, and comprised within them a remnant of what was probably an older race—the Atecotti, a word which Professor Rhys regards as denoting “ancient inhabitants.” Like the Picts, these Atecotti tattooed themselves, and were excessively hostile to the Britons. Besides this settlement in Galloway, there was also a Pictish settlement on the

southern side of the Firth of Forth, which settlement included the part of Lothian in which Edinburgh is situated, as also a portion of the Pentland Hills,—“a name in which we are supposed to have a corruption of Pehlth, the land of the Peht or Pict.”¹ All the remainder of the territory between the Walls was held by the Britons, from among whom the Romans organised a native army to assist in the defence of the province.

In describing this conflict of races, we need not for present purposes go farther back than A.D. 360. In that year the Picts, aided by the Scots, took advantage of the withdrawal of the Roman troops to burst through the Northern Wall and invade the territory of the Romanised Britons. In this, the northern Picts were joined by the Picts of Galloway, including the ferocious tribe of the Atecotti (“*bellicosa hominum natio*”). For four years these Picts combined to harass the province, ravaging and destroying everywhere; at the end of which time the great Roman general Theodosius was sent against them with an army. By 369 he had restored peace to the province and refortified the Northern Wall. The Picts he drove back to the north and west; but the fiercest of the Galloway hordes, the Atecotti, he enrolled as Roman soldiers, sending four regiments of them into active service on the Continent. He doubtless hoped, by this policy, to break the power of the Niduari Picts. But this did not end the difficulty. The Roman empire itself was now assailed by the barbarians at its very heart, hence the Imperial troops had from time to time to

be recalled from the extremities. On each occasion when the Roman troops marched out of Northern Britain, the Picts renewed their attacks, and the same scenes of bloodshed and savage reprisal followed. This continued intermitently throughout a period of thirty-eight years, till, in 407, Constantine finally withdrew the Roman armies from Britain. These were followed in 410 by the whole body of Roman officials who had been left behind to carry on the civil government; and with this event the Roman rule in Britain came to an end.

Unfortunately for us, with the departure of the Romans, written history took its departure also; and it is not till about A.D. 560, when the earliest British historian, Gildas, penned his lugubrious jeremiad, that we obtain a few dim and uncertain glimpses of what took place in the interval. This ancient Welsh monk, who had melancholy views of life and of human nature, tells a somewhat clouded and confused story, from which the chief impression to be gathered is, that he had a very poor opinion of his own countrymen, the Britons. His history is thin and rhapsodical; still, as Dr Skene has observed, while there is much in Gildas that is vague and indefinite, and although in no instance does he condescend upon a date, yet his narrative up to A.D. 409 is found to agree in the main with the Greek and Roman authorities for the same period.² Referring, then, to Gildas for what happened after the departure of the Romans, we find that no sooner had they gone than the Picts and Scots renewed their wonted tactics,

¹ Cf. Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, vol. i. p. 131; and Rhys's *Celtic Britain*, pp. 112, 113, 155, 220, 279.

² *Celtic Scotland*, vol. i. p. 113.

by invading the country of the Britons, one body of the Picts penetrating to the Roman Wall, from which with hooked weapons they dragged its defenders, and dashed them against the ground.

The chief passage in Gildas' narrative of this event has a peculiar bearing upon the subject which we are here endeavouring to elucidate. He says that the Picts and Scots, "learning that the Romans had departed and never meant to return, showed more than their usual audacity, and took possession, in the stead of the natives, of the whole of the northern extremity of the land up to the Wall."¹

This passage has by some historians been interpreted to mean that the northern Picts on this occasion swept down upon the Lowlands, and took possession of the whole of the territory between the walls. But this conclusion is rendered extremely improbable by one or two considerations. In the first place, the Britons had had the advantage of being trained as soldiers by the Romans, and were left in full possession of the numerous strengths and encampments which the Romans had built; hence they must have been, at the least, a fair match for the Pictish barbarians. Professor Rhys recognises this when he says that, before the Romans went away, "the Picts and Scots had more than once been able to carry their plundering expeditions into the heart of the province; but the comparative efficiency of the native army, which undertook the defence of the north, is proved by the fact that the only settlement worth mentioning which the north-

ern tribes were able permanently to make within what had been Roman Britain was that effected by the Picts on the southern side of the Firth of Forth." (This is the settlement already described as including Edinburgh and the Pentland Hills.) Again, that the Picts never completely dispossessed the Britons of their territory between the walls, seems to be rendered clear by the further fact, that when history, after a long period of obscurity, again raises the curtain, we see that while the Angles have seized upon a portion of country to the east, the Britons of Strathclyde and Cumbria still occupy, as before, their old territory. Moreover, Gildas mentions, as within his own knowledge, that the Britons, with the help of the Saxons, ultimately succeeded in driving the Picts back to what he calls "the extremity of the island," where, at the time he wrote his history, they still remained, occasionally plundering and wasting the country.

From these considerations it would appear that the words of Gildas must receive a more restricted meaning. For one thing, it should be borne in mind that this ancient historian's knowledge of the geography of the island was very meagre. He knew nothing of the Wall of Antoninus between the Forth and the Clyde; and while the Wall he describes as having been made by the Romans is obviously the Southern or Hadrian's Wall, he was not aware that it was a structure of hewn stone, but says it was built of turf. His knowledge of the extent of country to the north was also limited; and from the manner

¹ . . . "Cognitaque condebitorum reversione, et reditus denegatione, solito confidentiores omnem aquilonalem extremamque terræ partem pro indigenis muro tenus capessunt."—*Hist. Gildæ*, c. 19.

in which he alludes to the Picts and Scots as being both transmarine nations, as well as from other of his phrases, it has on fair grounds been supposed that Gildas regarded the country north of the Forth and the Clyde as a separate island. When, therefore, he speaks of "the northern extremity of the land," we must be careful not to read a modern meaning into the phrase. Besides, it is not improbable that he had fallen into a mistake similar to Ptolemy's, and regarded Galloway as the northern limit of the island. When, therefore, Gildas speaks of the Picts as seizing upon the country "up to the Wall," the statement evidently applies to the Picts of Galloway rather than to those of the north. Apart from the fact that Gildas knew nothing of the Northern Wall, his statement that the Picts took possession, "in the stead of the natives," of the territory "up to the Wall," does not apply to the Wall of Antoninus, as the northern Picts already held the country up to that wall, as well as a portion of territory in Lothian to the south of it. We think, therefore, that the most reasonable interpretation which the words of Gildas in the above passage warrant is, that the Niduari or Galloway Picts, aided by the Scots, burst across the Nith, overran Dumfriesshire and the country at the head of the Solway Firth, took possession of the valleys of the Liddel and the North Tyne, and still piercing farther into Northumberland, in this sense dispossessed the Britons and

occupied the territory "up to the Wall."¹

The Niduari Picts, having thus secured a hold upon the south-western tract of country between the Cheviots and the Southern Wall, doubtless proceeded to establish their position by the capture or erection of hill-forts at the most vulnerable points between them and the Britons of Teviotdale on the north and east. The valley of the Liddel—up which the Waverley line of railway runs in the present day—certainly formed the chief pass from the south-west into Teviotdale; and on the heights on both sides of that stream are still to be found the remains of numerous circular forts. The alternative name of the Catrail being the *Picts' Work*, or *Picts' Work Ditch*, it is of interest in this connexion to find that in Chalmers' time these round forts on the Liddel were also still known by the name of *Picts' Works*. He enumerates two of these forts as existing near Herds-house, two on the farm of Shaws, one on Softholm, one on Foulshiels, two on Cocklaw, one on Blackburn, and one on Sorbietrees, all within the parish of Castleton.² The southern extremity of the Catrail is also in this parish, which embraces within its territory the whole of the upper waters of Liddesdale.

While the Picts of Galloway were thus strengthening their hold upon the district which they had torn from its possessors, the fierce and predatory Picts of the north did not fail likewise to take ad-

¹ The place which tradition has mentioned as that at which the Picts broke through the Wall is still called Thirlwall. "Medieval writers," says Dr Bruce, "tell us that the Wall was first *thirled*, or broken through, by the northern enemy in this vicinity, and that hence arose the name Thirl-wall. Whatever truth there may be in the statement, it is certain that this is the weakest part of the barrier line."—*The Roman Wall*, 3d ed., p. 249.

² *Caledonia*, vol. i. p. 94.

vantage of the weakened condition in which their hereditary enemies, the Britons of Strathclyde and Teviotdale, had been left by the removal of the Roman troops. These Picts were already in possession of the Pentland Hills and the adjacent territory, and doubtless desired to press still farther south. In the great open valleys of the Clyde and the Tweed, where the Romans had planted many camps and stations, which the Britons now held, and which they had been trained by the Romans to defend, the Picts must necessarily have fought at some disadvantage; consequently they would avoid the valleys, and follow the method of warfare in which their strength lay—namely, by extending their hill-forts, and so gradually securing command of the principal river-passes towards the south. It is not therefore without significance in the consideration of the present question, to note that the high grounds on either side of the chief streams—the Lyne, the Eddlestone, and the Gala—descending from the Pentland and Moorfoot Hills to the Tweed, are still thickly dotted over with the remains of the circular forts of the Picts—the same class of forts as those which we have enumerated as existing on the heights above the Liddel; the same also as that called “The Rings” on Torwoodlee Hill, where the Catrail begins, and that which has given its name to the “Wheel Rig” at the sources of the Liddel, where the Catrail ends.

But apart altogether from these details—upon which we do not lay any particular stress—we have here a dim though sufficiently discernible historical situation. The northern Picts held, as they had probably held for a considerable period prior to the Roman evacuation, the mountain territory im-

mediately to the south of the Firth of Forth; and the Niduari Picts, taking advantage of the departure of the Romans, had now rushed out of Galloway, and seized upon the mountain territory immediately north of the Wall between the Solway and the Tyne. The Romanised Britains, therefore, who occupied the great central belt of the Lowlands, were thus liable to invasion on both sides, having Picts to the north and Picts to the south of them. Nor was this all. The central belt of territory which they occupied was not a continuous plain; for it was divided into two portions by the great mountain-barrier of the Southern Uplands, which runs between the Pentlands on the north and the Cheviots on the south. This mountain-barrier was intersected, east and west, by two chief passes: that of the Tweed, from Broughton to the mouth of the Ettrick; and that of the Yarrow and Ettrick to the Tweed—both passes converging at Ettrick-foot, immediately under Rink Hill fort, on the line of the Catrail. So long as the Britons held these passes, those of them on the east and on the west could join their forces and assist each other against their common enemy, the Picts. But these, the Picts, had now taken possession of Liddesdale, the chief pass from the south-west; and both the Picts on the south and those on the north must immediately have seen the immense importance to themselves, strategically, of obtaining command of the other two passes—those of the Ettrick and the Tweed, leading east and west—and so, by barring these passes, cutting the Britons in two. For this, they had the example of the Romans. To break the nation of the Brigantes in twain, Hadrian had stretched a

wall between the Tyne and the Solway; and similarly to divide the Caledonians, Antoninus had thrown up an earthen rampart between the Forth and the Clyde. In following a like policy now, and securing possession of this mountain territory, the Picts would not only, by dividing the Britons, weaken them, but they would greatly strengthen themselves; as the Picts on the north would thus be able to effect a junction with those on the south, and to amalgamate their forces against the enemy. It would likewise give fresh scope to the predatory instincts of the northern Picts, by affording them convenient access to the rich country of the Romanised Britons that lay beyond the Southern Wall. On the part of the Intramural Britons, resistance to such a conquest would become vital; while the enforcement of the design on the part of the Picts must have brought about a bitter and deadly struggle between these two races of hostile Celts.

It was in this conjuncture of affairs, and during the fierce racial conflict which this situation of parties must have produced, that we venture to think the Catrail may have been made.

The Galloway Picts being comparatively limited in number, it can hardly be supposed that they should take the initiative in the work; this was more probably the prerogative of the northern Picts, whose hordes of wild and savage barbarians were practically unlimited, and whose military advance, so to speak, had brought them to the point where the first and decisive struggle of the contest may be expected to have taken place. Once in command of the heights above Gala water, and of the fort on Torwoodlee Hill, where the Catrail begins, these Picts were

but three miles from Ettrickfoot, where the passes east and west, by the Tweed and the Ettrick, converge. The junction of these passes was protected on the north bank of the Tweed by the great fort on Rink Hill, and by another fort, about a mile distant, on the south or opposite bank of the Tweed. From the importance of their situation, these forts were no doubt strongly garrisoned by the Britons. That on the Rink Hill, which is oval in shape, has been very large and strong, measuring 90 yards by 60 yards within the ramparts. Outside the enclosing rampart is a fosse 30 feet wide, and still in several places about 20 feet deep. In addition to the inner rampart, there were also several strong outer defences, flanking the camp on every side. Under the rude systems of attack then existing, this fort must have presented a formidable obstacle to any assailant; and in all probability, if we are to suppose it on this occasion taken by the Picts, it was not until after many severe and sanguinary engagements.

From the fort on Torwoodlee Hill to that on the Rink Hill, the Catrail has been, judging from what is left of it, a work of great strength. Whether it was made after the Rink fort had been captured, or as a kind of covered way by which the assailants advanced against that fort, it is of course impossible to tell with certainty. But if we remember that the high ground stretching between the Torwoodlee and Rink forts, and along which the Catrail was made, formed part of the great wooded district afterwards known in Scottish Border history as "The Forest," it is not unreasonable to suppose that the latter was the alternative followed. When the Roman Severus penetrated into the northern half of

Caledonia, he could only do so by cutting down the woods, clearing out the jungles, and laying roads through them as he advanced. In like manner with the Picts, it may have been the necessity of penetrating a wooded country which first suggested the making of the Catrail; for by thus forming a sunk roadway, protected on either side by its high and palisaded ramparts, those in possession of it would secure a certain immunity from sudden attack, while it left their communications open in the rear, and afforded a way of escape in the necessity of retreat.

To write an imaginary history of how the Catrail was, point by point, made and secured, is unnecessary, and would in some degree, perhaps, be absurd: it is sufficient for our present purpose if we can show a certain reasonable approximation between the facts as they exist, and the hypothesis which is here advanced. This hypothesis involves the assumption that the makers of the Catrail were the Picts, and that their object in making it was twofold: (1) To enable them, by taking possession of the mountain territory along which the Catrail runs, to cut off the Britons on the east from those on the west; and (2) to enable the Picts on the north, and those of Galloway on the south, to effect a junction of their forces, and to maintain an open line of communication through the enemy's country. A reference to the description of the Catrail, which we have already given, will show that these conditions are met both by the form of its construction and by the line of route which it follows.

That the possession of the mountain territory referred to, and not merely the securing of the nearest way between two given points,

was one of the objects of the makers of the Catrail, is strongly supported by the fact that the route of the earthwork, about three miles after passing the Rink fort, instead of continuing to follow its southerly course, turns off at right angles and runs towards the west. The reason of this sudden and extreme divergence from its general line of route is obvious. Had the Catrail continued in the direction which it had hitherto followed, it would have been carried down into the valley of the Ettrick, and so missed the hill-country altogether. But by turning at this point (Linglee Hill), and running west, its route led directly into the range of the Southern Uplands—led, moreover, for seven miles along the watershed of the hills that lie between the Tweed and the Ettrick, and thus, during that distance, gave the possessors of the Catrail the command of both river-passes. Its route during those seven miles from Linglee Hill varies in elevation from 1100 to 1700 feet above the level of the sea; and when at length it touches the south-eastern edge of the broad hill of Minchmoor, it once more turns southward, and so continues, with a south-easterly sweep, till it reaches the sources of the Liddel, where the Picts of Galloway had already entrenched themselves. During this latter portion of its course, it cuts straight across the valleys of the Yarrow and the Ettrick—thus, as it were, double-locking these passes against the Britons; and as it proceeds, it also cuts off the higher from the lower waters of the Borthwick, the Teviot, and the Slitrig, and so commands all the passes leading downwards and eastwards into Teviotdale. That there should be numerous remains of forts all along the route of the Catrail—at dis-

tances from it varying from a few hundred yards to a mile—is what an investigator would expect to find, and does find; for the earthwork was not of itself sufficient to constitute an independent defence, although, with its double ramparts, admirably adapted, when supported by these forts, to enable its possessors to hold it against an enemy attacking it from either side.

While the Catrail may have served the purposes of a covered way during the advance of the aggressive Picts from fort to fort along the line of its route, it must afterwards have been used by them as a roadway quite as much as a defence. Mr Smail has observed that at certain places spurs, or "sidings," have been thrown out from it, which "sidings" may have been constructed to admit of herds of cattle or bodies of men passing each other. "In many places," he also says, "and over a large portion of the distance, it shows just about as many windings and twistings as an ordinary parish road. The smaller curvings were doubtless made in most cases to avoid rocks, or damp, very wet land." The Catrail would thus form a convenient and well-defined roadway, along which troops could be pushed forward even under cover of night, and by which, likewise, these same predatory hordes could return, spoil-laden, from their forays and incursions into the cultivated country of the Britons beyond the Southern Wall.

When once the Picts had effected the desired junction of their forces at the sources of the Liddel, they were in a position to assail the enemy on all sides. Three important passes meet at this point. The upper waters of the Teviot lead

directly into Teviotdale and the great valley of the Tweed to the north and east. On the south-west runs the pass of the Liddel, leading into Cumberland and Dumfriesshire; and on the south-east, that of the North Tyne, leading down into Northumberland. In addition to this, the Catrail, near its southern termination, cut through a Roman road, which ran from the sources of the Liddel directly south to the Roman Wall. Access to the enemy's country was thus easy, and the brief but significant notices which we have of the subsequent history of the combatants are sufficient to show that the Picts took full advantage of the commanding position which they had thus laboriously gained. Nor is the evidence which would connect the Men of Galloway, otherwise the Niduari Picts, with this the southern portion of the Catrail, wholly traditional; for in the charter of 1304, already alluded to, we have distinct mention of it. That charter refers to certain lands of Creshope (now Cliffhope), on the line of the earthwork, as being bounded by "*the fosse of the Galwegians*, and the '*rivulus*' running from thence into Liddel."¹

How long it took the Picts to secure possession of this mountain territory, and to construct the Catrail, is simply matter of speculation; but if ten years be allowed from the departure of the Romans, this would date the completion of the Catrail in A.D. 420. During the thirty years which followed, as we learn from Gildas, the Picts pursued their advantage against the Britons with the utmost cruelty and ferocity, sparing neither women nor children. Year by year, as winter approached, they withdrew into their strongholds

¹ Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland, vol. ii. p. 423.

among the hills; and year by year, as summer came round, they burst down upon the lands of the terror-stricken Britons, ravaging and wasting everywhere. The Britons in their extremity appealed from time to time to Rome to send them help against their savage oppressors; but Rome had more than enough to do with the enemy at her own gates, and no help came. Gildas has preserved a portion of one of these appeals, sent to Rome in the year 446: "The groans of the Britons to Aetius, for the third time Consul. The barbarians drive us to the sea, and the sea drives us back upon the barbarians; so arise two kinds of death, and we are either slaughtered or drowned." Failing still to obtain help from Rome, it was then, says Gildas, that the Britons "sealed their doom" by inviting among them "the fierce and impious Saxons, a race hateful both to God and men, to repel the invasions of the northern natives." The Picts at this time must have overrun the country beyond the Southern Wall as far as Lincolnshire, for, according to an old chronicler, the first battle between the Saxons and Picts took place in 449 at Stamford. "The Picts fought with darts and spears, and the Saxons with broadswords and axes; but the Picts could not bear that burden, and sought for safety in flight, and the Saxons took the victory and the triumph and spoil of the battle."

With this combination of Saxons and Britons, the predominance of the wild Picts came to an end, though not until after a long struggle. The details of the war in which the Picts were eventually driven back into their original settlements have not been preserved; we only know the main result, which was decisive enough.

But it is open for us to suppose that in this converse process of thrusting the Picts out of the mountain territory which they had girdled with the Catrail, the same places which were the scenes of the bitterest strife before would become so again. These would be the points at which the Catrail crossed the Ettrick and the Yarrow, and especially that where the earthwork commanded the pass of the Tweed at Ettrickfoot. The Rink Hill would once more figure as the *point de guerre*; and both fort and pass were possibly recaptured from the Picts by the Britons on the east and on the west making a simultaneous attack, aided by Angles, Saxons, and other Teutonic hordes. If this were so, we should naturally expect that the conquerors would immediately proceed to destroy the Catrail for some distance south and west of the Rink fort, so that, in the event of the Picts regaining that fort, they would no longer have the facilities for farther advance which the Catrail would afford them if left intact. This would form an explanation of why the great earthwork is so badly preserved on the high ridge of hills along which it runs from the Rink Hill to Minchmoor—the necessity for its complete or partial demolition at this place being rendered all the more urgent from the fact, that it here overawed or commanded the passes both of the Tweed and the Ettrick. Its ramparts would be razed or rendered untenable for the same reason that Wallace and Bruce demolished the Scottish castles and fortresses during the War of Independence, so that they might not again fall into the hands of the enemy. Again, on the Yarrow, where the Catrail, after descending from Minchmoor, barred this the second important pass, a similar conflict with similar

results may have taken place, and the earthwork been here also reduced to such a condition as no longer to bridle the heights between the Yarrow and the Ettrick. These suppositions, which seem to be consistent with the historical situation here developed, would sufficiently account for the Catrail being so fragmentary on the high ground to the east of Minchmoor, and so nearly impossible of recognition, now, on the hills between the Ettrick and the Yarrow.

For the Britons, however, as Gildas mournfully exclaims, the coming of the last enemy (the Saxons) was more dreadful than the first (the Picts). The heathen Teutons had no sooner driven back the northern barbarians, than they turned their weapons against those who had called upon them for assistance, and dispossessed the Britons all along the eastern sea-board. The particular steps by which this was accomplished are darkened by obscurity and distorted by fable. All we know is, that within a century after the battle of Stamford, the Angle King Ida had seized upon the country between the Humber and the Forth, and established the capital of his kingdom at Bamborough, a headland on the Northumbrian coast. From before the close of the fifth century, the Britons and Angles had been in deadly conflict; nor did the British arms finally triumph, even after the verse-renowned victories of Arthur, "blameless king," who "thrust the heathen from the Roman Wall, and shook him through the north." For the Angle in the end did prevail. His blood still beats in Border pulses, and his language is still on Border tongues.

The subsequent history of the Picts is well known. In the north or Highlands of Scotland, they continued to rule till extirpated or absorbed by the Scots in the ninth century. But the Picts of the Nith, the "Men of Galloway," held their own till after the end of the thirteenth century, existing as a half-independent State, under their native princes or lords, speaking their own language, and living under a system of laws peculiar to themselves. At the battle of the Standard, in 1138, they formed a main body in David's army, and claimed the right of leading the van in battle,—a fierce and courageous race, who hesitated not, half-naked as they were, to dash themselves against the ranks of the mail-clad Normans, as boldly as their forefathers had closed with the cohorts of imperial Rome. Thus long they held the Galwegian peninsula as their birthright, losing little of their original ferocity and courage, till they were slowly absorbed and lost in the younger and more vigorous nationality of the Scottish people. There, by the long reach of sea, they had lingered on, century by century, a singular remnant of an ancient race, who had seen the swift tides twice a-day flowing and ebbing over the sands of Solway since ages before the reign of the Cæsars. Their land was as the "sunset bound of Lyonesse,"—

"Where fragments of forgotten peoples
dwelt,
And the long mountains ended in a
coast
Of ever-shifting sand, and far away
The phantom circle of a moaning sea."

JOHN RUSSELL.

MRS OLIPHANT'S LIFE OF PRINCIPAL TULLOCH.

ONE opens a new biography, nowadays, with a feeling of nervous apprehension. This is mainly traceable to Mr Froude's treatment of the "remains" of Mr and Mrs Carlyle, and the prevalence of the theory that "the public" is entitled to know all that can be known about the private life of any personage of note, as soon after his career is closed as his letters, diaries, and memoranda can be collected and ransacked. It is one of the charms of the singularly attractive volume before us, that its author gives this pernicious theory no countenance. Mrs Oliphant has exercised a just discrimination as to what she should tell, and what she should withhold. Not that there was anything to hide in the chronicles of a life singularly frank, open, and honest in all its ways; but there are private passages in the correspondence of friends, in the intercourse of society, and in the records of thoughts and events, on which the public has no inherent right to intrude, and which only a cynical callousness of feeling, or a mean desire to gratify vulgar curiosity, would throw open to its gaze. In the pages in which Mrs Oliphant depicts the life of Principal Tulloch, there are no revelations that can give offence or pain—no betrayals to the many of confidences meant only for the few—none of the historical injustice which invests with literary permanence the most fleeting moods and unpremeditated utterances.

We may say, at once, that the work appears to us excellently

done. In her *Life of Edward Irving*, Mrs Oliphant had already shown marked capacity as a biographer,—capacity of generous sympathy with a noble character, of vivid portraiture of a picturesque career, of critical skill in the statement of questions involving no small amount of research and reflection. In this capacity, and in the art with which it is applied, there is no falling off; and the *Life of Tulloch* is, in all respects, worthy to be placed beside the *Life of Irving*. No two men, we may remark, could be more unlike. The extravagant unreasonableness which marked Irving's submission to the prophetic voices; the tendency to spiritual vagary; the obstinacy of dogmatism, which insisted on "keeping the conscience unfettered by the understanding,"—were characteristics with which no quality in Tulloch's nature had any affinity; but yet there was, after all, a certain similarity between the two, which, we fancy, the biographer has recognised. Each had the same large, generous, trustful nature; the same readiness to believe in and depend on the friendship and sympathy of others; the same power of attracting interest and affection; the same habit of unconscious self-revelation, which brought into a kind of humorous relief both their failings and their virtues,—to whose side, in each case, most of the failings leaned.

In one respect the later excels the earlier biography. The tone is more equable and restrained. There is some truth in what

Tulloch himself said, in reviewing Mrs Oliphant's *Life of Irving* in the 'Edinburgh:' "He moves through her pages in a cloud of admiring incense, which exalts, but at the same time shrouds, his figure. . . . The glory around her hero never dies down. His very personal peculiarities, even to his squint, are exalted, and touched with a certain vague magnificence." There is nothing of this here. The biographer, in this instance, knew her subject, not by the tradition and report of disciples who had enrolled him in the goodly fellowship of the prophets and the noble army of the martyrs, but by long and intimate personal intercourse of the friendliest sort. She saw him as he was, and not as he appeared through a golden haze; and she has portrayed, with frank and affectionate truthfulness, one whose life deserved to be commemorated.

The name of a Scottish Churchman, as a general rule, excites but slender interest beyond the pale of his own Church. The Anglican, on the sunny side of the hedge, concerns himself little in the affairs of his poorer neighbour, whose nose is nipped and whose temper is sharpened by the north wind. He is not only ignorant of the affairs of Presbyterian Caledonia, but he is contented in his ignorance, and does not think it worth the trouble of removing. Porson had never heard the name of George Buchanan, a greater scholar than himself; and we are ready to wager that not one in twenty of the clergy of England could give any coherent account of Thomas Chalmers and Robert Lee, or even of Norman Macleod and John Tulloch. And yet these were men who, in their day and their place, exercised a potent influence over the minds of their

countrymen—whose minds have a curiously ecclesiastical bent, and who like to flavour even their Radicalism with a smack of religion. The biography of a Scotch minister—for such Tulloch was—is thus apt to wear, to the eye of the Southron, a forbidding aspect, and to threaten dreary chapters of Calvinistic dogmatism and Presbyterian contentiousness, in which only a Scotsman born and bred could pretend to interest himself. Nothing could be more untrue to the facts than any such prevision of the contents of this memoir. It sets before us a life unusually full of manly energy, of multifarious work, of many-sided sympathies and interests, and contacts with all grades of society, with no trace in it of Puritanic acerbity, or Calvinistic gloom, or sectarian narrowness, or hampering provincialisms of any kind.

Like many another distinguished Scotsman, Tulloch was a son of the Manse, and became early inured to the hardy and self-reliant habits to which the discipline of slender means, and the necessity of intellectual exertion, train lads of his degree. Entering college in his fifteenth year, he studied under the racy old professors of St Andrews, with a versatile and impulsive, rather than diligent, application to the business of their classes—gaining the approval of the dons by occasional essays full of brilliant promise, and the hearts of his comrades by the bright gaiety and enthusiasm with which he took his share of work and pleasure. From St Andrews, bored apparently by the "sage prelections" of one professor of divinity, and the "curious dulnesses" of another, he betook himself to Edinburgh for the last year of his theological course, after which, in 1844, at the age of twenty-one, he was duly "licensed"

as a probationer of the Scottish Church. The recent secession of the Free Kirk had vastly accelerated the course of preferment, and in a few months Tulloch found himself duly called and ordained as minister of St Paul's Church, in the busy town of Dundee, which Lord Cockburn, in his 'Circuit Journeys' of that date, upbraids for its "starving turbulent population, and vulgar blackguardism."

Tulloch entered on this ill-conditioned cure of souls with an almost overwhelming sense of responsibility. He might already have been settled in a quieter and less exacting charge in Arbroath, but for the intolerable "consciousness of inability and unworthiness," which, after "nearly a month of agony," compelled him to decline the preferment at the eleventh hour. He could not have accepted the appointment to St Paul's, had not experience brought some relief from the pressure of this feeling; and his mind regained its wonted elasticity under the stimulus of work. Moreover, his gaining the independence and the emoluments implied in having a church of his own, brought within the range of practical domestic politics his union with the girl—for she was little more—who had long before won his devotion, and who was henceforth to be the greatest blessing of his life. "You bid me believe," he writes to her, while his prospects were yet uncertain and his spirits overcast, "that nothing in this world will ever separate us. Ah, dearest, you do not know how you may darken your own life in thus seeking to brighten mine!" There was some truth in the foreboding. The early marriage, the crowding cares, the silent anxieties, the share of sorrow, the pain of witnessing the pressure of the trouble she could not remove, were yet

to cast many a shadow on the life which was so precious to him; but throughout it all there was an "over-payment of delight," in the warmth of unbroken love, the restfulness of uninterrupted confidence, and the rare closeness of the union which bound the two together.

In thinking of Mrs Tulloch, we cannot help recalling the words in which Carlyle, *contra votum superstes*, recorded his lament for one whose life, without these compensations, had lacked much of that which ought to have alleviated its infelicities: "In her bright existence she had more sorrows than are common, but also a soft invincibility, a clearness of discernment, and a noble loyalty of heart, which are rare. For forty years she was the true and ever loving helpmate of her husband; and by act and word unweariedly forwarded him, as none else could, in all of worthy that he did or attempted." The period was about the same; the outward trials and embarrassments were much alike; but the inward life—how different! In Mrs Tulloch's case an absolute sympathy—a mutual understanding that never knew a check—the voices of happy children round the hearth—the gaiety, under all external crosses, of hearts at ease in the consciousness of a perfect love. No passages, in the story Mrs Oliphant has told with such sympathetic truthfulness and tact, are more tenderly and delicately drawn than those in which, without violating any of the sanctities of domestic life, she has depicted the beautiful relations of Tulloch and his wife.

They were married in the little church of St Laurens, in Jersey, in the summer of 1845, and after a few idyllic weeks in the sunny island, went home to grimy Dundee, where the dull sky and sordid

surroundings formed a harsh contrast to the "orchard lawns, and bowery hollows crowned with summer sea." The young bride became only too soon cognisant of the difficulties of her position. The Town Council were the paymasters; and being Radicals and Dissenters, they cut down—illegally, as it was afterwards proved—the stipends of certain of the clergy, of whom Tulloch was one, to the beggarly pittance of £105 a-year, to which disheartening measure the minister and his wife had to adjust their expenditure.

We can scarcely over-estimate their sufferings under this perplexing hardship. No doubt, like a brave man, Tulloch made no complaint or appeal for assistance; but, for all that, the iron entered into his soul, and we do not question that in the anxieties and discomforts of this impoverished time lay the germs of much of that nervous sensitiveness and tendency to depression, both mental and physical, which from time to time burdened his later life. It was in these very embarrassments, however, that he found the stimulus to new and extended activity. He began to write, not indeed with the "frantic laboriousness," the idea of which Mrs Oliphant scouts, but wherever he could get access to a newspaper or a magazine.

From the first he had a most available literary faculty: even his youthful essays at college were notable for their force and brilliancy, and he now fairly commenced his first tentative efforts in that career of literary activity, in which he was to win so much distinction. He was always impatient of the insularity which had become a note of the Scotch ecclesiastical mind, and looked back with regret on the interruption of that intellec-

tual intercourse which, 200 years before, had familiarised the studious youth of Scotland with the thought and scholarship of the Continent. He took the first opportunity that a holiday, required by the state of his health, afforded him, of repairing to Germany, and extending his acquaintance with the German language and the German theology. One of the first results of this enlargement of his resources was a translation, for Kitto's 'Journal of Sacred Literature,' of Neander's 'Lectures on Pascal.' But the engrossments of life in Dundee afforded little leisure for literary labours, and it was not till his removal to the quiet country parish of Kettins, in Strathmore, that he was able to undertake work of a higher quality, and in larger quantity than before. Although the stipend was a better one in Kettins than in Dundee, the necessity for augmenting it was not lessened. Tulloch sprang from that prolific Scandinavian stock, which has done so much to invigorate the population of the stormy Orcaes, whence his ancestors had migrated southwards; and a rapid and steady increase was multiplying the number of small bodies to be clothed and mouths to be filled, at the manse. So the pen was plied with diligence, and the Dundee papers and Kitto's 'Journal' no longer sufficed for its employment. He ventured to introduce himself to the more dignified society of the quarterlies, and was at once accepted as a contributor by the editors of the 'British Quarterly' and of the 'North British Review.' An article on Literature and Christianity, contributed to the latter in 1851, was the first which attracted general attention, and gave those who watch the movements of the literary world assurance that a new force was in

the field. We hear of friendly recognition extended to the young reviewer by such veterans as Sir David Brewster, Sir James Stephen, and Archdeacon Hare. Three years later Baron Bunsen's appreciation of the ability with which his 'Hippolytus' was reviewed by the critic of the 'North British' was not the least active of the influences that secured Tulloch's promotion to the Principalship of St Mary's.

When his name was gazetted, there was no little shaking of orthodox heads over Lord Palmerston's selection. To make a man the head of a theological college at thirty-one,—to pass over so many of the wise and prudent, and to give the prize to this youngster, who wrote in liberal Reviews, who had gone to Germany to study neology on the spot, and had come back infected with critical historical methods that Scotch divinity had hitherto done very well without,—this was startling, and of evil omen. Luckily for the object of these dubieties and suspicions, in the very midst of them, confirmation strong of the justice of the Government's choice came from an unimpeachable quarter. Tulloch had scarcely begun his work as professor of theology (the duty which was attached to the office of Principal), when he was announced as the winner of the second Burnett prize (£600) awarded to his essay on 'Theism: the Witness of Reason and Nature to an All-Wise and Beneficent Creator,' by the three judges selected by the trustees—Baden Powell, Henry Rogers, and Isaac Taylor—who allotted Tulloch the second place among 208 competitors. There was no longer any grumbling over his elevation to the Principalship. Nobody now ventured to disparage his ability and

fitness. The crisis was past: his position was assured. No editor needed to ask who he was. The publishers spontaneously offered to publish his essay. The students came up to St Mary's with an unaccustomed expectation of "light and leading," never disappointed. The secluded country minister stepped out into the sunshine amid a chorus of general applause, and took his place, with a quiet dignity and unobtrusive consciousness of power, at the head of the college which he had quitted as a student only eleven years before.

We regret that his biographer has said so little about Tulloch in his capacity of professor of dogmatic theology; but we cannot expect even Mrs Oliphant to be a theologian. And, to tell the truth, there was not much of dogma, properly so-called, about Tulloch's theology. He always preferred dealing with the facts of life and human consciousness to dealing with the systematised conclusions of the schools. Hence his lectures on Sin, the Atonement, Sacrifice, &c., aimed not so much at tracing the relative doctrines through their various stages of elaboration, as at showing the realities in human experience and the religious wants of mankind, out of which the facts that lay at the root of the doctrine had arisen. We do not think he was deeply read in the Fathers or the Schoolmen. To have pored over all the pages of Athanasius or Jerome, of Bonaventura or Aquinas, he would have thought but a waste of time. What he cared for was to see their relation to the general development of the main lines of Christian thought, to mark whatever oasis in their deserts was freshened with the water of life, and whatever track bore the print of human pilgrimage towards the shrine of truth. He had a rare

knack of discerning rapidly the presence of a *thought*, though embedded in much irrelevancy and obscurity, and of laying hold of it with firm grasp till he had shown what it was and whence it came, and had got out of it what he called "its living meaning." He cared little for doctrinal system, and was impatient of the restraints of orthodox tradition, realising keenly the inadequacy of the human symbol to embody the divine truth, and the impotence of any external authority to hamper freedom of thought in the region of theology, any more than in any other branch of inquiry. He valued, in the literature of the past, that chiefly which tended to vindicate this freedom—to disentangle theology from scholastic and sacerdotal tradition, and to establish it on a broadly human basis. This phrase, "broadly human," used by an eminent publisher in reference to a magazine article, became a kind of byword, which Tulloch would now and then employ, with an appreciation of its convenience, and a humorous recollection of its first and rather ponderous utterance. It expressed exactly enough the attitude of his own mind in his outlook on philosophy and theology, and his constant championship of the method of historico-critical inquiry, as opposed to traditionalism, of whose "essential irrationality," as exhibited in such a writer as Newman, he was intolerant, if intolerant of anything.

His own position, in regard to the Calvinism generally current in the Scotch Divinity Halls, may be fairly expressed in what he says of Hales of Eton. "When he left the narrowness of Calvinism, he did so not because he became possessed by some other narrowness, but because he saw, from a higher field of vision, how little dogmatic

precision has to do with spiritual truth, and how hopeless it is to tie and confine the truth under definite creeds and systems." And what, above all, he tried to teach his students was, as he said, "to read the simple meaning of Christianity in the crossed page of its history, to rise above its watchwords, as they reach us athwart the ages bearing many confusing sounds, to the living heart of the cause which they symbolised and were meant to defend, instead of losing the reality in the words, and becoming enslaved to names which may have long lost their original strength and truthfulness."

His teaching, from his chair, was conveyed with great force and earnestness, and with an unconventional geniality which won the hearts of the young men, but never in the least degree impaired the inherent dignity and authority with which he ruled them. "He impressed himself mainly," says one of his old students, in a letter quoted by Mrs Oliphant, "as a healthful and stimulating and friendly influence among us students. Tulloch had the power of drawing out one's best, and this, I think, because the sense of his luminous and sympathetic intelligence inspired the confidence without which the best cannot be done." Another letter—from the Rev. P. Anton, a distinguished pupil—sketches the scene in St Mary's Hall with an affectionate picturesqueness which must recall to many a memory the old chamber with the tall windows toward the east, the gallant presence, the kindling eye, the voice now deepening into solemn emphasis, now trembling with generous emotion.

"The little band rose to their feet. The Principal appeared. The Geneva gown hung from his shoulders in careless folds. He took his seat. The

work of the class went on. Soon some idea was broached which touched some subject of the day. The lecturer discarded his paper. The sound of the driving quills ceased. The Professor warmed with his new thought. His eyes became suffused. The windows fronted the east. Often in the winter mornings the rising sun struck his gilded rays right on the speaker where he sat, and, when full of his subject, he looked like one transfigured, one who had come down from some glorious mountain to teach the children of men some peculiarly high and holy evangel."

Although henceforth Tulloch's primary professional duty was that of professor of theology, the area of his activities was by no means bounded by the precincts of St Mary's. Indeed we should surmise that the manifold nature of the work he undertook interfered, in some degree, with his efficiency in his proper sphere. Not that this sphere was in any way neglected, but that it did not engross his powers so wholly as Scottish theology might have hoped it should. The reason was not far to seek. Had Tulloch been an Englishman, he would have had some fat living or golden stall, where lettered leisure would not imply starvation. Being a Scotchman, though standing in the very front rank of churchmanship and literature, a professor of theology, the head of a college, and the Senior Principal and Vice-Chancellor of his University (as he early became, on Brewster's death), he was thought to be adequately paid with a salary which, at first only £300, never, at its best, exceeded £500, a-year.

Scotch scholarship in general, and Scotch theology in particular, are sometimes reproached with barrenness. They have no reason to be ashamed. Consid-

ering how they are recompensed for their labours, we think they have been richly prolific. "A woman's preaching," said Dr Johnson, "is like a bear's dancing on its hind legs. The wonder is not that it is done well, but that it is done at all." We may say the same of the pursuit of learning, especially theological learning, north of the Tweed. Tulloch gave all to theology that he could give: but one must live; and to live on his professional salary was impossible. Hence his strenuous writing; his frequent engagements in Edinburgh and elsewhere as a public lecturer; his assumption of the duties of clerk of the General Assembly, and of the editorship of the Church's official 'Record.' To these were added, later, the functions of a member of the Education Board, appointed under the Act of 1872.

Had he possessed ampler means, he would not have burdened himself with the weight of all these charges. The strain of them told heavily on a man of so finely strung and nervous a temperament as Tulloch's, and more than once involved him in the meshes of a painfully oppressive and lingering disorder, which brought with it bodily weakness and *malaise*, but still more, mental unrest and depression, amounting to an almost crushing "power of darkness." It fastened, as Mrs Oliphant says, "like one of the vultures of ancient story, on brain and heart." She, very properly, gives us the record, kept by himself, of the progress of one of these mysterious and terrible inflictions—which is not only very touching in its revelation of his sufferings under the calamity, but singularly interesting from a psychological point of view. He describes the gradual

development of the "painful self-consciousness," which was one of the most harassing symptoms of the incipient mischief; the gleams of temporary respite, but with "the terror of the shadow" overhanging all; the baffled efforts for relief through chloral, opium, "Batley," and what not; the deepening cloud—"very dark and weary"—"God, in Thy mercy, spare me the misery of such another day"—"*Blackness of darkness*;"—then the final abandonment of the struggle; the flight from home, with the ever tender and self-forgetting guardian by his side; the return in hopelessness of any help, while "death would have been sweetness itself to the life that I was leading." Yet amid all this there remained a power of self-control and unimpaired clearness of mind, which enabled him to converse "about some theological projects" with Dr Martineau, who came to call on him; and in an after-dinner talk with Sir Andrew Clark and Dr Crichton Browne, to "see points with singular clearness, and explain Mr H. Spencer's point of view as against both of them, as Dr B. and my wife said, as lucidly as possible. . . . I was all through my illness savagely critical, at times, of both men and things."

For that time, after a long night of horror, the cloud lifted and passed away—thanks, as far as medical help was concerned, to the advice of Sir Andrew and the care of Dr Ramsay, who received Tulloch at Torquay and carried out the treatment recommended there.

Twice, when an attack of this malady had given him only too sufficient pretext for temporary relief from work, he undertook long journeys—the records of which are among the most interesting parts of this interesting biography. The

first took him up the Mediterranean to Malta, Greece, Constantinople, and Asia Minor, thence to Rome, where his wife and Mrs Oliphant awaited him. After a stay there, back to Greece, Athens, Corfu, rejoining them at Capri, whence he made his way through Italy by Naples, Rome, Viterbo, Milan, and the Splügen, into Germany, where he pitched his tent for a while at Tübingen, ere he returned to St Andrews. His letters are full of vivid descriptions of scenes and persons, and lively comment on the phases of life and thought that presented themselves to his quickly observant and critical eye. Wherever he went, he gathered friends, drawn to him by the force of his intellect and the manly genuineness and warmth of his character. In Rome a little company of English and American visitors, one of them Dean Alford, met in his rooms, now and again, to hear him read the critique of Renan, which he had written while on his travels, and which he afterwards published, under the title, 'The Christ of the Gospels, and the Christ of Modern Criticism.' Mrs Oliphant describes the delight with which, at Capri, the sunburnt natives regarded the noble type of northern manhood which the Principal presented to their unaccustomed eyes. Feliciello, the guide, a descendant of the old Greek colonists, in particular,

"could not conceal his admiration of such a splendid specimen of humanity, and one so different from his own. The great height and stately bearing, the *barba-rossa* and fair Saxon colour which always impress a swarthy race, the easy largeness and magnificence of the man, took all speech from the admiring and surprised guide. After walking round him with murmurs of ecstasy, Feliciello, at last in despair of being able otherwise to give ex-

pression to his feelings, came forward in a sort of rapture and patted the Principal energetically on the shoulder, in sheer applause and delight."

Here is another characteristic little incident. They were crossing to Amalfi, and the ladies, alarmed and discomfited by the suddenly rising wind, wished the sail lowered and the oars put out. The sailors replied

"with gentle laughter . . . and soothing assurances of our perfect safety, until the Principal grew impatient. He had no Italian, but another kind of eloquence which is superior to language. He clenched his large fist and held it up in Luigi's laughing face: 'Take, down, that, sail,' he said, in deliberate imperative English. No need for any interpretation—the canvas came down in a moment; there was no mistaking the meaning of that tone or of those eyes."

At Tübingen he busied himself in the University Library, and visiting the several theological classes,—enjoying specially the lectures of the Catholics, Hefele on Patrology, and Kuhn on Dogmatics; and of the Protestant Beck, on the Epistle to the Ephesians.

There were some Scotch and Irish students among the rest; and

"we all live," writes Tulloch, "in a very humble but hearty way in the Traube Post, the chief hotel of the place, breakfasting at any unwontedly early hour you like, and *dining*—think of that!—at half-past twelve, *table d'hôte*. They are a strange and simple people, and fill me with many thoughts as to their power of theological speculation, and of dining at half-past twelve. The liberality with which Beck and Hefele (the latter really a gentlemanly-looking man, even in our sense of the words, with bright humorous eyes) expectorate during the delivery of their lectures would make you open your eyes. The class-rooms of both are filled to the door. . . . Baur, having

made *history* of the whole Christian system, evaporated the Creed in a historical development. Beck plainly underrates the historical element in the theological system, and tries to go back in a Methodistic arbitrary way to the Biblical text. And so the theological ball goes from extreme to extreme in this blessed land of free-thinking and intellectual conceit, which, I am forced to confess, appears to me to explain a great deal of their systematising both in philosophy and theology."

His second expedition, in the spring of 1874, was to America, and included New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, Cincinnati, Chicago, Niagara, Ottawa, Montreal. He was everywhere received with American effusiveness, and welcomed as one whose name was pleasantly familiar. The dons of Yale, Princeton, and Harvard paid him the kindest attentions, and pleased him by their knowledge and appreciation of his books. At Yale, Dr Porter, the president, "expressed himself very warmly about my books—even 'Theism,' which I had learned myself somewhat to despise. . . . They all walked with me to the station." At Princeton a reception was held in his honour, where he was reluctantly and unexpectedly "forced to say a few words."

"It is a trying ordeal," he adds, in some disgust, "for a man without the American gift of the gab to be set up against a door in a drawing-room, or to be called on unexpectedly after a lecture to make a few remarks."

"I wish I could convey to you—I hardly can—some idea of the cordial welcome I have had from the Harvard University men. . . . Every one seems to have read my last book about the Cambridge divines, who are not forgotten here if they are in Cambridge in England. . . . It was disappointing to me that it did not meet

with more appreciation in Cambridge where the men had lived and worked. Perhaps, after all, it met with more than I knew of. It has been all the more gratifying to me to find it so well recognised here, amidst an intellectual atmosphere really more broad and brilliant than Cambridge. . . . You cannot imagine how fine a place this is—a mixture of Edinburgh and Paris; the houses quite as fine as some of the finest in Paris; the intellectual atmosphere so charming, thoughtful, brilliant, reverent. What a contrast to Eton in that latter respect, where one might wander about for weeks without anybody taking the slightest interest, or even knowing about Hales of Eton, about whom everybody knows here! It makes one have many thoughts about the value of English education, and the frightful lack of broad human interest in which it allows men to grow up.”

At Boston he lunched with the Literary Club, and dined in company with Emerson, Dana, Longfellow, and Holmes. At Washington he had an interview with the President, General Grant, who

“talked very freely, beginning with the usual ‘I am delighted to make your acquaintance, Doctor.’ . . . I spent the rest of the day in the Capitol, seeing heaven knows how many people—all remarkable men—to whom I was introduced. The Speaker of the House of Representatives made me sit down near him, and was most agreeable. . . . The chaplain of the Senate made me promise to go to-morrow and open the Senate with prayer.”

We must make room for a few of his fresh and racy impressions of American ways and characteristics.

“I sat beside Longfellow at dinner, and had some very pleasant conversation with him. But O. W. Holmes was the great talker, and kept asking questions constantly about Scotland, how Burns could have come out of its

Calvinistic atmosphere, &c.—a little dapper man, hard and brusque, and more inquisitive than pleasant, but very bright and intelligent. He and Longfellow more ignorant of Scotland and Scotch modes of thought than I had imagined possible. Emerson talking not very much, in oracular imperfect sentences, somewhat as he writes (he is very much interested in being proposed as Rector for Glasgow). I think I almost enjoyed the conversation of Dr Ellis, a retired Unitarian minister, who went with me through Harvard College to-day, more than any of them. There is almost nothing of the New York Yankee here. People are like English ladies and gentlemen of the best class, as different as possible from the Americans you meet abroad.

“Everybody here has a great interest in the Queen, and speaks of her with the most beautiful respect. This also, as you may imagine, is a bond of regard between them and me.

“I see from the newspapers that Mr Fields, to whom John Brown gave me a note, has been lecturing last night on Longfellow, extolling him to the skies as quite equal to any modern poet. This is rather extravagant. But it is better to speak well of one another, as all the literary men here seem to do, than to bite and devour one another as they often do at home. Lowell (who is not here at present, but in Italy) speaks with high commendation of Emerson, Fields of Longfellow, Holmes of Bret Harte (who does not belong to their own set), and so on. It is a little like a mutual admiration society; but it is better, after all, than a mutual depreciation society. I am going out to see some more of their *institootions*.”

“I have just heard the most remarkable sermon I ever heard in my life—I use the word in no American sense—from Mr Phillips Brooks, an Episcopal clergyman here: equal to the best of Frederick Robertson's sermons, with a vigour and force of thought which he had not always. I have never heard preaching like it, and you know how slow I am to praise preachers. So much thought and so much life combined—such a reach of

mind, and such a depth of insight and soul. I was electrified. I could have got up and shouted. I shook hands with the preacher afterwards, who asked me to preach in the afternoon for him ; but I would not do this, remembering your caution."

"I was found out, and invited to come up and take my seat among the officials round the pulpit as a minister. But it was necessary to draw the line somewhere, and I would not do this. The fact is, *I was rather frightened*. It is rather dreadful, the sight of men and women, a congregation of them, as black as the grate (tell Henny this), some of the women and men too only partly coloured, almost fine-looking, but for the greater part uglier than you can imagine. But if the mere sight was astonishing, the effect of the sermon of the nigger preacher—a wild and rather poor rhapsody about 'putting on the Lord Jesus'—nearly appalled me. As the preacher got excited and ranted forth these words, they ranted and roared in turn, some of them literally bellying, 'That's it!' 'Yes, hallelujah! Amen!' And a woman not far from me got into violent convulsive fits, and stood up bending herself backward and forward over the pew, like a person in catalepsy. I thought she would have broken her back. Then after she had been held down for a while, just like a maniac, she beat her hands together, and those around her beat their hands, and the men roared and grinned and nodded, till the whole affair was like Bedlam, and I was really glad to get away. I doubt if I had lived here if I should have been much of an Abolitionist. They certainly look an inferior race."

"I had noticed in a dictionary of authors that two of my books—the answer to Renan and 'Beginning Life'—had been republished at Cincinnati. I sallied forth into the large unknown town, and after various inquiries the 'Methodist Book Concern' was pointed out to me. I inquired for my books, which I got at once. I said, 'Now I am quite willing to pay for these copies, but I think you ought to give me them for nothing, as I am

the writer of them.' The man looked amazed, and referred me to the head of the establishment, who also looked amazed. When he understood who I really was, he was very gracious, and of course had a copy of each put up for me. I gathered that they both sold largely—one of them being the volume of whose limited sale Macmillan, you may remember, complained. The joke is, they were all dear—dearer, in fact, as everything here is, than at home. Their selling price is one dollar twenty-five cents, or five shillings, according to the present currency. 'Beginning Life' was never more than 3s. 6d. at home, and the other volume can be got abundantly for eighteenpence. They are a strange lot, to steal a man's brains in that way and never offer him a cent, nor even, till asked for, a copy of the book. One of the bishops writes a long and flattering introduction: one might say, 'Less of your manners and more of your siller, my pious Methodist.'"

"Nobody beyond his personal qualities of intelligence or character excites respect. There is no big man or formidable woman, simply because they occupy a certain social grade. Features of life and character are freely talked of. So-and-so is described in that sense, and with a kind of opinion unknown to us. 'She is a dear girl, with much loveliness of character,' Mrs D. said of a young lady, who on the death of her mother suddenly had assumed the management of a large household. 'He is a Bohemian, a political agent to-day, a financial speculator, a billiard-marker to-morrow.' The facts are so. Why should they not be told? There is no such social reticence as one meets with at home. Then educationally,—I have no doubt, from what I have seen, how thorough it is. At the Cooper Institute, for example, up to a certain point, work, educational or otherwise, *is work*—so far as it goes. There is no shame in ignorance in any special matter; the point is to get rid of it and become improved."

Altogether, the American trip interested and gratified him much;

and he came back freshened and invigorated in health, and with a pleasant stock of new experiences and ideas.

The book which he found so well known at Harvard was his 'Rational Theology and Christian Philosophy in England in the Seventeenth Century.' Its preparation had occupied him for some years before its publication in 1872. It was the work which, in his own judgment, was the most important he had attempted. He disliked the rough classification which divided the forces in conflict during that century into the two great camps of Royalist and Parliamentary, Prelatist and Puritan. His own essentially rational and moderate bent led him to study the position and character of the party, of which Falkland was the political head, and whose theology and philosophy were represented by the Cambridge Platonists. His study resulted in an intense sympathy with their principles, and recognition of their primary importance in the struggle which culminated in the Revolution of 1688. The constitutional victory then achieved he regarded as, in all its highest elements, due to the triumph of these principles in their breadth of reasonable liberality. The theologians of the party he specially admired.

"I have derived," he says, "so much pleasure from the repeated study of Hales and Chillingworth, and again of Whichcote and his Cambridge compeers, and cherish so warm an admiration of their great gifts of Christian reasonableness, that I should rejoice if I have done anything to restore the images of men who appear to me the very best types of the English theologian, manly and fearless in intellect, while reverent and cautious in spirit."

But to theologians of this type

the evangelicalism and the sacerdotalism of modern England were alike indifferent; and Tulloch found, with some chagrin, as his letter from Harvard indicates, that his book made little way among English Churchmen.

His earlier work, 'Beginning Life,' which he found "pirated" in America, was a much slighter one, and because, possibly, of its slightness, was much more popular, and has now reached, we rather think, its twelfth edition. None of his works is more characteristic of himself, in its genial sympathy, wise tolerance, sound good sense, and high moral tone. Also among his earlier volumes were 'The Leaders of the Reformation,' and 'English Puritanism and its Leaders,' in both of which we see him at his best, pursuing those lines of historical exposition which he trod with the firm and easy step of a master, and employing, with philosophic acumen and artistic insight, his favourite method of making the most striking personality, or character, of a period, the centre round which its events are grouped, and with which the development of its thought is associated. He shared Carlyle's conviction of the essential value of great men's biographies to true history; and in his exposition of principles and doctrines always tried to exhibit the central figure, with which he could identify a movement or a tendency. The same method predominates in his two latest works, 'Modern Theories in Philosophy and Religion,' and 'Movements of Religious Thought.' This latter contained his last contributions to those courses of Sunday afternoon lectures delivered in the restored Cathedral of St Giles, in which, from their commencement, he had taken a keen

interest, and which he valued as utilising for the highest purposes of intellectual improvement hours of the Sunday too often apt to be expended in mere idleness, or in drowsy attendance on supererogatory services.

But we must turn from his writings to his public life, which, as years rolled on, became ever more and more beset with demands on his time and energy.

His succession to the office of Principal Clerk required that he should not only manage the great bulk of the business of the General Assembly, but of some of the most important committees of the Church. As Senior Principal, he had to bear the burden of most of the business of the University. While the Education Board lasted, the work it involved was onerous. To his nervous temperament still more harassing were the cares that haunted him during those anxious months, in which he sat in the editorial chair of 'Fraser's Magazine.' The often-repeated, and always abortive, efforts at legislation for the Scotch Universities—necessitating abundant correspondence, frequent deputations to London, and bothers of manifold kinds—were also an ever-recurring element of worry and trouble. Yet, through it all, he bore himself bravely and worked manfully, except when strength and hope were sapped by his insidious and inexorable foe.

Mrs Oliphant gives, in considerable detail, the lengthened correspondence and negotiations connected with his relations to the Education Board, and the proposed measures of University reform, which are still of interest and importance to those concerned in Scotch educational questions. At some points, as she does so, she in-

dulges in a gently patronising tone, as of one bending from a superior sphere, towards the elucidation of obscure facts and provincial interests, which we have occasionally noticed that Scottish writers adopt, when treating Scottish questions with the consciousness of an English audience before their eyes. It seems a little out of place in dealing with Tulloch. But she succeeds—which is the main thing—in illustrating the candid, liberal, and enlightened views, with which he handled educational matters and the problems of university reform. In one respect he was decidedly in advance of the general opinion of his fellow-churchmen. He advocated the relaxation of the tests which exacted a confession of Calvinistic faith from the theological professors. Such tests, he maintained, were no security for orthodoxy, and simply hindered the progress of the scientific study of theology. The Scotch Dissenters, who, in their own denominational seminaries, imposed the same tests with rigidity, clamoured for such a modification of their terms as would admit nonconformists to the chairs in the divinity halls of the Universities. Tulloch had no sympathy with this pseudo-liberalism, and desired to see the study of theology in Scotland released, as it was in Germany, from whatever fetters of sect or creed hampered its free development on a scientific basis. His advocacy of this enfranchisement of the queen of the sciences has hitherto, however, been without direct result.

In his capacity as a churchman—after the death of Norman Macleod, the *leading* churchman of Scotland—Tulloch's interest centred mainly in three questions which, within recent years, have agitated

the National Church. These were the abolition of Patronage; the improvement of Ritual; and the relaxation of Formulas. There were minor questions, but these were the chief. Among the minor, one of the most interesting was the possibility of a union between Presbytery and Episcopacy, urged with unwearied patience by the venerable Bishop Wordsworth, of St Andrews. Tulloch's catholicity of feeling leant towards union wherever it was feasible; but his hatred of traditionalism and love of Christian liberty forbade his giving the good Bishop's well-meant proposals any countenance. Dr Wordsworth, in the last resort, after all argument, always fell back on the obligation of accepting "the historic Episcopate" and the threefold orders.

"Episcopacy," says Tulloch, "is certainly ancient: its existence may be traced to the verge of the apostolic life, if not within it. It presents in its usages, and especially in its form of worship as exhibited in the Anglican Church, many advantages. On such practical grounds many agree in our Church; but as soon as you approach them with the idea of Episcopacy as of divine prescription, as a dogma claiming their acceptance, they are up in arms. . . . The acknowledgment of Bishops as a divine power above presbyters is, so far as I can see, a notion that has utterly died out of the Scottish mind."

To the last Tulloch never wavered in his conviction of the essential unreasonableness and hopelessness of the attempt to reconcile Presbytery and Episcopacy, on the dogmatic basis of sacerdotal theory prevalent in the Episcopal communion in Scotland.

He never was an anti-Patronage enthusiast; but he felt that, theoretically, the system of lay patronage could not be permanently up-

held under the popular constitution of the Presbyterian Church—though in practice it had, on the whole, worked fairly well. He was not in favour of the unconditional abolition of Patronage; but he was in favour of a fuller recognition than the old system permitted of what he called "popular or congregational rights." When he saw, however, that any compromise which should do justice to these rights, and yet not absolutely depose the ancient patrons, was out of the question, he accepted the inevitable, and lent his influence to the passing of Lord Gordon's Bill; and after it was passed, to the adoption of such regulations by the General Assembly as should render it most effectual, both as a means of increasing the attachment of the people to the Church, and of reconciliation between the Church and Dissent. That it has popularised the Church is an obvious fact. That it has not reconciled the Dissenters is no fault of the policy which Tulloch advocated, and which the Church pursued.

Of the general movement in favour of an enriched and amended ritual, initiated by Dr Robert Lee, Tulloch cordially approved. He had, however, a large and easy indifference to details, and an impatience of minutia, which prevented his understanding the necessity of exact rubrics and careful attention to form, order, and attitude, in all efforts to amend a service which had so far deteriorated into slovenliness, as had the ordinary service of Scotland. But with the aim of the reformers of ritual he thoroughly sympathised; and the Church Service Society, through whose agency they endeavoured to effect their reforms, had, from its formation,

the benefit of his support and advice. He became its president, and frequently spoke at its public meetings. At the same time, he had some apprehensions of the possibly indiscreet enthusiasm of its younger or more zealous members. His "faith was large in time." "Don't push on," he would advise; "let things ripen. Time is on our side."

"I have no faith in aggressions of any kind," he writes, "or, in other words, in rapid or violent changes. Aggression seems to me to have been the aim of Scottish religion since the Reformation—Presbytery *versus* Episcopacy, and Episcopacy *versus* Presbytery; Evangelicalism *versus* Moderatism, and so on. My only faith in all the stir that is now going on, doctrinal and liturgical, is that there is a high conciliatory spirit at work—a spirit of eclecticism, in short, although I know the word is in bad odour with some. One extreme is just as bad as another extreme to me, and every year I think I am getting more and more Moderate, and content to *let things alone*, if only highflyers of all kinds would give thought freedom—allow spiritual thought and life to grow."

The battle of improved ritual may be said to have been now gained in the Kirk; but not so the battle for relaxed formulas. This was to Tulloch the battle for the centre and citadel of the forces of reaction and obscurantism. Once overthrow that stronghold of enforced subscription to a rigid creed; once deliver from its thrall the clergy and the elders of the Church, and the mind of the Church would begin to move at liberty; and this liberty was to him the condition of all healthy intellectual and spiritual life and progress. He resented the dominion of traditionalism none the less because it was the traditionalism of

a Protestant Church, serving itself heir to the dogmatic arrogance of Popery. His estimate of the Confession of Faith, and of the place it ought to occupy, is expressed, with sufficient clearness, in an address to his students "On the Study of the Confession of Faith."

"Those creeds and confessions are neither more nor less than the intellectual ideas of great and good men, assembled, for the most part, in synods and councils, all of which, as our Confession itself declares, 'may err, and many have erred.' They are stamped with the infirmities no less than with the nobleness of the men who made them. They are their best thoughts about Christian truth, as they saw it in their time: intrinsically they are nothing more: and any claim of infallibility for them is the worst of all kinds of Popery, that Popery which degrades the Christian reason, while it fails to nourish the Christian imagination."

These views he urged, time after time, both in his writings and his speeches in the Assembly in support of the motion, brought forward during several years, for an alteration (in the first instance) of the stringent formula by which the elders of the Church are required to declare their adherence to the doctrines of the Westminster symbol. The motion was again and again defeated; but Tulloch's advocacy of the principles which it embodied gave its policy weight and impulse, and, making that policy an integral part of the programme of the liberal party in the Church, rendered its ultimate success a matter of certainty.

Mrs Oliphant has wisely allowed the Principal to tell his own story, whenever that was possible, and has been fortunate in recovering from his family and correspondents a quantity of letters, which abound in lifelike description and racy com-

ment. His remarks on the persons he meets, and the incidents he notices, are often full of pungency and humour. Dickens, for example, looks to him "a mixture of the waiter and the actor, Frenchified in his dress to a degree quite disagreeable."

A notable London Preacher.—"A strong, vigorous, somewhat conceited man; his style of preaching incisive, interesting, and powerful, but rather cold and hard—telling people to be strong and depend upon themselves, and not yield to nerves, &c. It is easy enough for fellows with abundance of self-conceit and no nerves themselves, to talk in this way."

"W. was, if possible, more than usually polemical and absurd. . . . It is so easy to be what is called clever, when you think only of yourself and nothing of any others, or of the subject in hand."

"John Morley is very pleasant, and as little like an atheist and Radical as possible: rather like a Dissenting minister."

At the Athenæum.—"This is a funny place. The old fellows, whenever one goes into the dining-room, weary one. The great philosopher S., gloating, with unscientific eyes, over his dinner, and then going about the room, talking to his friends, with the air of a man of the world, acquired too late in life."

At the British Association.—"A long story about the hybridisation of Salmonidæ, the plain meaning of which is the crossing of salmon with trout or other fishes. There were abundant ladies, young and old, and an old fellow havered away about the influence of the male and female, which was the most potent in generation, &c. It really was barely decent."

"Political men want *intelligence* more than anything else. The country is going to the dogs for want of brains."

"The first evening at Mr Ellice's there were people at dinner whom we didn't know; and I said to the footman, at night, 'Who were those people at dinner?' 'Mr and Mrs Ellice,' he promptly replied. The

state of mind of the man who could have supposed that we were dining in the house without knowing who our hosts were, was certainly ludicrous."

After the collapse of the City of Glasgow Bank.—"All the expensive living, fine houses, fine wines, yachts, horses, &c., and the mad devotion of the young commercial brats, West and East, to such things—tokens of a degrading materialism, with a gilding of church-going habits—was sure to show itself in foul disaster of some kind some day, and the day of judgment seems to have come to many of them."

Apropos of Mrs ———'s assurance that Mr Gladstone was "so simple."—"This is the 'noble feature of his character.' *Sancta simplicitas* is all one can say. If he is simple, who is double?"

There are many pleasant little sketches of his visits to Balmoral, which, beginning in 1862, soon became regular yearly, and sometimes half-yearly, incidents. The Queen always showed him a cordial kindness and confidence, which deeply touched and gratified him. Her Majesty admired him as a preacher, and trusted him as a friend—and on his death, recorded her affectionate regard for his memory with tender warmth and simplicity. For many years he held the office of one of her chaplains, and latterly also that of Dean of the Thistle and of the Chapel Royal. These honours were bestowed by his sovereign. The Church accorded him the highest distinction in its gift, by raising him, in the year 1878, to the chair of Moderator of the General Assembly. The nomination to this office is, by the usage of the Church, left in the hands of the college of ex-moderators, and has repeatedly been exercised upon principles quite inscrutable to the ordinary intelligence, lay or ecclesiastical. It was everywhere

felt, however, that in the selection of Tulloch no paltry motives of personal or party predilection had been allowed to interfere. Tulloch, we think, valued it chiefly as a proof that the mind of the Church had come round to his opinions on many important points; and his natural craving for sympathy and union with his fellows was gratified by this, and by the universal approval of the electors' choice. He discharged the functions of Speaker with much tact and dignity, and without a single outburst of that irascibility, or any of those slight paroxysms of impatience under the strain of prolonged irrelevancy or prosing, which sometimes enlivened, if they did not startle, the House, from the chief clerk's side of the table. Dull disquisitions proceeding on crooked lines, ponderous platitude, unintelligent interruptions of the even course of business or debate—stupidity, or “havering,” in short, in any form—always acted on his temper like flint on steel. But this was kept in check during his Moderatorship. There never was a more stately, urbane, and patient Moderator; and he closed the session with a noble address on the Past, Present, and Future of the Church, which made a profound impression on the House, and was afterwards circulated in thousands through the country.

It was about this time that he began to contemplate, seriously, the necessity of a national organisation for Church Defence. As early as 1868 he had expressed, in a speech in the Assembly on Irish Disestablishment, his distrust of Mr Gladstone's policy. Himself a staunch Liberal, he failed to see in that policy the outcome of sound Liberal principles, or an intelli-

gent prevision of its probable results. With just insight he said:—

“Mr Gladstone's policy appears to me, not so much in itself as in reference to many who are supporting it, to be an anti-Establishment policy; and the probable result of it will extend much beyond what he anticipates. It is all very well to say there is no logical connection between the Church of Scotland or the Church of England and that of Ireland. There is no logical connection; but political movements do not move by logic.”

Such a speech as Mr Gladstone's about the Clerkenwell outrage and “the chapel bell” he regarded with the *severa indignatio* of an honest mind, which saw its own principles travestied, and degraded to serve the purposes of faction, and to conciliate the malign forces of disloyalty and crime.

His impression of the ineradicable shiftiness of Mr Gladstone's mental processes, and of the danger accruing to the commonwealth from the popular faith in a brilliant rhetorician, who traded on the ignorance and flattered the vanity of the “masses,” deepened year by year. He became convinced that, as soon as it suited Mr Gladstone's purpose, he would invent the most pious and politic excuses for doing to the Scottish what he had done to the Irish Church. Whenever the support of the Dissenting Radical party in Scotland should become a condition of his recovery or retention of power, he would, for so commendable an object, think the abolition of a non-apostolic Kirk no more than a righteous sacrifice.

That the Principal's forecast was a true one the event has proved. But at first he found few of his political friends to agree with him. They thought his apprehensions

groundless, and still retained their singular faith in the "great Liberal leader." Possibly, until stirred by Tulloch's appeals, they did not realise how fatal a revolution, how irreparable a loss, how complete a reversal of all the traditions of Scottish nationality, would follow the final dissolution of the immemorial union between Church and State. It was as a Nationalist, even more than as a Churchman, that Tulloch repudiated alliance with any statesman or any party that would attempt to dissolve this union, except at the imperative call of the people of Scotland themselves.

Mrs Oliphant has expressed very accurately his attitude on this question.

"Upon it," she says, "the Principal's convictions were strong. The value of a National Church, with all the responsibilities belonging to such an institution, and its superior right of service to all indiscriminately, was his favourite ideal. He would not have had the Church dissociated, as he said, from the soil, even by the abolition of Patronage—feeling that the bond thus made between all classes of the nation was more valuable in principle, and more advantageous in the long-run, than the immediate gratification of sentiment procured by its withdrawal from the national code. But whatever the outward circumstances might be, his strong sense of the desirableness, beauty, and advantage of a close connection between Church and State never wavered; and all his faculties were roused to defend the Church which, when all was said, was, notwithstanding his tolerance, which bigots called latitudinarianism, and his impatience of intellectual bondage, the chief thing on earth for this true Scotsman, who was all for his country and a little more for his Church, according to a long tradition of his race."

The keynote of his utterances

on the question was a perfectly rational and liberal one.

"The Church," he said, in a speech in Glasgow, "is not an Established Church on any theory of divine right. The Church of Scotland exists by statute based on popular assent. . . . I am not speaking of it as a spiritual institution. Its existence as an Establishment is political: it rests upon a popular basis; and we believe it still rests on such a basis, and we are ready to say to any who challenge this: 'Try the issue before the country,' but we also say, 'Try it as a direct issue.' . . . Don't level or destroy old historical institutions for the sake of faction or mere radical theories of equality or denominational jealousy. Let the existence of such institutions rest on their right and usefulness, depend upon their own merits, and I have no fear of the verdict if the issue is put directly before the people."

"What I am anxious to see is a vigorous push to show that the majority of the people are in favour of Establishments, and a good pull, and a pull all together, to increase the majority against Disestablishment."

It was with these views and principles he went to work, writing appeals and pamphlets, making speeches, organising committees, plunging into electioneering contests with a fire, force, and zeal which were undaunted by any lukewarmness of his friends or hostility of his foes, or even by occasional vexatious doubts of the strength of his own position. He had to contend with all these obstacles.

"The absence of all high ideas in the clergy, and the level of congregationalism, or sectarianism, to which many of them seem disposed to sink, make one wonder if the Church is worth fighting for. And then, again, the persistent blindness with which many Church Liberals look upon the fact of one Liberal candidate after another becoming pledged against the Church, is very discouraging."

The Liberal press, with the 'Scotsman' at its head, was, with few exceptions, unrestrained in its vituperation of the Principal and those of his friends who, with him, preferred their Church to their party, and did their best, at all hazards to mere party interests, to keep Disestablishers out of Parliament. Tulloch broke the ties of party for the sake of the Church, and was roundly abused for his pains. Had he lived till now, he would have seen the flower of the Liberal party doing exactly the same for the sake of the State, and eulogised for their patriotism by the very scribblers who vilipended him.

We cannot go into the details of the agitation; suffice it to say that in spite of all difficulties, it grew in strength and volume, and rolled over the length and breadth of Scotland, everywhere evoking, on behalf of "the Auld Kirk," an enthusiasm of attachment which even Tulloch's hopefulness had not anticipated, and one palpable expression of which was the transmission of petitions to the House of Commons, signed, on the call of his Committee on "Church Interests," and under an impulse "as spontaneous and democratic," he said, as ever had moved the country, by 650,000 people, who protested against any attack upon the National Church. Shortly after this, in giving in the report of this Committee, Tulloch delivered what proved to be his last speech in the General Assembly, of which he had long been recognised as the undoubted leader.

"This speech," says Mrs Oliphant, "was interrupted from beginning to end with 'loud and long-continued' applause. The listeners were well aware that the warm impulse of grateful recognition of the Church's claims which had swept over Scot-

land, was given, above all others, by the speaker himself; and his heart was so clearly in the cause of which he had constituted himself the champion, and for which he pleaded with all the eloquence of countenance and tone, the flush of earnest purpose, the tremor of emotion habitual to him when speaking of themes so noble and so dear, that every heart was moved by the thrill of sympathy which filled the place. When he set forth the position of the Church as 'a witness for the great principle of a Christian State and the maintenance of national religion,' adding, with all the brevity and simplicity of great feeling, 'We must stand somewhere. We stand here,'—the walls rang with the shout of response. No one had defined the position more clearly, no one had stood for it more boldly. When he resumed his seat, not without a word which quickly following events endued with the most solemn meaning, of the little personal importance which the question might possess to some present, the impression, half lost amid the repeated bursts of cheers, ran through all hearts."

One passage in the anti-Disestablishment campaign, not referred to in the Memoir, deserves to be recorded. It was arranged that Mr Menzies, the Agent of the Church, and the indefatigable adjutant of Principal Tulloch in all the business of that "Committee on Church Interests," of which the Principal and Lord Balfour of Burleigh were the "conveners," should procure a plebiscite of the Mid-Lothian constituency, *pro* or *con* Disestablishment, and present the result to the member for the county, who was about to address his constituents. The result showed a majority of 64 per cent against Disestablishment. At an interview on 10th November 1885, at Dalmeny, Mr Menzies placed the return in Mr Gladstone's hands. The right honourable gentleman had been assured by his Dissenting

friends, with whom he was in confidential communication, that the great majority of the Scotch people desired Disestablishment. The evidence of the falsity of these assurances, as far as Mid-Lothian was concerned, took him by surprise. He read it with a flushed countenance, and then said, "You will find, when I speak to-morrow, that a great many fears and a great many hopes will be alike disappointed." When he spoke on the morrow, he spoke at some length about the English Church, and said that the man had not yet breathed the air of parliamentary life who would be able to grapple with the question of its Disestablishment,—that it could only be seen through the long vista of futurity, and that to raise such a question in England, at present, would merely be to sow seeds of disunion in the ranks of the Liberal party, which he was there to prevent—and then, suddenly pausing, he added—while the countenances of the Dissenting parsons and Radical wire-pullers on his platform visibly fell, "And when I come across the Border, why should I be of a different opinion?"

But ere this tribute to the success of Tulloch's energetic policy was paid, the Principal was sinking into the weakness and lethargy of his last and fatal illness. It was not a recurrence of his old disorder, but one striking more directly at the centre of vitality. He was able to give one other lecture in St Giles'; to pay a final visit to Balmoral, and to Rosneath, where he preached the last sermon he ever delivered, and where he revived so much in the mild autumnal air, that he said he must come back at Christmas for a longer stay. Before Christmas he had left St Andrews,

never to see it again, in the hope of finding health in softer latitudes. He went to London, and from London to Torquay, to be again under Dr Ramsay's care; and there he passed away, on the 13th February 1886.

The closing scenes are told by Mrs Oliphant perhaps more briefly than the friends who were able to hear but little of them could wish, but with a simple and tender pathos that reaches those founts of feeling that lie too deep for tears. All who knew and valued Tulloch owe her a deep debt of gratitude for the memorial she has given them of the man greatly beloved,—for the true picture she has drawn of him as he lived, with a kindly acknowledgment of his failings—at the worst only those of a sensitive nature and quick temper—and with a full recognition of his great mental gifts; his always liberal and generous instincts; his large heart; his manly energies; his loyal service of Church and country.

To those who knew him, in the intimacy of cordial intercourse, it is hard to realise that he is gone for ever. One remembers, as one looks back on a friendship of a quarter of a century, unvexed by a single jar, unshadowed by a single cloud the breadth of a man's hand, the vitality, the kindness, the gay humour, the quick sensitiveness, the simple piety, the varied attraction, of his personality. One recalls the long rambles by Highland loch and glen, with their moving splendours of earth and sky, and their infinite oddities and interest of incident and character:—the afternoons at St Andrews, when—the day's work over, the letters written, the proofs despatched—the big man would rise brightly from his desk, and with a hearty rub of his hands, and giving himself a

shake, as of a great Newfoundland dog, would issue forth for a round of the Links;—the humours of the royal game, the quick indignation if some lumbering pedestrian or fluttering lady would cross the course, defiant of the shouts of “fore,”—the frequent “draw” of his ball to the left, and the resolute determination to amend that fault and never to calculate on its recurrence,—the boyish elation when a hole was won,—the imminent despondency when fortune was hostile, and the discovery of something in the wind or weather that advised a shortening of the match, and return to the clubhouse;—long summer evenings by the broad waters of the west, where the woods flushed red in the sunset, and the distant hills glowed in purple amethyst; the

high discourse, the joyous banter, the ready responsiveness to all the changing moods of thought and feeling:—all now quenched and gone.

He was very different from either of the men, yet in thinking of him, one is somehow reminded of the words in which Ferrier commemorated Hamilton, and Carlyle poured his lament over the bier of Edward Irving—“I knew him in his glorious prime, when his body was like a breathing intellect, and his soul could travel, as on eagle’s wings, over the tops of all the mountains of knowledge:” “The freest, bravest, brotherliest of human souls.” And now all that remains to us is the undying memory, and the grave, with its granite cross, beside the moaning northern sea.

“Sunt lacrymæ rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt.”

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LADY BABY.

CHAPTER I.—THE WHISKY-TRAIN'S CRANK-AXLE.

“I sing no tale of high renown.”

MR CARBURY was just beginning drowsily to wonder whether his corner of the railway-carriage was or was not comfortable enough for a snooze, when the question was settled by his finding himself abruptly jerked out of it. Without emitting a single warning shriek or a single threatening groan, the train had suddenly stood stock-still. As he gathered himself together and let down the window, Mr Carbury confessed to himself that nothing but the comfortable jog-trot pace by which for the last hour his patience had been so sorely tried, could have saved him from a severe shaking.

Other windows had been let down and other heads put out, but no one appeared to be in the least alarmed, or even particularly surprised; and the questions put to the guard, who was familiarly addressed as, “Eh, Sandy, man!”

or “Hist! Sandy, lad,” consisted solely of friendly “chaff.” Somebody cheerily inquired whether the water was off the boil. Some one else wished to know whether Mrs Johnston’s cow was on the line again, or whether it was Mrs Wallace’s bairn this time.

“Na, na!” said the imperturbable Sandy, after a little more wit had been aired, “it’s no’ the coo, and it’s no’ the bairn; it’s jist the whusky-train’s crank-axle gane wrang.”

“Williams,” said Mr Carbury to his valet, who at a sign had hurried up, “find out what the whisky-train’s crank-axle is, and how long it is going to keep us here.”

Williams shot off, and presently returned with the following facts ascertained,—that there were several trucks laden with whisky-casks blocking the line; that the

fresh engine could not be here for an hour, or—for Sandy declined to commit himself—"maybe twa"; that, owing to the want of an available siding, the passenger-train could do nothing to help the "whusky-train," and consequently nothing to help itself; but that (in Sandy's opinion) it did not after all matter much, as the station was only a hundred yards off. "Aweel," he had soothingly remarked in answer to the sharp questioning of the valet, "it's no' so bad either. There's no express behind us. I wudna be put aboot if I was you."

But Mr Carbury, thus reported to, was by no means soothed. Though there might be no express behind them, there was one in front of them—or rather, there was the chance of catching the London mail at the junction, a close-run chance in the best of cases, but which the "whusky-train's crank-axle," and the hour's delay its breakdown entailed, had conclusively settled beyond all hope of redemption.

"Williams," said Mr Carbury wearily, as he descended from the carriage, "find out what's to be done;" and as the agile Williams hurried off once more in search of some practical solution of the difficulty, Mr Carbury, following more slowly, bent his mind to a dispassionate and disconsolate review of his situation.

He had been paying a visit in the south-east of Scotland, and was now on his way back to London; the station a hundred yards off was strange to him, he was not aware of knowing any one in the immediate neighbourhood, the afternoon shadows were beginning to grow long, and there was a night between this and the next train that was likely to be of any use. Such was the sum of his position;

not at all pathetic, not at all affecting, calling for no depth of pity either from gods or men, and yet amply sufficient to test the meekness of a canonised saint. It had not even the dignity of an accident. It was like a shipwreck with the inconveniences but without the romance. Also it lacked the sympathy of fellow-suffering, for the rest of the travellers,—not more than a dozen in all,—were of the strictly local species, and to them the London train was a matter of indifference. By the time Mr Carbury reached the station Williams had verified the worst features of the case, and had furthermore ascertained that there was no inn worth the name at the junction, while the "Kippendale Arms" at the village close by was reported to furnish decent accommodation. In the blackest of humours, Mr Carbury therefore resigned himself to his fate. A wheelbarrow for his portman-teau was luckily forthcoming, and under the watchful superintendence of Williams it was presently despatched. As for himself, the short cut across the fields was recommended. It did not do for the wheelbarrow, on account of the stiles.

"But ye canna miss it," explained the rustic porter. "Ye've but to gang ahead till ye get to the bit plank ower the burn, and when ye've turned wast o' Mrs Armstrong's hoose, ye'll tak' the path by Jock M'Clochart's kail-yaird. Ony callant ye speir at on the way will show it ye; and when ye're past the wud, and hae gotten the kirk richt ahead o' ye——"

But the stranger, with a gesture of deprecation, had tossed a silver piece to the informant, and was walking off leisurely in the direction indicated.

"Looks gey furrin-like," re-

marked a bystander, staring after the tall figure of the traveller.

"His siller's English, onyway," answered the porter, pocketing his shilling.

Meanwhile Mr Carbury was moodily pursuing his way, not troubling himself much to unravel the true meaning of the directions that had been given him.

Had he been impressionable to outward influences, surely the pure sunshine which had burst out after a long grey day could not have failed to coax him from his ill-humour. It was early spring, and there were lambs in some of the fields he passed through; but Mr Carbury had never been able to see anything worth noticing in a lamb off a dish: he even kicked one of the innocent creatures that reflected too long before getting out of his path; and his frame of mind was so far from idyllic that a young heifer that came trotting up, confident and curious, was rewarded by a threatening wave of his stick, which sent it back scampering to its companions.

His mind, at first occupied with gloomy anticipations of overdone beef and an understuffed mattress, soon turned bitterly to the instability of crank-axles; and so engrossed did he become in framing imaginary letters to the 'Times' upon the subject, that when the end of the meadow brought him to an open gate, he walked straight in, heedless of his surroundings, and unconscious of trespassing. He had just reached the conclusion that the improvement in the system of crank-axles was one of the burning questions of the day, when his meditations were broken by an approaching sound. It was the sound of galloping hoofs.

He looked around him, and became aware that he was standing

upon private ground. The galloping horse passed him at some little distance; he caught the glimpse of a red coat, and he remembered that this must be one of the latest, if not the last hunting-day of the season.

The ground which he had invaded was a long grass avenue, bordered on each side by clumps of rhododendrons, over whose heads the budding beeches and oaks stretched their arms protectingly. Looking back, he could see in the distance the open gate through which he had entered; looking forward, the broad green path seemed to lead straight to the foot of heather-clad hills, whose sweeping lines loomed coldly purple against the sky. In the grass at his feet the very first daisies were nestling; on the highest branch of the highest beech an enamoured blackbird was disburdening its heart to the echoes; while the setting sun, like a penitent miser on his death-bed, was making the most of its last hour, and remorsefully trying to atone for its sins of avarice by a burnt-offering of the purest gold.

It was scarcely spring yet; it was only the hint of spring, the promise of that which was to follow, of the colour and perfume which still lay folded away in a million brown buds on the trees, or buried an inch deep under the fresh sod. It was the time when grass-blades are prized higher than roses will be in June, and when people still think it worth while to stoop for a daisy, or to stand still and listen when a bird is singing.

Mr Carbury did not stoop for the daisy, he looked at the prospect and yawned; and again he wished that some one would invent a better sort of crank-axle.

"My ideas with regard to the characteristics of a kail-yard are

somewhat unpronounced," he reflected, as he gazed about him; "but I'll take my oath that this is *not* Jock M'Clocharty's kail-yard. Why, here is another horse, — several other horses."

A stretch of low paling was visible to the right, and just as Mr Carbury was in the act of turning to retrace his steps, a fine bay hunter, ridden by a white-whiskered, red-faced man, in hunting attire, appeared on the other side of the paling, cleared it with ease, and crossing the grass avenue, disappeared in one of the glades to the left. At the same moment another group of riders turned on to the avenue at a short distance off. These were two ladies, one mounted on a dark brown, the other on a singularly tall and powerful chestnut. A grey-haired groom followed.

"This is becoming a nuisance," thought Mr Carbury, as the horses vanished among the trees. "As yet I am unperceived, but presently, I suppose, I shall be taken up for trespassing. I wonder where I am? That stout woman on the chestnut strikes me as being not quite a novelty. I have seen her before, and I have seen her on horseback too, and yet I can't quite put a name to the face."

He had turned now, and was walking back towards the gate, when once more the sound of galloping hoofs fell on his ear, and there came tearing up the avenue towards him a riderless horse, wet with foam, and splashed with mud up to the girths. As the beast thundered past him, shying violently at his sight, Mr Carbury perceived that one of the stirrup-leathers was broken, which had probably caused the rider's fall. The bridle had slipped forward, and threatened every moment to

trip up the excited animal in a noose.

"Plenty of horses about, at any rate," reflected Mr Carbury, as he looked after the runaway. "Now I wonder whether Christianity or Humanity, or whatever they call the thing, demands that I should hunt up the unhorsed rider? Ten to one he is lying all of a heap somewhere in the neighbourhood, and his relatives, if they be such, seem to be on ahead. This is becoming more and more of a nuisance. I wish that confounded crank-axle had managed to stick together for a little longer!" And in a worse humour than ever, Mr Carbury retraced his steps down the grass avenue, glancing now and then listlessly and ever more listlessly, to the right and to the left, among the trees for a sight of the dismounted rider. But his eye fell only on the tangles of last year's ferns, or upon the ghosts of dead hemlock, upright still after all the winter's storms. He had almost forgotten about the supposed victim, when there arose a commotion among the bushes beside him, a cracking of twigs, a bending of boughs, and the sound of heavy breathing. "Another horse, I suppose," he thought, resignedly, and stepped aside just as the shaggy black head of a pony emerged from among the bushes. In another moment the pony had struggled free of the branches, and Mr Carbury now perceived that its rider was a girl, or, as it appeared to him, a child, in a rough home-spun riding-habit. She was bending forward in the saddle, and with one arm held above her face, was shielding herself from the branches which closed again behind her. As she reached the clear space she dropped her arm and her eyes fell full upon those of Mr Carbury, who was standing

aside to let her pass. She glanced at him in surprise, and was about to touch up her pony, when, as if struck with an idea, she reined it in rather sharply, close by Mr Carbury's side, and asked, in a quick, peremptory tone—

“Did she pass this way?”

Mr Carbury was stupid enough to say, “Who?”

He was not indeed a particularly stupid man, nor one easily flurried; but this young amazon's sudden appearance and imperious glance had quite swept from his mind the recollection of the runaway horse.

Transported just as she was, pony and all, to Rotten Row, she would doubtless have caused there more amazement than admiration. Nobody in London wore such long, full-skirted habits, nor such wide-brimmed hats, nor such thick gauntlet-gloves; but, in present surroundings, the careless and primitive equipment seemed somehow wonderfully in place. Once, when Mr Carbury was a very young man, he had seen an old print, with the title, “A Morning Ride.” It represented the edge of a forest in the early morning, while a girl, mounted on a white palfrey, had evidently just drawn rein in the shade of the trees, and was leaning forward to pat a large dog which sprang up to be caressed. It might have been nothing but the shape of the hat, which now brought back that old print to Mr Carbury's mind. He used to think then that the painter had made the hat by several inches too broad, and now the same thought crossed his mind. The shadow of the hat-brim was so deep that he could not even determine whether this child was pretty or not, whether he was addressing a blue-eyed or a brown-eyed damsel, a blonde or a brunette. He could see only that her small

ear was flushed pink with exercise, that her glistening lips were parted, and that her cheek was round and fresh, as the rosebud which has just burst into sight.

As Mr Carbury uttered his pointless “Who?” the curious and enigmatical child-amazon made a movement, which seemed to suggest that, if she had been on *terra firma*, she would have stamped.

“Who? Why, the mare, of course—a brown, with one white fore-leg, and a white face. Have you seen her?”

“Yes, she passed this way, looking rather wild.”

“This way? Then why did you not catch her?”

“It did not occur to me,” he candidly replied.

Again the amazon's stirrup gave an ominous click, and the impish-looking black pony, catching the infection from its mistress, champed at its bit, and eyed Mr Carbury through its tangled mane with a pair of impertinently bright black eyes.

“I suppose you can tell me, at least, which way she went? Up there? Thanks,” she said, graciously but shortly, and, with a slight inclination of the head, she put her pony to a gallop, and left Mr Carbury standing where he was, alone under the trees.

Mr Carbury stood for some minutes hesitating, but at last he turned his face back again in his first direction, and renewed his progress up the avenue away from the gate—and this time with a rather less leisurely step. “I ought to be near to lend that child a hand, if necessary,” he thought. “I wonder how old she is? She might be twenty in manner; but from what I saw of her face it belongs to the schoolroom; and as for her voice, it's straight from the nursery.”

At that very instant the voice in question rang out among the trees, not fifty yards from him. "Suleika!" it called impatiently. "Suleika!" and the youthful rider appeared again, glancing about her from side to side under the branches, and this time visibly annoyed with what, judging from the state of the black pony's coat, must have been a lively chase.

"Do you not think the mare will have taken the straightest road to her stables?" suggested Mr Carbury, when he was within speaking distance.

"No: the inner gate was shut, and that turned her back. I was close to her once,—I almost had her; ah! there again, beyond the birches. Now, Jet, let us have another try!"

"One moment, please," said Mr Carbury, putting out his hand towards Jet's bridle. "If I might offer a piece of advice, it would be to moderate the pace. Once let it come to galloping, and your pony cannot possibly try conclusions with that brown; but a little stratagem may do it. If you will trot round to the other side of the birch-clump quietly, I will cut off the retreat here, and between us, I think, we shall manage it."

The girl gave him one long steady look, as though weighing the advisability of accepting his help; but she ended by making a sign of assent, and trotting off towards the birch-clump.

There followed a breathless ten minutes, during which Mr Carbury, with something that for him almost amounted to energy, and with varying turns of fortune, stalked the mare, much as he might have stalked a stag, and at the end of which he succeeded, by a sudden and very dexterous movement, in getting possession of the bridle.

The girl was sitting quite still on her pony when he brought up the now submissive brown.

"You did that beautifully," she said, with grave approbation. "You could not have done it more beautifully if you had dropped straight from heaven to help me; and, by the by, where *did* you drop from? I don't think I have ever seen you before. It can't have been the express intention of catching Suleika that brought you in here, so what was it that *did* bring you?"

"It was the whisky-train's crank-axle," answered Mr Carbury. "The what?"

And then Mr Carbury told his sorrowful tale. She listened attentively, but without showing any more surprise than the people in the train had done.

"Well, it is hard luck for you," she said at the end. "And I don't think you will get very much to eat at the village; but since you *have* to get there it is a pity you did not take the right road instead of the wrong one. You are three miles out of the way now. I wonder how the matter is to be settled." She said this with an air of serious concern, as though the responsibility of the situation rested entirely upon her. "Perhaps the dogcart which has taken Nicky home could drive you to the village."

"Nicky?" repeated Mr Carbury, struck with a recollection; "which Nicky?"

"My brother-in-law, Mr Nicholas Craigtoun," replied the girl, drawing herself up in the saddle, and apparently displeased with the question.

"Nicky Craigtoun! The world is a small place after all. Craigtoun and I have been great chums in our day." And, as he spoke, Mr Carbury suddenly became able

to identify the face of the stout woman of whom he had caught a glimpse a little time ago. She was Lady Agnes Craigtoun, of course. He remembered now having seen her with her husband at the Blankshire races.

"A friend of Nicky's?" said the girl, in an altered and eager tone, while a bright smile showed her milk-white teeth. "Oh, then the difficulty disappears. Never mind the inn: I will take you home to Kippendale."

"But, really," began Mr Carbury in some amazement, "I do not quite see that I can accept this kind invitation; I know no one of the family except Craigtoun——"

"And myself," she finished for him; "that is quite sufficient. Any one who is a friend of Nicky and Agnes's, is also a friend of mine. You need not have the smallest scruples, Mr——By the by, perhaps you would not mind introducing yourself," she added, with a return of her former quaint dignity of manner.

"Laurence Carbury," said the stranger, gravely lifting his hat. She inclined her head with the same gravity.

"Thank you; that makes it all right. My name is Frances Bevan. Well, Mr Carbury, have you made up your mind? Are you going to sleep at the Kippendale Arms or at Kippendale House?"

She had noted the indecision on his face, for he was asking himself whether this welcome but oddly given invitation was to be considered seriously or as a joke. If there had only been some one, an elder sister, or even a governess, by to ratify this strange child's proposal, his mind would have been easier by far. He feebly suggested that his bags and his servant were at the village; but

she disposed of that objection at once by saying she would have them fetched. He did not think they could be reclaimed in time for the dressing-gong: she considered this of no consequence whatever,—Nicky could lend him a spare dress-coat. "And I suppose you will be able to get into it without your servant for once."

"I suppose so," he said with a laugh, which, nevertheless, had a touch of dismay in it; for, to tell the truth, the prospect of appearing in a coat not measured to his person was as little agreeable to his vanity as the prospect of putting it on without Williams at his elbow was agreeable to his indolence.

"You could even dine without a dress-coat for once," she added; "papa is not at all particular."

"Thanks, you are very kind," he murmured, in deeper amazement.

"Are you coming or not?" she asked, knitting her eyebrows. "We can't keep Suleika here much longer," for the brown was fidgeting again.

"But are you going to lead her all the way home?"

"Can you ride?" she asked him abruptly.

"Yes," he said, with a smile.

"But can you ride well?—very well? For if you can, and if you have quite made up your mind about coming back with me, the simplest plan would be for you to ride Suleika home. Only I had better tell you that she has a particular dislike to strangers, and also she kicks dreadfully and sometimes rears. That is the way she threw Nicky to-day, and you must know what a splendid seat he has."

Now it so happened that Mr Carbury was particularly vain of

his horsemanship, and that of late years he had rather lacked opportunities for displaying it. While she was speaking he had been examining the unimpaired stirrup, and, before she had done her sentence, he had swung himself into the saddle. Suleika, taken by surprise, plunged rather violently, but, after a minute settled down. The curious child on the pony looked pleased, and led the way down the avenue. Though he had not formally accepted the invitation, Mr Carbury, in mounting Suleika, had tacitly yielded.

"Are you very fond of riding?" asked his companion, as she watched him approvingly.

"I used to be."

"Then you ought to be so still, for you really ride very well. I don't suppose you could break a horse as well as Nicky does; but your hand is just what it ought to be."

Mr Carbury raised his hat with an air of mock gratification.

"If Suleika *should* throw you," she said presently, "your best plan will be to——"

"Get on again?" he suggested, drily.

"Well, no; I think on the whole it would be wiser to make for the nearest tree. She is very savage at times with strangers."

As this reassuring piece of advice was uttered, the riders issued from between the trees and reached open ground. A great sweep of lawn lay before them, dotted with majestic beech-trees, which stood far apart and solitary, like kings that have turned hermits from weariness of the world. In the distance the green stretch was broken by the yet leafless woods, through whose depths the landscape-gardener's art had opened up many a delicious glimpse of softly rolling hills. To the left

the ground fell away in gradual slopes; and somewhere far below and out of sight, the river was tinkling musically among the stones. And soon the house itself was disclosed—a tall, irregular, many-storeyed, many-gabled mansion. Bathed as it now stood in the evening sunshine, its long lines of terraces flooded with golden light, its many panes all aflame with the dying beams, Kippendale promised indeed to afford pleasanter quarters than those which Mr Carbury had but half an hour ago been despondently contemplating. As they cantered across the velvet lawn, scattering the browsing sheep to the right and to the left, and drawing nearer to the hospitably open hall-door, even an unobservant man could not fail to be aware of the many little signs of care and comfort, without which a place of this description will always miss the seal of perfection. The costly shrubs, carefully netted against the voracious rabbit, the well-tended grass, the brilliant ribbon of crocuses with which even at this early season the edge of the lawn was picked out, the blaze of hyacinths behind the panes of the conservatory—all these were little things in themselves, yet they served to produce a whole. Mr Carbury did not scan these details; he was only vaguely aware that everything was in very good order and in very good style, and an undefined feeling of comfort began to take the place of his recent ill-humour. And when, just as the last glow of sunset had died down in the west, they drew up under the stone porch, and Mr Carbury heard the crackle and saw the blaze of the welcome fire, whose light played along the seats and rugs of the entrance-hall, then the

annoyance of his interrupted journey appeared to him in so very different a light, that he found

himself mentally ejaculating, "I am glad that that crank-axle went wrong."

CHAPTER II.—A B C.

"Be your own palace, or the world's your jail."

"If there is one thing I object to more than another," soliloquised Mr Carbury, as he glared at himself somewhat tragically in the glass, "it is being made a guy of. I wish I knew the name of Craigtoun's tailor, in order to avoid him, and I wish I knew when Williams will turn up. Makes a fellow feel like something in a Christmas pantomime to be humps and bags all over this way; I hope to goodness they haven't got a houseful! From all I know of them, I fancy they're a quiet set."

During the intervals of his unsatisfactory toilet, Mr Carbury had been ransacking his memory for any scrap of information with regard to the family whose hospitality he found himself thus unexpectedly enjoying. He had the peerage pretty well at his fingertips; but Lord Kippendale never brought his family to town for the season, and the very nature of his political opinions was unknown, so there was little to fix them in the memory of such a thorough Londoner as was Mr Carbury. All that he could recall was that the present Lord Kippendale had succeeded his brother, who had died unmarried; that there were one son and several daughters, one of whom was the wife of Nicholas Craigtoun, with whom he had been at college. Then, as his memory freshened, Mr Carbury recollected that whenever he had heard Lord Kippendale mentioned, it was as a "hard-riding Scotch peer," and M.F.H. in his county. Present-

ly, in the midst of a tussle with his tie, another circumstance occurred to his mind; he had heard this same hard-riding Scotch peer familiarly nicknamed "the Copper Earl," but whether as a skit upon his complexion or as a reference to the source of his wealth, Mr Carbury was not sure. He vaguely inclined to the latter theory: "but there is no such thing as Scotch copper," next occurred to him as a passing thought; "Lord Kippendale must have land elsewhere. Confound the thing!" and, abandoning all dim speculations, Mr Carbury became absorbed in the more immediate necessities of the moment; for not only did the tie absolutely refuse to lie with that perfection of snowy smoothness which only Williams knew how to impart to it, but no amount of tugging and shifting could persuade Nicky's coat not to bulge up to Mr Carbury's ears, "And, by Jove!" sighed the harassed man, "I have always laboured under the impression that my limbs were fully as long as those of my neighbours, but there positively seems no end to Craigtoun's sleeve. It will be a mercy if they are not given to personal remarks in this house," and Mr Carbury made his way down-stairs, grimly resolved to discourage the most distant approach to a smile by looking supremely and pointedly comfortable in Nicky's coat.

As yet he had only had a momentary glimpse of his host, who had appeared to be very hospitable,

but very muddy, and who had shaken his hand violently and told him that he was "verra welcome," for Lord Kippendale's accent was not above an occasional lapse into a genial breadth of vowel. Of the other members of the family, with the exception of "Nicky," he had seen nothing. As he was descending the wide staircase he heard some one, obviously a servant, apostrophising another in the depth of a passage with: "Have Lady Baby's tea-things been cleared away?" Mr Carbury made an involuntary grimace, for children were his pet aversion. "So they deal in babies? What a pity! I hope they are kept out of the drawing-room." In the big entrance-hall, on which doors opened all round, a footman was trimming the fire. "The drawing-room?" said Mr Carbury, at a loss for the right door. "Any one down yet?" he asked, as the servant showed the way. "No one but Lady Baby, sir." Mr Carbury drew back apprehensively. "I asked the way to the nursery," he muttered; but the footman, with the ghost of a smile upon his face, was holding the door open, and it was too late to retreat. The first big drawing-room was deserted, and would have been dark but for the shifting fire-light that made the crimson couches and hangings of the room look like bits out of a Rembrandt picture. Fitfully and fancifully a spot of bright gold alighted upon some polished surface, the corner of a gilt picture-frame, the bulging side of a china vase, or the round knob of a table-foot. Out of far-off dark corners bright objects twinkled dimly. The dreaded infant was not visible anywhere.

"I don't know a single fairy tale, and I have no sugar-plums in my pocket," sullenly thought Mr

Carbury, as he lounged across the big room and cast a rather fearful glance into the next apartment. There was no infant here either, but a young lady in a white silk dress was standing on a footstool before a mirror, engaged in fastening a bunch of purple crocuses into the front of her bodice.

"I beg your pardon," said Mr Carbury, afraid that his appearance had startled her. She looked at him quite composedly in the mirror, without turning her head or pausing in her arrangement of the flowers.

"Down already?"

The voice seemed familiar; but this only bewildered him, for he did not think that he had ever seen her before.

"Yes," he said, rather pointlessly; "I am down."

She turned round to look at him.

"What has made you so shy?"

"Nothing; I thought there was no one in the room—that is to say, I fancied there was a child here."

"A child?"

"Yes, a baby; or so I understood."

"Oh!" Her lips twitched for an instant; in the next she broke into a sudden, delicious, ringing laugh, and laughed for a full minute with her face hidden in her hands. But in the midst of it she drew up, as abruptly as she had begun, and stepped quite gravely off her footstool.

"I forgot you have had no introduction; but Lady Baby is quite used to introducing herself," and as she stood before him in the fire-light, she dropped him a curtsy to the ground. At her words, Mr Carbury's blindness vanished. In the tone and gesture he had recognised his acquaintance of the green avenue.

"It is rather a foolish name," she

explained, as she came forward further into the light; "but we girls were all called 'Lady Baby' in turn, and as I was the last it stuck to me. Most likely it will stick to me for ever." And she heaved a sigh of aggravement.

"Most likely," thought Mr Carbury, as he viewed her more closely. In spite of the respectable length of her white silk dinner-dress, which had evidently quite recently had the benefit of a let-down tuck, Lady Baby looked somehow as though she were only playing at being grown-up. Her slight figure wanted finish, though it was not without that grace which sometimes belongs to the very immaturity of early girlhood; her step, her glance, her smile, the roundness of her cheek, were still too evidently those of a child to satisfy a very severe critic of female loveliness; and yet the picture, such as it was, was little short of charming. In some undefined way she reminded Mr Carbury of the April day which had just gone down in the west. Here also everything was promise, nothing fulfilment—everything was in bud, nothing in bloom. It was scarcely loveliness yet, but only a foreshadowing of loveliness which made her face sweet to look upon. In hair and complexion she was extremely fair, but her lashes were dark and sweeping, like those of a child, and in her blue eyes there shone that soft, dim, dewy lustre, which is like the first bloom on the flower, or like the last veil that still hangs between childhood's ignorance and life's realities. Her nose and chin were delicately pointed, which gave her an expression at once rebellious and imperious. Something of pride, too, there was in the curve of her short upper lip, and something of vehemence in the line of her deeply cut nostril.

She looked like a child indeed, but like a child who has been used to have her own way and means to keep it; whose rosy finger-tips have not often felt a chastening stroke, whose free and fearless glance knows nothing of the horror of penitential corners, and whose spirit has never quailed before such nursery tortures as dark cupboards and butterless bread to tea.

"She has not done growing yet," thought Mr Carbury, "and her hair is not used to being pulled up in that fashion: it won't lie still, and yet she is prettier than I thought she was; but, bah! I never cared for unripe fruit."

The lights had been brought meanwhile, and the rest of the party appeared.

Lord Kippendale was a short spare man of near seventy, with thin iron-grey locks and dead-white whiskers; but the reassuring brick-red of his complexion, the vivacity of his manner, and the keen glance of his eye, virtually took twenty years off his age. He was one of those men who, without a spice of what is generally understood as bad temper, yet go through life in a state of irrepressible impatience. Everything moved too slowly for his taste, everybody was much too leisurely in their actions and too hesitating in their decisions. He was always looking at the clock to see whether the next hour was not going to strike; not that he had anything particular to do in the next hour, but simply because some want in his nature was hurrying him continually over the present and pressing him towards the future. He was forever wanting to be at "the next thing." As an un-evil friend had once observed, "Kippendale is like a kettle continually on the boil."

His two married daughters, who always passed the hunting season

at Kippendale, were both present. The elder, Lady Agnes, whom Mr Carbury had once or twice met, was a large, meek, sleek woman, a little on the shady side of thirty, who, according to rules, ought to have been handsome, and who yet somehow managed to be almost plain. She possessed quite an array of charms, which catalogued upon paper would have sounded overwhelming. She had good solid teeth, looking as though they were cut out of the most stainless ivory; she had good solid hair, carved apparently out of solid gold, and heaped in a hillock on her neck; she had perfectly rounded arms, and a flawless complexion. And yet she escaped being handsome, and conveyed only the impression of being genuine, and framed of the most sound and healthy, not to say expensive, materials. She rarely spoke except to agree with her husband, and yet more rarely acted except to obey him. If he was not at hand she would obey whoever else happened to be, *faute de mieux*. Round her throat Lady Agnes wore a single row of the very finest diamonds that Mr Carbury had ever seen except among crown jewels. Perhaps it was the great advantage to which they were displayed which chiefly attracted his attention. On Lady Agnes's neck they looked as though laid out for inspection on a well-padded white satin cushion.

Lady Catherine Blashford, the second daughter, a widow of some years' standing, was of the same slender type of figure as Lady Baby, being only somewhat taller,—for Lady Catherine had long since done growing,—and she had the very same wavy flaxen hair; but her features were sharper, and her complexion had begun to fade. She was pretty still, in a way,

pretty and disconsolate, and matters were so arranged about her that she would not have been pretty if she had not been disconsolate. It was the slight but suggestive disorder of her hair (no one had ever seen Lady Catherine's hair quite smooth), the droop at the corners of her mouth, and the appealing look in her eyes, always apparently on the point of filling with tears, which made her pretty. If she had been cheerful, she would have been quite commonplace. But nature had guarded against this by giving her an unlimited power of being disconsolate about anything or everything. She was capable of being unhappy about an ill-starched cuff, and of appearing inconsolable over a broken boot-lace.

"Nicky" Craigtoun, Lady Agnes's husband, was the only other member of the family present, for the son, Lord Germaine, was away from home. Craigtoun, as the borrower of Craigtoun's coat knew to his cost, was an abnormally big and abnormally broad-shouldered man, with the neck of a bull and the muscles of a gladiator. Regarded as a gladiator, he would, no doubt, have come up to the mark; but regarded as an English gentleman, he was somewhat less satisfactory. There was a suggestion of coarseness about his features, and people who saw him for the first time had a way of shrinking back nervously, as if expecting him to bite. But for this poor Nicky was not responsible; it was the construction of his jaw which forced him to show his teeth, whether he wanted to bite or no, almost like a thorough-bred bulldog, which might, after all, be the best-natured creature in the world.

At dinner, where Mr Carbury found himself seated next to Lady Baby who presided with great composure at the head of the table,

the subject of Nicky's fall formed the chief topic of conversation. Nicky himself sat by in sulky silence, for he was not used to having falls. Mr Carbury took little part in the talk; there had been a time when he had liked to shine in conversation, but nowadays he did not care to exert himself so far. Besides, he was ruffled and preoccupied. Try as he would, he could not banish from his mind the consciousness of those humps and bags which he had seen in the mirror up-stairs; he could not forget that there was a black cloth sausage rolled across his shoulders, and a white linen cavern shielding his chest; and when seated at table and engaged with his soup, he could not fail to be painfully reminded of the length of Craigtoun's arms as compared to his own. A shy man would perhaps have suffered more, at any rate he would have suffered differently; but though shyness was foreign to Mr Carbury's nature, there were other elements composing it which rendered the torture very exquisite indeed. While something in the construction of his mind made him acutely aware of every separate crease on each of his sleeves, something else made him morbidly dread his state of mind being detected; and this dread was only deepened by the instinctive and absolute conviction that all eyes were fixed upon his devoted person. The mixture of these sentiments produced a sort of gloomy defiance of attitude. Not for worlds would he have any one guess the depth of suffering which some inches of superfluous cloth were capable of causing him.

Lady Baby, puzzled by this gloomy defiance, watched him furtively. She had made one or two vain attempts to draw him out. A discussion about railway

accidents had failed to animate him; he exhibited supreme indifference as to politics; even the hunting-field, which Lady Baby generally considered infallible, had produced no effect.

"It is not shyness, certainly," she reflected, as she ate her soup. "I wonder if it is stupidity. I should like to know what his tastes are: he must have tastes. Ah, I have it! I shall put him through his alphabet."

This alphabetical system was one of Lady Baby's favourite resources in cases like the present. It consisted in choosing topics by the alphabet in steady progression; and it was generally to be counted on that somewhere about M or N, often even by C or D, some congenial subject was hit upon, which, so to say, floated the conversation.

"Have you ever been to Athens?" asked Lady Baby, turning to Mr Carbury.

"To Athens?" he answered, rousing himself. "Oh yes; very often."

"What is it like?"

"Very like every other place; there are houses, and there are people. Some of the people have red caps, and most of the houses have flat roofs; but it isn't a bit more amusing than London, I assure you, only a little further off."

Lady Baby appeared to reflect for a moment, and then resumed.

"How do you like Miss Brad-don's novels?"

"Miss Braddon?" repeated Mr Carbury, in some slight surprise at the change of topic. "I scarcely know, it is so long since I have read any."

"There are lots that I like better than hers," went on Lady Baby; "for instance, Ouida."

"You read Ouida?" said Mr Carbury, with just the ghost of a startled look upon his face.

"Of course I do, as fast as they appear. I could read Ouida all day and all night. Couldn't you, Mr Carbury?"

Mr Carbury said that he didn't think he could.

"Then what could you read all night? Who is your favourite author? Don't you find novels interesting?"

"I am so tired of them," said Mr Carbury, indifferently; "they're all exactly alike."

Her face fell. "I am afraid he is not literary," she said to herself.

"Please tell me all you know about crocodiles," she presently began. "I hear there is one in the menagerie that is coming to the village next month. They are beginning to put up planks already, for it's to be a circus as well—a 'dramatic equestrian entertainment,' I believe, is what the play-bills call it. I am so glad they have got a crocodile! In the last novel I read the hero was eaten by a crocodile in Egypt, and since then it has been one of my greatest wishes to see a crocodile."

"Really! I am afraid you will be disappointed. One can't quite fancy the Nile without them; but to look at they are nothing but an ugly lump of brown leather, not in the least interesting."

"Then you have been on the Nile? How exciting such travels must be!"

"Perhaps so," civilly assented Mr Carbury, not looking in the least excited.

"I have found him out now," thought Lady Baby; "he is a great traveller,—though, to be sure, he didn't seem to care much about Athens. He must be something, after all; everybody is something." Then aloud—"What other places have you been to?"

"Oh, a great many," said Mr Carbury abstractedly, for he was

just then endeavouring furtively to hitch up his right sleeve to a more convenient angle.

"You will find it a comfort to get into your own coat again," said Lady Baby, catching sight of the manœuvre, and merely by way of saying something civil, for, to tell the truth, the deficiencies in Mr Carbury's attire had up to this moment passed completely unobserved by her.

"Oh, thanks," said Mr Carbury hastily, feeling this sympathetic notice to be just the last drop in his cup, "it doesn't in the least signify. The coat does very well," he added, with an extra touch of defiance. "You—you were asking about the places I had been to?"

"Yes; you seem to have travelled a great deal. I think you English travel more than we Scotch. There are some of the people in this county who have never even been over the Border, and yet we are within a drive of England, you know. By the by, you *are* English, are you not?"

"Yes, I *am* English," he answered, with a rather more violent emphasis than the occasion seemed to demand. "What else did you take me for?"

"Oh, I don't know. My first idea was that you might be a Frenchman or an Italian; but when I saw you catch that horse, I felt pretty sure you could not be a foreigner."

"Really!" Mr Carbury flushed with what seemed to be annoyance, while at the same time he laughed with what might have been gratification; but the laugh was forced, and annoyance evidently had the upper hand.

"No," thought Lady Baby, "he is not an enthusiastic traveller, and he certainly is very touchy, though I can't make out what it is about.

I wonder what would be a safe subject? Let me see. Where am I in the alphabet? If he does not care for crocodiles, I am afraid dragons will not do, nor ducks, nor dolphins; devils might have a better chance, but I can't use bad language at table on account of the servants' morals." Her eyes wandered round the table in search of a subject, and by chance they alighted on the diamond necklace which her sister wore. Mr Carbury happened to be looking in the same direction.

"You are looking at Agnes's diamonds," said Lady Baby; "are you a judge of diamonds?"

"Well, no; one can't help getting rather bored with diamonds after a time; they are such aggressive things. Your sister's are very fine stones," he added, as a sort of reparation for his too obvious indifference.

"They are fine, but they are not my sister's."

"Whose, then?"

"They will belong to Germaine's wife, my brother, you know; but he is not married yet, so Agnes wears them in the meantime. They have a history too, quite a tragical history. Do you like tragical histories, Mr Carbury?"

"I don't mind them."

"Well, then, thirty years ago, when papa's brother was still alive——"

"Baby!" interrupted Lady Catherine, "you are not going to tell that story now, surely?"

"Frances!" said Lord Kippendale, across the table, "I beg you to recollect!" and he glanced significantly towards the servants.

"Oh well, I forgot," said Lady Baby, colouring; "it will do as well at dessert. Can you wait till dessert, Mr Carbury?"

"I will try," he said, with his jaded smile. Some dim and far-off

recollection had awakened in his mind; something about a diamond robbery in connection with the Bevan family, which had made a sensation at the time. He could not remember what the circumstances had been, but he knew that they had been peculiar. At any rate, he felt quite able to hold out till dessert, or possibly till Doomsday, without ascertaining the details of the story. Sensational robberies were quite a commonplace, and he was very tired of diamonds.

But by dessert-time Lady Baby had forgotten about the promised story, for another topic had arisen. Just as she was casting about for her next alphabetical subject, and hesitating between the rival merits of Esquimaux and earthquakes, her sister Catherine unconsciously came to her aid by observing, in a tone of most becoming dejection—

"What on earth am I to say in answer to Maud Epperton's letter?" The appeal was made to no one in particular, but to every one in general, and her pretty helpless eyes wandered from face to face, as though in search of advice.

"That will do for E," thought Lady Baby; "it is better than either Esquimaux or earthquakes."

"Do you know Miss Epperton?" she asked Mr Carbury.

He looked almost amused. "I should think I do. One can't help knowing Miss Epperton."

"Do you know her as well as Athens, and crocodiles, and the Nile?" she asked, with unconscious irony.

Instantly the cloud descended again on Mr Carbury's face. "I know her pretty well," he said stiffly, eyeing Lady Baby somewhat askance. Could it be possible—no, surely it could not be

possible—that the child was making fun of him?

“She is very fond of country life, is she not?”

“Country-house life, I daresay, yes.”

“And very glad to get away from town life when she can?”

“There is a town called London that she is very glad to get to when she has a chance.”

“But she doesn’t talk as if she cared about London much, and she must be fond of the country—she says so in her letter to Catherine this morning. Catherine is the only one of us who knows her. She wants to come here.”

“Miss Epperton wants to come to Scotland *now*?” asked Mr Carbury, with the first genuine interest he had shown that day; “surely you must be mistaken. Why, I have not known her miss a season for years.”

“I knew it!” cried Lady Catherine, who scented a grievance on the instant. “I have only met her once or twice at Bournemouth, but I felt quite sure she was a worldly creature; and what are we to do with a worldly creature at Kippendale? I wish some one would tell me how to answer her letter!”

“Why, say ‘Yes,’ of course,” broke in Lord Kippendale, taking up the question of the moment rather hotly, as was his wont. “And, for goodness’ sake, say it in as few words and as few minutes as you can. Don’t take an hour to make up your mind on which part of the page you’ll begin. Eh? What’s wrong? Any more difficulties? For goodness’ sake, let us consider the matter settled.”

“But, papa, please don’t be so dreadfully cheerful about it,” pleaded poor Lady Catherine;

“don’t you hear that she is just wild about gaiety, and we have none to give her? I can’t imagine why she is coming. Does she ride, Mr Carbury?”

Mr Carbury was quite sure that she didn’t ride.

“If she doesn’t ride,” pronounced Nicky, with oracular decision, “she will be a bore;” and Lady Agnes, considering that she had received her orders, immediately began to regard Miss Epperton as a bore.

“If she doesn’t ride,” remarked Lady Baby, “it won’t be easy to amuse her. She can feed the horses if she likes, and take the puppies out for exercise, and I can show her the kennels; it is all I can do for her. But I hope she will come all the same, for I want to see a regular fashionable girl.”

“Of course she will come,” said Lord Kippendale, decisively; “what is the use of wasting words over it? Why, Kate, lass, where are your notions of Scotch hospitality? For goodness’ sake, why shouldn’t the poor girl come if she has a fancy for rest and change? Isn’t that the way she puts it in her letter, eh? There’s nothing to bletcher or haver over that I can see. Let’s consider the point settled, and get on to the next thing. Will you pass me the figs, Craigtoun?”

“She will turn the whole house inside out,” sighed Catherine, softly. “I know she will.”

“Why shouldn’t she come?” reflected Mr Carbury. “Yes; but why *should* she come? She has taken her aim, no doubt; but I confess I don’t see the mark this time.”

Mr Carbury was puzzled. For more than half-a-dozen—in fact, it was nearer a dozen—years past, Miss Epperton had been one of the

standing features of London society. Mr Carbury had met her more times than he had memory for,—in drawing-rooms, in theatres, in the Park, at kettle-drums, and at Academy openings. He had passed her on crowded staircases at night, and come across her at morning concerts. Many a polo-match had he watched with her at Hurlingham, and many a lobster-salad had he handed up to her at race-day luncheons. He knew what she was like in her winter furs, and how she looked in summer muslins. He had shaken hands with her some thousands of times, in some thousand different situations; he had walked with her, danced with her, flirted with her, and admired her; but he had never been in love with her, even in the slightest degree. Perhaps for this reason they had been all the better friends; for every one knew that Miss Epperton could marry only a rich man, and every one knew also that Mr Carbury was not rich, or at least not rich enough. That a girl whose sole object in life was understood to be the securing of a husband with an establishment, should of her own free will come to bury herself in Scotland, just as the season was beginning to wax towards its glory,—this appeared to Mr Carbury to cry very loudly for explanation. Even after he found himself in the solitude of his room that night, his mind continued to run with a sort of vague wonder upon the question of Miss Epperton's motive. That she had a motive, was as certain as that two added to two produces the sum of four. He had never known her do the most trivial act without a motive, and he had known her long. As regards that idyllic yearning after rustic repose before mentioned, Mr Carbury, figuratively speaking, snapped his fingers at it.

“But who can it be?” he argued, as, having dismissed Williams, he lay back luxuriously in an easy-chair, before the still smouldering fire. “She is certainly coming down here after somebody. *Cherchons l'homme*, by way of a change. It can't be Lord Germaine, for he is a boy, six years her junior, I should think; and besides, it is not likely they have ever met. I don't think she is quite desperate enough yet to try her hand on the old man. It can't be me, because I am not supposed to be here, and then she is too clever not to know that I see through her. Oh no! I am safe. After an acquaintance of such long standing, we are not likely to make any mistakes about each other.”

“Long, very long,” he muttered presently, “a great many years. I am getting old. Heavens! how out of date I felt while that child was chattering away to me! She can't be more than sixteen, I imagine—sixteen at the outside.”

He remained for a minute staring fixedly into the fire. His thoughts had taken another turn; he was troubling himself no longer about Miss Epperton and her motive. After a minute he rose and walked slowly towards the toilet-table, then stood still and gazed abstractedly at his reflection in the glass.

It was the face of a world-worn man, worn before his time. Years, no doubt, had something to do with that sunken look about his temples and those deeply ploughed lines about his mouth, but years alone could not have done it. Of good looks, strictly speaking, there remained but the gauntest and grimmest of wrecks; but something in the type of his countenance, or the cut of his deepset eyes, or the turn of his head, or the carriage of his tall figure, made it absolutely impossible for him to

go through life unnoticed, even had he so wished it. He did not happen to wish it very much, and though there were moments when he resented this notice, he would probably have found its cessation far the greater trial of the two.

Rather peculiar circumstances had surrounded his childhood. Strange though it may sound, boundless unselfishness and bottomless good-nature—not his own—had been his undoing. Good luck or bad luck had fated him to grow up the centre-piece of an admiring circle of sisters, all his seniors, and all—so also a freakish fate would have it—as remarkable for their uniform plainness of feature as he was for the somewhat showy style of his good looks. What might yet have been wanting to put the crown to the work was supplied by the injudicious tenderness of a widowed mother, to whom this late-born, brilliant boy quite outweighed his three colourless and featureless sisters. In her eyes, as well as in those of the ungrudging sisters, his mere existence was a standing credit to the family, and everything which could make that existence smoother and pleasanter, even only by a shade, it was no more than the family's duty to procure. Upon this principle, therefore, his education was conducted, and in this way a positive mania of egotism was scientifically fed up, and vanity was nursed with as tender a care as though it had been the most precious and delicate of hothouse plants, and answered so well to the nursing, that soon, with its stealthily spreading roots, and with its luxuriant tendrils, it strangled, one by one, every single seed of good which tried to live within him. The showy style of looks clung to him, even after boyhood's bloom was gone. If a clear olive skin

and a pair of very remarkable black eyebrows could do it, the man Carbury was no less a credit to his family than the child Carbury had been. The family, at least, continued to think so, despite a certain sprinkling of hostile remarks; for this particular class of good looks, though it met with universal notice, did not meet with universal approval, and, though it always made people stare, did not always make them admire. While something about him appealed to the imagination of the fair sex, this same something seemed to provoke the criticism—or perhaps it was the jealousy—of his brother men. Women described his appearance as “romantic,” men as “operatic.” One man had been heard to compare him to “an Italian baritone, masquerading in plain clothes,” but that man had been of stumpy build and of flabby complexion.

Carbury's own mental attitude towards his own looks was of the most complex. He was vain of them, with a sort of sneaking vanity which dreaded detection as morbidly as it feared ridicule, but which nevertheless was very intense. Their possession caused him as much anxiety as satisfaction. In any case the consciousness of their existence was, in one shape or another, seldom absent from his mind. His personal tastes were of the most cultured and fastidious, and it is quite possible that in any one else he would have found that it was almost too gaudy, scarcely good style in fact, to have eyebrows so broadly marked that they might have been laid on with chalk, or such very brilliantly white teeth, or such very aggressively black hair, that lay about his temples in the thickest of jetty waves. It was all just a trifle overpowering; it wanted distance, it almost want-

ed footlights. On occasion it would have been all very well, but the display of all this holiday style of beauty was too much for the week-day life of this workaday world. No one felt this latter truth more than the admiring family circle. Work! It was not to be thought of; he was a great deal too ornamental to be allowed even to dream of making himself useful. He might leave that to the plain people. And he did leave it to the plain people, though not without a few, a very few, uncertain efforts at resistance, born of some faint feeling of shame, or of some fibre of healthy ambition which had miraculously survived within him. It was wasted pains. He had no chance against the demoralising atmosphere of self-sacrifice which surrounded him; and, giving up the unequal struggle, he let his arms sink to his sides, and resigned himself to a life of idleness. But even idleness, unless accompanied by imbecility or sickness, must take some shape. A man in full possession of his mental powers, and of a physically vigorous youth, must either work or play. Since he was not suffered to work, and since, after all, there are twenty-four hours to be filled up in the day, Carbury took to play of all sorts. Society came first, varied by a very free pursuit of equestrian and field sports. These latter he cultivated assiduously, not only because, at that time of his life, he enjoyed them very keenly, but also because of some instinctive conviction that to prove himself ostentatiously British in this respect would be the best refutation of the Italian baritone idea, of which all the time he was angrily conscious. But he soon grew tired of that which he drank of in such full and unchecked draughts; and then he tried Art, and then he tried books,

and he tried dice, and he tried politics. The wildest romance and the driest science were all experimented upon; and when these too had palled, travelling had its turn, to the ineffable grief of his sisters, who worked their fingers sore in equipping him for his wanderings as no traveller had ever before been equipped, and who knitted thick vests for the cold countries, and sewed muslin scarves for the hot countries, as well as they could see for the tears that dimmed the stitches. But the novelty of travelling wore off, like the novelty of everything else, and he returned home, to find that the interests which he had left because they tasted so flat only tasted rather flatter for the spell of disuse. And meantime his fortune had melted and his youth had faded, and Laurence Carbury found himself a worn-out man on the verge of forty, sick to death of the world in which he moved, yet finding it intolerable to move in any other; sick to death of life itself, with a withered face which many suns had tanned and many passions deeply marked, and with eyes that had grown almost as irresponsive as dimmed and blinded mirrors, worn away, as it were, by the many things that have been reflected on their surface,—the many landscapes and cities and flowers and trees, the many beautiful pictures, and the many beautiful women that had cast their images there. Such as he was even now, he was a man whom few people passed without turning their heads to take another look, or asking instinctively, "Who is he?" In his way he was almost as striking as in the days when he had un- easily wondered whether, after all, his teeth were not a shade too white, and his hair a shade too black. Too black! Ah, well! time

had altered that at any rate ; but even his hair had not turned grey as other people's do ; and the faint silver sprinkling, contrasting with the black of his eyebrows, altered the character of his face without making it less remarkable.

The fortunes of his mother and his three sisters (who had all remained unmarried) were virtually at his disposal ; and this, together with the wrecks of his own, enabled him to live in comfort, even comparative luxury ; so it can scarcely be said that he palpably missed the money he had squandered. Every interest and instinct within him was deadened, except the instinct of that insensate egotism which coloured for him every inch of the world. Seldom, very seldom nowadays, was he visited by any of those self-questionings which had disturbed his youthful mind. Only now and then, at very rare intervals, something like the far-off echo of a voice would faintly

stir some shadowy feeling of regret for his wasted life ; sometimes, as to-night, the sight of a very young face, or the radiant innocence of a pair of blue eyes, would touch him, as the memory of the first spring day touches those that stand in mid-autumn ; and in those moments even his supreme self would totter, and his soul within him would cry rebelliously—"O God ! (if there be a God) can I have done well ? Can this be the whole of life ? Is there not something beyond ?"

But those moments were few and far between ; the mood was wont to pass rapidly, and it passed rapidly now. As he turned from the glass, it wanted no more than the chance sight of Nicky's coat, hanging over a chair-back, to change the current of his thoughts ; and instead of his wasted life, it was the galling recollection of his recent appearance in that garment, which formed Mr Carbury's last waking thought that night.

CHAPTER III.—A BORDER RAID.

"England and us have been lang at feud."

Lord Kippendale's hatred of anything in the shape of procrastination, and his anxiety to be at "the next thing," led to Miss Epperton's appearance at Kippendale only two days after the reception of her letter. The train which brought her from the south arrived a little later in the day than the one by which Mr Carbury had found himself left stranded, but it jogged along at just the same easy pace. Miss Epperton did not lean back in her corner with closed eyes as Mr Carbury had done ; for, in the first place, it was a third-class carriage, and the corner was not a tempting one for lounging in ; and, in the second place, she had

discovered that her glove wanted mending, and it would take her all her remaining time to put in the needful stitches. A torn glove would have accorded ill with the perfect neatness of the travelling-cloak which fitted close to her slim and elegant figure, or with the faultless sit of the plain black hat which surmounted her shining braids of hair. An uncharitably keen-eyed person might have pointed out that the cloak had certainly been turned, and that the hat had probably been reshaped more than once ; but, to the ordinary observer, the things were worn with a certain easy grace that disarmed criticism.

In the intervals of stitching her

glove, Miss Epperton took a delicate sniff at her bottle of salts. She was not alone in the carriage. A noisy farmer and a snuff-taking mechanic occupied the further end of the compartment; for Miss Epperton had been unable to spare the necessary half-crown tip for the guard. Her head was aching a little, and every tone of the farmer's bucolic roar went through it like a knife; but she looked neither morose nor sour. She only looked very tired, and at the same time sensibly and courageously resigned to her fate.

As they neared the station—the glove by this time being re-buttoned—she took down her bag and small bundle of wraps from the net, and then, catching sight of the footman on the platform, she drew sharply back until they had glided past him. In the next minute the passengers were descending, and while the footman made a rush for the first-class carriages, Miss Epperton, deftly gathering up her slender hand-baggage, leapt lightly to the ground, and presently James, looking about him in bewilderment for the tall, dark, young lady who had been described to him, became aware that the very young lady required was standing calmly and coolly on the platform, with her bag by her side.

"From Kippendale?" she said suavely. "You missed me, I suppose; my box is in the van."

The whole little manœuvre was executed with an ease and a neatness which spoke of long practice; and after all, it was not in the least necessary that James should know by what class this new visitor had travelled.

When Miss Epperton alighted at the door, and for the first time set foot on the threshold of Kippendale House—and it turned out

later to have been a memorable day—the whole party happened to be gathered together in the entrance-hall, knocking the balls about the billiard-table which stood in the centre.

"We are not all strangers," said Lady Baby, doing the honours of the house, when the first flurry of introduction and greeting was over; "there is some one else here whom you know besides Catherine,—a friend of yours. He has only been here two days."

"A friend of mine?" repeated Miss Epperton, in an extremely melodious voice, as she turned expectantly towards the dark corner where Mr Carbury was putting away the billiard-cues.

"An old friend, Miss Epperton," said he, advancing to shake hands with her, and watching with a sort of languid curiosity to see what effect the sight of him would have upon her. It did not seem agreeable. The expectant light on her face vanished, and in its place came a look of vexation, swift but unmistakable.

"Oh, Mr Carbury, of course; but I did not know you were in Scotland. Is not this rather hard upon London?"

"Scarcely as hard as your absence will be, Miss Epperton."

She bit her lip, and then said hurriedly, "It is quite a pleasant surprise to see you."

"Surprising it may be, but pleasant it is not," thought Mr Carbury, as he noted her forced smile. "What your little game is, my fair husband-hunter, I do not know; but it is quite evident that you would rather have played it without any 'old friend' looking on. She expected to see some one else when she turned; I was distinctly a disappointment; well, time will show! I almost hope

they will keep me on here to see the sport."

And there seemed every prospect of his being "kept on." There was no question yet as to his resuming his interrupted journey. Since, as he confessed, he had nothing particular to do in London, there was no reason for hurrying south. The fact of his being an acquaintance of Nicky's seemed sufficient recommendation for his social character, in Lady Baby's eyes at least, whose will ruled the household, and who looked up to Nicky with enthusiastic admiration, as to a wonderful elder brother whose power of muscle would have been sufficient to tame anything that could be saddled and bridled, short perhaps of a zebra. As for Lord Kippendale, as soon as he had seen Mr Carbury sit on horseback and take a fence, he refused to hear an immediate departure spoken of, and insisted on considering a long visit to Kippendale as a thing sealed and settled, over which neither time nor words need be wasted.

It was well that Mr Carbury's curiosity was more of a desultory than of a devouring sort, for during the first forty-eight hours, neither Miss Epperton's manner nor conversation afforded the slightest clue to the possible motive of her visit. To all appearances it was neither more nor less than the harmless desire for change of air spoken of in her letter. That dangerous thirst for amusement, of which Lady Catherine had talked with such apprehension, had as yet not showed itself. There were no symptoms whatever of the house being turned either upside down or inside out. She was a trifle pale, a trifle languid, quite unobtrusive, and even easily amused; equally ready to feed the horses or to join Lady Baby in taking two young

and very foolish foxhound puppies out for their daily exercise, and helping to control their vagrant and unsteady conduct.

"I can't make it out at all," said Lady Catherine, much distressed at seeing everything go so smoothly; "I have always heard that she is thoroughly worldly, and there she was yesterday helping to plan the arrangement of the annuals in the flower-garden, just as though she were really fond of flowers. I thought she was going to be supercilious and disagreeable, and make us all feel uncomfortable."

"Cheer up, Kate," said Lady Baby, laughing; "she may make us all very unhappy yet. It is the vocation of all the handsome dark people in the world to make all the plain fair ones unhappy; they do it in every novel. And, O Kate! *isn't* she beautiful?"

Lady Baby's own beauty belonging to the fair and irregular order, led her passionately to admire all dark and regular beauties, and at the very instant of their meeting she had decided that Miss Epperton's face was far the most beautiful thing she had ever seen in her life. As a piece of delicate and almost pathetic pallor, the face, indeed, when seen in a favourable light and at a favourable moment, was one which might well have enchained the fancy of a severer critic than Lady Baby. Searching daylight was apt to reveal marks of wear about the eyes and mouth, just as sharp-eyed people might detect the same marks about her hats and gowns; and when the searching daylight was ungallant enough to lend its aid to the sharp-eyed people, then not only the marks of wear became revealed, but also the efforts which had been made to repair them. But of this Lady Baby noticed nothing; indeed it is probable that such a thing as

poudre de riz was not even known to her by sight. She saw only that Maud Epperton had the most beautiful dark eyes and the most beautiful dark hair, so dark that it might have been taken for black except for a certain luminous warmth shed over it, and for the rich depth of its shades, richer and deeper than the shades which even the most magnificent black hair can ever boast of. And in a vague way Lady Baby felt too that her new friend was not only to be admired but was also to be pitied; that though her eyes were so beautiful they were not peaceful, and though her smile was so brilliant it was not happy, and the awe she had expected to feel of "the regular fashionable girl," was softened into something more like sympathetic interest.

It was on the third day of Miss Epperton's visit that Mr Carbury's curiosity got its first taste of satisfaction. Strolling up to the tea-table that afternoon, he found Lady Baby serving out, together with the bread-and-butter, various items of information concerning their neighbours in the county; from which Mr Carbury concluded that Miss Epperton, who was sitting by in a listening attitude, had deemed it time to show some active interest in her surroundings.

"And then there are the Frazers," Lady Baby was saying as Mr Carbury came up; "but they are always either ill or gone abroad to get well. And then there are the Smarts—seven girls, I think, or is it eight?"

"Oh," said Miss Epperton, rather blankly, "you don't seem to be very lucky in neighbours. And are all the people who have not got seven daughters, or who are not gone abroad to get well, out of driving distance?"

"All those in the county are—

though there is another place over the Border which is quite within reach as far as distance goes; but—we don't go there much."

"Don't you?" Miss Epperton looked up for a moment from her work. This subject seemed to interest her more than the seven Miss Smarts had done. "I should have thought that in the country any neighbours within reasonable distance——"

"Yes; but the Wyndhursts are not like usual neighbours. We—don't get on with them."

"That means that they don't ride, or don't sit straight in their saddles, I suppose," suggested Miss Epperton, with a smile.

"Oh, but they *do* ride!" exclaimed the three sisters simultaneously. "They ride very much indeed, and sit very straight," added Lady Baby, in the tone of one who intends to deal justice even to her foes.

"Then what can their shortcomings be?"

"Oh, nothing particular; only, don't you see, it is just because they *do* ride, and are so awfully conceited about it, and always look out for the biggest fences, especially when any of us are behind them, and think they know more about breeding thorough-breds than papa does (which of course is absurd), or breaking horses than Nicky does (ridiculous idea!). That is why we don't get on," said Lady Baby, simply; "and besides, we are Scotch Borderers, you know, and they are English Borderers. It is quite impossible that we should get on just like other people. In fact, we haven't got on for the last five hundred years, ever since the first Wyndhurst set fire to the first Bevan's haystack; for I am quite sure they began."

Miss Epperton sat silent, thought-

fully putting stitches into a very modest and unostentatious strip of white embroidery. No one from her expression would have guessed that she had met with a cheek in the first move she had played since her arrival at Kippendale, and was considering how to circumvent the unexpected obstacle.

It will be as well to explain here that Lady Baby's speech had very correctly sketched the state of feeling which existed between the Scotch family of Bevan and the English family of Wyndhurst. They met rarely, except in the hunting-field, and, when there, found the keenest enjoyment in eclipsing each other's achievements. Such similarity of tastes as they possessed could only produce either firm friendship or hot rivalry, and in this case some traditional remnant of an ancient Border-feud had perhaps determined for the latter. Since the death of Sir Anthony Wyndhurst, somewhat more than two years ago, the heat of the rivalry had slightly flagged, for the only Wyndhursts in the hunting-field had been three or four small boys on tiny shaggy ponies, who used to disappear, pony and all, into deep ditches, and reappear again on the other side with a spirit and pertinacity which a Bevan could not but admire, even in a Wyndhurst. Sir Anthony had left another son, considerably older than these sporting mites; for he had been twice married, and his heir was the only child by the first marriage. This young man, the present baronet, was not known, except distantly by sight, to the Bevans, for they had never come across him in the hunting-field, the most natural place for a Bevan to meet a Wyndhurst. He was generally away from home: he liked yachting, and it was under-

stood that he was delicate. Perhaps sea-air suited him; or perhaps, as was sometimes hinted, his stepmother's society did not particularly suit him. Those who knew his stepmother best appeared to think this supposition not impossible. But even in Sir Anthony's lifetime the eldest son had rarely been at home; nor was he talked of and made much of, as eldest sons, be they absent or present, generally are in the conversation of their fond relations. It had almost seemed as if Sir Anthony were not particularly proud of his heir, over whom some unknown cloud seemed mysteriously to brood. People had gone so far as to suggest a want of intellect, or a hump, or a crime, as explanations of the mystery; but nothing was positively ascertained.

"By the by," said Lady Baby, presently, "talking of the Wyndhursts, Nicky told me yesterday that Sir Peter is on his way home at last. It is a positive mercy, on account of next year's hunting. Poor papa was getting quite low at no longer having Sir Anthony to eclipse."

Sir Peter was the present baronet, who had never been home, except on flying visits, since his succession to the title.

"He did not seem in a particular hurry to get home when I saw him last week in London," said Miss Epperton, without looking up from her work.

"In London? Has he got as far as London? And you know him? What is he like?"

"He is very quiet and rather silent, and—and really nothing else very particular, except that he is something of an artist. He has a portfolio full of sunrises done at sea, and another full of sunsets."

"I don't care for landscapes,"

said Lady Baby; "does he never paint faces?"

"Yes; he takes portraits too: he is a sort of general dabbler in art. He took quite a gallery of portraits when he was in London last month."

"And you figure in the gallery?" suggested Mr Carbury, as she hesitated, and he began to see a glimmer of Miss Epperton's plans.

"Yes," she said quietly, and she looked Mr Carbury full in the face; "Sir Peter painted me in costume. He wanted some one very colourless and very tall, for a study of Clytemnestra, and so I sat to him. By the by, have you decided about the blue lobelia in the flower-garden?"

The name of Wyndhurst was not mentioned again till that evening after dinner; and then, quite accidentally it seemed, the subject came up again. Lord Kippendale, who liked a decent excuse for his after-dinner snooze, had asked for some music. Catherine had gone to the piano and was singing the "Pibroch of Donald Dhu" in a feebly pretty voice, not by any means calculated to induce even the most loyal of Scots to "hark to the summons." Maud Epperton, however, must have been moved by the appeal, for by-and-by she left her seat, and drawing nearer to the piano, began to turn over some books of songs that were piled on a chair.

"I am sure you must find our music dreadfully barbarous," said Catherine, as she touched the last chord, and speaking in the deprecating tone in which she generally addressed Miss Epperton. "I am so sorry we can't entertain you better, and I suppose you have heard all the good singers in London; but——"

"Indeed I have not," said Maud, good-humouredly, "and I think a

touch of barbarism is quite refreshing after all the "Good nights" and "Farewells" we get in English drawing-rooms. But, do you know, these volumes here are a revelation to me. I did not know the whole musical world contained as many Scotch songs as I have already found on this one chair. I see you have got some of the Border ballads put to music; do you sing any of them?"

Catherine confessed to singing a few of them, only she was not sure of the accompaniments, and Maud, whose fancy seemed to be caught by something about the Border ballads, offered to accompany her; and thus many pages were turned over, and many verses deciphered, and Maud carefully examined the quaint old engravings which illustrated some of the Border songs. Presently one particular engraving appeared to have fixed her attention. It was the rude representation of a gigantic oak, with a gaping trunk, and one huge leafless branch stretching gauntly and weirdly from out of a mass of leafy boughs, and with the sufficiently startling inscription: "The Gibbet-tree at Nolesworth Castle."

"And what is the story of *this*?" asked Maud; "this tree can't possibly help having a story."

"Oh, the story is quite simple," said Lady Baby, who had joined the group at the piano; "it is the tree on which one of the Wyndhursts had the impertinence to hang one of the Bevans a few hundred years ago, and the branch on which they hung him very properly never bore leaves again. It is exactly what one would expect of any respectable oak."

"Hang!" repeated Maud, rather staggered.

"Yes; though of course they did it in the night, and denied it afterwards. Wasn't it an awful

shame? Instead of running him through with a lance, or knocking him on the head with an axe in the proper way."

"But why had he to be killed at all?"

"Oh, well, you see, he had cut off two of the young Wyndhursts' heads and brought them to Scotland, which, of course, irritated them a good deal. And even before that they were always persecuting him. Once they even made such a fuss that they got our own Warden to lock him up, and that was all about some stupid cows or sheep that they had not looked after properly."

"I am afraid I don't quite understand," said Maud; "did the cows and sheep——"

"We took them, of course, don't you see?"

"Took them?"

"Yes; carried them off. Haven't you noticed the wall round the flower-garden? That was the place where we used to shut up the Wyndhursts' cattle, for fear of their getting back again, and the wall is still part of the old one. I assure you there was nothing in the least odd about it: it was the custom of the time; and besides, they always took *our* cattle whenever they could get them. It was perfectly fair play; don't you understand?"

"Give her time," said Mr Carbury, who also had come up; "you see these facts are just a shade startling to effeminate Southerners like Miss Epperton and myself. Bear with us, please: consider that we have not been brought up in Border lore."

"Oh, but you must not believe half that Frances says," broke in Lady Catherine; "most of the tales are mere traditions, and most likely nobody was ever hanged

upon that tree,—and people have just invented stories to account for the barren branch."

"At any rate the branch is there, if it has to be accounted for," said Maud, who had been deeply engrossed with the verses meanwhile. "If the tree is at all like its portrait, it must be well worth seeing, whether it ever served as a gibbet or not. Why, its trunk is a perfect cavern!"

"Do you mean that you would really care to see it?" said Catherine, eagerly, feeling only too happy to have hit upon anything which could keep this dangerously worldly creature amused, and gazing at Maud as one might gaze at some half-tamed ferocious animal, in whom an outbreak is momentarily to be expected. "Frances, don't you think that, if it would really amuse Miss Epperton to see the 'gibbet-tree,' perhaps papa might not mind, for once in a way, on the show-day, you know—for Nolesworth is quite a show-place," she explained, turning to Maud; "the outer park is open to visitors twice a-week."

"Oh!" cried Maud, in mock alarm, "I could never forgive myself if I were to be the cause of a renewal of hostilities. Would we have to go armed to the teeth?"

"It would be the proper way of conducting a Border raid," remarked Mr Carbury, drily.

"Border raid? eh? what?" broke in Lord Kippendale, waking up at that moment, and very anxious to slur over the fact that he had ever been asleep, for which reason he threw himself warmly into the discussion. "Miss Epperton anxious to see the gibbet-tree? Eh? Is that so, Miss Epperton?"

"Well," said Maud, with a laugh, "I confess to having rather lost my heart to the gibbet-tree.

But of course I shall stifle my yearning, if there are such difficulties in the way; your daughters seem afraid——”

“Afraid!” broke in Lady Baby, scornfully. “We are not a bit afraid; we never have been afraid of any Wyndhurst, so why should we begin now? Papa, don’t you think we might go?”

A very little more discussion now settled the point. Everything unconsciously was shaping itself towards the fulfilment of Miss Epperton’s wish.

Lady Baby was indignant at the imputation thrown out; Lady Catherine was anxious that Miss Epperton should be amused, and seemed inclined to view the gibbet-tree in the light of a quieting sop to be thrown to the dangerous animal; Lord Kippendale was not only hospitably ready to gratify any wish even hinted at by any guest residing under his roof, but also laboured under an intense dislike to postponing, even by one unnecessary hour, the execution of any resolve once arrived at; and between all these various influences, it was decided, before they parted for the night, that, as next day happened to be a show-day, Nolesworth Castle should without further delay be visited.

“The Wyndhursts are not back, are they?” asked Lord Kippendale while the candles were being lit in the hall. But none of the family knew anything of the Wyndhursts’ movements, and Maud said nothing, but kept her eyes bent on the candle which Mr Carbury was lighting for her; so Lord Kippendale answered his own question by concluding that they were sure not to have left London yet. “Besides, we don’t bite when we meet, you know, Miss Epperton; you must not think that there are no such things as

manners on the Borders: we are very civil, I can tell you; it’s only that there’s no love lost.”

“So the raid is resolved on,” said Carbury, in a low voice, as he handed Maud the candle.

“Yes, the raid is resolved on,” and she met his mocking gaze unflinchingly. “Are you to be of the invaders?”

“Undoubtedly; I might be useful in helping to carry off the booty.”

“The booty!” said Maud, as she calmly gave him her hand for good night; “the booty will I dare say be quite transportable, even without your aid.”

“D—— her pluck!” remarked Mr Carbury to himself as he walked up-stairs, “and d—— her cleverness; she deserves to succeed.”

Next day was dull and the afternoon was damp, and looked almost as if it might in time be wet; not at all the sort of day for seeing a show-place to advantage. “But it is all the better not to have too bright a day,” said Miss Epperton, when, after some hesitation, it was finally decided to risk the chance of a shower; “at least we shall have the tree all to ourselves.”

Nolesworth Castle was a far more impressive building and a far more important place than Kippendale, and in its features it had much more rigidly preserved its ancient character of a Border mansion.

While successive Kippendales had added to and altered their ancestral abode until the rugged old “keep” had gradually become transformed into a picturesque and homelike jumble of gables and excrescences, which, though it might irritate an antiquarian and madden an architect, was yet a most cheering sight to the ordinary visitor, Nolesworth Castle still stretched the same stony wings

and reared the same forbidding towers that had loomed and frowned thus for centuries. And while the Kippendales had filled up and planted with flowers the moat that was no longer threatened, and had light-heartedly thinned out the woods that were no longer required as convenient hiding-places, the English Border-castle had disdained to modernise so much as a single breast-work or bastion, and remained still wrapped in the gloom of its vast forests, as grimly prepared for an attack now as in the times when a horse ready saddled had stood day and night in the Wyndhurst stables, and a broadsword newly sharpened had ever hung within reach of the master's hand. It was a place to look at, but not to live in. The long straight avenues and scrupulously stiff gravel-walks, laid out on something of a regal scale, might perhaps excite a sort of cold admiration, but they did not tempt to leisurely saunters. It was the sort of place which puts people on their good behaviour, and brings every one's store of company manners to the light. It seemed incongruous to walk vagrantly on these ceremonious stretches of gravel, or to laugh foolishly in the shade of these historical-looking trees. "Have we got umbrellas?" said Lord Kippendale, as they alighted in the outer park. "I declare it is going to rain after all."

"We can take shelter inside the oak," suggested Miss Epperton, airily; "I am sure it ought to hold us, if that picture spoke true."

"But the horses can't get inside the oak," said Lady Baby. "Papa, must the poor horses stand out?"

"If that black fellow up there breaks," said Nicky, scowling at the sky, "we are in for a jolly good wetting, that's all."

"Then let us not give it time to break," said his father-in-law testily. "Which is the way to the oak? We had better make sure of that first."

But the gibbet-tree was not by any means the only sight at Nolesworth, as was proclaimed by the numerous sign-boards, which directed the visitor to go this way "To the Waterfall," or that way "To the Fairy Grove," and the various hands which pointed towards spots that were rather mysteriously designated as "Dick's Cradle," or "Red Willie's Trysting-dell," and which excited Miss Epperton's curiosity to such a degree that a great many rounds were made, and a great many corners of the park explored, before the gibbet-tree was reached. And though Lord Kippendale fussed visibly, and continually pressed the pace, and though all the rest of the family were rather silent, and felt probably a great deal more guilty than ever their ancestors had felt when visiting these same grounds in the shades of night, Maud Epperton, strangely enough, appeared to be blind and deaf to these general symptoms of discomfort. Not only did she not hurry; but whenever a shadow of an excuse offered itself, she distinctly loitered, talking at first with animation, but gradually lapsing into pauses of what looked like anxious reflection, until, by the time the gibbet-tree was reached, she had become almost as silent as her companions.

"Has the oak disappointed you?" asked Mr Carbury at her elbow, as she stood with her head thrown back, gazing up rather blankly into the naked branches. Maud quickly called up a smile. "A little bit; yes—the portrait was a flattered one."

"Come, come, Miss Epperton. I am sorry to hurry you," burst out Lord Kippendale; "but just look at the sky! We positively must be going."

"Without booty?" said Mr Carbury, raising his eyebrows. "Who has ever heard of a raid without booty? How are we to show our faces in Scotland if we come back empty-handed?"

"We are not back in Scotland yet," said Maud, coolly. "Lord Kippendale, is there no better view to be had of the castle? We have seen everything, it strikes me, except the very kernel of the thing; and I am sure the rain will hold off for five minutes longer."

There *was* another view—the show-view in fact, the view of views, proclaimed upon numerous wooden boards, and pointed at by extra large index-fingers—and as it really did seem absurd to leave

a show-place without seeing the show-view, this last extra round was decided upon.

"Dear me!" said Lady Baby, as they turned the corner of the walk which brought them in face of the castle, "we are not the only visitors after all who have braved the weather."

There was a bench at the end of the walk, and on it, with his back towards them, sat a young man, apparently engaged with a sketch-book. They were close upon him when they saw him, and, at the sound of their steps, he glanced over his shoulder; then, as though aware that he was obscuring the view, he rose and stepped aside, closing his sketch-book and slightly raising his hat. He appeared to be on the point of moving away altogether, when Miss Epperton, with a step forward, held out her hand and exclaimed—

"Sir Peter!"

MY RIDE TO SHESHOUAN.

I do not know whether it was merely from love of adventure, or from curiosity to see a place that, as far as is known, has been only once before looked upon by Christian eyes, that I made up my mind to attempt to reach Sheshouan, a fanatical Berber city situated in the mountainous district of Northern Morocco, between the large tribe-lands of Beni-Hassan and the Riff. But whatever was my first impulse, this helped to bring me to a decision—the very fact that there existed within forty hours' ride of Tangier, a city into which it was considered an utter impossibility for a Christian to enter. That such a place can exist, seems almost incredible to those whose sole experience of Morocco is based on the luxurious Tangier hotels, and the more than semi-civilisation of that town.

My mind once made up, it did not take long to prepare myself for my journey; and on a Friday of July in this year I might have been seen purchasing in the native Tangier shops the articles of clothing that were needed for my disguise,—for any attempt to proceed thither in European dress must prove unsuccessful. The costume that I chose consisted of the white long shirt and baggy trousers of the Moors, a small crimson silk sleeveless jacket, the *tarboosh* or *fez*, and a *jelaba* or white-hooded cloak that envelops one from one's ankles to one's head. Having successfully purchased these articles, my next business was to send for a boy—by name Selim—who lived in Tangier, but who was a native of Sheshouan. An hour later he came, looking very thin and down on his luck; I told

him of my idea, and found him—much to my surprise—ready for a comparatively small sum of money to accompany me, and act as guide. I forthwith sent him into town, where he hired two mules with *burdas*, or Moorish pack-saddles, which were to be at my hotel at two o'clock the following morning. I then packed my luggage—a not very tedious proceeding,—as it consisted merely of a small red leather native bag, which I wore slung over my shoulder, containing a tooth-brush, a revolver, twenty-five rounds of cartridges, a few sheets of writing-paper, a pencil, and fifty cigarettes. Beyond this I only took a blanket, which was spread over the rough pack-saddle.

About three the next morning we left, and arrived at Tetuan—our first stage, distant from Tangier some forty-five miles—in about ten hours. I shall not describe the journey thither, as it is one so easily and so often undertaken; but I cannot pass on without some little mention of the splendid situation of that town, with its mosque towers and flat-roofed white houses, its gorgeous gardens, its river, the banks of which were crimson with oleanders—now in full bloom—and the glorious background of wooded and rocky mountains.

I put up at a Moorish *fondak* or *caravanserai*—a dirty place, full of mules and vermin; but it was a necessity to keep up my disguise and go through any discomforts rather than risk discovery.

My guide spoke no language but Arabic, of which I was only sufficiently cognisant to be able to understand the gist of his remarks, and just render myself understood

by him ; but of course, had I opened my mouth to speak in the presence of other Moors, I should have been at once detected.

The following morning we were up before dawn, and fording the river near Tetuan, proceeded on our way. As soon as it was daylight, we began to pass Moors coming into town with vegetables and wood, laden on donkeys ; and I was pleased to find that my disguise was sufficiently satisfactory as to lead them to assume that I was an Arab, and to salute me with the salutation—never offered to a Christian—“*Salaam 'alikâm.*” After about two hours on the road, we passed through the village of Zenat, perched high on the mountain-side,—a pretty picturesque little place, half hidden in its groves of olives and oleanders, with tiny streams and miniature waterfalls in every direction, and rocks clustered with maidenhair fern. When we had left the village behind, the road led us along the mountain-side at a great distance above the valley beneath, till, an hour later, we descended by a winding path, forded the river, and proceeded up the valley on the left-hand bank. Up to this point the country had been fertile and well cultivated, and the fields full of men and women gathering in the harvest ; but now we had entered the country of the wild Beni-Hassan tribe, and the aspect entirely changed ; instead of fields, nothing but steep mountains, covered with arbutus and other stunted growth, being visible, except ahead of us, where the great bare rocky peaks of the Sheshouan mountains stood out boldly against the morning sky.

The next object that we passed was a ruined *fondak* or *caravan-serai*, not unlike that which exists

half-way between Tangier and Tetuan, but entirely deserted and out of repair. It was near this *fondak* that my first adventure befell me. We had been overtaken by two Beni-Hassan tribesmen, who, I had noticed, had scanned me very closely—far more closely than I appreciated ; and I was not particularly pleased to suddenly discover these two, and a third who was holding a chestnut horse, stationary about two hundred yards in front of me, engaged in conversation, and now and again turning in my direction. There was no other course than to proceed, which I did. On nearing them, the owner of the horse placed it across the road, completely blocking my way, while his two companions took up their position on either side. On my reaching them, one, seizing my bridle, told me I must go no further, while a second pulled me from my mule by my *jelaba* or cloak. I knew that if I uttered a sound my chance of reaching Sheshouan was at an end, so grasping my revolver firmly under my cloak, for the double reason of having it ready in case of necessity and keeping it from the sight of my assailants, I remained dumb. My Arab boy proved himself on this occasion—as he did on several afterwards—to be quite worthy of the confidence I had placed in him, for lying in a calm and collected manner, he asserted that I was a Moor from Fez.

“Why does he not speak ?” asked one of the men.

“Is it likely a Moorish gentleman would speak to robbers who attack him on the road, and insult him by pulling him off his mule ?” responded Selim ; “but he will be revenged, for when the Sultan comes (referring to the approaching visit of the Sultan to Tetuan)

he will come here and lay your country waste."

Thereupon the men, with a still incredulous look, relinquished their hold of me, and mounting once more I proceeded on my way. An elevation having rendered us invisible to the tribesmen, we thought it as well to place a more satisfactory distance between ourselves and them, so whipped the mules into a gallop, and were soon some way ahead.

Turning a corner, we suddenly came upon a band of some twenty or thirty Beni-Hassani working by the roadside. These we passed without any difficulty, though the minute or two that we took to pass through them was scarcely a pleasant time, as I expected every moment to hear our first assailants shouting to them to arrest my progress. Then we again proceeded at a gallop over terribly open country; I say "*terribly open*"—for I felt sure that before many minutes were over I should need some place of concealment. We were crossing the high table-land that exists between the Zenat and Sheshouan valleys—an elevation that is entirely ignored on most of the maps of the country—and the only spot that would offer any cover was a stream, the banks of which were overgrown with oleanders. For this we at once made, and entering the bed of the stream I dismounted and hid myself amongst the shrubs, while Selim led the mules to a spot some little way further up the river.

By this time the three men who had first stopped me had reached the band we had seen at work, and informed them of their belief in the presence of a Christian; and as I had expected, a few minutes later some dozen Arabs appeared in sight running along the path we had just travelled over. In five

minutes they had found our mules, and were questioning Selim as to my whereabouts. From my hiding-place I could overhear sufficient of the conversation that passed between them.

"Where is the Christian?" they asked.

"What Christian?" said Selim.

"The Christian who was with you."

"There was no Christian with me."

"Who was with you?"

"A Moor; the son of Abdul Malek from Fez, who is going to Sheshouan to see some of his mother's people."

"Bring him here."

"I don't know where he is."

Then for a minute or two the talking was carried on in whispers, and I saw my boy and an elderly mountaineer leave the group and wander off engaged in conversation. A few minutes later I was discovered and marched forth from the river-bed to a large tree growing near by on the plain, where I found myself alone with a dozen or so wild-looking fellows. I knew that to deny I was a Christian was useless now, so I informed them at once that I was one, and that I was on my way to Sheshouan, handing them meanwhile (much to my grief!) some of my cigarettes. They seemed very much surprised at the calm way in which I took matters, and not a little amused; and five minutes later, conversation—as far as my Arabic would allow—was being carried on in an animated but amicable manner. Suddenly my boy appeared on the scene, and never in my life have I seen a face of greater surprise than he wore then, on finding me seated in the group of Berber mountaineers, who a minute or two before had been telling him to bring me out from

my hiding-place, presumably to kill me,—and not only seated there, but apparently on the best of terms!

On my rising a few minutes later to proceed on my journey, they begged me to go no further, assuring me that if I were discovered I would for certain lose my life, and that even their own people would kill me if they detected that I was a Christian. I told them that I had made up my mind to reach Sheshouan at any risk, and bade them adieu, shaking hands with all of them, but closing my ears to their ill-omened warnings.

We had soon left the watershed, and once more the path led us along the steep mountain-side—the new valley running almost due south, while that we had left ran in the opposite direction. From where we were now we obtained a glorious view, rivaling any scenery I have seen in Morocco, with the exception of some of the valleys of the Atlas mountains, which it much resembled. Thousands of feet into the now sunset sky the great mountain of Sheshouan reared its rocky crags; while far below, purple in the evening shadow, lay the wooded and cultivated valley, with its rapid river turning and twisting here, there, and everywhere like a thread of silver.

We were now at no great distance from Sheshouan, so concealing ourselves in the bushes, we awaited the setting of the sun. As soon as he was down we resumed our journey, and an hour later, in bright moonlight, crossing the sharp ridge of a hill, came suddenly upon Sheshouan, and found ourselves in the *sôko*, or market-place, situated outside the walls of the town. Crossing the *sôko* at a brisk trot, we entered the town

by the Bab-el-Sôk, and proceeding through several streets, passed under a dark archway. Here dismounting, we knocked at a door, which, being opened, we entered the house of my guide's parents. In the dark they did not recognise me as a Christian—in fact it was not till some minutes later, when we had secured the mules in the *patio* of the house, and ourselves in a large bare room, that my boy confided in them. They were not at all pleased to see me, but they knew as well as I did—and therein lay my safety—that my detection meant death to their son for bringing me, as well as to myself. Half an hour later, having partaken of some food, and rested a little—for we had been sixteen hours *en route* from Tetuan, I left the house, and with Selim's father walked through the town.

Sheshouan, which is a large town covering more acreage than Tangier, and possessing seven mosques and five gates, is magnificently situated on the slope of the mountain, which rises from the town almost perpendicularly to a great height. The houses are different from those of any other city in the country, as they do not possess the general flat roof, but are gabled and tiled with red tiles, which gives the place more the appearance of a Spanish than a Moorish town. But what to the natives is the great attraction of Sheshouan is the abundance of water; for issuing from caves far above in the mountain-side are three waterfalls, whose water is so cold that the natives use the expression that "it knocks one's teeth out to drink it." I tasted it, and found it too cold to be pleasant drinking. From the pool at the bottom of these three falls aqueducts carry the water to the numerous mills which are clustered

there, after turning the wheels of which it continues its course to the many fruit-gardens for which Sheshouan is famous. After about two hours' walk in the town, we returned once more to the house, where I was only too glad to roll myself in my blanket and surrender my weary body to sleep. All next day I lay in hiding. During the afternoon we decided that my safest means of leaving would be after dark in the disguise of a woman, as that would render me almost entirely hidden from sight under the enormous *haik* that completely envelops womankind in Morocco.

About sunset my boy returned from purchasing some fowls and eggs for supper, looking very much upset and in tears. I was sorry to see this, for up till now he had behaved splendidly, though his mother had been in one long fit of hysterical crying ever since I had arrived—a circumstance which was not warranted to improve any one's spirits. Even when I saw Selim in this state, I never suspected anything was wrong, except that his spirits had given way under the strain, and it was quite casually that I asked him what was the cause of his trouble.

"Oh, sir," he cried, "it is all up! Those Beni-Hassan men have told that they had seen a Christian on his way to Sheshouan, and all the town is on the alert to catch you!"

I went at once to the tiny window and looked into the street. It was full of men hurrying to and fro. Twice I heard the question asked, "Have you seen the Christian?" My prospects certainly did not look golden; but nothing could be done for an hour or so, till it was dark; and on an empty stomach one can do very little, so I set to work and cooked and ate

my supper. I had not much appetite, but I made a point of eating half a roast fowl and drinking a large jugful of milk, meanwhile carefully considering my plans in my mind. First, I determined to abandon the woman's disguise, as being of a suspicious nature, and instead borrowed a torn and ragged mountaineer's brown cloak.

Supper was over, and in half an hour more it would be sufficiently dark for me to leave. What a wretched half-hour that was! Selim was in tears, his mother in hysterics, his father sulky; in fact, the only persons who kept up any show of spirits were myself,—and I confess it was nothing more than a mere "show" of spirits,—and a man whose help had been sought, a native of a mountain village some hours distant, and who all through never lost his cheerfulness, though the risk of losing his own life—a risk that he was voluntarily running—was very great.

At last the half-hour was over, and all our plans completed. Mahomed—my new-found friend (and verily a friend in need)—was to accompany me out of the town by the principal gate, thus hoping to excite less suspicion than if we attempted to escape by one of the less important and more obscure exits; while Selim was to proceed by another way and meet us outside the *soko*. The mules we left for the present, arranging for Selim's father to bring them early in the morning to our next hiding-place, the cottage of Mahomed, situated in a village some four hours distant.

My disguise was light and airy—far too light and airy for such a cold night—consisting as it did merely of a brown *jelaba* and a pair of slippers. Creeping quietly through the door we left the house, and walked through the

now crowded streets to the gate. Every now and again I felt an uncomfortable creepy sensation, as I heard the hurrying natives saying to one another—and saying it once or twice even to my companion and myself—“where is the Christian?” “Have you seen the dog of a Christian?” At the gate was a guard placed to stop me; but in my disguise I passed them successfully and entered the *soko*, where men were passing to and fro on the look-out for me. Here, to avoid suspicion, we seated ourselves cross-legged on the ground and remained sitting for several minutes,—it seemed like an hour. While in this position a native came and seated himself next to me, and carried on a short conversation with my companion. Every moment I expected detection—it seemed an impossibility that I could escape. Then we rose and were once more *en route*.

Soon we had reached the spot where Selim was to have met us, but there were no signs of him. We sat down on some rocks and waited, but he did not come. Then Mahomed left me to search for him, and I was alone, but completely hidden among the ferns and stones. While Mahomed was away, a man passed me so closely that his *jelaba* touched my knees; but he went on without perceiving me. A few minutes later Mahomed and Selim appeared, the latter having mistaken the trysting-place.

We at once set off at a brisk walk across country to Mahomed's cottage. For four hours and a half we walked in the cold night, over the most terrible ground. We had not been on our way half an hour, when I slipped in crossing a stream, and got my shoes soaked with water, which rendered them impossible to walk in. From

that moment, till we arrived at the cottage, I walked bare-legged and bare-footed, pushing my ankles, already raw from sunburning, through the sharp thorny bushes, till the blood was trickling down over my feet. At last we reached the village, and creeping from tree to tree, Mahomed reconnoitring ahead, we entered the cottage. I was at once taken to my hiding-place, a kind of cellar, but very clean, where, half an hour later, when I had bound up my legs in some strips of sacking, we ate a supper of native bread and goat's milk, and very good it was too. My kind friends then left me, and were soon slumbering in another part of the cottage,—their snore reaching me even in my cellar. I felt better, though far from safe, yet I was out of Sheshouan. I opened my red-leather bag, and drew out some cigarettes; then rolling myself in my blanket, I lay and watched the blue smoke curl up and up till it was lost in the darkness. Never did I enjoy a cigarette so much as then, and were I a poet, I would have written an ode to that benefactor of mankind, Nestor Gianacis! It was not long, however, before I fell asleep, worn out with the excitement of the day, and the long night walk; nor did I wake till late the next morning. My breakfast—bread and eggs and milk—was brought me at once, and I received the welcome news of the arrival of my mules.

Luck, however, was against me, for one of the very Beni-Hassan men who had accosted me on the road turned up in the village by some evil chance and recognised my beasts. However, Mahomed denied that they belonged to Christians; but the suspicion of the villagers was aroused, and again I was in great danger.

It had been our intention to proceed on our way when the sun set, but toward evening we discovered that the villagers were on the look-out for me, and that it would be unsafe to leave before the moon went down, about midnight.

That day and evening seemed very long, but Mahomed never lost his cheerful mien, and kept me interested by telling me stories of himself—how he was the head of a robber band, and only a few months before had shot two rich Moors, whom he had robbed, and whose mules he had stolen. Never for a moment did I mistrust him, as I knew that whatever he might be, his ideas of hospitality—the greatest virtue the Arabs possess—would render impossible any treachery. The only reason I can think of why he should have rendered me such services was his love of adventure, for he positively seemed to enjoy the risk he was himself running in saving me. There was no monetary reason in his acts; for on my parting from him the next day, he absolutely refused to take what I offered him, and it was with great difficulty that I persuaded him even to accept payment for the food, &c., I had partaken of in his house. . . .

At last the moon went down, and accompanied by Mahomed I set out, again creeping from tree to tree and hedge to hedge, once even taking refuge in an empty stable, till the village and the guard around it were safely passed. Then Mahomed hid me in a clump of trees while he returned to the village, and, with Selim, brought out my mules. The cold was intense, in spite of its being July, and I felt cramped and sore indeed as I crouched down, not daring to move a muscle. So an hour passed, then my eyes were gladdened with

the welcome sight of Mahomed, Selim, and the mules. Selim and I at once mounted the beasts, while Mahomed walked ahead to show us the way. When dawn appeared we were well on our way, and an hour or two after sunrise had left almost all danger behind us. At the ruined *fondak*, which we reached after about eight hours' ride, Mahomed left us and turned back. Never did I grasp a hand to say good-bye with more kindly feelings than I did that of this stalwart handsome mountaineer, who had risked his own life and had saved mine. I tried to thank him in fitting words, but he stopped me and said, "It is nothing, it is nothing." Four hours later the white walls of Tetuan were in sight; and thirteen hours after leaving the village, tired and hungry, with blood-stained legs and torn clothes, I passed through the gates with a sigh of relief such as I have seldom sighed, and felt myself—at last—safe from all dangers.

Possibly in three months' time there will be no such place as Sheshouan, for the inhabitants have always been at war with the Sultan's people, and denied his authority. Not long ago His Majesty sent a governor there to try and bring about a more orderly state of affairs; and had he survived, he might have done so, but he was at once murdered by the fanatical inhabitants. Rumour, which often speaks the truth, says that the Sultan, on his approaching visit to Tetuan, intends to turn aside from his route and revenge his governor's death, to lay waste their country, kill their men, carry their women and children captive, and burn their city. My only hope is that my friends may escape.

WALTER B. HARRIS.

TANGIER, 1888.

GRESSET AND "VERT-VERT."

JEAN-BAPTISTE GRESSET wrote little, but he wrote enough to secure immortality. Except for one inspired moment in his manhood, it was only in the morning of life that he caught the whisper of the Muse. His fame rests on the one inimitable poem of his youth. "Le Méchant" is a masterpiece of the colourless *grisâtre* school of classic comedy, but it is by "Vert-Vert" that Gresset lives.

Gresset's life presents few marked features. The son of a distinguished lawyer, and the eldest of five children, he was born at Amiens in 1709. Like Voltaire, he was educated by the Jesuits. The fathers spared no pains to attract their brilliant pupil to their society, and with success. "Porté du berceau sur l'autel," as he says of himself, he entered on his novitiate at the age of sixteen. To complete his education, Gresset went to the Collège Louis le Grand at Paris. According to custom, he subsequently professed the subjects which he had studied. As Professor of the Humanities, he lived successively at Moulins—close to the Convent of the Visitandines, at Tours, and at Rouen. Meanwhile he served his apprenticeship in the art of rhyming. He translated the Eclogues, adapting the fourth to the birth of the Dauphin at Versailles in 1729. He wrote an ode to the Archbishop of Tours,

another to patriotism, a third on war, which was dedicated to Louis XV. in 1733. In this last year he wrote his "Voyage à Rouen," an amusing skit in prose and verse.

He was now studying theology with the intention of entering the Society of Jesus. In 1734 appeared "Vert-Vert, ou les Voyages du Perroquet de Nevers," a poem which completely changed his future. It was published without Gresset's knowledge. He himself set little store by it; but several copies were handed about among his friends, and one found its way to the printer. The poem took Paris by storm. Louis XV. read it aloud to his courtiers, and stopped his hunting in order to learn the fate of the parrot. Frederick of Prussia wrote Gresset an ode, and pressed him to come to Berlin. Society was amazed that such exquisite banter could have proceeded from the pen of a collegian. The jaded world of fashion was amused by the masterpiece of light poetry, and was grateful to the author for its brief rescue from *ennui*. Critics agreed with the reading public. Rousseau hailed "Vert-Vert" as a literary phenomenon which gave him and his contemporaries a hint to retire. "Quel prodige dans un homme de vingt-six ans! Quel désespoir pour tous nos prétendus beaux esprits des modernes!"

The parrot Vert-Vert¹ was the pet of the Convent of the Visitan-

¹ Six translators at least have attempted to render "Vert-Vert" into English verse. But of the number Father Prout alone has succeeded in reproducing the sprightly wit and graceful ease of Gresset. It need hardly be said that the following extracts are not by Father Prout; but they are at least faithful to the letter of the original, and may assist those who are not familiar with "Vert-Vert," or its incomparable English version, to follow the outlines of the story.

dines at Nevers; he fed in the refectory, slept in the dormitory, lightened the labours of the nuns and novices by his pretty ways, and was at least as much revered as the Father Confessor. He was, in fact, worthy of the Convent's love.

"Vert-Vert a parrot was of strict devotion,
A lovely soul, in holy things well taught.
Of wickedness he'd not the smallest notion,
Nor ever harboured one immodest thought;
But in their stead the canticles he knew,
Oremuses, and prayers, and collects not a few;
He could recite his 'Benedicite,'
Run through 'Our Mother' and 'Your Charity,'
Had even mastered some 'soliloquies,'
And Marie Alacoque's soft 'Reveries.'
Of course he had in this most sapient College
All helps that lead the mind to saintly knowledge;
Such learned damsels dwelt within the site,
Their brains could really word for word retain
All Christmas Carols, new or old in strain;
They taught and trained his mind to such a height,
They soon were equalled by their neophyte;
He caught their voices to the very tone,
And breathed devotions with a pious drone,—
Those holy sighs,—those notes in languid flow,—
Songs of the Nuns,—like turtle-doves in woe;
To sum up all—so well he'd learnt by heart,
He'd take the 'Mother of the Choir's' own part."

It was not surprising that the fame of Vert-Vert's learning and piety spread far and wide, and that he was day by day more ardently worshipped by the Nuns.

"And so he lived in this delightful nest,
Philosopher, and Saint, and Master blest,
Plump as a monk, and quite as much revered,
Good Father Vert-Vert, to veiled Hebes dear;
Fair as a heart could wish, as Abbé wise,
And loving all, he was to all endeared;
Polished and trim, perfumed, in fashion curled—
Oh, luckless day, when first he saw the world!"

The fatal time arrived when the Visitandines suffered their pet to go on a visit beyond the walls of their convent at Nevers.

It was only at the urgent entreaty of the Nuns of the Visitation at Nantes that they reconciled themselves to part even for a short time with their bird. Vert-Vert is accordingly placed on board the passage-boat which plies up and down the Loire between Nevers and Nantes.

"On that same frivolous and wandering boat
Whereon our holy bird was sent afloat
Embarked two damsels gay and soldiers three,
A nurse, a monk, two men of Gascony.
Now, for a child brought up in convent grace,
'Twas surely falling in strange company!
As for Vert-Vert,—in pretty ignorance he
Felt himself banished to some foreign place;
The language strange; the manners somewhat free.
He missed the Gospel texts, the grave quotation,
The pious converse, and the Bible tales
Uttered so sweetly underneath those veils:
Instead came words that spoke not of salvation,—
Phrases which gave him not the slightest hint
That they were taken from the Septuagint;

For the Dragoons,—no very pious
 race,—
 Here thought their sutler language
 quite in place:
 Besides, to charm the dulness of the
 road,
 They somewhat freely hymned the Vin-
 ons God.
 The girls and Gaseons never ceased to
 utter
 Their songs that savoured strongly of
 the gutter;
 The Boatmen too, who would not be
 outdone,
 Profanely rhymed, blasphemed, and
 swore in one,
 Nor did their voices, masculine and
 round,
 Clip from their oaths one syllable of
 sound.
 Amidst the din, embarrassed and con-
 fused,
 To silence forced, sad Vert-Vert shyly
 mused;
 Fearing to speak and ignorance betray,
 He knew not what to think or what to
 say.

"Now on their way the travellers
 kindly seek
 If they can make this dreaming parrot
 speak;
 So Brother Lubin, with unclerkly air,
 Thought he would question our young
 anchorite fair:
 A tender look passed o'er the saintly
 bird;
 Next came a sigh of puritanic care;
 Then 'Sister! Hail!' in primmest tones
 was heard.
 'All Hail! *Sacré!* Whom have we here
 before us?'—
 They all burst out, and laughed in
 ribald chorus.
 Thus mocked, the novice, timid and
 dismayed,
 Felt something had been wrong in what
 he said,
 And feared he'd ne'er of woman's smiles
 be winner,
 Till he could swear like any other sinner.
 His heart, by nature proud, which till
 this hour
 Had felt of incense sweet the soothing
 power,
 No longer could its modest virtue guard,
 His comrades' mockery pelted down too
 hard;—

Vert-Vert lost patience, and not it
 alone;
 With patience his first innocence was
 gone."

His descent is rapid: he curses
 the Sisters who had not instructed
 him in the elegant niceties and ner-
 vous strength of the French lan-
 guage; and, with all his powers, set
 himself to acquire the new learning.
 He made rapid progress.

"Like any trooper soon he cursed and
 swore,
 Mastered the mysteries of Satanic lore,
 And quickly gave the ancient saw the lie,
 That perfect villains grow up gradually;
 No Terms he kept, skipped every low
 Degree,
 And rose a Doctor of Iniquity."

At Nantes Vert-Vert was re-
 ceived with all the honours that
 were due to his reputed sanctity.
 But the Nuns were quickly un-
 deceived. He disconcerts the
 stately Lady Abbess, insults one
 Sister, mocks another, and imi-
 tates the nasal twang of a third.

"But things grew worse, when, in a
 corsair's tone,
 Wearied and bored their vapid talk to
 hear,
 Foaming with anger and with spite
 full-blown,
 He thundered out the most appalling
 words
 Which he had gathered from his ship-
 mates' hoards,
 Swearing as if all wickedness he knew,
 Hell and damnation passed in full
 review;
 Roundly the oaths came flying from
 his beak
 (The younger Sisters thought him talk-
 ing Greek),
 'Morblen,' 'Sacré,' 'Your pipe the
 Devil light!'
 The convent quivered, horror-struck
 with fright;
 Voiceless they grew, then, shuddering,
 turned and fled,
 And, as they ran, they crossed them-
 selves with dread,

Thought the Last Day was come, and
 helter-skelter
 Fled to the convent cellars for a
 shelter:
 Old Cunigonde slipped down, and,
 tumbling o'er,
 Left her last tooth a relic on the
 floor."

Vert-Vert's triumph is not for long; he is sent back to Nevers in deep disgrace. There a chapter is held to consider his misconduct: some of the elder Sisters vote for his instant execution, others for his life-long imprisonment. Finally he is condemned for nine weary months to solitary imprisonment, abstinence, and silence. His exemplary conduct abridges his penance, and he is released. But his restoration to liberty and sweetmeats is too sudden; he dies of joy and excess. He is buried in a funeral-urn which bears the following touching inscription:—

"Ye Novice Nuns! who to this Grove
 repair,
 To Elder Sisters' Eyes unknown,
 One moment, if ye can, your Tongues
 forbear
 And make our Woes your own.
 Is Silence painful — for a Space so
 brief?
 Then speak! but speak of our undying
 Grief.
 One Word our tender Sorrow's Cause
 imparts,—
 Here VERT-VERT lies; and here lie all
 our Hearts."

But though Vert-Vert is dead,
 his spirit survives:—

"'Tis said the parrot's soul refused to
 dwell
 Immured within the aforesaid funeral
 cell;
 Through transmigration the immortal
 bird
 Lives in the Nuns, who thus will still
 inherit,
 From age to age, his cackle and his
 spirit."

In 1734 "la brillante Baga-
 telle" was the divinity of Paris,

and "Vert-Vert" proved an excep-
 tionally happy hit. But Gresset
 soon learned that it is possible to
 be too successful. The Mother
 Superior of the Visitandines was
 incensed at the insult to her Or-
 der. Her brother, M. Chauvelin,
 was an important official; the
 affair could not be hushed up,
 because the poem had become the
 rage. Such pressure was brought
 to bear upon the Jesuits, that they
 were compelled to punish their
 pupil. There is, indeed, little
 that could be called offensive in
 the poem. Love painted in a
 convent might have caused a scan-
 dal; but here a bird plays the
 part of a human lover. A con-
 vent may refine or spiritualise
 Love, but it cannot wholly ex-
 clude the deity; and one of
 Gresset's aims may have been to
 unfold, without destroying their
 bloom, those unconscious aspira-
 tions which no discipline is able to
 suppress. Only the sincere con-
 trition of the poet, and the promise
 to write no more verses, saved him
 from immediate expulsion. He
 was banished to La Flèche. Those
 who have sate, on an autumn day,
 in the high-walled deserted garden
 of what is now the Prytanée—
 where no sound breaks the still-
 ness except the noise of the chest-
 nuts in the shady alleys breaking
 their husks and falling with a thud
 upon the ground—will sympathise
 with the brilliant young novice in
 his exile. In a letter to Madame
 du Perche he describes the place of
 his captivity:—

"La Flèche pourroit être aimable,
 S'il étoit de belles prisons;
 Un climat assez agréable,
 De petits bois assez mignons,
 Un petit vin assez potable,
 De petits concerts assez bons,
 Un petit monde assez passable,
 La Flèche pourroit être aimable,
 S'il étoit de belles prisons."

Gresset had promised to write no more verse, but he could not restrain himself. "La Chartreuse" and "Les Ombres" were published clandestinely in 1735. Rousseau preferred "La Chartreuse" to "Vert-Vert"; posterity has reversed his verdict. Yet "La Chartreuse" is a pathetic poem of great autobiographical interest. It reveals the perpetual struggle in Gresset's mind between his tastes and his sentiments. No doubt his brilliant success dissatisfied him with his position. Beyond his gloomy garret, beyond the smoky walls of Louis le Grand, lay the bright life of gilded salons. His glimpse of the gay world made his pedagogic future seem dull and monotonous. He is half conscious of a mistake: he compares himself to St Simon Stylites. The same feeling breaks out in "La Carême Impromptu" and "Le Lutrin Vivant," which were skits on the clergy of the town and country. Yet Gresset would probably never have had the resolution to sever the ties by which old associations bound him to the Jesuits. Fortunately for himself, the decision was taken out of his hands. In "La Chartreuse" he had attacked the Parliament of Paris, and the Fathers began to fear that Gresset would prove a troublesome member of their Society. In a very sensible letter, they ask the advice of Cardinal Fleury respecting their poetical novice. They do justice to Gresset's genius, remark that talent and judgment are not invariably allied, and that a study of French poetry "n'inspire ordinairement l'esprit de piété," and enclose copies of the young poet's publications. Fleury admired "Vert-Vert" extremely, but thought that "il est bien libertin," and in November 1735 Gresset was re-

stored to the world. In his "Adieux aux Jesuites" he extols the virtues of the Fathers—men who were

"Voués à la patrie, à leurs rois, à leur Dieu,
À leurs propres maux insensibles,
Prodiges de leurs jours, tendres,
parfaits amis."

He wept for the tie that was severed:—

"Oui, même en la laissant, j'ai regretté
ma chaîne,
Et je ne me suis vu libre qu'en
souponnant."

Even as late as December 1735 he was still in Paris, "en habit ecclésiastique, et déterminé à suivre cet état."

Gradually the attractions of Parisian society overpowered his religious sentiments. A sinecure office was created for him, with what was practically a pension attached. He went everywhere. Paris no longer condescended to receive men of letters on sufferance—it fell at their feet and worshipped. An excellent talker, a master of light banter, a wit, courtier, and epigrammatist, Gresset became a social lion. He was a frequent visitor at the Hôtel de Chaulnes, always open to men of genius, especially if, like the duke, they were Picards. There he met Bussy Rabutin, Bishop of Luçon, Le Père Bougeant, and La Motte d'Orléans. Bougeant proved less fortunate than himself. Like Gresset, he was banished to La Flèche for his 'Amusement philosophique sur la Langage des Bêtes,' and, unable to free himself from his vows, died there in exile. La Motte d'Orléans, himself a rhymist and a wit, was afterwards Bishop of Amiens, and Gresset's lifelong friend.

It was among the shady groves

of the magnificent country seat of the Duc de Chaulnes, between Roye and Péronne, that Gresset wrote his *Epistle to his Muse*. The poem is forgotten, as the palace has disappeared. The formal artificiality of *Le Nôtre's* garden seems to have entered for the time into the soul of the poet. Like all his verse written subsequently to 1735, it is comparatively worthless. Yet its publication exercised indirectly a great influence over his life. Rousseau criticised the epistle severely for its attack on Boileau. But the advice which he joined with his criticism was injudicious. He estimated Gresset by himself; he had supplemented his own scanty inspiration by all the resources of art; he believed genius to be "le travail," and that Gresset with more care might become the first of living authors. He urged him to write more slowly, and to turn from Anacreon to Sophocles. But Gresset's charm lay in his spontaneity; he rather improvised than composed. He might have replied to his friendly critic as Chapelle retorted upon Boileau—

"Pour moi c'est ainsi que j'en fais,
Et si je les voulais mieux faire,
Je les ferais bien mauvais."

Yet Rousseau's advice seems to have turned Gresset's attention to the stage. His first dramatic effort was a tragedy; his second, a comedy. "*Edward III.*" and "*Sydney*" appeared respectively in 1740 and 1745. Neither composition possesses great merit. But "*Edward III.*" is remarkable for its violation of the conventional rules of the drama. Volfax is murdered on the stage, not with poison but with a dagger. Thus Gresset may claim to be the precursor of Victor

Hugo, "*Hernani*," and the Romantic school.

Gresset's third play, "*Le Méchant*," was brought out in April 1747. It is a satire on the manners of the fashionable world. Men who were slaves of conventionality aped originality by creating artificial requirements; to escape boredom they turned scoundrels, and practised libertinism as an art and a pastime. Cynicism sapped the foundations of society, substituting the opposite faults for the old code of honour, and passing from words to deeds. This is the corrupt state of society which Gresset assails. In the character of Cléon he strips the mask from the contemptible man of fashion who lives to propagate scandal, sows dissensions in families, compromises women by his attentions, and seeks to profit by the mischief he creates,—who destroys characters with a sneer, damns new plays with an epigram, and believes that

"Se moquer du monde est tout l'art
d'enjouir."

Cléon scoffs at love, simplicity, and naturalness. He mocks at truth, for

"Rien n'est vrai sur rien, qu'importe ce
qu'on dit?"

At virtue, because

"Tout le monde est méchant et per-
sonne ne l'est."

At honour, for

"On me craint, on m'estime."

At friendship, for

"Quant aux amis, crois moi, ce vain
nom qu'on se donne
Se prend chez tout le monde, et n'est
vrai chez personne.
J'en ai mille, et pas un."

"*Le Méchant*" has contributed largely to the proverbial currency of France. Probably the earliest

use of the phrase, "Possédé du démon de la propriété," occurs in this comedy. Some of the sayings, like "L'esprit qu'on veut avoir gâté celui qu'on a," are, as La Harpe has said, worthy of La Rochefoucauld.

"Le Méchant" lacks invention and dramatic situations. But the character of Cléon, to which all the other actors are subordinated, is a true creation. It is said—and the rare finish of the verse, the weakness of the plot, the coldness of the intrigue, and the subordination of all the characters to the one central figure, confirm the statement—that Gresset puts into the mouth of Cléon a number of detached satiric pieces which he had long kept by him, and, to give consistency to the whole, fitted them together by means of an ill-constructed plot. In "Vert-Vert" Gresset had made the most of the little world with which he was familiar. He had touched with a light hand and smiling face the little oddities, innocent peculiarities, solemn nothings, and minute observances of conventional life. Now his canvas is broader, his colour stronger, his figures more firmly sketched. His world is wider, but it is still limited. He never descended into the arena of life, or mingled with the crowd; he still regards human nature from out of a corner. But he brought to bear upon his subject a keen observation and a delicate perception. What he lacked was breadth of sympathy and depth of feeling. While *Tartuffe* is the rascal for all time, Cléon is the product of a particular but recurring phase of civilisation: the one represents eternal verities of our essential humanity, the other embodies ephemeral and superficial results of special social surroundings. But

if Cléon is as a creation inferior to the *Tartuffe* of Molière, he is immeasurably superior to the *Flatteur* of Rousseau, with whom he challenges comparison. It may be truly said—and the praise is not slight—that Gresset was the only dramatist since Molière who, not content to skim the surface of human nature, had penetrated into the depths that lay below the crust of conventionality.

The publication of "Le Méchant" opened to Gresset the doors of the Academy. His rival was Piron, who revenged himself for the defeat in caustic lines:—

"En France on fait par un plaisant
moyen
Taire un auteur quand d'écrits il as-
somme ;
Dans un fauteuil d'académicien,
Lui quarantième, on fait asscoir mou
homme ;
Lors il s'endort, et ne fait plus qu'un
somme ;
Plus n'en avez prose ni madrigal," &c.

In the following year Gresset wrote another comedy, called "*Les Bourgeois, ou le Secret de la Comédie.*" But it does not appear to have been acted.

Two such triumphs in two different fields as "Vert-Vert" and "Le Méchant" seemed to promise a brilliant career. But in 1749, at the age of 40, Gresset left the capital for ever, and withdrew to his native place. He followed the advice of Montaigne, and "retira son âme de la presse." Two years later he married. At Amiens, within the sound of the cathedral bells so dear to Picards, he became the centre of a small society of intimate friends. His only visits to Paris were paid as an academician. His bosom friend was now La Motte d'Orléans, the Bishop of Amiens, and through his influence all the traditions of Gresset's early life

resumed their sway. In 1759 he abjured his errors at the feet of the Archbishop, burned three unpublished comedies, the two unpublished cantos—"Le Parloir des Sœurs" and "Les Pensionnaires"—which he had added to "Vert-Vert," and wrote his letter upon Comedy, renouncing the stage, and regretting the scandals he had caused. His friends recognised in the change the result of lifelong convictions; his enemies attributed his awakened conscience to his recognition of failing powers. His letter upon Comedy drew from Voltaire some bitter lines:—

"Gresset, donné de double privilège
D'être au collège bel esprit mondain
Et dans le monde un homme de collège;
Gresset dévot, et longtemps petit badin,
Sanctifié par ses palinodies,
Il prétendait, avec compunction,
Qu'il avait fait jadis des comédies
Dont à la Vierge il demandait pardon.
Gresset se trompe: il n'est pas si
coupable."

No man of eminence escaped the lash of the irascible patriarch of Ferney; but special circumstances irritated Voltaire against Gresset. The success of "Vert-Vert" wounded his pride; he is said to have recognised in Cléon some traits of his own character; and he was disappointed to find that Gresset was not, after all, a *philosophe*. "Insolent ex-Jésuite," "fat orgueilleux," "plat fanatique," are some of the abusive expressions which he hurled at Gresset's head.

Gresset lived the last twenty years of his life in great privacy. He died in 1777. He was buried in the cemetery of St Denis at Amiens. But during the Revolution the chapel in which his monument was placed was turned into a stable, and the cemetery into a cow-pasture. In 1811 his remains were removed to the cathedral, in

the north transept of which stands his monument.

A prize was offered by the Academy of Amiens in 1782, 1783, 1784, 1785 for an *éloge* on Gresset's career. In 1785 Sylvain Bailly and Robespierre were among the competitors. Bailly's panegyric is a cultivated and graceful performance. Robespierre's oration, on the other hand, is full of pompous commonplaces. He congratulates Gresset on the religious scruples which had induced him to abandon dramatic composition, and goes out of his way to flatter Louis XVI.—"cette tête si chère et si sacrée."

A few words in conclusion on Gresset's masterpiece. The true title of "Vert-Vert" is undoubtedly "Vair-Vert," as it was originally written, and the name accurately describes a grey-green parrot. No edition of the poem was ever published with the author's sanction or corrections. In 1747 Gresset wrote to protest against the editions of his works which had been previously published. He promises to issue a correct edition, enlarged by two new cantos of "Vert-Vert," and other unpublished compositions. We have seen that the two new cantos were burned in 1759, and the promised authorised edition was never published. Had Gresset ever issued a corrected edition, he would in all probability have restored the original title, "Vair-Vert."

"Vert-Vert" is still as fresh as the day when it was written. Light as air, simple in structure, it retains all the bright colours of the prism which it received from Gresset's genius. Written at an imitative age, it is a copy of nothing. Boileau's "Lutrin" was before Gresset as an example. He

might have made his parrot talk like Æneas, or introduced the classic machinery of gods and goddesses, or mingled allegorical personages with his real actors. He struck out for himself a new and wholly original line. He refused

"Psalmidier la cause infortunée
D'un perroquet non moins brillant
qu'Enée,
Non moins dévot, plus malheureux
que lui ;"

or

"Faire un autre Odyssée
Sur sa vertu par la sort traversée
Sur son voyage et ses longues erreurs."

He does not expand his poem into thousands of lines, for he perceived that the age was intolerant of lengthy exercises, and he knew that his slender thread might snap with undue extension. He preserves the limits of the probable, writes in a natural style, and gives the poem all the interest of apparent truth. Vert-Vert is no bird of fable ; he retains the nature of a parrot ; he is endowed with no impossible powers of reason or of speech. He may be

"The wisest fool that ever swung,"
Or had a crown, or held a tongue ;"

but he is a parrot after all, a bird of paradise, who, in the days of his innocence, was a fit inmate of the conventual Eden. So it is that we are charmed with his scraps of mystic lore, amused with the effect of his oaths, saddened by his imprisonment ; we rejoice at his pardon, and mourn for his decease.

Skelton's 'Boke of Phylipp Sparrowe,' which contains the history of Philip's life and death among the black nuns at Carowe, near Norwich, bears considerable resemblance to the story of the parroquet of Nevers. Unfortun-

ately, neither the ease and playfulness, nor the mirthful dancing measure, can conceal its occasional coarseness. Gresset's English rival is not "beastly" Skelton, but Pope, whose "Rape of the Lock" is, like "Vert-Vert," vastly superior to Boileau's "Lutrin." One element of the charm of the "Rape of the Lock" is the artistic skill, the deftness of workmanship, which triumphs over the uncouthness of the language. This element of surprise contributes nothing to the charm of a poem written, like "Vert-Vert," in the native tongue of delicate raillery. The effect of "Vert-Vert" resembles the impression produced by the felicitous language of Gray ; but while Gresset charms by his instinctive spontaneity, the English poet succeeds through tasteful eclecticism. In the literature of his own country, Gresset's place is assured. He takes his seat but little below La Fontaine. Though he cannot claim to rival the fabulist in breadth of treatment or moral experience, he shares his rare secret of making trifles important yet not serious, and approaches him closely in his exquisite gift of telling a story. "Vert-Vert" is one of those "jolisiens qui ne conduisent à rien." It has been translated into every European language, but probably Gresset valued most its translation into Sèvres, each plaque of green china depicting some scene from the history of Vert-Vert. It is impossible not to associate the parrot's life and death with this most perfectly appropriate rendering.

"Vert-Vert" contains none of the ribaldry of the page who is a boy in years and a man in experience. It is rather the frolic of a light-hearted boy ; for though the novice was twenty-four when he

wrote the poem, he knew no more of the world than a child. If he glances at dangerous subjects, it is only to steal quietly and quickly away. Like all the *conteurs Gaulois*, he laughs at the Church; but his laugh is always silvery and merry, never coarse or mordant. His quick perception and delicate sense of humour revealed to him the trivial aspects of conventual life; but there is no trace of hostile feeling in the poem. Verse seems to be to Gresset what prose is to most men, his natural mode of expression. But though his language is easy almost to negligence, he is never slovenly, nor is his fulness that luxury of words which often betrays poverty of mind. His style is at once harmonious and varied, trenchant and graceful. He never substitutes affectation for novelty, nor breaks monotony by harshness or subtlety. The poem is a treasure of the French language, brilliant and fascinating as Vert-Vert himself.

On other grounds, "Vert-Vert" deserves to be studied. The poem is Gresset himself, the nation, and the age.

Like Vert-Vert, Gresset was brought up within the walls of a monastery, and knew by rote scraps of mystic lore, which he acquired without any depth of conviction. Once introduced into the world, he quickly learned

"Jurer et maugréer,
Mieux qu'un vieux diable au fond d'un
benitier."

He takes the impress of his surroundings: the pious neophyte passes into the social lion, if not the *philosophe*. His sentiments are religious, his tastes mundane; his flexible character inclined this way or that, as one or the other gained the upper hand. In ma-

ture age his youthful sentiments overpower the tastes of his manhood, and, like his own hero, he abjures his errors and dies, as it were, within monastic walls.

"Vert-Vert" bears the sign-manual of the French nation. The nimble wit which presents a subject in a hundred different attitudes, suggesting contrasts and harmonies with an inexhaustible ingenuity that is never at fault and never strained, the instinctive precision of touch, the delicate neatness of the supple style, the exquisite variety of airy nothings,—all these are eminently characteristic of the nation. The charming slyness, the simple raillery, the piquant originality, the vivacity and lightness of the satire, the perfection of the finish, are the natural heritage of a people who have many words to express a mental gift for which the English language possesses no exact equivalent. It breathes throughout that undefined air of gay leisure which surrounds a people who, with all their indefatigable industry, have yet deified Idleness.

Finally, "Vert-Vert" is a poem of the age—the Iliad of the early years of Louis XV. It expresses a marked stage in the decadence of the monarchy. It makes no attempt at epic grandeur; it is, like the audience it addresses, frivolous,—it only seeks to distract thought. Historians have preferred to dwell on the culminating glories of the Bourbon monarchy rather than on the infamies which prepared for its destruction. Beneath a superficial appearance of stability, society underwent a radical change. Never were charms of manner, polish of language, or costly refinements carried to a higher pitch of perfection. But under this glittering

surface all was rottenness. Gradually virtue, patriotism, generosity were supplanted; open profligacy followed on cumbrous ceremonial; cynical ridicule succeeded to high-flown enthusiasm; even courage was sneered at by the king; insolent guilt replaced the formal hypocrisies of the Court of the "Grand Monarque." Louis XV. lost whatever sense of duty he had ever possessed. Devoured heart and soul by *ennui*, he sought distraction in a series of mistresses; every shred of reverence towards the Crown was torn away, and the king was no less despised than hated. In the early stages of decay, youth and grace masked the progress of disease: the Court was dissipated and frivolous, but the powder was still on the wings of the butterflies. Society consumed its energies in a *bataille des fleurs*, with roses which were yet fresh with the morning dews of spring-

tide. Thirty years later the combatants were wrinkled sirens and leering satyrs, whose missiles were artificial flowers. "Vert-Vert" in its grace and beauty, represents the early years of decadence. Its tone of humorous irony fell in with the tastes of the day. Beliefs were gone, but habits retained their sway. Society had lost its faith in old traditions; it was too careless to be hostile, or too polished to betray its feelings. Men preserved their gravity, and even increased the external pomp of respect; but it listened to the teaching of religion with the decorous smile of unavowed incredulity. "Vert-Vert" is the literary embodiment, in its most perfect form, of the gay infidelity, the sprightly scepticism, the religious *insouciance* which preceded the bitter hostility of undisguised and aggressive atheism.

R. E. PROTHERO.

IRISH HOUSEKEEPING AND IRISH CUSTOMS IN THE LAST CENTURY.¹

THE past exercises a certain fascination over the mind. We like to hear of those who lived in the days when we were not: their customs interest us, and distance veils in part the discomforts they endured. A sketch, then, though necessarily brief and imperfect, of everyday life in Ireland during the last century, may have a degree of novelty for readers already familiar through history, biography, and tradition with English customs at the same period.

Irish life one hundred years ago, while marked by characteristic features, resembled in many particulars that of the Scotch, as depicted by their great novelist. Mrs Pendarves, afterwards Mrs Delany, who first visited the country in 1731, writes of the people: "There is a heartiness among them that is more like Cornwall than any I have known, and great sociableness;" but if one may judge of the contemporary Cornish from Baring Gould's 'Gaverocks' and 'John Herring,' the Irish had the advantage on the score of refinement. This was probably owing to the constant communication kept up with France and Spain.

Visitors to the capital describe it as having been a gay and charming city. In most ways it was superior to the Dublin of 1888. Men of rank and wealth resided there, and kept up state consistent with their position: it had not yet sunk to the level of a provincial town; and we get glow-

ing accounts of the Duke of Leinster's stately dwelling in Kildare Street, and the decorations of Moira House, of Lord Charlemont's town house in Rutland Square, and his country place, Marino, at Clontarf; of "Buck" Whalley's residence in Stephen's Green, and the Earl of Meath's mansion close by,—all of which, and many others, have now been transformed into convents, colleges, hospitals, Government offices, or other public institutions. There were balls, dinners, receptions, masquerades, operas, and concerts in abundance. Arthur Young says: "Dublin far exceeded my expectations. . . . There is very good society there in a parliamentary winter; a great round of dinners, and parties, and balls, and suppers every night in the week, some of which are very elegant."

Ridottos were held, to which the men subscribed two moidores apiece, and got in return two tickets to present to ladies of their acquaintance. There were also subscription concerts on the same plan, so that we are told "the women were at no expense for their entertainment." One curious custom is mentioned—namely, that on the 23d of October, the anniversary of the Irish Rebellion of 1641, open house was held at the Castle, and the numerous guests were sumptuously feasted. Dinner over, the doors were thrown open, and the crowd outside permitted to rush in, clear the dishes, and carry off the fragments.

¹ The writer begs to acknowledge the kindness of Mrs Morgan John O'Connell, of Longfield, Co. Tipperary, who supplied many interesting details of Clare, Cork, and Kerry customs, and also gave permission to print extracts from MSS. in her possession.

We read with interest of a visit paid to the Irish House of Commons by two ladies, thus recorded by one of them :—

“We rose at nine o'clock, put on our genteel dishabille, and went to the Parliament House at eleven to hear an election determined. The parties were Brigadier Parker, the sitting member, and Mr Ponsonby, the petitioner. Mr Southwell's interest was the first, and the last was Sir Richard Meade's.

. . . I believe we were the most impartial hearers among all the ladies that were there, though rather inclined to Sir Richard Meade's side. I was very well entertained. . . . Mr Hamilton brought us up chicken and ham and tongue, and everything we could desire. At four o'clock the Speaker adjourned the House till five. We then were conveyed by some gentlemen of our acquaintance into the Usher of the Black Rod's room where we had a good fire, meat, tea, and bread-and-butter. When the House reassembled we resumed our seats, and stayed till eight.”

Dublin was, however, at no period a typically Irish city, and if we seek traces of customs now obsolete, we must collect the traditions of the West and South-west, for there old ways lingered longest, and isolation from the busy world of fashion and politics tended to concentrate the interest of women in particular on their household affairs. Life in these remote districts, if sometimes painfully exciting, was not lively as a rule ; but the people were always gay and light-hearted, until the famine of 1848, which changed at once and for ever the national character. A ride of fifteen miles or thereabouts to a neighbour's house for dinner or a dance was quite an ordinary affair : every one was hospitable, and it was customary to set each day two or three extra places at table on the chance of stray guests. “They not only treat us magnificently,” writes Mrs Pendarves from Mayo, “but if we

are to go to an inn, they constantly provide us with a basket crammed with good things. No people can be more hospitable or obliging, and there is not only great abundance, but great order and neatness. The roads are much better in Ireland than in England, mostly causeways, a little jumbling, but very safe.” In all parts of which this last remark held good, the gentry kept handsome coaches or chariots, drawn by four or six horses, according to their rank and means ; but in mountainous districts, where there were only rough bridle-paths, ladies rode on pillions behind a male relative or a groom, and continued the practice even when quite old women. It may be added, that until about seventy years ago horses were not clipped, while cobs were cropped—that is, had their ears and tail docked, like terriers. Every lady, no matter how remote the place where she lived, wore at that period a silk gown when dressed for the day, it being an epoch when people kept things “for best.” In the morning, and when occupied in household duties, woollen was in winter the favourite wear, and in summer, linen, stamped in gay colours like chintz, and very durable. The manufacture has since been discontinued, but it might with advantage be revived. Hunting and dancing were the favourite amusements, together with the national game of hurling, a species of hockey. Great interest was taken in matches between opposing counties or baronies, and we even hear of games played in Paris by the Irish Jacobite exiles, wherein Munster was pitted against Leinster, and each side had its champion hurler. Nearly all the sons and daughters of the Irish Catholic gentry were educated abroad. They thus had engrafted on their Irish

liveliness that stateliness and dignity characteristic of Continental society previous to the French Revolution. The difficulty was to get them safely away, to conceal their absence, and then to secure their return home. Jane O'Connor of Clonalis, great-grandmother to the present writer, was brought back from her Parisian convent by the Rev. Dr Clifford, a priest of the Sorbonne, and great danger to both was involved in the journey. Dr Clifford's clerical character of course was concealed, and the girl, who rode behind him on a pillion through France and England, her maid similarly mounted on a groom's horse, doubtless passed for his daughter. All the upper classes spoke and wrote English. Irish was in general use for communicating with servants and tenants unacquainted with the Sassenach tongue. French or Spanish was naturally acquired by the upper classes while residing in the country where one or other was spoken; and Latin was a language familiar even to Kerry and Galway peasants, as we learn from the Pope's Nuncio Rinuncini.

All the best Irish families were poor—at any rate, all who were purely Irish, as distinguished from Anglo-Irish; but they were proud to a degree. They looked on most of their rich neighbours as *parvenus*, and received and exacted as much respect and homage as if still in possession of the estates that had fallen into other hands. . . .

"My dear," said a Galway lady of the old school, speaking of a well-known nobleman, "you can-

not say *he* is of ancient birth; why, his ancestor only came to this country in the reign of Henry II.!"—a fair record some dukes might think who trace no higher than the seventeenth century.

After the invasion of Ireland in 1172, five families—the O'Neills of Ulster, the O'Conors of Connaught, the O'Melachlins of Meath, the M'Morrags of Leinster, and the O'Briens of Thomond—were granted a special charter allowing them the benefit of English laws, and were known as *de quinque sanguinibus*, or "the five bloods." In the eighteenth century the descendants of the first and last named, Viscount O'Neill and Lord Inchiquin, bore English titles, but the representatives of the other three were men of fallen fortunes. Arthur Young,¹ writing in 1779, says: "At Clonells (Clonālis), near Castlerea, lives O'Connor, the direct descendant of Roderick O'Connor, who was King of Ireland six or seven hundred years ago. There is a monument of him in Roscommon church, with his sceptre, &c. I was told as a certainty that this family were here long before the coming of the Milesians. Their possessions, formerly so great, are much reduced. . . . The common people pay him the greatest respect, and send him presents of cattle, &c., upon various occasions. They regard him as the prince of a people involved in one common ruin."

We are told of M'Dermot, known as the Prince of Coolavin, who belonged to one of the principal Connaught families, that his

¹ While accurate on the whole, Arthur Young, from not knowing Irish history, falls into two or three errors. The O'Conors are descended from Thorlough O'Connor, Roderick's father, through his second son, *Cathal Crowdearg*, or Charles of the Red Hand. Roderick is buried at Cong in Co. Galway. The monument in Roscommon Abbey is that of Felim O'Connor, the son of Cathal Crowdearg, who died in 1265, and was buried in the Dominican monastery he had founded ten years before.

income in 1776 barely amounted to £100 a-year, yet he never suffered his children to sit down in his presence. Lady Morgan adds that his daughter-in-law alone was permitted to eat at his table; even his wife was not accorded this privilege, as, though well-born, she was not of royal blood. When Lord Kingsborough, Mr Ponsonby, Mr O'Hara, Mr Sandford, and others, all men of position, came to see him, he only took notice of the two last-named, whom he thus addressed: "O'Hara, you are welcome! Sandford, I am glad to see your mother's son" (his mother was an O'Brien). "As to the rest of ye, come in as ye can." One more illustration, and we have done. A certain Mrs D——, a Roscommon woman, and a friend of the writer's family, died some eighteen or twenty years ago, being then an extremely old woman, but retaining her memory, her sharp tongue, and her grand manner to the last. Of her it was related that in her youth, being a noted beauty and toast, she was complimented by being requested to open a county ball. On her way to the entertainment some delay occurred through her carriage breaking down, and on arriving she found to her mortification that, having waited for her in vain, the stewards had called on a rival belle to lead off the first dance. The indignant fair one was equal to the emergency. She promptly desired the attendants, who dared not disobey, to place benches across the assembly room, so as to cut off the party dancing at the upper end, and sent a peremptory order to the musicians to cease playing until she gave a signal. Then taking up her position with her friends outside the barrier she had created, she announced: "Ladies and gentlemen, the ball will *now* begin; and you will please remember that

wherever Mrs D—— of C—— stands, is the head of the room"!

At all times the Irish carefully traced and preserved their pedigrees, the Ollams, or Seanchaidhe, being specially devoted to genealogy before the advent of the Normans. Yet while haughtiness of manner and family pride were characteristic of the eighteenth century, these people were kindly, warm-hearted, sympathetic to their equals and to those admittedly their inferiors. The consciousness of having, through no fault of theirs, lost land, money, and position, occasioned and excused many outbursts of self-assertion, that under happier circumstances would have been unpardonable.

We have said that women found their chief interest and occupation in household affairs. They attended to many details now delegated to servants, and frequently, like the gentlewomen of the middle ages, led a secluded life spinning or embroidering with their maids. Numerous attendants were *de rigueur* at the period of which we write. Wages were low, and food was plentiful, so the kitchens of country-houses were filled with troops of sturdy, red-armed, bare-footed lasses, who carried home peat, the sole fuel, drew water in pitchers from the well, ground corn in a stone quern as Eastern women still do, milked the cows and helped about the dairy in summer; prepared flax, cleaned and scutched it, and spun it into thread during the long winter evenings, by the glare of a bog-wood torch or the feebler light of rush candles.

"Bad to have many horses without ploughing to do;
Bad to have many maidens without spinning to do,"

says a Kerry proverb.

Rough lads were always to be found hanging about the stable-

yard, ready to run errands or lead round a visitor's horse. Besides these irregulars, there was a staff of upper servants who waited at table, cooked, washed, did fine sewing, and all the lighter work of the establishment. The men were provided with livery; the women were neatly dressed, and wore shoes and stockings. Families of any position kept a butler; each lady had her own maid, each gentleman his man, these being, as a rule, foster-sister and foster-brother to those they served. The ties of fosterage were considered in Ireland to be as sacred as those of blood; and as all children of the better classes were given out to nurse, they had a number of *quasi* relations amongst their tenants and dependants. We frequently hear of one foster-brother giving his life for another, and of a young man of family joining the Irish brigade in France, or Spain, or Austria, accompanied by the son of his peasant fosterer, who would fight as a private in the regiment his master commanded, and die if need be at his side. In the romantic family traditions common in Ireland, when a beautiful girl falls in love with one who differs from her in rank, creed, or politics, a foster-sister is almost invariably reported to have been her messenger and confidant.

A well-known character in Irish country-houses was the old sportsman or keeper, who could do a little of everything; who knew the bend of the river where salmon rose freely or trout lurked behind stones, the coppice where a litter of foxes was hidden, the corner of the plantation nearest the oat-field beloved by the pheasants; who was an authority on bait, traps, and snares, and whose principal duty was to keep his master's table supplied with game and fish.

The cost of living was less than in England at the same period. We hear of a wife, three children, a nurse, three maids, three men, a good table, a carriage and four horses, being kept for £500 a-year.

Servants in the last century were not highly paid. Fifteen shillings to a pound a-year was all the rougher domestics received, in addition to food and clothing. A footman earned from four to six guineas per annum; a professed woman-cook might be had for six guineas, a good housemaid for three pounds, a kitchenmaid for two pounds or less; and a butler, the best paid of all, was happy with from ten to twelve pounds a-year. Their food was plain but abundant. For breakfast they had porridge or "brick bread" and milk. Brick bread consisted of whole meal coarsely ground and made into flat round cakes, baked on a griddle over peat embers; it probably derived its name from the Irish word *brack*, speckled. For dinner there was salt meat and vegetables, eggs, and occasionally fish, with abundance of potatoes, accompanied by "piggins" or "noggins" of butter-milk or cider. Piggins and noggins, it may be explained, are beechen drinking-vessels with a handle, resembling miniature milking-pails. Delf was little used, the servants eating off pewter. Arthur O'Leary, the outlaw, was proscribed by the Government for refusing to sell his priceless mare for £5, as was then the law for Catholics. He stood a siege, and resisted stoutly, aided by his beautiful wife, Dark Eileen O'Connell. She had married him in opposition to her family, and clung to him with unswerving devotion through all the vicissitudes of his checkered career. She loaded his guns as he fired, and when ammunition ran short, had the servants' pewter plates and

dishes melted down and cast into bullets, while her linen was torn up for gun-wads. Her husband was afterwards shot by soldiers, May 14, 1773, and she wrote in Irish a highly poetical *caoin* (pronounced *keen*), or funeral chant, which is still in existence. In this she tells of her happy home, her wedding, the feast on her home-coming, her peaceful, luxurious life, their many friends, the gay hunting-parties, and contrasts past joys with present woe. She describes the murder,—how the riderless mare came home, how she sprang on its back and rode to find the corpse—her horror at the sight; and she ends by fiercely vowing vengeance on Morris, the instigator of the crime. Truly, from some aspects, one hundred years ago seems very far off; and it is difficult to believe that Dark Eileen, with her outlawed lover and her wild death-song, was aunt to a personage as prosaic and modern as Daniel O'Connell. There was infinitely less difference between manners and customs in the reign of Elizabeth and those in the reign of George III., than between the times of George III. and the days of Queen Victoria.

To return to our domestic details. Salmon was so abundant in some places that it was not unusual for servants entering a new situation to stipulate that they should not be required to eat it oftener than three days in the week. Similar agreements, we are told, used to be made between masters and servants in the districts watered by the Scottish salmon rivers, down to the beginning of the present century. Every mansion had an orchard and a cider-house attached, with press and various utensils complete, so that no one entered the servants' hall and retired with thirst unquenched.

As tea cost from fifteen to twenty shillings a-pound, it was a luxury never bestowed on domestics, unless by way of a special favour, or in case of illness, its medicinal value being rated highly, but the butler or lady's-maid sometimes secured a little after the family meals. In the breakfast-room two tables were laid every morning. At one the mistress of the house presided: it was supplied with tea, coffee, and sometimes chocolate. Mrs Delany speaks of "tea, coffee, toast-and-butter, caudle, &c." There was abundance of home-made bread, white and brown, soda-cakes, slim-cakes, and other delicacies familiar to Irishmen—cream, fresh butter, honey, preserves, and fruit. At the other table, intended for the men of the family, appeared substantial joints of cold beef and mutton, ham, cold fowl, game-pies, and fish, with potatoes, washed down by claret, cider, and strong ale in abundance. The ladies seldom partook of this substantial fare except on a hunting morning; and it was customary for the men, having satisfied their appetites, to draw near their hostess and take a cup of tea from her hands. It must be remembered that in those days lunch as a meal was not known: even at a comparatively late period it was looked on as an effeminate institution, nor is it to this day as much favoured in Ireland by gentlemen as in England. In the last century only two meals a-day were eaten by many men, or three at the most, the third being a nine-o'clock supper; and though their wives and daughters sipped tea in the interval, the lords of creation disdained the beverage.

Dinner was generally served at four P.M. It was abundant to profusion. The wines were excellent, being the choicest produce of

French and Spanish vineyards, whose quality was remarked by almost all visitors to Ireland; and the potatoes were, as at the same period in England, long and deep. Costly silver, handsome glass and china, and the finest linen, appeared in all the better-class houses. A characteristic feature was "the potato ring." This was of silver, richly chased, and was used to support the great bowl in which potatoes were then brought to table. The sequence of the courses differed widely from that now general. Soups came in the third or fourth place; fish, flesh, and sweets jostled each other; while potted meats and cold pasties were not unfrequent items on the bill of fare. For more accurate knowledge of what our ancestors ate at their principal meal, we are indebted to a chronicler of the time. In 1747 she sends the following *menu* of a dinner to her sister; the quaint spelling is retained:—

"*First Course.*—Fish, beef-steaks, rabbit and onions, fillet of veal, blamange, cherries, Dutch cheese.

"*Second Course.*—Turkey, pont (poult?), salmon, pickled salmon, grilde (grilse?) and quails, little terrene peas, cream, mushrooms terrene, apple-pye, crabs, leveret, cheese-cakes, almond cream, eurrants and gooseberries, orange butter.

"*Dessert.*—Raspberries and cream, sweetmeats and jelly, strawberries and cream."

She adds—

"I give as little hot meat as possible. The invitation was 'to beef-stakes,' which we are famous for."

A less elaborate meal is thus recorded:—

"*First Course.*—Turkeys *endove* (?), boyled neck of mutton, greens, &c., soup, plum-pudding, roast loin of veal, venison pasty.

"*Second Course.*—Partridge, sweet-

bread, collared pig, creamed apple-tart, crabs, fricassee of eggs, pigeons.

"No dessert to be had."

On the 6th of October 1764, at a dinner given to eleven persons in honour of a marriage, this was the bill of fare:—

"Turbot and soles, remove ham, foremeat, &c., 2 partridges and 2 grouse, rabbits and onions [apparently a favourite dish], sweetbreads and crumbs, salmigundi, soup, boyled chicken, collop veal and olives, pease, cream-pudding, plumb crocant, chine of mutton, turkey in jelly, hare, lobster fricassee.

"*Dessert.*—Nine things, six of them fruit out of our own garden, and a plate of fine alpine strawberries."

As the writer was a woman who mixed in the best society from her childhood, and as her husband, if not rich, was comfortably off, her dinners may be taken as fair specimens of their class. Supper differed from dinner only in the number of dishes being fewer.

A novel mode of cooking was popular in Mayo. It consisted in roasting a sheep whole in its skin, and was called "swilled mouton." This is the "hogg in hairst," as it was styled north of the Tay. We are assured by those who tasted it that it was excellent—so good, indeed, that nothing else was eaten when it was to be had.

While all the necessities of life were cheap and abundant, the gentry of the west and south-west coasts depended for rum, claret, Spanish wines, snuff, silk stockings, cambric, French shoes and gloves, laces, dried fruit, and other luxuries, on the smugglers who abounded at the time. None amongst them thought smuggling wrong. The Government forbade it, of course; but then it forbade many things which they knew were not sinful, and moreover, being Jacobites to a man, they did not acknowledge its author-

ity. Protestants condoned the practice for the sake of the good things they gained thereby; and even some magistrates, it was whispered, were not averse to finding mysterious casks of rum, or rolls of silk, laid at their door during the night. If they suspected the donors, they were prudent men, who held their peace on the subject, and were discreetly blind to the comings and goings of strange craft. The Catholics, apart from profit, were thrown, by circumstances and the penal laws, into the arms of the contraband traders, who, when no ordinary seamen would take the risk, conveyed their sons and daughters to the Continent for education; who brought tidings from exiled friends and relatives at the Courts of St Germain, Vienna, or Madrid; and who perilled their lives many a time and oft to secure spiritual ministrations to their patrons, by landing disguised priests on their shores. They were brave fellows those smugglers, and kindly despite their calling.

In country places, remote from shops, all ordinary domestic requisites were made at home. Most Irish gentlewomen, even poetesses like Eileen *Dhuw*, were notable housekeepers: with the valiant woman of the Scriptures, they "sought wool and flax, and wrought by the counsel of their hands." "Go to your spinners" was, one hundred years ago, a form of rebuke from a husband to a wife, when the latter showed a disposition to meddle in matters outside her province.

The heroine of the old ballad says—

"I'll sell my rock, I'll sell my reel,
I'll sell my only spinning-wheel,
To buy my love a sword of steel;"

and devotion could go no further,

English ladies at the same period had not abandoned the spinning-wheel. Mrs Delany, and her mother Mrs Granville, were noted spinners. The former had the honour of giving a lesson in the art to Queen Charlotte, and we hear the pupil succeeded "tolerably well for a queen." Many Irish families possess to this day fine linen woven from thread spun by a great-great-grandmother. Weavers lived in every village who were glad to earn a few shillings in the week by working for families around. The web was made in different qualities, according to the purpose for which it was intended: one almost as coarse as canvas was for servants' sheets and shirts, or linen to be given to the poor; another somewhat finer, such as Mrs Ernest Hart now employs for embroidering on, was intended for the upper servants; the very finest was for family use. A kind of diaper was also made, with a diamond pattern, for towelling, very strong and durable, and tablecloths of various lengths and degrees of fineness. One of the patterns, having a raised double cross-bar, was known as "farmer's fancy," and is still made in Clare and Kerry. It seemed hardly possible to wear out these home-made linens.

Wool, too, was spun at home, and made into frieze, flannel, blankets, and coarse stuff for maid-servants' gowns and petticoats. The blankets were much too heavy for use, according to modern notions, but our ancestors associated weight with heat, and bore the load uncomplainingly. They were woven in the favourite double-diamond or herring-bone patterns, and were almost everlasting in wear. Counterpanes for servants' use were made of dull

green or russet flannel, stuffed with the *dhags* or *dhaggauns* — that is, the short coarse wool off the sheep's legs, with the trimmings of the fleeces, and quilted on a frame. Similar articles are still to be seen in many Connaught cottages. The wife of the shepherd always claimed, as her perquisite, such tufts of wool as were found attached to briers, and many a comfortable pair of socks her husband gained thereby. Angry farmers often accused the women of deliberately driving sheep through hedges, to secure a more abundant supply of their fleecy covering. To make grey frieze, a certain proportion of black sheep's wool was, and still is, taken; a small quantity of undyed wool; the same of wool coloured with indigo; and the rest, having first been boiled in a decoction of the young shoots and leaves of the alder, was dyed with *dhuv*, a sticky resinous black stuff, most likely a vegetable product, found in small quantities in certain bog-holes.

A great feature of Kerry life in the last century was the annual slaughtering of the cattle. Stall-feeding was unknown, and at that period very few grew turnips or mangels; consequently, in the November of each year, all the superfluous stock was sacrificed and pickled for winter use. This was the Anglo-Saxon custom, from which November derived its name of *Slagtmaand*, or the month of slaughter. An old lady still living in county Limerick remembers the last survival of the usage, the killing of a cow each Christmas for distribution amongst the poor. One can fancy how busy all good housekeepers must have been, having personally to superintend the scouring and scalding of pickle-vats, and the making of strong

brine to fill them anew. Salt meat, in quantities sufficient to last until summer, no matter what demands were made on "the master's" hospitality, was laid by, and formed during the cold season the *pièce de resistance* at the family board, supplemented by fresh fish, fowl, and game. The hides were salted and laid aside for a time, then thrown into tan-pits filled with water and oak-bark. When dressed, they were made into the brogues formerly worn by the peasantry. Though the word is now used to designate a clumsy, hob-nailed boot, the original Irish brogue was a kind of moccasin of soft skin, doubled or trebled for the sole, and laced with thongs of hide or sinew half-way to the knee. The skin of a little Kerry sufficed to make two pairs. Italian *contadini* still wear a somewhat similar foot-covering, but made with the hair on.

A home industry arising from this prodigious storing of provisions was the manufacture of rushlights or dips for the servants' use. While wax-candles illuminated the dining-room, the drawing-rooms, and the bed-chambers, these others were alone employed in the kitchen. All the superfluous fat was set aside to make them at the time of the annual slaughter; but if the supply ran short, it was readily augmented by the contents of the dripping-pan, which no mistress at that period dreamt of considering as her cook's perquisite. On this point modern mistresses might, with advantage, imitate their great-grandmothers, who knew that granting perquisites encouraged dishonesty. Amongst the kitchen utensils the "greashood" (pr. *grisset*) held a prominent place—this being a long shallow iron vessel, resembling an exaggerated ladle, used for melting the tallow. Old-

fashioned pairs of tongs may yet be seen which were used in conjunction with it. These had in the centre of each plate a groove through which the liquid grease ran into the pan beneath, when, as was sometimes customary, they were heated red-hot, and used to squeeze pieces of fat. This was considered wasteful and extravagant, and was adopted only by the careless, who had neglected to store their rushlights in time, and so were compelled to make some hurriedly for immediate use. In summer, the very old and the very young, with other feeble persons, were employed in cutting rushes, the best kind for candle-making being the common soft *Juncus conglomeratus*. These grow best by river-banks and in marshy pastures. The longest and plumpest were selected, and deprived of the outer green covering, a process facilitated by first steeping them in water. One very narrow strip alone was left from top to bottom as a support for the pith, or two if the dip was intended for a night-light, when it burned slowly and with a feeble flame. After being peeled, the rushes were bleached on the grass, and then dried in the sun. Six pounds of grease were allowed to a pound of rushes: these last required to cool between each immersion in the boiling fat, and were dipped again and again until of sufficient size. Where bees were kept, a small quantity of wax was added to the tallow, the candles acquiring greater consistency thereby, but mutton-fat was considered to answer the same purpose. The rushlights thus formed burned from half an hour to forty minutes on an average. A curiously-shaped candlestick was used to hold them, and similar ones are still employed for the purpose by some of the Connaught peasants. Machine-made

candles, however, are now so cheap, and paraffin-oil is in such general use, that only in the remotest districts does one see a home-made rushlight.

A county Tipperary lady, living until quite recently, remembered making hartshorn jelly from the horns of her father's deer in days when prepared isinglass and gelatine were unknown, except by name, in country parts of Ireland. The horns were cleaned, scraped, and boiled down for the purpose.

It will be seen that women, who were expected to overlook these wonderful processes, not to mention the making of pickles, preserves, and home-made wines, led no idle life, as each season brought its round of household duties.

When a girl of good family married, immense droves of cattle formed her dowry, either with or without a sum of money down. An old steward living in 1820 remembered the herds of black Kerry cows that had formed the portion of a Miss O'Connell of Darrynane, seventy years before. This lady was sister to the beautiful Eileen O'Leary; and her mother, *Mor-ni-Dhuv*, or Dark Mary (of the O'Donoghues *Dhuv* — a younger branch of the O'Donoghues of the Glens), was a sufficiently remarkable woman. She was at once a notable housekeeper, the mother of twenty-two children (one of them the father of Daniel O'Connell), and a poetess who composed a farewell to sons and nephews going to France. The themes that inspired Irish verse at the period were chiefly sad, and the wretch of parting drew forth many a lament, of which not the least pathetic is the old peasant song:—

“’Tis my grief that Patrick Loughlin
is not earl in Irrul still;
And that Bryan Dhu no longer rules as
lord upon the hill;

And that Colonel Hugh O'Grady is lying stark and low,
And I sailing, swiftly sailing, from the county of Mayo."

Though Mor-ni-Dhuv spoke and wrote English habitually, she could order dinner in improvised Irish verse; and a rhymed dispute about a farm, in the form of a dialogue between her and the tenant, still exists. Some of her belongings are still to be seen at Darrynane,—amongst the rest, an immense silver spoon with a long handle (used after 150 years of service for skimming preserves), two huge christening bowls of rarely beautiful china, a dessert-service, blue china baskets with open-work edges for fruit, and plates to match; a collection of queer teapots and old porcelain; and a mirror with a very thick bevelled plate and a deep rococco gilt frame, smuggled from France. Through her good friends the smugglers, the old chieftainess got over every year a piece of cambric, a length of black silk, French shoes, and silk stockings. Her eldest son, John O'Connell, who died early, married a Miss Faley of Faha, near Killarney, and lived his brief life with his bride in the house of his father and mother. For their exclusive use they had her maid, his man, and a "boy," whose duties are not specified—possibly a last-century "buttons." These they clothed; but they seem to have paid them very low wages, since in an account-book belonging to the young husband, and dated 1749, we find the following entry: "One quarter's wages to Bridget Sulivane, 8s. 5d." From the same book it appears that Bridget got cloaks and dresses, but the cost of these items cannot be ascertained, since they are included in the bulk sum of a paid bill. The man, Martin Geran, got linen,

serge, cloth, and livery, buttons, also shoes, knee and shoe-buckles, &c. The "boy" was likewise supplied with serge-cloth, "bundle-cloth,"—that is, homespun flannel, sold by the bundle, or length of the extended arms,—combs, gaiters, shoes, and ink. The curious item occurs, "Thirteen pence to Jasper Lisk, for one year's schooling of my boy." The lad was apprenticed for seven years, and the portion of his indentures that had not expired at the time of his young master's death was left by will to his mistress, who survived her husband. A great variety of gloves, shoes, and boots are debited in John O'Connell's account-book. The long silk stockings worn by gentlemen when in full dress are set down as costing fifteen shillings a-pair. Fine linen for shirts came to three shillings and threepence; cambric for the ruffles, imported from France, to eight shillings and sixpence. At the same period, in Kerry, a two-year-old heifer cost only one pound five shillings. Everything of the kind being provided for the young couple, there are naturally but few entries relating to provisions, except on one notable occasion. A son was born in due time to Mr and Mrs John O'Connell, and the father appears to have paid the incidental expenses. We find these entries:—

"For a christening suit . £1 11 8
Cambric, linen and lawn
(baby's outfit) . . . 3 19 8"

On the 12th of January 1750 occurs the following, which gives a good idea of the fees usual on such occasions in the last century:—

"To cash to Mrs Carr
(the nurse?) . . . 1 guinea
To Dr Cronin . . . ½ a guinea
To a pint of Cinnamon
water for my wife . . 2 shillings"

A pint of Hungary water "for my wife" is also entered. Brown sugar, white wine, almonds, barley, nutmegs, oranges, and candied fruit appear as ingredients required for making caudle. On the same occasion the young husband bought 29 lb. of beef at 2½d. the pound, and a side of lamb at 11d., doubtless for the christening feast. The maternal grandparents sent four guineas to buy silver spoons, and the paternal grandparents presented thirteen guineas for the benefit of the infant, while the father of the child sent a present of rum and salt fish to his father-in-law.

Another book from which the writer has been permitted to make extracts belonged to Mrs Coppinger, of Barry's Court, in Cork. She had been a Miss M'Mahon, of Clare, and brought with her, as maid to her new home, on her marriage in 1777, her foster-sister, Nellie Buckley. When Nellie married, she was put in possession of a farm with a neat slated house thereon, — quite an aristocratic dwelling amongst the thatched cottages round, — such a reward for faithful service being not uncommon at the time. The tie between the descendants of mistress and maid has not been broken. The son of Mrs Morgan John O'Connell, and a Mrs O'Neil, one of his tenants, are respectively the great-grandchildren of Jane M'Mahon and her foster-sister.

Mrs Coppinger's collection of household receipts is interesting: some are medicinal, others culinary, and, judging by the antiquated spelling, not a few would appear to have been copied from some older book. The handwritings, too, differ, friends and relations having apparently contributed cherished formulas. When reading the ingredients of these sup-

posed remedies, one is irresistibly reminded of that paper in 'The Spectator' which attributes the unusually high death-rate of a certain village to the ministrations of a charitable lady. Who, for instance, could survive this "Cure for Fits" at any rate, if he knew of what it was composed?—"Equal parts of powder of human skulls, red earth-worms, and wall-rue mixed"!

About the same period Mrs Delany recommended to her sister "two *infallible* receipts for ague." The first consisted in applying a plaster of ground ginger and brandy spread on sheep's leather, which might or might not be efficacious; but what shall we say of the second?—"A spider put into a goose-quill, well sealed and secured, and hung about the child's neck as low as the pit of his stomach"! To return to Mrs Coppinger. Many of the diseases and their supposed remedies are given in language unsuited to the more refined taste of our day. Besides specifics for rheumatism, jaundice, cancer, warts, and corns, we find a diet-drink and several ointments. One of the items is called "Lord Trimbleston's Universal Plaster," purchased abroad by a member of the Butler-Esmonde family, to which Mrs Coppinger's mother belonged. A note says "it was brought from foreign parts," where the secret of its composition was secured for "a hundred pistoles in gold, and a promise never to sell it, but to give it away for the relief of suffering." The book states that the receipt was at that time (1777) eighty years old. This plaster contained new bee's-wax, burgundy pitch, black pitch, and "the best fresh and greenish Venice turpentine," boiled together, and rolled into sticks like sealing-wax.

When required for use, a sufficient quantity was melted and spread upon linen. Lord Trimbleston studied medicine on the Continent, and on his return home practised gratuitously. He is mentioned by Mrs Delany as living in her day. Amongst the culinary receipts are one for beef-stock, two for curing beef; another, very old, for "oyster-pye"; one for oyster-soup, and one for making raspberry-jam—the two last signed by fair Frances Esmonde, daughter of Sir John Esmonde,¹ a relative of Mrs Coppinger. Most of the puddings, tarts, and cakes mentioned are familiar to us. Instructions for pickling samphire remind one of a scene in 'The Gaverocks.' There are two receipts for barm, and one each for ginger-beer, with real beer—no temperance beverage—currant-wine, and raspberry-wine.

With regard to wills made by Irish gentlemen in the last century, one finds that the husband always left the wife her own jewels, the family coach, and at least one pair of horses, to be selected by her, if they lived in a level place; if in the mountainous districts, her "riding-horse, pillion, and horse-furniture." Jointures

in money were small as a rule, but the widow was allowed to select a considerable number of cows, some young horses, and a flock of sheep, as her own property, a portion of the demesne being allotted to her for pasturage. Sometimes there was a choice between a fixed jointure and holding certain lands for life. Generally the widow had the use for life of a certain amount of plate and furniture, as also of all the property, whether in cattle, money, or land, which she had brought as a dowry to her husband. She and her eldest son were given in most cases almost despotic power over the younger children. Faithful servants were not forgotten, and the gift of land, either rent-free or at a nominal sum, often rendered an aged domestic independent. In conclusion, we may cite in proof of the kindly spirit existing between classes, and of the comfortable sums amassed, despite the low wages customary at the time, the will of Andrew Connell, butler to Maurice O'Connell, uncle to "The Liberator," wherein a farm, cattle, and numerous feather-beds are disposed of, and his master is appointed sole executor.

C. O'CONNOR-ECCLES.

¹ Sir John served as a captain of horse in Spain early in the eighteenth century. His portrait is in the possession of his descendant, Sir Thomas Grattan Esmonde, M.P., and that of his beautiful daughter belongs to Mrs O'Connell of Longfield, Mrs Coppinger having been her late husband's maternal grandmother.

A STIFF-NECKED GENERATION.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—HARTLAND UNLIKE HIMSELF.

“O Love! tormentor! fiend!—whose influence, like the moon’s, acting on men of dull souls, makes idiots of them, but meeting subtler spirits, urges sensibility to madness.”—SHERIDAN.

WITHIN four-and-twenty hours after the events recorded in the last chapter had taken place, every busy tongue in and about the two great houses of the neighbourhood was ringing with its own version of them.

Some facts were beyond dispute.

Rosamund Liscard was lying dangerously ill at the Abbey, and Major Gilbert’s sisters had departed from King’s Common in a mighty hurry; but what was the connection between these, or whether there were any connection at all, was enough of a mystery to be delightful and provoking.

It was all very well for the young ladies to give out that they had been summoned home unexpectedly. Mr Liscard’s household could testify that no summons had come through any other medium than that of their brother the major (and the major had certainly been the person to spirit off the two), but neither he nor they had dropped a hint of bad news, sudden illness, accident, or any one of the usual causes of a hasty exit.

Of course the family might have chosen to keep their own counsel. There might have been ill tidings after all; and if it had been so, and if, on hearing these, Miss Liscard had been taken worse, and her future sisters-in-law obliged to flee, nothing more could be said. But the gossips shook their heads, and knew better.

No, no; more than that lay beneath the surface. And the first idea that naturally presented itself was that Rosamund’s papa

had been brought to book for his late high misdemeanours. The old gentleman had been enjoying himself far too much, and the young lady had got wind of it. Probably, then, she had taxed her lover with his sisters’ indiscretions, and he in wrath had swept them off to satisfy her.

His gloomy brow, the severity of his manner towards them, and their frightened, cowering obedience under it, were all attested to; and the major, who was as popular as his sisters were the reverse, was allowed to have done the right thing—no second mistress being desired at King’s Common.

The major, then, they concluded, did not choose to have his family talked about; and as the members of it now under discussion had not known how to behave themselves, it had been “to the right about face” with them.

And to be sure, said one and all, it served the misses right, and the old gentleman too. Say he did intend to have another wife one of these days, no one would have gainsaid him, if only he had waited a reasonable time and chosen a reasonable lady.

Lady Caroline had not been beloved, and it would have seemed only a righteous retribution, had a successor to her been found at the expiration of a twelvemonth; but the indecent haste with which the widower had suffered himself to be beguiled from his seclusion was one offence, and his having found a siren in Miss Emily Gilbert was another.

Miss Rosamund's lover was all very well: he was major of his regiment, and for the time being in command of it; and the regiment was stationed hard by. Every now and then he might be seen riding out with his men, a gallant handsome fellow, with a fine authoritative air. He cut a dash in his tandem dog-cart, kept a couple of smart grooms, and spent his money like a gentleman. To crown all, he had saved Billy Barley's life at the risk of his own.

Altogether he had been regarded with complacency as a suitor even for Lady Caroline's daughter, and her ladyship had been stigmatised as haughty and arrogant, and quite beyond bearing with her airs and her pride, because she had not lent herself to the general sentiment.

But Major Gilbert was one person, and his younger sister was another.

For her was no accompaniment of military grandeur and beat of drum: for her no red-coated orderly would dash over with important despatch, or telegram; nor could she handle dexterously a pair of frisking thorough-breds. To be sure, a French abigail and a silver-mounted dressing-case might have done something towards retrieving Emily's credit; but the sisters had been brought up plainly, and, wealthy as the family was, did not know what feminine luxury meant. It was their code that Frederick must have this and that—great, gilt monograms on his toilet accoutrements, and handsome fittings to his travelling-bag; but none of the girls whom they knew indulged in anything better than they had themselves, and they were content to be on the same level. Accordingly, although their outfit for the much-talked-of visit had been selected with care, and contained many new and expensive

articles of dress, it was deficient in those trifling accompaniments which are the delight of ladies'-maids and housemaids. Neither embossed silver nor ivory, neither satin sachet nor embroidered shoe-bag, was there to be seen. "Not a bit o' lace nowhere," whispered one saucy minx to another behind-backs, "and only the meanest of edging! La! they ain't nothing."

All of this was told down-stairs, and down-stairs told outside, and outside spread itself to right and to left, and the outcome of it all was that Mr Liscard was felt to be lowering the standard of the whole establishment, by paying court to a lady who brushed her hair with a bone-handled brush.

To have had the popular voice with him, he should have selected the daughter of a noble house—or at least of an old county family—and have gone gradually and soberly to work. But instead, he had jumped up all of a sudden, like a jack-in-the-box, banged the proprieties about their ears, and gone for the first pretty, simpering pair of lips that said a civil word to him. Shame upon him, the nasty old man!

There could be no doubt as to his vexation over the hasty finish put to his felicity.

He had come home from Longminster, apparently aware of what had happened; indeed the groom attested to his having had a meeting with Major Gilbert in the town—and he had clearly been very much put out, indeed quite nonplussed, by it. Miss Catherine's company at dinner had been declined; and she had been further informed, in terms that had admitted of no discussion, that her presence for the rest of the evening could also be dispensed with. He had not himself gone into the drawing-room. He had retreated, as he

had been wont to do of old when worsted in a fight, to his library and his books, and coffee had been served to him there.

Presently the village doctor had joined him; and the increased illness of Lady Julia's charge had been announced to Mrs Ossory, and Mrs Ossory had been requested to attend to divers directions, and had herself had a word with Dr Makin, which had troubled the good soul not a little.

But for all that, every one knew that Rosamund had not been the thought uppermost in her father's mind upon his return from Longminster, and that although her state might now be as alarming as was given out, he had not then known it to be so.

To himself, indeed, it is to be feared, the attached parent almost went the length of allowing that his daughter's illness was opportune.

"It will stop people's tongues for a time," he reflected, "and save a vast amount of exposure and scandal. She has been a great fool. Gilbert would have made her an excellent husband; he has a good fortune, and the family is highly respectable. If she fancied him once, what possessed her not to go on fancying him? Is there any chance of patching up the affair, I wonder? No; for she has her mother's own temper. Besides which, he won't give her the chance. I never knew such a piece of folly in my life. All done in an hour! All made an end of without giving one time to put in a word! If poor Caroline had been alive, neither of them would have dared to go up and down, backwards and forwards, like this. She, poor woman, always disliked the match, and tried to prevent it—but I knew the world better. I knew that Rosamund might have gone

farther and fared worse. Besides, husbands are not rife in these days, and it does not do to pick and choose. It was nothing but Caroline's ridiculous fancy about Hartland that made her object, moreover. She could not see that Hartland is not a marrying man, or at least will not be a marrying man for many a long year. He will wait till he can lay hold of an heiress, and free himself from Julia's trammels," (to him Lady Julia's plan had never been confided)—"that's what Hartland will do. He is never dreaming of one of our girls. Rosamund had the sense to see as much, and take up with a good-looking fellow who could marry her off-hand, and be indebted to no one. Nice, bright girls those sisters of his, too. I was just beginning to feel a little more cheerful, and the house to be a little less doleful, and we might have got along very pleasantly as we were, if Rosamund had only held her tongue. Even if she did mean to cast him off in the long-run, she need not have been in such a precious hurry about it. She might have waited till she was better. She might have thought about me. But no; it is self, self, self all round. No one, not even my own daughter, thinks of me. And the upshot is, that here am I, stranded afresh, with no one to talk to, no one to have my dinner with, no music, no anything! Dr Makin says Rosamund is ill. She may well be ill. She has made herself ill. Julia is no more good as a nurse and guardian than a potato-stalk. I should not wonder if the old goose were at the bottom of it all, either. I don't fancy she cared for Gilbert much more than Caroline did. Between them, they have made a mess of the whole business. All concluded without my sanction, without even any

reference to me! I—I—upon my word, if this is going to be the way in future, I might almost—almost as well——” and he just stopped short of saying, “I might almost as well have Lady Caroline back again.”

“And is it really true what I hear, Mr Stoneby?” inquired Mrs Waterfield, on meeting the rector a few days afterwards; “is the engagement really at an end?”

“I am afraid so,” said he. After all that he had seen, supplemented by all that he had been told, “afraid” was hardly the right word; but how seldom can one use the right word? It stands in the background, and a cat’s-paw answers the purpose.

“Do you know anything about it?” pursued the lady, with the directness of the family friend.

“I believe that it was felt to have been entered into hastily, and it has come to as hasty a conclusion.”

“It is on her side that it is broken off, of course?”

“On hers, yes.”

“I thought not on his. I never saw a man more in love, in my life, than he was beforehand. I have not seen them together since. But I could fancy that, on closer acquaintance, he would not altogether suit the family. And Rosamund is capricious.”

“She has felt it deeply.”

“So she ought, Mr Stoneby.”

“Oh—yes—of course.”

“She has jilted him, you know, explain it as you will,” said Mrs Waterfield, who was on easy terms with her clergyman; “that is the plain English word.”

“I know,” said Jack, quietly.

“Her illness is really the best thing for her reputation, poor child,” continued Mrs Waterfield, softening. “It has been an unfortunate affair; and I thought

Lady Caroline,—but, to be sure, Lady Caroline knew nothing about her children. Rosamund was an unknown personage to her mother—I always said so. Lady Caroline used to hint that I had my girls too much about me, made too much of them as companions, and gave them too much liberty; but one thing I know, no daughter of mine would ever get as intimate with any acquaintance as Rosamund Liscard did with Major Gilbert, without my knowledge and permission. Why, Lady Caroline’s head was in the clouds, while he was paying her child the most open attentions beneath her very nose! Then, when she did at last become aware of what every one else in the neighbourhood had known ages before, she thought she had nothing to do but to put her foot down on the affair to extinguish it! She was, of all the women I ever knew, the most injudicious,” concluded the speaker, with intense conviction.

“I think she was, Mrs Waterfield; and her daughter now suffers for it.”

“And what does the father say?”

“He is considerably put out,” said Jack, with a faint twinkle in his eye.

“Put out, is he?” and the lady noted the twinkle, and responded to it. “Put out? Not distressed, nor anxious, nor——”

“Mrs Waterfield, you know Mr Liscard.”

“Very well indeed, Mr Stoneby. That is, I thought I did once; but I am told—people do say that there is a new Mr Liscard beginning to rise out of the ashes of the old one, and with *him* I am certainly unacquainted. If this upset of the family arrangements has put an end to the novel order of things at King’s Common, no wonder he is ‘put out.’”

"You mean his driving the Miss Gilberts about?"

"And playing his flute to them—and—and other things."

"They are bright, talkative, musical girls, you see, Mrs Waterfield."

"I never saw them but the once," responded she, drily. "Talkative they were—the rest I must take on credit."

"At any rate, they are gone now."

"And gone in a hurry, I hear. Now, Mr Stoneby, I respect your reticence, and you are quite right not to tell me more than I have heard already,—but do not expect me to suppose that you, Lord Hartland's intimate friend, do not know a great deal more of this matter than you choose to discuss. I daresay I ought not to be inquisitive, but"—with a smile—"can a woman help it? And I do love Rosamund," added the speaker, who was warm-hearted after a fashion, "and I am truly grieved she is ill, and truly rejoice that she is well out of her engagement to Major Gilbert. I wonder now whether I ought to leave a card and inquiry at the Abbey? Perhaps Julia would as soon I did not; perhaps she would rather not be troubled with me just now. And living four miles off, we need not be supposed to know just yet. Still——" and she looked at Jack for inspiration.

He had none to offer.

"I daresay I should best show my goodwill and affection by staying away, the case being so very peculiar," concluded Mrs Waterfield. "If I am to do to others as I would that they should do to me, I shall certainly not go near them. What do you think?"

He thought he wished that he could do the like himself. If he could only have reflected as com-

fortably that he also might show his affection and goodwill best by staying away, how thankful he would have been!

He had not once met nor spoken to Hartland since their last never-to-be-forgotten interview. They had avoided each other by tacit, mutual consent, and were alike aware of having done so. It was Clementina who had been sent for to hear in confidence from Lady Julia of Major Gilbert's dismissal and Rosamund's increased illness,—and at first her brother had understood that he was to take no notice, and pursue his way as though nothing had happened.

But the confidence was now four days old, and he felt that as rector of the parish, living within a mile of the Abbey, he could not with decency absent himself longer for the sake of appearances. He need not ask to be admitted. An inquiry at the door would serve all purposes; and should Lord Hartland see him, and wish to avoid him, he himself would make escape for any one easy, by looking neither to right nor to left either on his way thither or on his return.

"If I had had any plausible pretext for not coming," thought Jack, as with leaden foot he slowly moved up to the front door, "I should never have set a foot within the precincts. I hate seeming to push forward, and be the first to hear the news, and all that sort of thing. Evidently Hartland does not want to see me——"

"Come along," said Hartland's voice behind him, "come along. I thought you would be up to-day. Come in. I am at home, if no one else is."

"I did not expect to see any one."

"You will not—excepting me."

"Lady Julia is engaged, I suppose?"

"She is in—my cousin's room."

"And how—tell me truly, Hartland—how is she?" At once he saw that he was to be allowed to speak, to inquire, and to be frank.

"She is almost as ill as she can be," said Hartland.

"And you can say it so! Are you serious? You cannot be serious. Can you possibly say that, and——?"

"I feel as if I could say anything."

His friend glanced at him. "I think you are ill too," he said.

"I am not. I wish I were."

"You are very unlike yourself, and no wonder. After all you have gone through——"

"All I have gone through! For heaven's sake, let us have none of that!" cried Hartland, with a harsh laugh. "Your pardon, Jack, but don't let me hear you say that again. I have 'gone through' nothing. I have not been dissected for a woman's amusement, and made sport of for her vanity. I have not——"

"No, to be sure; no, I was wrong: my dear old fellow," said Stoneby, beginning to perceive what he had to do,—“my dear Hartland, you are quite right. But you are not going to say things now for which you will be sorry presently——”

——“Why not? Why should I not say them? We have all taken leave to say anything up here now-a-days, don't you know? Rosamund says one thing one day, and another the next. She——”

——“You tell me she is very ill,” said Stoneby, slipping his arm through his friend's. “When people are ill, you know, Hartland, one must be patient and gentle with them. You would not be unkind to—to your cousin——”

“Oh no—oh dear, no—not for

worlds. That is *her* privilege. She——”

“Hartland, this is unmanly and cowardly. You would not further bruise a crushed leaf——”

——“Bah! Don't preach, Jack.”

Stoneby was silent. He was not offended, but he was startled, inexpressibly startled: he perceived more and more clearly, by every word uttered, that the speaker was saying that for which he was at the moment scarcely accountable, that his mental condition was unhinged and overwrought, and that he was in no fit state to be argued with, or irritated even by a calm dissent. More, he ought not to be trusted by himself. At such a crisis, tact, patience, and infinite sympathy were imperative, and here had he been grudging, or at all events withholding, all three. His hanging back during the past four days seemed now the height of selfishness;—and reflecting that during that time, a time when sympathy and beguilement had been most needed, his friend had been bereft even of Lady Julia to talk to—for she had been almost wholly engrossed by the sick-room—he could only be thankful that at least he had not suffered himself to delay another day.

“If I am not to be allowed to speak,” proceeded Hartland, sullenly——

——“Speak as much as ever you will—as much as ever you please—only let us be alone and unheard,” whispered Stoneby, for they were now crossing the hall. “But you are excited, and your voice travels farther than you are aware of,” in an undertone. “Why should we go there?” as his host turned the handle of the drawing-room door; “that is too public a place, is it not? Can't we go and sit in the library——”

"The library!" echoed Hartland, starting back with an oath. "The library! Don't you know what happened there? Don't you know a spectre haunts the place? I tell you that if I went in now, I should see him standing before me; she told me where he stood, and how he looked—and, O God! what he heard! She will tell you too, if you ask her. Women can tell anything. She thought it must have been 'very sad and painful' for him! She was really 'very sorry about it.' Faugh! She

would have said the same if he had cut his little finger. Oh that it should have come about thus! That no one had even the face to go openly to the poor wretch, and say 'There, take that,' and strike him down in front! That it should have been dribbled out through the leaking of a careless tongue! Let fall as a bit of news! Something dropped by the way! Yes, —come along, come along, and we'll go somewhere else and be alone, but not"—pushing roughly past—"not in by that door."

CHAPTER XXXV.—"PROMISE THAT YOU WILL BUT WAIT."

"Above thy head, through rifted clouds, there shines
A glorious star. Be patient. Trust thy star."

—THE SPANISH STUDENT.

A few hours later on the same day saw Mr Stoneby seeking admission at Major Gilbert's quarters at Longminster. He was admitted, although he could perceive that Gilbert came forward with an effort, that he was hurried and nervous, and evidently received with reluctance a visitor whom it was impossible to avoid.

For this, however, Jack had been prepared, well aware that the sight of any one connected either with the Abbey or King's Common could be no agreeable one to the unfortunate soldier, and he resolved to lose no time in extenuation of a visit so untimely.

"You are busy?" he began, glancing round.

"Packing up," said Gilbert, succinctly. "I am going on leave."

"So I see. I ought not to have intruded at such a late hour, but I trust—I am sure that you will pardon me when I am able to explain my business——"

"Oh, certainly. Sit down, Mr Stoneby," and there was another

obvious effort to be disengaged and courteous. "You won't mind if I go on with my work," emptying a drawer which stood open. "I always see to these things myself; and as I have given up the rooms——" he stopped and pretended to have lost an article, for the admission was inadvertent, and might have caused surprise.

"When you want a thing done, do it yourself, is your motto? I followed it to-night when I came here," said his visitor, with a faint smile. "The fact is, Major Gilbert, I am anxious about a parishioner of mine, who is in great trouble——"

—"In trouble, is he? Poor devil! What is it? A broken leg, rent to pay, or what?"

"No. His trouble is not of that sort."

"It is of a sort that a fiver or a tenner will heal, anyway?"

"I am afraid not."

"Not indeed?"

"It is not money he is in need of."

"Amazing! I thought it was

always money a poor man was in need of."

"But my parishioner is not a poor man."

"Eh? oh! . . . It is not one of my fellows who has been getting into mischief over there, is it?" said Gilbert, sharply. "And you are come to beg him off? I hope not. I——"

"No, you are wrong again. And your time is too valuable to be spent in guessing riddles. It is on Lord Hartland's account I am come."

At the name Gilbert's face changed, and his colour rose.

"Oh," he said, shortly, "I thought you said 'a parishioner'? Well, he is that, of course, but it misled me. But are you sure that you have any message from Lord Hartland to me? I think there must be some mistake. I hardly think he would send one," with an emphasis that was instantly intelligible. "Had Lord Hartland had anything to say, surely he would have come in his own person to say it."

"He did not send me, nor does he know I am come here, but I have sufficient trust in your generosity to feel confident that you would have blamed me had I hung back."

Gilbert inclined his head; he had ceased to touch a thing from the moment Hartland's name had been pronounced.

"It would be useless for me to affect ignorance of what has happened this week," said the young clergyman, quietly. "I know, of course, all. I have come straight from the Abbey, Major Gilbert. Lord Hartland is nearly beside himself with grief and indignation, and the most vehement remorse——"

——"Remorse!" said Gilbert, starting. "Remorse, did you say?"

But"—and he regarded the speaker with keenly searching eyes—"but I was not aware that Lord Hartland had any cause for remorse," he added, slowly.

"On my word as a Christian gentleman, he has none," said his companion, raising his head to enforce the asseveration, "but he thinks he has. He thinks that what took place might have been prevented if he——"

"Absurd," said Gilbert. "I am obliged to him, but as if anything he could have said or done could have influenced my affairs! My affairs are my own——"

"Hear me out. You are on the wrong track. Hartland does not presume to think he could have done or undone any of this—this—what I mean, what really preys on his mind is that you should have been—that she should have allowed you——"

——"No need to mention her," said Gilbert, sternly.

"The fact is," said poor Stoneby, who began to perceive how difficult his task was likely to prove, and who had as yet got no nearer his real object,—"the fact is that she is so seriously ill, his anxiety for her has completely unhinged him——"

——"Anxiety for her! I begin to understand. And his 'vehement remorse' too! But I was told—Rosamund herself told me,—no, she did not tell me, but her aunt did, and she endorsed it,—that Hartland was nothing to her. I was solemnly assured——"

——"He *is* nothing to her—but—but she is all the world to him."

Gilbert fell back, and his hand dropped by his side.

"Yes, Major Gilbert, that is it; that is God's truth about Hartland. His cousin knows it not—no one knows it but myself—but

it is so. He has buried his secret in his own breast."

"Then, Mr Stoneby, kindly tell me this. What is the remorse for? And with what does your friend reproach himself?" demanded Gilbert, folding his arms, and leaning across a small table, while he fixed his eyes, burning like coals of fire, upon his companion. "Surely he had as good a right as I to enter the lists? The lists were free to all."

"I am afraid," said Stoneby, reluctantly, "that it was not until after you——"

"Ha! I see. But still, unless he played me false——"

"That he did not."

"Then what in the name of heaven does he reproach himself for?"

"He thinks he had no right to love her."

"That is folly. He had a right to love as much as he chose, so long as—— Can you swear that he never gave her any reason to suppose it? that he never sought to undermine me? never tempted her away from me? never let her know that a coronet awaited her acceptance——"

——"Never—before heaven I swear it, Major Gilbert—never!"

"How do you know, Mr Stoneby?" said Gilbert, contemptuously. "Was Hartland likely to tell you? You are his father confessor, I daresay; but people do keep back little things, trifles, even at confession they say; and a man in love——" he stopped.

"Shall I tell you how I know?" said Stoneby, rising and standing before him. "When a man talks of himself and of you as Hartland has done to me this day; when he refuses even to look upon the place whereon you stood that morning; when he almost curses the two women whom he loves

best in the world for what they have done, and curses himself again for that which he has *not* done,—do you think that such a man, at such a time, would cheat me with a lie?"

"You mean that he is unnerved," said Gilbert, but it was evident that he was more struck than he chose to own. "I should not have supposed Lord Hartland would have been so easily shaken. And if it be as you say, that he has nothing on his conscience, he can surely afford to——"

"A man who *had* had something on his conscience would not, I think, have been half so deeply moved," said Stoneby. "No one capable of playing another false, would view the idea with the horror Hartland does. You smile? Major Gilbert, I know and love Lord Hartland as a brother. I could answer for him as I could for no other living man. It is because he is so upright, honourable——"

"Spare me the recital of his virtues," said Gilbert, drily. "I have a regard for Lord Hartland, and I am glad to find his conduct does not necessitate its withdrawal, since,"—and he passed his hand across his brow,—"since I am willing to take your word it is so. But a eulogium on a rival is hardly—if you will excuse my saying so—is not quite in taste at the present moment. You say he loves his cousin"—he turned away his head—"in time she will love him too," he added to himself.

Stoneby was silenced.

"You said something about some one being ill," continued Gilbert, returning to his papers, and affecting to recommence arranging them; "it is not serious, not dangerous, I hope?"

"It is very serious. Until

yesterday evening, I believe it was thought dangerous."

"Who is with her? Who attends her? Not only that——"

"A consulting physician came down from London yesterday, and he will see her again to-morrow."

"Is it as bad as that?" said Gilbert, in a lowered tone. "I had not heard. I—to be sure I did hear she had been worse; but I thought, I fancied it was as it had been before, made more of than the reality warranted."

"At any rate there is no exaggeration now," said Mr Stoneby, in answer to the bitter smile which accompanied the words, and by which he could perceive that the cause of the exaggeration had been now divined. "They hope the most critical period is past, but a relapse would be most certainly fatal."

"Is it brain fever—or what?"

"Of that nature."

"I am going abroad," said Gilbert, after a pause. "I start to-night. But my sisters are—here is their address," writing it hastily down. "I should be grateful if you would send me a single line now and again, which they could forward. I am ashamed to trouble you——"

——"Trouble!" said Jack Stoneby, with emotion. "Major Gilbert, I have not dared—I do not dare to intrude upon your sorrow, but——" and he held out his hand with a look that supplied the rest.

"Thanks," said the soldier, briefly.

The two men faced each other for a moment as their hands met, but Gilbert did not then know that here was another bound to him by that same secret link wherewith Hartland had been. "May I hope to be pardoned coming to-night?" said Jack, very humbly.

It was hardly night, but the darkness of December at six o'clock made the term seem appropriate.

"Certainly. I respect a man who does what he conceives to be his duty. Even though I do not quite understand your object, I allow, Mr Stoneby."

"I hoped for a word—a message of confidence—something to enable my friend to take a less distorted view of his own conduct. If he goes on brooding over every unhappy circumstance, and encouraging his own morbid fancies, I cannot answer for the consequences. He is in a strange state, and my mind misgave me when I left him just now. Major Gilbert, if anything were to happen to Lord Hartland, you would never forgive yourself if you had refused to send what I now ask for—a single kind, forgiving, believing word."

Gilbert winced, and drew his brows together. "A kind word is easily spoken," he said, "and I forgive him, as I hope to be forgiven; but,"—and he moved uneasily,—"it is hard to be called upon to place implicit faith in a friend who—who is more fortunate than yourself."

"It is hard. God bless you for trying to do it. It is so hard, that if I did not myself believe heart and soul in Hartland's honour, I could never ask it of you. But I know him better than he knows himself. I know what it will be to him to have to lie under this stigma in your eyes——"

——"Does he expect to marry her?" said Gilbert, abruptly.

"He says he will never ask her."

"But you think——?"

——"I think that unless you say something now to clear him in his own sight, he will hold to this resolution."

"I am to acquit Lord Hartland

in order to leave him free to do the thing whereof he is acquitted?"

"You are to free him from a state of unreal misery and self-deception, because you are a just man," said Stoneby, steadily. "You are to lift a burden off his back, because it has no right to be there. No one but you can perform this labour of love, and as God's minister, I call on you to do it. I tell you that Lord Hartland is suffering from an overstrained sense of his share in your wrongs. His share! *No* share in that wrong accrues to him any more than it does—to me," suddenly added the young man, a blaze of light upon his pale countenance. "Look here, Major Gilbert—you must, you shall be convinced by me, when I tell you that I too love Rosamund Liscard. I loved her before you did—before Hartland did—before, long, long before I knew it myself. I have never, by word or sign—all will bear me witness—I have never betrayed myself. Hartland never suspected it—you never suspected it. What then? Am I to afflict myself with cruel doubts and shame because of what I was powerless to prevent? Yet what has Hartland done, that I have not done? It is for my friend's sake I now yield up this secret; but I feel that knowing it, and acquitting me, as I know you must do, of every dishonourable thought, you cannot in justice withhold the same acquittal from another."

"Don't you see, Stoneby," said Gilbert in a low voice, "that there is a difference? My poor fellow,"—and he went up and put a hand upon the speaker's shoulder,—“my poor fellow, you—and—I—are one. Hartland is not with us. He——” he stopped.

——“Yes?”

“We have no hope,” said Gilbert, calmly. “He has . . . You are a good man,” proceeded he, after a long silence. “I believe in religion of this sort. It is, of course, rather strange and confusing to me to find another on the ground, and I must, as you say, allow you have never in any way given rise to suspicion of your feelings; but—well—I will try to think the same of Lord Hartland. I wish him no ill. Nay, since I must, I will endeavour to feel that I have no just cause to bear him a grudge; but I must say this,—I hope—I do hope that, for his own sake, he will not marry Rosamund.”

Nothing had been gained by the visit.

The next point to be considered was, should Hartland know of it or not? His friend decided that unless point-blank questions were put to him, he would say nothing of the matter; and as it was most unlikely that he should be cross-examined, the step having been an improbable one, he had not much fear of being unable to keep it to himself.

As luck would have it, however, while yet little more than half-way home, the pedestrian was overtaken by one of the light dog-carts belonging to the Abbey, driven by Hartland's own particular groom,—and the man, recognising the rector of the parish, at once drew rein. The night was dark and misty; Jack was tired and chilled. He reflected that whether or no he should accept the offer of a lift, the man's master would probably hear that it had been made, and where he had been met; and hunger and fatigue clamouring this view of the case into his ears, up he got, begging to be set down at a roadside cottage hard by the rectory gate—he

did not care to run the risk of finding Lord Hartland sitting with his sister within his own four walls.

Diplomacy thrown away. He was in the act of dismounting, when he was hailed for the second time that day unexpectedly by Hartland's own voice.

Hartland was standing by a wayside pool, while his dog was dabbling among the weeds.

"I vacate to you," said Jack, as lightly as he could, and springing down almost before the eager horse could be brought to a standstill. "You'll get in, will you not? You are rather late for Lady Julia's dinner as it is?"

"Is it dinner-time?" said Hartland, dreamily.

It was long past, but neither was aware of it.

"I came down here for a walk," continued the speaker, in the same tone. "I have not had much of a walk to-day. There's nowhere to go. "No, I shan't get in." To the groom—"Go on home. I'll follow directly. I suppose I must," he sighed, under his breath.

"Come in with me," said his friend. "My dinner, such as it is, is no doubt waiting, and—Stop a moment, Robert"—as the dog-cart was moving off—"if you will stop with us, just send word, Hartland, won't you?" he added, judging Lady Julia's feelings by his own.

"Oh, I'll stop, of course," replied Hartland, in the same dreary accents. "I'm thankful to stop anywhere. Tell him so; and I say, come along in out of this beastly cold wind," shivering. "Take me in with you, Stoneby; and I say, tell them to send a close carriage for me when they send. I hate this cold, night air," he murmured, plaintively.

There was no wind, and to Stoneby the night did not ap-

pear more chilly than usual; but he understood. "Yes, let us get indoors sharp," he said.

He was now glad he had got his friend safe under his eye. Since his first appearance had provoked no comment, he feared nothing, and trusted to food and warmth and resolute cheerfulness while Clementina was by, and the unrestraint of affectionate intercourse subsequently, to doing what could be done in the way of soothing and cheering.

"You must take what you find," he said, stepping inside. "This may be mutton-chop day—and if so, you are lucky. Yesterday was mince day. I don't look upon mince day with equal favour, I confess. To-morrow is Sunday's beef—hot on Saturday, cold on Sunday, demolished on Sunday night. If we did not send it well round among the sick folks, we should not see the end of that beef till the middle of the week, so I hit upon the dodge—oh, here is my sister."

"How soon you are back!" cried she, running out into the hall at the sound of his voice. "Have you really been in and out of Longminster in the time—"

"Never mind, never mind. Here is something much more important. Here is Lord Hartland come to dinner. What have you got for dinner?"

"Only mutton-chops," said Clementina, with a somewhat rueful visage. "I did not know exactly when you would be back from Longminster—"

"Longminster?" echoed Hartland, as though struck by the second repetition of the name. "Longminster?" And he looked from one to the other.

"Yes, I have just been in on—on business. It did not take me long—" and the host hung up

his hat, and began to take off his coat, as if the admission were nothing.

"But you did not say you were going, when you were with me. Did you mean then to go? We could have sent you over; we were sending anyway."

"Thanks. The walk was nothing."

"I would have walked with you—but no, I wouldn't. Longminster?" repeated the speaker, suddenly. "What were you doing in Longminster to-day? What did you go for? Whom did you see?"

"I said—I—well, Hartland, I said I went on business, you know."

Vain effort. Hartland was now upon the scent, close and keen as a bloodhound, and his burning eye and twitching lip held out no hope of quitting it.

"Pshaw!" he exclaimed, impatiently. "What is the use of saying that? Business? Your business was with——"

—"Yes—you are right—it was. Wait but one moment, till we are alone," whispered his friend. "One moment, dear Hartland. Come in here," opening the door of the little sitting-room, which was, as it happened, deep in shadow, though not shuttered in for the night. "What! no lights, no fire——?"

"You can have both directly, brother, but we are to dine in the study, and it is all bright and comfortable in there. I had said we should not want the drawing-room to-night,——" began the attentive little sister, but she was cut short ere she could explain domestic arrangements further.

—"Never mind—it will do well enough," said Jack.

"But do come in to the study," pursued Clementina, opening the door, from which instantly stream-

ed forth brightness and warmth,—"see how comfortable it looks! Do, Lord Hartland, come in here. Here, Jack," as no one moved to obey.

For the light was, truth to tell, undesired by either, and Hartland, to whom it was even an annoyance, now made so peremptory and involuntary an advance into the less tempting chamber, that it was plain nothing could be done for him in the way of creature-comfort. "Just like a man," murmured little Clemmy to herself; "when they are ill, or unhappy, they always will be uncomfortable too. Jack is just the same——" and she had to respond to Jack's significant glance over his shoulder and nod in answer to it, and trot off to the kitchen to delay the cooking of the chops, and feel all the while that if she had been at the helm and had had the management of Lord Hartland's affairs, she would have contrived infinitely better,—she would have seen to it that he had first of all a good dinner (though it were a plain one), a good dinner, and a glass of good wine, and then his chair wheeled round to the fire, and some nice coffee or tea brought to him, over which he could confide his troubles comfortably,—instead of allowing him to turn in to that dismal drawing-room, with the blinds still up, and there, all tired and fasting as he was, plunge into an anxious interview. For she could see with half an eye what the interview was likely to be, and "Men are so stupid," concluded the little soul, shaking her head over them both.

But perhaps Jack was sometimes as wise as she.

He had heard that in his friend's voice, and seen that in his face, which told him that delay might be as dangerous as evasion was

hopeless, and felt that all which now remained for him to do was to be as brief and as satisfactory as was possible. Alas! no real satisfaction was possible.

"Hartland," he began, however, "you are right, quite right, in what I perceive to be your conjecture. You suppose I went to see Gilbert? I did. And I saw him. He is on the eve of departure from Longminster. He goes to-morrow, and——"

——"Get on—get on. There is something more than this. You went to him for more than this. You went——?" and he looked the rest.

"I went because of what you told me just now. Forgive me if I should not have done so, but——"

"Oh, it's all right. I am glad, on the whole, you did. Do you know, I am glad you did. What did you say? What did he say? Did you—did he—— What does he think of me? But why need I ask?" he suddenly wheeled round. "What *can* he think? You need not be afraid to say. Speak out plainly. Oh, it will not hurt me; and what if it does? It is only what I ought to expect; of course he will abuse me——"

"He did not abuse you. On the contrary, he——"

——"Well?"

"He was most moderate and calm. I never thought to have felt myself so constrained to admire——"

——"Ah! we know all that. That's the old thing over again. We are all constrained to admire, —and then—some of us break down. Now look here, Stoneby; I must know, and I will know exactly, what passed between you and Gilbert this afternoon. You cannot refuse to tell me, and until I hear——" his haggard, expectant gaze supplied the rest.

"I will tell you all, Hartland."

"You fancied that Gilbert took it that he owed his dismissal to you," proceeded the speaker after a moment's pause, "and that in consequence he doubted your integrity——"

"Oh, doubted my integrity! My good fellow, say he thought me a blackguard. We want plain words now."

"I was able to give him my solemn assurance you were not."

"He did think it, then?" quickly.

"He had not known what to think. Evidently the idea had been presented to him, and had been dismissed. He had been twice told that there was nothing between you and your cousin——"

——"Who had told him?"

"Lady Julia and Miss Liscard herself."

"Had they? Had they? But how then——" his face fell heavily. "It is only on that understanding, is it, that I am to be exonerated? You had to assure them that there was nothing, and never would be anything, between us? And Rosamund, had she done so too? Oh, I daresay he will forgive me if he has her word for *that*? He——"

——"I don't think he had had her word for that. Indeed, from what he let fall, I gathered that he had had no one's word for anything of the kind. To tell the truth, Hartland, I fancy that he still fears, still looks upon you as a rival, and as a probably successful one in the future."

"Oh!" there was a perceptible alteration of tone.

"In which case, you can hardly wonder if he is a little difficult to convince just at present."

"He was difficult, was he?"

"Yes."

"Well? Go on."

“Gilbert has been accustomed to think for himself, and judge for himself; and though after a time he was willing to acknowledge in a form of words that he had no just cause to bear you a grudge, I own that I felt his heart scarcely went with his lips. He did not seem to understand, and perhaps he could hardly be expected to understand, how you could feel as you do without having direct cause for doing so. I had told him of your grief and——”

——“And shame,” said Hartland, emphatically. “I am ashamed—ashamed; and I care not who knows it. I feel as if we had all bitten the dust before this man. He is above us all, and may look down upon us all. It is that which cuts, Stoneby. If only we had played him fair——”

“Do you not see, Hartland, that you are taking on your shoulders a burden which—forgive my saying so—only belongs to another?”

“If you mean Rosamund,” said Hartland, quickly, “I—I—not a word against Rosamund. The poor girl is punished enough. You would not have her—you would not talk of her—I—I mean—let her alone.”

“So I will; but as you have identified yourself with—with her, and suffer accordingly, you cannot wonder that Gilbert thinks your share in the wrong done him——”

——“I told you I had no share.

Stoneby, I told you, before heaven, I was guiltless. You ought to have assured Gilbert of this. Why, good heavens!—did you allow him to think——”

Stoneby strove to be patient.

“No, Hartland, I allowed him to think nothing that was not true. But you had yourself made the task so difficult, that I was obliged to be content without accomplishing my chief end. I was forced to leave Gilbert to reconcile as best he might your feelings of a criminal, with your protestations of being an innocent man. After all, what matter? He will do this some day. Some day, in time, when the first shock has passed away, he will be able to see more clearly, and to do you justice. My assurances will recur to his mind. He will remember those of others likewise, and his nobler nature will assert itself; the time will surely come when you will be as clear in his eyes as you are in those of all others.”

“If I am not,” said Hartland, bitterly, “I will never, so help me Heaven——”

“Hartland, not another word. Rash vows are easily made, and hang like millstones round the neck thereafter. Say nothing—do nothing—for the present. Remember that one week ago you would have given the world to have had matters as they are now. Then be thankful; be patient; and wait.”

CHARLES KIRKPATRICK SHARPE.

WHAT, asks the stranger who finds himself for the first time launched into the latter-day society of the metropolis of Scotland,—what has become of the race of men who sat to Kay for their portraits, or who figured as “Modern Athenians” in Crombie’s prints a generation or two afterwards? Do they rest in the Calton and Greyfriars kirkyards,—shut down under those unseemly iron gratings which irresistibly recall Cardinal Balue’s cages in the castle of Loches,—and have they left no posterity? Of lions, Edinburgh can boast plenty, but they belong to the domains of archæology. In the human division of the animal kingdom we would be at a loss to know where to lay our hands upon a single specimen, except our venerated friend Professor Blackie,—“ultimus Scotorum,”—may he live for a thousand years! No; the stranger will find few idiosyncrasies with which to fill his note-book, either at the dinner-table or among the ball-rooms in Edinburgh; and even Dr Johnson, were he to come again amongst us, would go away with little except the Kirk and the accent to rail against.

The change has not been effected without cost. In assimilating Scotland to England, we have either had to abandon or relegate to the background many traits and tastes of Scottish character, the loss of which has, in some respects, impaired the Scotsman’s natural development, and circumscribed the exercise of his national feelings. He has given up his language, his literature, his music, his tastes; or if he does patriotically cultivate these in the

abandon of private life, it is with the fear haunting his mind that the forbidden fruit may in an unguarded moment betray him into uttering a shibboleth that will stamp him as a provincial and a solecist. We may regret the fact, but the mischief is done and cannot be undone. Professor Blackie has laboured like a zealous missionary, but in vain, to convince his fair countrywomen that Scottish song is not vulgar; that Scottish music flows from the heart and not from torturing manipulations of crotchets, quavers, and demi-semiquavers. All attempts at a national revival have not only been futile in the present, but have even thrown ridicule on the past. The written use of the Scottish language in our day has fallen into such hands, and runs through such channels, that the Scotsman of taste would gladly assist at its final obsequies; and Scottish patriotism, in its newest development of Home Rule, bids fair to completely confirm the justness of Dr Johnson’s definition of the quality.

But we cannot blame English influence altogether for having extirpated the race of singular and striking individualities which were to be met with in such abundance in Edinburgh and in the northern kingdom in the last century and in the beginning of the present one. It is not merely in Scotland where singularity, whether of genius, taste, or habit, has been put down with a high hand. Where now are all those grand personalities who swaggered in Sackville Street, dined at Daly’s, slept themselves sober in the old House in Stephen’s

Green, and fought their duels in the Phoenix next morning, whom Jonah Barrington knew and Charles Lever chronicled? Where are the characters of the Georgian era, of the days of the Regency, the "Toms and Jerrys," the Brummells, the "bloods" and the bucks, whose very contempt for social enactments itself gave a law to society? The dude or the masher—*aut quocunq̄ nomine gaudet*—of Pall Mall in our day is as unlike Brummell in dignity and importance as the miserable, cringing Mexican is unlike his mail-clad progenitor who came over with Cortes and Alvarado. In our age "a character" meets with repulsion, generally with contempt, except when the *rôle* is assumed for advertising purposes. This we understand, this is in perfect harmony with the sordid commercial spirit of society; but that any other person upon whom it possesses claims, singular in his tastes, independent in his habits, impatient of conventionalities, and with a keen perception of the foolishness of aggregated humanity, should live his own life in his own way, should prefer to be a bystander and a critic, is not to be tolerated by modern Median or Persian law. Society is a mill which rounds off all our sharp corners, rolls out our inequalities, whether they be above or below its pattern, to the same dead level, and delivers us smooth and flat as its standard demands. Then, and only then, can we go our ways in peace. It was the absence of such a mechanical measure-gauge that made Edinburgh so rich in characters, using the term in its best sense, from a hundred to sixty years ago.

There was "no king in Israel." With the beginning of the latter half of the eighteenth century the last of the Scottish nobility forsook their capital, and only a few of the

poorer and old-fashioned peers still kept up Edinburgh town-houses. The mantle of the Peerage fell upon the shoulders of the Law, and the garment cannot be said to have at first fitted well. Of gentry and aristocracy there was enough and to spare; but in the absence of the class who had set the fashion and prescribed the laws a generation earlier, the sway of the new leaders of society lacked sanction, and failed to produce uniform compliance. The throne of even so autocratic an arbitress of propriety as Miss Nicky Murray was no couch of roses. The tone and tastes of rank and fashion in Edinburgh at the time when the last Jacobite insurrection was put down were mainly those of the Court of Louis Quatorze and the Whitehall of Charles II., tempered by such restraints as the Presbyterian feelings of the dominant party had been able to introduce. There was a freedom of speech—not to say a looseness—which to us it is very difficult to disassociate from impurity of thought and action. The sociologist, however, who would found upon the conversation of our great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers reflections unfavourable to their moral feelings, would merely fall into an open trap. Edinburgh society was as decent in its walk as it was indecorous in its conversation, and contrasted most favourably in contemporary morals with the southern metropolis. The facts remain, however difficult they may be to reconcile; quite in the same way as we find that, contemporaneously, continued convivial debauches were consistent with deep and fervent piety—"the spaits of prayin' and drinkin'" that stupefied the unsophisticated southern traveller. The explanation is not to be sought in any national peculiarity lurking in some recondite recesses of the Scottish charac-

ter. The law of relativity is sufficient to solve the problem. The Scottish mind had been so long habituated to talk, anecdotes, and allusions of what we may call a *risqué* character, that these sounded as the merest commonplaces to the ears of the auditor. The jokes of Rabelais, and the stories of 'Le Moyen de Parvenir' had, centuries before the time of which we are writing, become naturalised in the folk-lore of Scotland. Use and wont had made familiar the interchange of ideas which touched upon the indelicate in sound, although not suggesting it in sense. The same remark holds good with respect to the much-maligned dramatists of the Restoration, whose innuendoes fell harmlessly enough on their audience, however they affect the modern reader, brought up with stricter notions of propriety.

We do not deny that the Rabelaisian element which entered so largely into the Scottish humour of the last century could not be indulged without engendering a certain amount of coarseness. But there were national circumstances which induced Scottish society to cling to discourse which was now getting obsolete elsewhere. A section of the Kirk, while disposed to exercise all Christian charity towards slips in practice, was zealous even unto slaying against the offence of light conversation and frivolous talk;¹ and just as the narrowness of the Puritans drove the Cavaliers in England to an unseemly extreme in the opposite direction, so the Scots of both

sexes persisted in a licence of which they themselves were beginning to disapprove. We must also take into account that when advanced civilisation begins to file away our native coarseness, a repulsion is always excited; and old abuses will not be surrendered without a struggle. It was only with a younger generation, derided by their seniors as "mim-mou'ed," that the old free-and-easy town-talk of the Scottish capital was finally driven into the recesses of the country. We have ourselves heard among the Scottish peasantry jokes and repartees which had their origin unquestionably in the stage of the Restoration, but which, we may presume, have long ago been blotted out of their ideas by the sanguinary fiction of the penny newspaper — a change of very doubtful advantage.

These reflections are suggested by a perusal of the memoir and correspondence of Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, a figure once well known on the *pavé* of the Edinburgh Princes Street, and whose name was still farther celebrated as a writer of clever, sarcastic, and malicious letters. Of Sharpe himself our knowledge was rather superficial. He was pleasant, witty, not inclined to general intimacies, fond of friendships on mutual terms of intimacy with ladies who had either wit or beauty; and most obliging to all and sundry who sought to take advantage of either his antiquarian knowledge or his fine artistic tastes. Add to this that he attended St George's Episcopal Church, where he wielded an

¹ We have before us, among the papers of a much-respected Scottish clergyman who lived into the commencement of the present century, a formula by which at the annual "fencing of the tables" he debarred from participation in the Sacrament not only "grite sweirers," but those who used such expressions as "Faith, haith, hōgs, trōgs, and conscience, and a' mainner o' minced oaths." These be "prave 'ords"; and though the exact import of some of them is probably lost, the solemn circumstances under which they were denounced leaves no room for doubting their exceeding sinfulness.

antique and ponderous Prayer-book of unknown rarity and value, and we have about all that the greater mass of his contemporaries knew of his personality. Of his letters, of his MSS., and of his annotated edition of Douglas's 'Peerage,' terrible tales were told; and there was an impression that if ever his papers reached the public eye, the nobility would be rent in twain, and society shaken to its centre. On more than one occasion, at dates not remote from the present, we have known a round sum paid at a sale of autographs for one of Mr Sharpe's letters, under the dread that the reputation of some long-dead great-grandmother or maiden aunt might be in jeopardy. It seems, however, that the unknown has been taken for the horrible. We have his biographer Mr Bedford's assurance that the much-dreaded notes on 'Douglas' are not so personal as was supposed; while his correspondence, though full of gossip and sarcasm, from which time has now happily taken the keener edge, is not likely to cause personal sorrow or domestic dispeace.

His biographer and editor have by their united efforts adopted the best course for enabling the public to form a definite opinion of Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe. The Memoir without the Letters constitutes decidedly an imperfect record; the Letters without the Memoir would have been mainly unintelligible. The only defect of the Memoir is the want of that appearance of personal impressions and intimate knowledge which we would have expected when a nephew is writing of an uncle. In the "Correspondence" fuller editing is in not a few cases a desideratum, especially to those whose recollections are not contemporary with Sharpe and his friends. We observe, indeed, one or two instances in which

Mr Allardyce has scarcely shown his usual accuracy; but it would be hypercritical to allude to these in a work which has evidently cost so much labour and care. The task of selection must have been carried on under more than usual difficulties. An edition of Mr Sharpe's letters *in usum virginum et puerorum* would have been like the play of Hamlet with the part of Hamlet left out. Mr Sharpe's vein was too well known to make it possible for any editor to attempt adapting his correspondence to the style of "Elegant Epistles" or "*Lettres édifiantes.*" No doubt the editor has exercised the discretion of reticence in some cases, but we have his assurance that he presents Mr Sharpe's own letters as they were written, and we conclude for ourselves, especially when we compare the replies of his correspondents, that his communications were not more licentious than those of other gentlemen of wit writing to intimates in the *abandon* of familiar friendship. Before we look into the letters, let us endeavour to recall some facts about the writer himself as he was known in his day.

The son of Charles Sharpe of Hoddam, a Dumfriesshire laird,—whose father, a Kirkpatrick of the Closeburne family, had taken the name of Sharpe on succeeding to Hoddam,—and of Eleanore Renton of Lammerton. From the father he inherited the blood and traditions of the bloody-dirk Kirkpatricks, of the Erskines of Alva and Mar, and, still farther back, of the Stuarts of Lennox. Through his mother he was descended from the Earls of Eglintoun, the beautiful Countess Susannah having been his great-grandmother. A third of the pedigree would have been sufficient to establish any Scotsman as a natural aristocrat; and as through these families Kirk-

patrick Sharpe could lay his finger on a cousin in every other page of 'Douglas,' it is quite pardonable that his tastes and associations should have been formed in a strictly patrician mould. The Sharpes themselves probably did not bulk so largely in his estimation, but still he could look back upon them with complacency; for two of the family had been out in the Forty-five, and one had to take refuge in France. But the memories of the Kirkpatricks, the Montgomerys, the Mars, and the Lennoxes, continued to exercise a decided influence upon Mr Sharpe's mind, and to give a colour to his whole life. "Whip Isabella for not giving me my Kirkpatrick on her last letter," he writes on one occasion to his mother from Oxford.

The traditions of the country round Hoddam found congenial root in Sharpe's young mind. The name of Lag was still a terror by night, if not by day, on the country-side. Sharpe's grand-aunt, Mrs Campbell of Monzie, had been taken to see the ancient persecutor, and "a grewsome-looking carle he was," she related, "wrapped in blankets, wearing a wig, and in an elbow-chair." She was made to go up and kiss him, "to her no small terror;" and no wonder, for people deponed "that he was partly in hell before he died, as his saliva burned holes before it fell, and his feet put into cold water made it boil." The story of Lag's burial, when the horses could not draw the dead weight of the Devil, who had mounted inside the hearse, is too well known to need repetition. We are less familiar with Lag as a humourist, but it appears he could crack a grim joke. "Sir Robert possessed originally a large estate, which his extravagance greatly diminished. He made one of his sons an apothecary

in Carlisle, and when he sent him to practise, he, at parting, gave him his blessing, saying, "God speed ye! ye'll revenge the fecht at Flowden;"—an excellent counterpart to Sir Walter Scott's farrier, who crossed the Border in the guise of a physician, armed with "calamy and lodamy," for the same patriotic object. Of demonology and witchcraft Sharpe's native air was full. Sir Patrick Maxwell of Springkell had given over his first-born in "kain" to the Devil; and on another occasion had the rare good fortune to outwit the fiend himself. The old ballads of the country were still sung by the spinners and the knitters in the sun. All these impressions thus early received continued to cling to Sharpe throughout his life, and give a colour to his feelings.

He seems to have attended classes in Edinburgh College for a couple of years; but in 1798 he entered Christ Church, and for the next ten or twelve years, his life and correspondence centre round Oxford. The best record of his life there is contained in his letters to Mrs Sharpe, a beautiful and sprightly woman, who, according to the etched portrait by her son, might compare in charms with her more celebrated ancestress Countess Susannah. Mr Sharpe's letters to his mother are to us the most natural, the most delightful, in the mass of correspondence. This view may seem a bold one in the eyes of some critics, but it is easily justified. Sharpe uses no artificialness, no restraint, in writing to his mother; and there is nothing in his letters that would have struck her as indecorous. Ladies of the old Scottish school were no prudes so far as conversation and writing were concerned; their fastidiousness was exercised in other directions. And when Mr Sharpe writes to his mother on the

freest terms of companionship, it would be a gross blunder to imagine that any of the elements of filial reverence were absent from his mind. Mr Sharpe's love and devotion to his mother, which in latter days were put to the proof, was the finest trait in his character. He stood by her in her troubles, in family dissensions, and in the worries of litigation; and we may say that half of his life departed with her death.

His first impressions of Christ Church were as uncomfortable as those of most home-sick freshmen.

"I have got my gown and cap, but the Lord preserve us, what a cap! To know the shape, look into Susan's old Prayer-book, and the first print I think is the one; but I have scrawled the way of wearing them here—how do you like it? The young men, you may tell Ellen, with many loves, that I have yet seen, are all ugly, conceited, and putting themselves in the posture like Mr Don, and have the worst legs I ever beheld, crooked thirty different ways, east, west, north, south, that it is a very shame to be seen. Then their faces are scabby, like sheep, and their cheeks like an unbraced tambourine, all nasty with being played upon. In short, all that I have yet seen are a set of as scurvy-looking companions as eyes ever looked at. I go to dine in the hall to-morrow, and then take up my abode in the Colledge for good, and then—the Lord knows what next. . . .

"Indeed the dinner is hardly worth the grudging, being served up on pewter or silver, the Lord knoweth which, at the first course: and a joint of meat is set down at the head of each table, which descends gradually to the bottom, the students cutting huge slices from it all the way down. Then comes potatoes; and your beer is put down to you in a stone mug. Then if you choose pudden or a tart, you must vociferate for it with the voice of a fishwoman, and often not get it neither. When done, you rise when convenient, waiting for nobody. This is a brief sketch of the eating."

Carey, afterwards head-master of Westminster and Bishop of St Asaph's, was his tutor; and we have a good portrait of the dignified Dean, Cyril Jackson, whose "nolo episcopari" had no empty meaning, and who, we have heard, consented to sit to Sharpe for his picture—an unexampled act of condescension to an undergraduate. "Lo! from behind a large folio Strabo issued this august personage, with Herodotus in his hand. And now figure my surprise, when, instead of an old, cold, wrinkled creature (you know by what a stiff model of quality I had formed him in my mind), I beheld a very handsome oldish man, with a well-powdered wig and a black gown, resembling much in face Lady Betty Cuninghame, junior, when she is dressed in smiles." Sharpe very soon made friends. His tastes naturally led him to form intimacies in the more aristocratic sets—not that he seems to have ever been a "tuft-hunter," but his relations with the Scottish peerage readily opened up to him the friendship of the crowds of young men of rank and family then at Christ Church. Among his chief friends were Lord Gower, afterward second Duke of Sutherland, who entered Christ Church after Sharpe; Lord Lewisham, afterwards Earl of Dartmouth, who became a well-known friend of letters and science; Lord Newtown, afterwards Earl of Lanesborough; the two Wellesleys, Richard and Henry; Addington, St John, and Lygon, afterwards Earl Beauchamp; Impey, the son of the Chief-Justice of Bengal, whose delicate health never allowed him to do justice to his great abilities; Conybeare, who became Professor of Poetry; Sir R. H. Inglis, afterwards member for the University; and that excellent scholar Sir

James Milles Riddell. With Lord Gower he claimed a *quasi* cousinship through the Alva Erskines, and though the two did not take very kindly to each other at first, they afterwards became very firm friends; and the Duke of Sutherland's letters to him come down to within a short period of his death.

It is quite evident, from the letters now published, that Sharpe soon made a very well-defined place for himself in Oxford circles. He had many accomplishments: he was musical; had decided talent with his pencil either for a portrait or a caricature, and a wonderful mastery of the grotesque; even at that period he had become an authoritative *virtuoso* and *dilet-tante*, whose advice, often in request, was always readily given; and an amusing and whimsical writer, if not sayer, of good things. The letters from his friends show in what estimation the quaint little notes he sent to their rooms, or the longer letters he wrote to them during vacation-time, were held; and this appreciation made him cultivate the art of letter-writing in a style which met with so much approval. His Oxford letters establish also the fact that his chief end was to amuse his correspondents, not to ridicule his friends, for he, as often as not, makes himself his own butt. That he had a delicate sensitive constitution was quite apparent; but his ailments are so often employed to present himself in the most ludicrous light, that we are sometimes tempted to think he is drawing upon his imagination. Indeed, to thoroughly criticise those letters, we should have to establish some infallible test to distinguish between Sharpe in jest and Sharpe in earnest; between Sharpe spreading ill-natured scandal and Sharpe stretching his imagination in the highest good-hu-

mour to amuse his mother by a ridiculous account of a company into which he had fallen. A perusal of his letters warrants us presuming that such a test would be difficult to institute. Here is a case in point, an account written to Mrs Sharpe of Christmas festivities at Grey's Court, whither he had gone with his friend Stapleton, afterwards Lord le Despencer. It may be as ill-natured a piece of gossipy description as ever was penned, or it may be as genial and whimsical as any of Du Maurier's sketches of Mrs Ponsonby de Tomkins's "at homes," or Sir Gorgious Midas's dinner-parties.

"But between friends, I was ready to expire with weariness all the time I stayed there, the family is so excessive dull and silly, and my friend in it not over-well-natured I fear—but the visit saved expense, and the trouble of prayers, and I saw a little of the world." My Lord and Lady Kilmorey were with us for a day, as also a Miss Middleton of Chirk Castle, an heiress. His lordship is as full of fiddle-faddle as an ancient unmarried gentlewoman, and wears yellow-plush breeches, and boots nearly approaching to jacks. He is no beauty, and well stricken in years, being a huge deal older than his wife, who is mighty like the fair and festive Miss Eliza Hamilton of Dumfries. Miss Middleton sets up for a wit, a very adventurous thing for any young lady to do, and a most saucy and brazen-faced attempt in her case; for the poor thing is so very illiterate that she is continually abusing God's patience and the King's English by uttering bad grammar, and the sense of her discourse by no means makes up for the fault of expression. Stapleton and I went to Windsor for two days, and I was delighted with the pictures in the Castle. The famous cartoons fell far below my expectation, not being learned enough to understand the anatomy, &c., &c.; but I was charmed with King Charles's beauties, and many other paintings. We went to a ball the first night, which was more elegant than that I was present

at in Henley, but not half so diverting. We went with a Doctor Lochman, one of the canons of Windsor, a peevish old soul, and a friend of Stapleton's. I danced with an old acquaintance, a Miss Rook, who was once in Edinburgh; but the English fiddlers fiddle so bad, and the English dancers dance so much worse, that a Scotch person has no pleasure in their merry-makings. There was a Miss E—— there, the best figure I ever beheld in my life. She was nearly quite naked, with cheeks so deeply rouged that they made you sweat to look at them, and her hair dressed something like a horse's head with a pair of blinders on. She lies under an ill name, but nevertheless is going to be married to some cuckoldy fool very shortly. I had not time to visit Herne's oak, to my great sorrow, though some Windsorians will tell you that the original tree is cut down. By the by, what strange mortals we are! I was always wailing about our trees when I thought them felled, and now I am grieved that they are still standing. Well, we are but a composition of contradictions, as some sage, Lord knows who, once said. We dined at Mr R——'s one day, and there appeared another Miss L——, by name Jane, or rather, I think, they should call her Jeanie. She is of that complexion that no Scotch person would see her without exclaiming, 'Hech, sirs, sic an ill-skinn'd hizzie!' and of this skin she is exceeding lavish, showing ells of it both before and behind. Mrs R—— is breeding, and told me that day that she was longing for fish, but could get none in Henley for love or money. Her husband and she are so new-fangled and fulsome upon each other that I vow my stomach was ready to turn to behold their languishments and pretty little caresses."

Let us see now how he himself fares at his own hands. He writes to his mother of his sufferings, after a bucolic ball at Henley—"the nymphs imitating the kicking of their cows, the swains the prancing of their cart-horses."

"But, alas! the night after, my

courage got a woeful cooling. I was seized with such a violent fit of the toothache (worse than any that ever afflicted me before), that I lay the whole night groaning, squealing, rubbing my gums, and spitting into everything I could find. Well, 'Aurora, with rosy fingers,' came at last, and with her the *poticary* from Henley. He clapt an old rusty instrument on my tooth, which had been in many a foul mouth I'll warrant, and with one tug delivered me of this scurvy production, which I committed to the flames with infinite joy and exultation. The toothache, however, was the beginning of my misfortunes. (Ask Isabella, who is Fortune's eldest daughter?) Some time afterwards I thought of returning to Oxford, and the night before the day I had fixed for my departure brought so much snow, that my lady's lignum-vitæ tree before the door was broken, and I with difficulty got to Benson, from whence I intended to proceed by coach to Oxford. But here the information came upon me like a thunderclap, that the road was almost impassable with snow, that no coach could come up, and that I must post to Oxford. Well, the distance was only twelve miles, and I was fain to put the best face upon it I could. So I got into Oxford half-starved with cold, eaten up with spleen, and as poor as Lazarus or Job on his dunghill. Thus ended my Christmas gambols, full of sickness and sorrow."

The journey to Oxford from Hoddam was made in those days by stage-coach, and on each occasion he gives his mother a whimsical account of the sufferings he had to undergo, the nondescript characters he encountered, and the ridiculous adventures he met with. On one occasion he encountered a storm of hail and snow at Stilton, against which the horses refused to set out. "Such kicking, such rearing of beasts, such cursing and swearing of men (who had a stronger smack of the true brute in them than even their cattle), I never met with before; and every cudgel in the house—yea, even

my landlady's private stick, with which she corrects her spouse—had been bent or broken over their backs" before they could be induced to set out. Here is a stage-coach reminiscence that might have figured in a page of Fielding or Smollett.

"When we got the length of Ferry-bridge, an ancient gentlewoman ascended the coach, who amused me exceedingly. She came out of the inn with an old man (who, she told us afterwards, was aged eighty-two, herself being seventy-four) and a young damsel. She kept up a constant fire of screams and scolding for a quarter of an hour before she got into the vehicle, because her young woman could not get an inside place. And after clapping her arm round the old man's neck, and giving him a hearty kiss on the middle of the mouth (every one laughing at such a conjunction of mouldy beards), she scrambled up, treading on our toes with a foot like the hoof of an elephant. The young lady tript up the ladder into the rumble-tumble behind, where she sat with the guard, who seemed to pay small respect to her beauty, which, in truth, could not with justice demand much, for she had a pale face and a rusty brown Joseph on, with a muff by way of finery which had not as much hair upon it as the half of her aunt's chin. The old lady had a visage like a man's, with a black hat and blue habit, and was no sooner seated in the coach than there arose a stench enough to smother an Edinburgh scavenger. I could not at first imagine whence it proceeded, being an effluvia quite unlike that of man or beast which had ever assaulted my nose before, but at last discovered that it issued from a black earthen vessel, like a greybeard in embryo, which she held in her hand, and which she told us contained some cordial for her niece, who had a weak stomach, and was apt to be squeamish when she rode in coaches. She informed us that the old man was not her husband, but had been butler to Robertson, the Primate of Ireland, when she was housekeeper. This gave us some suspicion that Mrs

Niece was a nearer relation to her than she professed. After a little time she put her head out of the window and made the young lady drink a portion of the liquid, in which she herself joined her. But here began her troubles, for the men in the coach had the rudeness to hint that there was a little gin in the composition of the cordial. She flew into a violent rage, repeated every ingredient of the medicine a thousand times over, and declared she never had been accused of drinking in her life. This balsam of Fierabras was soon exhausted; but the flask was a source of endless wit and mirth to the drivers and guards, and of great fury to the old woman. 'Aye,' cries one, 'that's for the rum-jam, I warrants.' 'Noa, ye fool,' says another, 'it's but a little water to cure the bellyache.' 'Water!' cries a third; 'I'd love to drink such water every day; our water's not so tastey hereabouts.' The old woman lost all patience, and after calling them impudent fellows and saucy rascals, threw her flask into the dirt in a high pet.'

Outside Oxford Mr Sharpe made numerous friends, either through his College connections or during his visits to town. Among these was the Marchioness of Stafford, the mother of his friend Lord Gower, who, as a girl, had been the heroine of the famous Sutherland "cause," and who, more fortunate than the Douglasses, had won her earldom. She had been brought up under the guardianship of Lady Alva, and the friendship which was established between her and Sharpe in his Oxford days is attested by a correspondence reaching down to her death. The Duchess-Countess's letters are amongst the most remarkable and charming in these volumes, almost masculine in decision and firmness of opinion, and indicative of the broad views, wide sympathies, and commanding intellect of the writer. Among other town acquaintances of this date were Lady Charlotte Campbell, afterwards Lady Char-

lotte Bury, but for whose indiscreet revelations the remains of Sharpe might have been more plentiful; the Margravine of Anspach and her son Keppel Craven; and Gell, who figures as "Anacharsis" in the letters. These all belonged to the Princess of Wales's *coteries*, which Sharpe also frequented, without, however, becoming a partisan of the Princess's. Monk Lewis, then recovering from his passion for Lady Charlotte Campbell, and the young *émigré* Count de Grammont, afterwards Duc de Guiche, then a man about town, were also his friends. But the friendship, dating from his Oxford days, which bulked most largely in Sharpe's life, was that of Walter Scott. Sharpe had already contributed a satire, "The Vision of Liberty," to the 'Anti-Jacobin,' and written a good deal of verses and lyrics, when the publication of the 'Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border' inspired two ballads, "Lord Herries: his Complaint" and the "Murder of Carlaveroc." Both were among the happiest of Sharpe's poetical efforts. With the ballad he was always more or less successful, for he had caught both the rhythm and the spirit of Scottish ballad poetry. His lyrics were for the most part somewhat sickly and artificial, and his *vers de société* lacked the piquancy of his prose style. A hearty correspondence was opened between him and Scott, which soon ripened into a most affectionate friendship. They had many tastes in common, and the affectation of peevish acridity in the one was an excellent foil to the genial heartiness of the other. The sad letter of farewell which Scott wrote to Sharpe, almost the last which any of his correspondents received from him, is well known from Lockhart's 'Life,' and the exact text, which Lockhart appears to have altered, is now

given. Sharpe shared in course the secret of the Waverley Novels, from which, indeed, he could not well have been debarred, for he could have had no difficulty in recognising his "ain groats" in Sir Walter's "kail." We confess we cannot understand the low estimate of the Waverley Novels, expressed in a letter written in his later years; for if any man was calculated, both by taste and sympathy, to appreciate these fictions, that man was Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, and we are surprised that his editor has volunteered no explanation of this most unexpected utterance.

It was at Oxford that Scott and Sharpe first met, in the rooms of the latter. The Oxonian was at first sight disposed to be critical. "The Border Minstrel paid me a visit some time since on his way to town, and I very courteously invited him to breakfast," he writes to his mother. "He is dreadfully lame, and much too *poetical*. He spouts without mercy, and pays compliments so high-flown, that my self-conceit, though a tolerable good shot, could not even wing one of them." It is much to be regretted that the close proximity in which the two were afterwards to be cast, abbreviated the long letters with which their correspondence opens; but the large number of letters from Scott shows him to us in a new and pleasing light, no longer shut in by the thick-set hedge of biography, but sitting unbuttoned and laughing in Rabelais's easy-chair.

Some years of Mr Sharpe's life were spent alternately between Oxford and Hoddam, London and Edinburgh, until finally he settled in "New Athens," as he derisively designated the Scottish metropolis. He took up house in Princes Street, along with his widowed mother. He had adopted no pro-

fession. We have an impression that he left Oxford in Orders, or at least in deacon's Orders; but we look in vain for a confirmation of this idea from either Mr Bedford or Mr Allardyce, although in one of his letters we find him seriously discussing his prospects in the Church. At various times he seems to have hoped for a piece of secular preferment being thrown in his way, chiefly through the influence of Lady Stafford. He was not without literary aspirations, but his literary tastes lay in a direction in which outlay was to be incurred, rather than remuneration expected. He had the fixed intention of writing a life of Lord Dundee when he left college; but this, to the great loss of Scottish historical literature, was never fulfilled. No man of his day—not even Scott—had the same intimate knowledge of Dundee and his times as Kirkpatrick Sharpe. He would have done justice to the hero, and his predilection for enacting the rôle of devil's advocate would have saved Claverhouse from complete canonisation. But beyond a Ballad-Book, some reprints and club-books, we have comparatively little, except his letters, to represent Sharpe's pen. Kirkton's History, which he published with annotations in 1817, created a disturbance among Edinburgh Presbyterians scarcely less than was excited much about the same time by the "Chaldee Manuscript." It was first offered, it was rumoured, to Blackwood, but declined on account of the partisan spirit of the annotations. There was ill-feeling over the matter, which was not mitigated by 'Maga's' onslaught on the book and its editor soon after, from the pen, Sharpe believed, of Dr M'Grie. This was probably the reason why Sharpe gave his support to the vain efforts of Constable, Pringle, and Cleghorn

to strangle 'Maga' in her cradle; and explains some peppery allusions to the fortunes of the new periodical, which he regards as "likely to fall asleep shortly." After 'Kirkton' came his edition of 'Law's Memorials'—with his unrivalled disquisition on Scottish witchcraft—which was popular, and excited less controversy than its polemical predecessor.

The best epoch of Sharpe's correspondence is that which covers the years from 1810-1811 down to about 1816. The letters during that period, dated either from Hoddam Castle or from 93 Princes Street, Edinburgh, are by far the most clever and carefully written of his epistles, and suggest the idea that they were ultimately intended for publication. His Oxford friendships were still in full bloom; his London acquaintances were constantly writing him and beseeching replies; and he had Scott, Surtees, and Marriott as literary, antiquarian, and poetical correspondents. His style was already formed. That it, as well as his manner, was in a great measure affected, we cannot doubt. The general freedom of old Scottish society to which he clung, his kindly relish for the phrases and ideas of a bygone age, and the genuine antiquarian sentiment which he undoubtedly possessed, made him deliberately choose the part of an Anachronism; and this attitude, affected at first, became confirmed into a natural disposition.

Perhaps we shall better illustrate the letters of the period we have referred to by some gleanings, than by a formal attempt at a summary. And as Mr Sharpe, under the character of "Chloe Doggerel," writes to Sir George Warrender, whom he elsewhere compliments as "that comely haggiss," so shall we avoid "the

warmth, the pepper and salt, the high seasoning, so that no turtle-soupe will be found in this literary repast." Any piece of whimsical gossip which comes within his own ken, or is reported to him by his correspondents, is noted, transmuted from dry detail to witty point, and again "set in circulation." Writing of Lady Mary Coke's death,— "Lady Queensberry tells me that Lady Mary died with a high-crown'd beaver hat upon her head, tho' in bed—like Cleopatra, crown'd, 'Proud Egypt's prouder Queen.' As Lord Seafield said of the Scottish Parliament at the Union, 'here's the end of an auld sang.' She was the daughter of a sad robust villain, and in character as like her father as Christina of Sweden was to hers. Only think of Lord Orford being in love with such a harpy." He is a sharp critic of ladies' attire. "Lady Stafford orders her head better than anybody's else in the world. When I last had the honour of seeing her at Cleveland House, sitting on a couch after dinner, I could not help staring at her for a long time, as I did think I had never seen any one so *belle*, and so *bien parée*." Lady Hood, the heiress of Seaforth, "is a very singular personage, with a sort of head like a pigeon-house: in this hole, a couple of eggs ready for hatching—in that, a dove; here, some dung and a rotten egg—there, a cat that whips out upon you unawares, and makes you start with its long tail." Southey's 'Curse,' he tells Scott, "is much more dreadful than that of Ernulphus, yet there are many beauties among much beastliness." Another lady, who bore the deserved character of a *belle*, is described to Monk Lewis as having "tender eyes, but no flesh to cover her nakedness. She is a sort of ghost

of Lady Charlotte (Campbell), dead of a consumption, and much compressed by whipping through the key-hole." In a letter to Granville Vernon, he has the following remarks on the middle-class and democratic abuse of the peerage, which has a certain autobiographical value, and disposes of the suspicion of his contemporaries, that he was one who would dine any day with a duke rather than a marquis, or with an earl than with a viscount.

"I cannot help thinking it as great a symptom of vulgarity to suppose people of rank worse than others, as to look in a terror and astonishment at their approach, starting and staring like Sancho at the bearded Comtess in 'Don Quixote.' It hath certainly been long the mode in poultry novels, and still more miserable stupid plays, to hold up the nobleman as a silly wretch, and the clown as a compound of every virtue; but such systems are only fit for studious abigails, and the scum of the earth which collects in our theatres. Nobody of sense and any experience can endure that stuff. At the same time, few but Townshends, and persons who have no relations in the peerage, and who never saw ten lords or ladies in their lives, would suppose that every virtue nestles amid the leaves of a coronet, and that the smile of a nobleman confers an honour on his untitled acquaintance. That old-fashioned notion hath been dead and buried ever since the civil wars. It was struck off, I do think, from the shoulders of the commons with King Charles the First's head before Whitehall, and no balsam of Fierabras, whatever flatterers may say to their idols, will ever make it again adhere. But noblemen and noblewomen are very good people; and while they chuse to keep up any show of character, and not to give themselves high airs in London, they will always be respected by gentle-men and women as they ought, whatever *valets de chambre* may write, or the rascality of the playhouse relish.

"Though as a Tory one would not say such things in public, dukes, and

duchesses too, are generally very stupid persons. Had I not been a gentleman born like Crispinus, I should have been a terrible democrat."

Of Burns, for whose poems, "though not so great a worshipper as many," he professes a qualified admiration, especially of his "Tam o' Shanter" and songs, he writes: "I remember him well. He always appeared to be formed for the most enchanting *lover* in the world. His genius and vivacity must have rival'd the divine flames which consumed Semele." He tells the Margravine of Anspach of "a writer (that is, an attorney) in Edinburgh, who is an Anabaptist and a sort of Blue Beard, for he hath drowned two wives, after converting them in the distinguishing ceremony of his sect; and, I am told, is at present busy with his third rib, who, should she yield, is sure to go, poor woman, as she is very fat, and consequently, like Falstaff, must have an alacrity at sinking." Lady Anne Hamilton, of 'Secret Memoirs' celebrity, "really gives one the idea of the right reverend and original nightmare." He congratulates Miss Hyde Douglas of Holmhill on her fatness, "which is an improvement upon everybody but Jehoshaphat and the minister's mother at Durisdeer." . . . "People who *flyte* on paper seldom tilt in the martial field. To be sure, Jeffrey and Moore are an exception; but still their duel was an author's fray—

"So mouse and frog came gravely to the field;
Both fear'd to fight, and yet both scorn'd to yield."

To Miss Murray he avows thus his distaste for politics:—

"Talking of newspapers, you are right, my dear madam, in supposing me no politician, for from politicks, like cards, I systematically abstain,

as even the consideration of former events, such as the Reformation, Revolution, Union, &c., makes me now and then very uncomfortable; and I am certain that an interest in the present routine of political chances (however prosperous) would render me completely wretched. It would ruin my temper, and make my teeth decay faster than they do at present; for I should never forbear showing them to the opposite faction—and external air, say the dentists, is vastly pernicious."

In a letter to the Margravine, he is very severe upon the poetical indiscretions of the Earl of Carlisle—the fifth earl—who was Byron's guardian:—

"I heard lately that Lord Carlisle hath periodical attacks of rhyming madness, in which he wanders through the rooms of Howard Castle with a bit of chalk, scrawling verses on the doors and window-shutters, while his poor wife follows with a wet dishcloth to erase his folly from the observation of the servants. He wrote the following distich on one of the doors:—

"O Portal, Nature's pattern, in and out,—
But here comes Lady Carlisle with a clout."

In an amusing letter to the Countess of Mansfield, he gives a description of a stormy voyage across the Queen's Ferry, amid terrible blasts, which

"had wellnigh put Miss Murray and me astride upon the back of a Queens-ferry dolphin, or placed us at dinner in the stomach of a whale. . . . I should enlarge upon the howling of the winds and the roaring of the waves, the cruel descent of the rain, and the merciless ambition of the mud. I might relate how our boat went thus—[Here follows a graphic sketch in a few scratchy lines, representing a tempest-tossed bark ploughing its way across the Firth amid the terrors of waves, rocks, and expectant dolphins.]—how we were trod upon by the rude hoofs of sailors and carriers' horses, hanged in the

cordage, brained by the mast, and buried in the filth at the bottom of the vessel; how the fate of Ophelia, Rosabelle, Sir Patrick Spens, and Lycidas, ran violently in our heads, while our hearts were somewhat supported by the hanging face of (I believe) my Lord Provost of Inverkeithing, the tail of a stout bull-dog (which is of rare significance in swimming), and the true heroism of a new-married couple passing towards Edin., who seemed as easy as if the sweet breath of Favonius had swelled our sail, and the god of Love himself sat perched upon the rudder."

It is in some respects unfortunate that Mr Sharpe should have been "dubbed the Scotch Horace Walpole," although the title, we believe, was conferred by Sir Walter Scott himself. Such contrasts are seldom very apt, and never pass unchallenged. They compel one to recall the unfortunate outcry in the old Edinburgh theatre, of "Whaur's yer Wullie Shakespeare noo?" when John Home's tragedy of "Douglas" was played. In the case of Lord Orford and Sharpe, there are many points of resemblance, but there were radical differences. There was innate bitterness, not to say malevolence, in Horace's nature, which only waited to find an object. As often as not his direct aim was to ridicule and sting. Sharpe's, on the other hand, was solely to amuse, and many of his remarks that are most open to the charge of acridity, must have been penned unconscious of the fact that they were ever destined to go beyond the eye of his correspondent. The following quotation, which we may assume to be written in good faith and earnestness, gives his own views on this subject:—

"You make me blush when you are so condescending as to make me such flattering eulogiums on my epistolary genius. To speak with sincerity, I never piqued myself on that score; for I consider it so elevated a

talent to have the genius of good letter-writing, that I have never attempted to gain the steep height of that fame. The next best style to an artificial quality of excellence in that line, I think, is to write naturally; and Nature has always some merit, if she is suffered to have her free will. Affectation is never more tiresome and ridiculous than in a letter. Madame de Sevigné was the best letter-writer that ever existed. I would rank Swift and Lord Chesterfield next. Voltaire to me is charming; but then I suspect he studied his epistles, as Lord Orford certainly did, and so had little merit. Heloise wrote beautifully in the old time; but we are very poor, both in England and Scotland, as to such matters."

In spite of the praise and appreciation with which his letters were received and eagerly entertained, he is diffident enough about them himself; and had he been figuring as the "Scotch Horace Walpole," he would no doubt have precipitated the catastrophe which Lady Charlotte Bury's use of his letters in course brought about.

There were three subjects that formed the staple of the correspondence between Scott and Sharpe—demonology and witchcraft, ballads, and Scottish antiquities; and many valuable and curious memoranda on these topics are to be found scattered through the letters. Sir Walter was anxious that Mr Sharpe should join him in a work on Scottish *diablerie*; but this was before Sir Walter's affairs assumed a critical complexion, and before it had to be "time and himself against any two." But we have Scott's 'Demonology and Witchcraft,' and Sharpe's introduction to 'Law's Memorials,' as illustrations of the spirit in which the two worked out similar subjects; and of the two, we think Mr Sharpe's work, although probably the less known, is to be preferred. Superstition appealed more to the grotesque than to the serious side

of Sharpe's tastes ; while Sir Walter was not without some leaven of credulity, if not faith, in manifestations of the supernatural. Even of his own family traditions, which were not without their ghostly elements, Mr Sharpe cannot resist writing in a spirit of banter.

"There was one picturesque tale attached to Closeburne," he writes to Scott. "A white swan appears on the loch which surrounded the castle before the death of any member of the family. My great-grandfather's father, the first Baronet, married a daughter of Lord Torphichen, by whom he had two sons. After her death he married Miss Hamilton of Raploch. At the wedding-supper the young heir looked very dowie, and on his father's reproving him for it, supposing he did not like the notion of a stepmother, merely said, 'Before lang ye'll look wae too.' He had seen the swan that evening and died that night. The loch is now drained, but were it not, a goose would be a fitter omen to Mr Monteith of Closeburne."

In all his etchings and drawings that deal with the supernatural, it is the grotesque element that predominates, and if he ever allows himself to rise to the horrible, there is always some whimsical feature in the picture that overrules our feelings in favour of a ludicrous idea. Major Weir evidently impressed him more than any other personage in the black calendar of Scottish warlocks and witches ; but we are inclined to think that the Major's puritanic pretensions, and the difference between them and his real character, was the reason why he so often figures in Mr Sharpe's letters.

It was, we think, rather unfortunate that Sir Walter Scott's enthusiasm for his friend's artistic powers led him to put forward Mr Sharpe as a candidate for the post of his Majesty's Limner for Scotland. It is true the office was

a Court one, and had not been looked upon as a perquisite of professional painters ; but the claims of practical art were beginning to force their way to public recognition, and the appointment of Raeburn had formed a precedent that was not likely to be overlooked. Scott's reasoning regarding the office, like Sharpe's claims upon it, were a quarter of a century out of date. "It was held before Sir Henry by Bishop Abercrombie ; *ergo*, it is not necessary that the official should be an artist, and it is fit for a gentleman to hold. *You* are both a gentleman and an artist, and why should you not be King's painter?" When Wilkie was prepared to accept the office, Mr Sharpe's chance was practically gone ; but Scott, Lady Gwydyr, and other attached friends would not abandon his cause without a struggle ; and it is with the utmost evident reluctance that Sir Walter acknowledges in the words of one of his favourite songs—

"Now a' is done that man can do,
And a' is done in vain."

The honorary character of the post was probably what would have most highly recommended the Limmership to Sharpe, but he does not appear to have made any personal efforts to secure the appointment except in answer to the urgency of his correspondents ; and the fact is chiefly interesting now as showing the deep impression that his artistic talents, which he was ever ready to devote to the service of his friends, had made upon a large circle of contemporary connoisseurs.

In another capacity Sharpe's tastes were of even more public utility. He was a fierce censor of municipal vandalism, and a determined obstructor of all attempts to improve away the ancient build-

ings of the Scottish capital. A rage for innovations seems during his time to have taken possession of the magistrates of Edinburgh and Leith, and one historical monument after another was threatened. Mr Sharpe in himself combined the functions of Antiquarian curator of the City of Edinburgh and of the useful Cockburn Association of our time. He roused cultured opinion through the newspapers; he covered the aggressive forces with ridicule in his own hard-hitting way; and when the damage threatened to still go on, he enlisted the sympathy of more powerful influence by means of his aristocratic friends. These volumes testify to his vigilance and energy, and also to the fact, which should be more fully recognised, that Edinburgh owes him no small debt of gratitude for his interest on behalf of its amenities and associations. Attacks on Salisbury Crags, the disfigurement of Holyrood, threatened alterations of the Castle, the Mound or "midden," then a serious sore to both eyes and nostrils, were all matters in which he intervened with effect; and one of the works of his later years, when his health had prevented him from taking a very active interest in attempts to destroy the amenities of the town, was to save Drummond Place from being denuded of its fine old trees. For the affectation of "Athenianism," which was a craze in his time with the good citizens of Edinburgh, he had no tolerance. The frequent dating of his epistles from "New Athens" speaks for itself of his sense of the unfitness of the Grecian architecture which was running rampant around him, as well as for the pretentious academic tone of the younger portion of literary society, which was beginning to degenerate into preciousness. In a burlesque enactment

"for improving and embellishing the town of Edinburgh" in a style suited to the artificial taste of his contemporaries, and intended to ruin all that was natural, picturesque, and historical, he winds up with the following quotation, slightly modified, we imagine, from Henryson:—

"Kirks, closes, kimmers, clatters, sywthe, begone!
Deil tak' expense, heeze up the Parthenon."

Of Edinburgh society he delights to write in a vein which is certainly sarcastic, but which we cannot consider either unkindly or absolutely serious. He professes to detest the city; he had done the same for Hoddam, which beyond question was that corner of the earth which smiled kindly for him beyond all others. He occasionally spoke uncivilly even of Oxford; of his impressions of any lengthy residence in London we have, fortunately perhaps, no means of forming a very decided judgment. But that Edinburgh offered him social amenities of which he cheerfully took advantage, the volumes before us conclusively prove. No matter though he ridicules parties, balls, and *fêtes*, and country-houses about the city, he went to them if the company was good and to his liking. The fact that a man so well known as one who turned the peculiarities and little follies of his fellow-creatures to humorous account, should have been welcome to all gatherings of his friends, disposes in a great measure of the idea that his ridicule and banter were regarded by those who knew him as either malicious or ill-natured. There must have been some kindness and good feeling in the friendship of such a man as Mr Sharpe, to save him from the reproach so often launched at those who take notes in social circles:

“Fœnum habet in cornu; longe fuge;
dummodo risum
Executiat sibi non hic cuiquam parcet
amico.”

When the chief literary interest in these letters passes away with the death of Scott, a series of “Letters to a Lady of Quality,” whose name has been withheld, but which it is not difficult with some closeness to guess, conveys Mr Sharpe’s social views and gossip about things in general. In the latter portion of the correspondence the names of most of the friends of Sharpe’s youth have dropped, though some, like Lady Willoughby de Eresby, Lady Keith, and the Duke of Sutherland, remain faithful to the end; but the letters to the anonymous “Lady” afford us the minutest pictures of the writer’s sayings and doings. To her he sends the following account of the vulgar celebrations that in Edinburgh attended the passing of the first Reform Bill.

“We had a real and a delicious procession in this town last Tuesday. After some of our sourest Whigs had ranted their souls out to all the rubbish which loads the earth in the King’s Park, a Sir Something, in the first place, was hauled along the street in a rusty open carriage, standing bolt-upright and bareheaded, bowing to the mob and to the mail-coaches as they passed. His white hair and rotten appearance reminded one of Dante’s Triumph of Death much more than of Le Brun’s Alexander entering Babylon. In the coach with him were three fat vulgar-looking women, dressed like the Cowgate rounpwives at a christening; and ever and anon he fell prone as the coach jolted on these quagmires, which I dare swear was wholesome, and saved the poor soul’s life; for the east wind was bitter, and they were as hot as Whiggery, and pride, and fat, and perhaps a dram of brandy could make them; so he always seemed to rise refreshed, as you know the giant Entellus did whenever Hercules cast him into the kennel. . . . Of course our new lawgivers

got all as drunk as they could afford, and three cholera cases took place that night for the good of the nation. This is all that I have got to tell in the way of news, and, God wot, far from being worthy of your perusal.”

Appropos of the presence of the so-called Sobieski Stuart princes, who had favoured him with a visit, he writes in the following lively note—

“And now, madam, I will change my strain. You don’t in the least know who is addressing you. You think, I warrant, Mr C. Sharpe a very insignificant person—a sort of frozen snail in the Princes St. Gardens! Alas! how the wisest may err! But then, to be sure, you cannot know who called on me two days ago: make your lowest Court curtsey and I will tell you—no less a dignitary than the King of Scotland! accompanied by his Majesty’s Prime Minister, the Laird of Clanranald. As ill-luck would have it, I was not at home, but they are to be here again on Monday. Their business is a *State secret*, which I am too profound a diplomatist to trust to paper. Don’t expect even a hint. Your housekeeper in Queen St. and the carrier may be against our party, for anything I know; nay, at Gosford, though I might have hopes of *Bonhomme*, as a Frenchman, I dread Alexander and Mrs Bates. However, this I will say, that you may soon meet with mighty surprises, and among greater, a change in my condition! Malvolio, the valet in Shakespeare, saith, ‘Some are born great, some gain greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them;’ hint the first. I have been pondering on the title and the rank of my peerage. Modesty is becoming. I shall commence by being created a Baron. If his Majesty insists, I’ll consent to Viscount, but then Clanranald shall pay the fees. There is a small hill, with a tower at top, near Hoddam Castle, called Repentance; from that I have resolved, for many good reasons, to take my title. My Lord Repentance,—it hath a very pretty suitable air; and I hope to see my wife, Lady Repentance, some evening

shortly, standing on certain steps, in a certain Assembly room, with as disdainful an air as *certain ladies* I know. . . . I fear you will think I have restricted you wonderfully as to rank, but I leave you your own notions as to title—*hinting* once more that Lady Musselborough or Lady Fisherrow have not a very sweet sound. Prestonpans is much better.

“If I be not hanged, drawn, and quartered, I hope to have the honour of seeing you when you revisit Athens; and I am, dear madam, ever your obliged faithful servant,
“REPENTANCE.”

The humour of this of course is obvious; but when we find Mr Sharpe writing to the Duke of Sutherland a good many years later—in fact only about four years before his death—inquiring with all apparent seriousness as to the amount of the fees payable for a baronetcy, we confess we do not know whether he was in jest or earnest. The grant of a baronetcy, he says, was proposed to have been made to the Sharpes of Hoddam by Queen Anne’s Government, but the grantee had died before the warrant was made out. His reason for seeking a revival of the dignity is amusing enough: “The truth is, this is a rude place, and people have been much ruder to me since I lost my estate; but were I a *Sir*, I should be more respectfully used, and this tag to my name would be an advantage to me in other matters.” But although in the same letter he proposes to make the first use of his title in flying to Munich and laying it at the feet of Lola Montez, we are disposed to think, if the matter could have been conveniently arranged, he would have accepted the dignity. The Duke of Sutherland appears to have made the necessary inquiries about the fees, which were probably enough to have proved a serious drawback to a man in Mr Sharpe’s posi-

tion, whose circumscribed means during his latter years would have proved scarcely compatible with the honour to which he aspired. But in this, as in other matters, it is difficult to say whether we should take him as altogether in earnest.

It is rather difficult to divine from the correspondence whether the later years of Mr Sharpe’s life could be characterised as happy or the contrary. He was a man of many inward resources; he had a large collection of unique treasures of artistic, antiquarian, and literary curiosities, in which he evidently took intense pleasure, and which he was always ready to show to any one who could appreciate them; he had his friends, in whose service he never tired of exercising his tastes down to the last year of his life, and a select few congenial intimates who were always eager to draw upon his unrivalled stores of information, and who—except in the case of those, like Lady Charlotte Bury, who abused his confidence—ever met with a cordial response. But the correspondence of these years is all too scanty. In some cases, like those of Dr Robert Chambers and Mr Maidment, Alexander Sinclair, and others, Mr Sharpe’s letters and memoranda are to be found incorporated in their works; and there is very little difficulty, for those who knew his peculiar modes of thought and expression, to lay their hands upon passages and confidently say, “Charles Sharpe *aut* —.” But though he persevered in the course of life and of habits which he had assumed when a younger and more vigorous man, there came a time when life apparently ceased to have its previous relish. An acute and sensitive spirit fretted with a body that was never naturally robust; the ailments that had served in former days to amuse

himself in describing them, and had diverted his friends when they read the ludicrously dolorous accounts of his sufferings, became substantial maladies that were not to be jested with. It is with this latter-day personality that those of the present generation who remember Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe in the flesh are mostly associated. They remember him as the quaint figure on the streets of Edinburgh, which Crombie's well-known print can scarcely be said to have exaggerated, or as the "Fitzpatrick Smart, Esq.," of the "Book-Hunter's" graphic sketch. Dr Hill Burton, however, never saw Mr Sharpe at his best; and we are mistaken if we suppose that any such real intimacy existed between them as between him and, say, the late Mr J. T. Gibson-Craig, Thomas Thomson, or even Mr Maidment. Indeed it must have been within the last ten years of Mr Sharpe's life that similarity of tastes brought the "Book-Hunter" and him into much personal contact. Dr Hill Burton fails to see what these volumes appear to us to clearly bring out, that what was at first affectation of the tastes and feelings of a bygone age had become settled into a confirmed mental habit, which was not likely to make him especially tolerant of the modern world around him. To the innate kindness of his nature the "Book-Hunter," however, does justice. If he was a recluse, he never became a misanthrope; if a suspicion of selfishness attached in the estimation of his later contemporaries to a man who seemed to live solely for the gratification of his own tastes, his geniality and kindness *when* approached were never called in question. It was not his *métier* to give illustrations of his own acts of charity in his letters; but there is an allusion to one we cannot forbear quoting,

while feeling assured that the deed would never have been put on record had it not been comically absurd in its failure.

"Talking of charity, I remember a very curious dialogue I once heard between Lady Frances Erskine and my mother concerning the poor of Edinburgh. Lady Frances spent her whole time in acts of benevolence, and my mother always gave when she required it, besides bestowing much on her own drunken beggars. They amicably settled it that the poor here were all alike, jades and rascals, that nothing ever contented them, and that the worst lived the longest. I remember Lady Frances said she thought blind people never died at all. Then the comparing of notes as to their adventures was charming. Lady Frances had a poor female pet who, because she would not buy her a new bonnet to jaunt to Dalkeith, got a man, for she could not do it herself, to write a most impertinent letter, calling Lady Frances a miser and a Papist; and my mother trumped on this card with a tailor's widow, whom she supported more than a twelvemonth after her snip's decease. Very sickly at length she grew, and took to her bed; but the last time my mother sent her some money, the maid met the *sage-femme* coming downstairs!! A sigh from both ladies cut short the story.

"My own romance with an old Highland woman in Blythe's Close, I think I had the honour of telling you long ago. Though starving here, she would not travel by *water* to her relations in the north, who could support her, because she never had done such a thing in her life."

And in his last letter to the anonymous "Lady," we find a pleasant and delicate instance of his forethought for his friends.

"Pray take care of yourself: under fatigue of body and mind, whenever you can, walk out into the park, and even in this dismal weather; there is no cure like that to the troubled soul—I speak from much experience—and do not go to the shrubbery, which is never healthful in autumn and winter,

but to the front of the house, and near the sea.

"In all distresses it is a great comfort to be in the country—to walk out unmet with, and to avoid a thousand impertinent inquiries, and condolences from people who, out of curiosity, or idleness, or pretence to sentiment, talk and write and call, tho' they care not one jot about the matter, and, whatever ill news they may get, will not eat one mouthful the less at any of their subsequent meals."

"Mr Sharpe's biography is written in his correspondence," his editor tells us; and the collection of his letters, taken along with Mr Bedford's too brief Memoir, constitutes the only life of him that is ever likely to come before the world. But even between the two, the materials for forming an accurate and certain estimate of Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe are still in many respects wanting. To get at the true key-note of the man's character we must not lose sight of the fact that he was an Anachronism, first by an assumption of the character, and then by second nature. He was a Scotsman of the Cavalier and Jacobite type. He adopted the feelings and predilections of these obsolete sections of Scottish society, and regarded contemporary men and things from their standpoint. His aristocratic origin, as he imagined, imposed upon him the enacting of the part of a fine gentleman of the old Scottish school, and the rôle certainly lacked nothing of dignity or of success in his hands. Fortune never opened a career congenial to him, and he was much too fastidious to carve out a practical one for himself. With his talents, both in literature and art, he might have taken a high place in either department; but nothing could have been further from his views than to turn his abilities to pecuniary profit. The strong good sense of Scott,

who sought to encourage his friend's literary energies in a lucrative direction by a quotation from the old song—

"Oh, if it were a dirty thing,
The gentry would deny it,
Or if it were ungodly,
The clergy would defy it.

Then sure it is a fine thing"—

made no impression on Sharpe's sensitive mind. Instead of profit, his books must have been a considerable drain upon his limited fortune. To have made himself a popular writer or a fashionable artist would have entailed so complete a surrender of his individuality that we cannot wonder that he never cared to make it: and we are tempted to doubt whether the success would have been equivalent to the sacrifice. As the case stands, his contributions to literature are about as much *disjecta membra* as the letters which his editor has gathered together, and exhibit nearly as many moods of mind and veins of feeling. His sketches, so much prized by those for whom they were originally made, are still sought after with an avidity which bears a constant ratio to their growing rarity, and a collection of them, published some years ago by Mr Bedford, was regarded with much admiration and wonder by a generation to most of whom Sharpe was already but the shadow of a name. From this volume we shall quote Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe's epitaph, written by himself in his Oxford days, which may very fitly close the stray characteristics we have been endeavouring to glean from the letters of this very remarkable mortal:—

"Here rests, forgotten and forgot,
No murderer, robber, thief, or sot;
No Tory worshipper of kings;
No Whig, the most accursed of things.
All's over now, we hope, and well;
Go, stranger, I've no more to tell."

THE BIRD OF APOLLO.

THERE is no bird—not even excepting the nightingale—which has furnished a more frequent theme for poetic inspiration, both in times ancient and modern, than the subject of this article. From the time when Juvenal penned his famous Sixth Satire, up to the discovery of the antipodes when a black swan no longer remained a rare bird on the earth, and onward through a succession of more modern poets to the present day, the Bird of Apollo has formed the subject of many a beautiful passage (almost as sweet as its own fabled song), both in prose and verse, the collection of which would amply repay the trouble and research necessary for the purpose; whilst the flood of controversy as to the vocal powers of the paradoxically named “Mute” Swan—of which Sir Thomas Browne remarks, “Surely he that is bit with a *tarantula* shall never be cured by its music”—as well as the antiquarian interest attached to the curious laws and customs regulating the ancient swan-rights, would fill no inconsiderable volume. On the present occasion, however, it is not our purpose to dwell upon the antiquarian aspect of the subject, undoubtedly interesting though it be, but after introducing the various members of the family, to give some account of the present state of two ancient swaneries, about one of which very little has been written, although it certainly claims to be of interest from more points of view than one.

The genus *Cygnus* comprises nine or ten very elegant species,

which are widely distributed over the temperate and arctic portions of both hemispheres, but mostly abounding, at least in the number of species, in the northern division of the globe. If we give, as in duty bound, the first place to those from a distance, the now familiar black swan takes precedence.

This fine species was discovered by the Dutch navigator Willem de Vlaming, who, on 6th January 1697, landed in an estuary in West Australia, now called Swan River, where his boat's crew met with several, and succeeded in capturing four of these birds, two of which they sent alive to Batavia. The news of this remarkable find soon reached Amsterdam, and Mr Witsen, the burgomaster of that town, communicated the fact to Dr Martin Lister, by whom it was communicated to the Royal Society of London in October 1698, and published in the ‘Philosophical Transactions’ (vol. xx. p. 361).¹ “Here,” says Witsen, “is returned a ship, which by our East India Company was sent to the South Land called *Hollandia Nova* ;” and adds that black swans, parrots, and sea-cows were found there. Cook found this bird on several parts of the coast, and from that time to the present it has been mentioned by all authors who have written on the natural productions of the antipodes. It was not till the year 1801 that the black swan was introduced into this country, when a pair, which arrived in the Buffalo, was presented to Queen Charlotte, and placed on the waters at Frogmore. Since then it has become well known in the ornamental waters

¹ Newton, Ency. Brit., ninth edit., article “Swan.”

of this country, where it breeds freely; and its graceful carriage, jet-black plumage, and bright coral bill, present a very striking appearance. The native habitat of this species is very restricted, being confined to South Australia, Tasmania, and the islands of Bass Strait, where it was formerly very numerous; but great numbers have fallen victims to the same fatal method which, in days gone by, proved so destructive to the wild-fowl-breeding in the fens of Lincolnshire—viz., “driving” the moulting birds when unable to fly, or hunting them down in that helpless condition, on the water, by means of boats. Mr Gould, referring to this practice, remarks that he has heard of the boats of a whaler entering an estuary, and returning to the ship nearly filled with black swans. So great has been the destruction, that Professor Newton, in the article before quoted, remarks that “perhaps even now there are more black swans in a reclaimed condition in other lands than are at large in their mother country.” And it is much to be feared that, in a state of nature, it will indeed soon become a rare bird upon the earth.

Even still more curious than the swan totally black is a very beautiful species—also found in the southern hemisphere—the body of which is pure white, but its head and neck are black as ebony. This species, which is found in the extreme southern portion of America, the Falkland Isles, Straits of Magellan, La Plata, and Chili, was first introduced into this country by Admiral Hornby, when in command of the Pacific station, who, Mr Selater tells us in his notes to Wolf’s ‘Zoological Sketches,’ at different times sent home to the late Lord Derby eight individuals, six of which were living at the dispersal of the

Knowsley collection in 1851, since which time it has become well known in collections, and has bred freely in confinement. A remarkable circumstance connected with the breeding of this species is on record. At Melbourne, in the year 1883, two black-necked cygnets were hatched from one egg. The twins progressed very slowly in growth, and although perfectly healthy, the smaller of the two at seven months old was a queer little fellow still covered with down, and in appearance not more than two months old. This species is mentioned by Narbrough, in the first edition of his *Voyage*, as having been found by him in August 1670 in the Straits of Magellan.

There is one other southern species known as the Coscaroba Swan, which is found in about the same limits as the preceding species. It is much smaller than the domestic swan, but is an exceedingly beautiful bird. Although it has on one occasion at least produced eggs in confinement, hitherto no young ones have resulted. It was introduced into this country from Chili in 1870, and is now an inhabitant of several of the Continental zoological gardens as well as of our own.

Turning to the northern hemisphere, there are six, or perhaps seven, known species of swan,—one said to inhabit Northern China, which has received the name of David’s Swan, from its discoverer, and is only known from a single specimen seen by Père David at Pekin, unless, indeed, two swans from Corea, recorded (*P. Z. S.*, 1887, p. 590) by Messrs Giglioli and Salvadori, and doubtfully referred by them to this species, really prove to be identical with the bird imperfectly described by David. Of two North American

species, one, the American Swan of Baird, has, according to Mr Sclater, never been brought alive to Europe, nor does he know of its having ever been exhibited in any of the American gardens; the other, the well-known Trumpeter Swan, inhabiting, like the preceding species, the arctic portions of America, has frequently bred in confinement, and it is this species which yields the skins so largely imported by the Hudson Bay Company.

We now come to the European species of swan; and the smallest of these, although noticed by Pallas, who appears to have regarded it merely as a small race of the Whooper, was first described as a distinct species by the late Mr Yarrell, who named it (in honour of Thomas Bewick) Bewick's Swan. It is an elegant little bird, and by no means rare on our coasts in some seasons. Mr Seebohm found it breeding in North-East Russia and in Eastern Siberia: its true home appears to be Arctic Asia. Although a peace-loving bird, living amicably with other water-fowl, and said to be capable of strong attachment to other individuals of its own species, it has not been known to nest in captivity.

A very touching story is told of a Bewick's Swan, which, being wounded on the 10th December, out of a flock of twenty-nine, was unable to follow its companions in their flight. It was not wholly deserted, however, for a second bird, presumably its mate, haunted the spot till banished by persevering efforts to effect its capture. Not even then did it finally desert its captive companion; for on the 23d of March, a swan believed to be the same individual made its appearance, and until the

13th April, when it was again alarmed by some strange dogs, was assiduous in its attentions to its still incapacitated companion. On the 5th of the following September, the wounded swan, having quite recovered the use of its injured wing, took its departure—let us hope, to rejoin its faithful mate where dogs and men would cease from troubling them. The cry of this species is a loud musical “tong, tong,” very like the sound of a violin-string.

Almost every winter brings to our shores flocks of another species of swan, known as the Whooper, or Whistling Swan. In some seasons it is by no means rare, and its presence in greater or less numbers is much influenced by the comparative severity of the weather; long-continued frosts occasionally witness the arrival of immense flocks of these fine birds. The Whooper, which a hundred years ago, according to Low (*‘Fauna Orcadensis,’* p. 133), nested in the holms of the loch of Stenness—where, however, he adds, it was always robbed by the country people—has quite deserted Orkney, and now breeds principally in the arctic portions of Europe. By the inhabitants of the high latitudes through which it passes on the approach of summer, its “whoop, whoop,” as it wings its way to its breeding-station, is as welcome a sound as is to us the note of the cuckoo. How differently it is regarded by the inhabitants of our more southern latitude, and for what reasons, has been charmingly told by the Rev. Richard Lubbock in the following passage in his *‘Fauna of Norfolk’*:—

“The whooping of a herd of these birds,” says Mr Lubbock, “is by the Laplander compared to the sound of a violin, and it conjures up to his

mind agreeable hopes and thoughts, telling him that winter is past, that pasture is at hand for his reindeer, and that short-lived arctic flowers shall bloom again on the banks of the Tornea. He therefore thinks it harmonious in the extreme. The English fenman, on the contrary, listens with disgust to the phalanx of whoopers which sweep on high over his head: they speak of increase and continuance of cold, remind him of want of fuel and of dearth of occupation. The voices of the unwelcome visitors grate upon his ear, and from association of ideas he calls them melancholy and unpleasant."

Low says, "When the swans go soon away, the Orkney people expect a forward season; but when they go south in the spring, fear the worst."

In Ireland, Sir R. Payne-Gallwey says that there is a very strong feeling against slaying a swan, for the strange reason that the fowler believes that in each individual swan is imprisoned a departed spirit, it may be of one of his own kin. Should he be guilty of such an act, he believes the consequences will be dire indeed. In the hard winter of 1881, Sir R. Payne-Gallwey says that in a small lake at Castle Gregory, on the coast of Kerry, which has from time immemorial been celebrated as a resort for wild swans, there were about 800 of these birds present at one time, and that upon a gun being fired they rose on the wing as one great white cloud and left for the sea, only to return, however, at night-fall.

Mr St John, in his charming book, 'Natural History and Sport in Moray,' thus speaks of the arrival of the wild swans in the Findhorn Bay, which takes place about the middle of October. In 1844 he estimated the number at

nearly 300, and says their appearance

"As they circle round the fresh-water lakes on their first arrival is one of the most beautiful sights imaginable. There is, too, a wild harmony in their bugle-like cry, as they wheel round and round, now separating into small companies, as each family of five or six seems inclined to alight, and now all joining again in a long undulating line, waiting for the word of command from some old leader, whose long acquaintance with the country and its dangers constitutes him a swan of note among the common herd. At last this leader makes up his mind to alight, and in a few moments the whole flock is gradually sinking down on the calm loch. After a moment or two spent in looking round them, with straight and erect necks, they commence sipping the water, and bending their flexible necks into a thousand graceful curves and attitudes. Then they break off into small companies, each apparently a separate family, and set to work, with seemingly a most excellent appetite, on the water grasses and plants."

Their food in these situations, Mr St John says, consists chiefly of the aquatic grasses *Glyceria fluitans* and *G. aquatica*.

To those who have only seen occasional flocks of seven or eight of these grand birds wending their way in wedge-shaped formation high in the air with extended necks, the beauty of such a sight as that described by Sir Ralph Gallwey or Mr St John can hardly be imagined. The Whooper is not a graceful bird in the water—he carries his neck too straight, and has none of the elegance of the Mute Swan; but a bird pure white, and measuring from beak to tail five feet, with a stretch of wings reaching eight feet, and weighing twenty-four pounds, is certainly a magnificent object when on the wing. These

birds have frequently bred in confinement, and Yarrell tells of the proud father of a brood in the Zoological Gardens which was escorting its young ones on the water, when a carrion-crow had the temerity to strike at one of the cygnets. He paid dearly, however, for his boldness; the male Whooper, coming to the rescue, seized the marauder, and immersing him in the water, held him there till life was extinct.

Whether or not there is a third species of swan which visits our shores in a state of nature, naturalists are not unanimous; certain it is that from time to time birds, to all appearance wild, are killed which present certain peculiarities which led Mr Yarrell to assign to them a true specific value, the claim to which was, he considered, greatly strengthened by the fact that individuals possessing the same peculiarities had for many years been imported from the Baltic by the London dealers under the name of the Polish Swan, and that the offspring of these birds, instead of being grey like those of the Mute Swan, were white or nearly so: this induced Mr Yarrell to name his new species *Cygnus immutabilis*. Of late years many broods of the so-called Polish Swan have been known to be produced of a white or very pale buff colour, a circumstance of extremely rare occurrence in the young of the Mute Swan; and it has been suggested that, even in the few instances recorded, the fact may be due to the presence, although unsuspected, of Polish blood in one or other of the parents. It seems, therefore, highly probable that Mr Yarrell's swan is really a good species.

Far exceeding any of the preceding species in beauty and graceful bearing is the common

swan of our ornamental waters, of which it is itself the greatest ornament—the so-called “Mute Swan.” Why the “Mute” Swan, who can say?—for although it is not possessed of the fabled song so often attributed to it by poets of the past, and although Sir Thomas Browne was fully justified, as he usually was in most of his conclusions, in his remarks already quoted, still our domestic swan is by no means mute; and it may frequently be heard, more especially when accompanied by its young, indulging in a soft low contented sort of murmur, which Colonel Hawker, in his ‘Instructions to Young Sportsmen,’ has reduced to music. The “swan’s melody,” he says, is “formed with two notes—C, and the minor third (E flat)—and the musician kept working his head as if delighted with his own performance.” In addition to this song of peaceful love, the usual call of the Mute Swan is a croaking note, which, although certainly not musical, is by no means out of harmony when heard in the haunt of the coot and moor-hen; and who has not heard, when venturing too close to the jealously guarded cygnets, the hiss of anger and defiance with which the parent bird threateningly pursues the intruder! What becomes of the dead swans is almost as difficult a problem to solve as the like disappearance of defunct donkeys; but that they do die, the writer had once an opportunity of witnessing. In the reed-bed by a river-side, the poor bird, probably injured by some means of which there were no outward indications, had beaten out a small dock amongst the water-weeds, and was swimming round and round in a narrow circle, like a boat propelled by one oar, using one foot only—the other apparently paralysed—

till it became more and more feeble, and its beautiful neck at length dropped into the water, never more to be proudly arched between its snowy pinions, the very emblem of pride and stately beauty. But where was

“The warble loud and full and clear”

which should have heralded the death of Apollo's bird? Alas! the swan's dying song existed only in the poet's imagination, and poor Cygnus expired without a sound, mute only when he should have been musical.

The Mute Swan in a state of nature is found in the present day, according to Yarrell, in Denmark, Sweden, some parts of Germany, Central and Southern Russia, the Lower Danube, Greece, the Black and Caspian Seas, and Turkistan. It is much more intolerant of cold than the other species of the genus, and in the northern portion of its range is migratory, being found in winter as far south as the lakes of Algeria and Egypt. Whether this country is ever visited by the Mute Swan in its migrations is uncertain, but it has always been accorded a place in books on British ornithology. At what period it was introduced into this country as a domestic bird is also uncertain; but the authority just quoted states that it was brought here from Cyprus in the reign of Richard I. (1189-99), and that swans are mentioned in a MS. of the time of Edward I. (1272). Paulus Jovius found the river Thames thickly covered with swans in 1543; and in the ‘*Avium Historia*,’ published in 1544, Turner notices the swan with the black tubercle on the beak. According to Hutchin (‘*Antiquities of Dorset*’), King Henry VIII., in the thirty-fifth year of his reign (1544), granted the swannery of Abbotsbury to Giles

Strangeways, Esq. It is therefore certain that swans existed in plenty both on the Thames and at Abbotsbury in 1544. How many years previous to that time the abbots of the latter place had “enjoyed” the privilege of maintaining a swannery is not recorded, but probably from a very early date. It has been suggested that we owe the introduction of the Mute Swan, like so many other good things, to the Romans; and who is prepared to prove the contrary?

Of the Abbotsbury swannery Hutchin says:—

“A little west of the town is a noble swannery, much visited by strangers. In the open or broad part of the Fleet are kept 600 or 700 swans, formerly 1500, or, as some say, 7000 or 8000, including hoppers, or a small species of swans, who feed and range, and return home again. The royalty belonged anciently to the abbot, since to the family of Strangeways, now to the Earl of Ilchester.”

This remarkable swannery still exists, although the birds are greatly reduced in numbers. It is situated about a mile south of the town, at the western extremity of the “Fleet,” a tidal creek of brackish water, with a narrow inlet from the sea, in Portland Harbour, and separated from the sea on the south by the Chesil Bank. In 1877 it was computed that there were 1300 swans on the water, and in May of that year 330 nests might be seen with the old birds busily incubating their eggs; but at present there are believed to be not more than 600 or 700 birds. This is in great measure owing to the losses sustained in the severe winter of 1880-81, when, in consequence of the destruction of the “grass” (a species of *Zostera*) on which they feed, some 700 birds are believed to have been lost: the birds were starved,

and would not at that time take the corn which was provided for them. At present there is not enough natural food for the remaining swans, and they are fed on boiled Indian corn. Probably owing to this scarcity of food in the ancient locality a considerable colony of swans has established itself at Weymouth, in the "Backwater"—sometimes called Radipole Lake—a sheet of brackish water a mile and a half long by a third of a mile broad, and separated from the sea by the spur of old beach on which the town of Weymouth is built. A weir has recently been erected which prevents this Backwater from becoming a muddy estuary at low tide, as used formerly to be the case, and the health of the town is thereby much improved. The swans, which number probably about 300, have a little islet to themselves, are fed on boiled Indian corn in addition to the natural food which they glean from the bottom of the shallow lake, and are supplied with fresh water by the Wey and other streams which run into and through the Backwater. The good people of Weymouth have tried to induce the swans to live in the open sea—in the bay; but they have not succeeded, although occasional stragglers may be seen in the bay or harbour. These stragglers often return flying, and single birds or pairs may be occasionally seen winging their way home to the Backwater. They seem to dislike a strong wind, and in boisterous weather retire from the town side of the Backwater, notwithstanding the tempting food which the inhabitants provide for them. These birds seem to be in excellent health, whereas those at the older colony at Abbotsbury appear to be in low condition.

This is also indicated in the latter instance by the unproductiveness of the old birds, which are said never to lay more than nine eggs, generally only three to six; whereas in the Norfolk rivers the average *hatch* would not be below seven, and ten eggs are not uncommon. The nests are constructed of reeds and coarse herbage, which are supplied to the birds for that purpose; and when one bird has hatched off, she is separated from the others, and other cygnets are given to her to rear to the number of about twenty: these are supplied with barley-meal, and are either fatted for the table or turned off to maintain the stock. The birds always resort to fresh water to drink, both here and at Weymouth; and it is a pretty sight to see them congregate for that purpose, laving their bodies and carefully arranging their plumage. Doubtless many of the unpinioned birds leave the water to return no more, it may be to swell the ranks of their free-born brethren.

To what age the Mute Swan will attain is not certainly known, but the keeper at Abbotsbury has never known any to die "in his time,"—a pretty long experience, too,—except of accident or starvation. A pair known as the King and Queen are popularly believed to be from 100 to 150 years old; but of that there is no evidence. These two eccentric individuals do not associate with the common herd of swans, but occupy a pond in the neighbouring decoy, which no other bird of the same species dares to invade. Should an intruder make its appearance, no quarter is shown it by their majesties, until it either makes its way out of the decoy or is removed by the keeper. Even their own young ones, after having once

left the pond, are never allowed to return; but birds other than their own species — ducks, &c. — are never molested by these ancient monarchs.

The Abbotsbury swans are frequently joined by genuine wild birds, which, however, do not remain, but, as Hutchin says, “feed and range, and return home again.” These strangers are, for the most part, Whoopers; but it is not unlikely that occasional examples of Bewick’s Swan also frequent the waters, attracted, like the Whoopers, by the semi-wild Mute Swans.

It is a long distance from Dorsetshire to the east coast of Norfolk, but probably no other locality (after Abbotsbury), not even the Thames itself, produces so many swans annually as the Norfolk “broads” and rivers. Here, in the sluggish streams bordered by a debatable margin on either side—which is neither land nor water, and which is covered with the rankest of marsh vegetation—or on the shallow waters of the broads themselves, the swans thrive beyond measure and multiply exceedingly, finding for themselves an ample supply of their natural food in the teeming waters. How many swans there are in these favoured regions it is impossible to say, but in Hickling Broad alone there are probably not less than thirty couple; and scattered along the river-sides and on the marshes, even within sight of the traveller as he journeys from Norwich to Yarmouth by rail, many old birds may be seen at the breeding season busily collecting the material for their nests, or quietly seated on the great heaps of rank marsh-grasses, a slight depression in which contains their treasures, whilst the old male keeps watch close by. Not socially,

as at Abbotsbury, do the swans nest here; every pair has exclusive possession of its own district, and fierce battles are the result of the slightest attempt on the part of any intruder to trespass on its neighbour’s domain. Many of the swans which, at other seasons, frequent distant portions of the rivers, return regularly each pair to their accustomed spot to nest; and so jealous are they of intruders, that it is often difficult for a young couple to find a settlement. Of course these swans all have owners; but except on private waters, the birds belonging to the different individuals possessed of swan-rights mix indiscriminately, and pair with an utter disregard to ownership. This, however, as will be seen, is of little consequence.

We will suppose the month of March to have arrived, and the young birds, it may be only in their second year (if so, their brood will be a small one), to have paired (probably for life), settled all preliminaries, and chosen a site for their nest: then begins the important work of building a receptacle for their eggs; and this is no mean labour, for the swan’s nest is of ample dimensions, and requires a very considerable quantity of material for its construction; and even when sitting, the old birds appear to be constantly adding to and rearranging their already, to all appearance, ample structure. The spot chosen for the nest is always near the water, either on an island in the river or broad, on the marshy “rond,” or at the entrance to some marsh-drain, and is composed of the coarse herbage which is sure to be found in abundance in such a locality, often supplemented by a load of marsh-grass and sedges, deposited in a convenient position by the

broad-keeper. The male bird takes his fair share of the work, and when the nest is in all other respects ready for the eggs, he stations himself upon it, shaping out, with the weight and motion of his body, a hollow centre in which they are deposited: nor does his assiduity then cease, for in addition to guarding his mate when upon her nest, he is always ready to take her place should she desire to leave it for a time. An old male swan never shows to greater advantage than when proudly sailing up and down keeping guard over his nest, with neck thrown back and wings arched, every feather on his body seeming to stand apart from its fellow and to bristle with excitement as he surges through the water to drive away the intruder. And this is not mere display; there is plenty of evidence of the old male's ferocity, even to his boldly boarding a boat and attacking its occupants. The onslaught of an old male swan, although not so dreadful as it has often been depicted, is by no means devoid of danger, and some of the broadmen tell of serious inconvenience arising from the blows administered by the stump of the pinioned wing of an infuriated bird. The number of eggs laid by the Mute Swan varies considerably. It often happens that an adult bird is paired with a young mate, say of the second year: in this case the produce would be greater than that resulting from two young birds; for should both birds be only two years of age, they will probably not produce more than three or four eggs the first year. They will, however, in each successive year become more and more productive, till the full complement of nine to twelve eggs is produced. Mr Stevenson, the author of the 'Birds of Norfolk,'

in a paper on the Mute Swan as observed in that county, printed for private circulation, gives a table of the produce of a pair of swans which bred on Surlingham Broad. In eight years they produced eighty-five eggs and reared eighty-two cygnets. The writer has known several instances in which the same bird has laid twelve eggs, and more than one in which she has hatched that number of cygnets.

In due time—that is, in about five weeks—the eggs hatch into little balls of dusky down, which are conveyed to the water, and assiduously tended by their proud parents; and what a beautiful sight is the snow-white mother, surrounded by or attending her dusky little ones, or perhaps, with arched wings, bearing them upon her back, their queer little heads peeping from beneath her sheltering plumage—fit emblem of peace! Then is heard the gentle crooning note of the female before referred to, whilst the proud father is sailing protectingly round in all his warlike pomp, ready to give battle in their defence to all the forces of the universe! The life of the little cygnets must be a happy one, as, tended by their constant parents, they are taught all that it is becoming for baby swans to know, gradually progressing from the down of their infancy to the rather inelegant figure and plumage of their hobbledehoyhood; but there is a sad future before them, happily hidden from their knowledge.

The second Monday in August is an eventful day in the history of the existence of the dusky cygnets, for on that day their fate is decided: either they are destined to live a life of freedom like their parents, or they are hurried off to the swan-pit, there to undergo

a course of gradual preparation, which ends in the spit.

The Swan Upping or "Hopping" on the Norwich rivers, although formerly attended with some little pomp, is nowadays a prosaic affair enough. On the river and its broads below Norwich, it takes place on the second Monday in August, but on the streams above the city it is deferred till the last Monday in the same month. The morning having arrived, the keeper of the St Helen's swan-pit, to be hereafter mentioned, and who represents the swan-right of the city corporation, meets the representatives of the various other swan-rights, at Buckenham Ferry, ten miles below Norwich, on the river Yare; and the preliminary of breakfast having been got through, the procession of boats starts to take up the young swans. This is not always a very easy matter, as the old birds, probably with a glimmering recollection of former raids upon their broods, make every effort to lead their young ones into a place of safety. Before long, however, they are either surrounded by boats, and the young ones captured by means of a sort of shepherd's crook, or both old and young are driven out of the water and secured. Sometimes, however, a pair of cunning old birds will manage to get into the open water, or dodge between reed-beds, and give a great deal of trouble before they are captured; but as a rule, they do not show so much fight as might be expected, seeming, between their anxiety for the safety of their young ones, and fear for themselves, to be quite bewildered; and although the piping of the captured young ones will induce them to follow the boat at first, they soon give up the chase, and seem to forget the loss of their families. When the parent birds are taken

from the water, their "marks" are examined, in order to ascertain to whom they belong; and if, as is generally the case, the male and female birds are owned by different proprietors, the brood is equally divided; if there is an odd young one, the representatives of the two owners "toss up" for it, and by this means make an amicable distribution. Should the marks in the bill of the old birds be defective from any cause, the opportunity is taken to renew them by fresh cutting.

The young birds have their feet turned on their backs, where they are tied by a piece of soft list, and are then placed on a bed of rushes at the bottom of the boat if they are to be taken away for fattening; but if they are destined to replenish the breeding stock, they are pinioned by removing a portion of the wing at the carpal-joint—a rough but effectual piece of surgery—and are then returned to the custody of their parents. All are "marked" by having certain cabalistic signs, the ancient "swan-mark" pertaining to the "right of swans," cut upon their bills. This is either done by incising the skin or notching the side of the bill: the latter is the more permanent, but both are probably equally painful to the bird; and ancient as is the practice, it seems a pity that one less cruel cannot be substituted for it, such, for instance, as punching small holes in the web of the foot, which would admit of an infinity of combinations, and would be much less painful for the bird. The young swans intended for the swan-pit are not pinioned, as it would tend to prevent their fattening so readily.

There are several private swan-pits belonging to the various owners of swan-rights on the Norwich rivers, but the bulk of the cygnets

are taken to the swan-pit at the St Helen's Hospital, an almshouse for old men and women at Norwich, and there consigned to the care of the governor of that institution, who has the privilege of fattening them. Of the history of this ancient swan-pit, strange to say, little is known. None of the local historians mention it; but as a minute in the books of the Hospital Trust says that a *new* "swan-yard" was constructed in 1793, it is fair to presume it existed long before that time, and by some it is thought to date from even before the year 1547, when the site of the present hospital in the parish of St Helen's was granted to the mayor and commonalty of the city of Norwich and their successors for ever by King Edward VI. Here from 80 to 100 cygnets may be seen at the proper time of year undergoing the process of fattening in the swan-pit, which is constructed of brickwork, and is about 35 yards long by 12 yards wide: one end is left inclined for the convenience of the birds in entering and leaving the water; the other three sides are perpendicular, and have floating troughs in which are placed the barley and Indian corn on which the birds feed. They have also, particularly at first, a plentiful supply of cut grass, which is thrown upon the surface of the water. Although situated at some distance from the river, the water has free access to the swan-pit, and rises and falls with the tidal flow, which tends to prevent its becoming foul, although so thickly inhabited.

The past season has not been a very favourable one for the young broods, and there are at present only eighty cygnets in the swan-pit. Very pretty indeed they look swimming up and down in their new home, and dabbling

for their food, but this happiness will be of short duration; the Christmas season will make a great inroad upon the inhabitants of the swan-pit, and indeed after that time they cease to thrive, and by the month of January lose flesh, notwithstanding any amount of high feeding. At their prime the cygnets will weigh up to 28 lb., but when dressed for the table about 15 lb., constituting a very imposing dish, and fit to grace the tables of the royal and distinguished persons, or the civic feasts at which for the most part they are destined to appear.

In a recently published book, purporting to portray the manners and customs prevailing in the East Country in the latter part of the seventeenth century, Mrs Dorothy Browne, the wife of the celebrated Norwich physician, afterwards Sir Thomas Browne, is represented as lamenting that the cygnets on the spit (note the plural, and this at an *impromptu* supper!) testified "by an odour too strong to be agreeable," to their having been kept a trifle too long, a circumstance rendered not at all improbable from the fact of Mistress Browne's supper taking place in the month of March, whereas cygnets are only in season from October to the end of December!

The value of a cygnet when first taken from its parents is said to be about ten or twelve shillings; when fat it is sold at the swan-pit, dressed ready for the spit, at two guineas; but for fattening swans sent for that purpose one guinea is charged—not too large a sum, seeing that, in addition to the care required, the cygnet before being ready for the table has consumed nearly four bushels of barley.

Let it not be imagined that the cygnet, when delivered to the cook, is to be regarded with levity. No;

the after-treatment of so ancient and grand a dish is a matter of too much importance to be left to the caprice of the *chef*, be he never so original a genius. Each bird sent out from the swannery is accompanied by a recipe, and that a

poetical one, giving instructions for the due performance of that last rite of all, which shall culminate in the final entombment in the aldermanic stomach. Would the reader like to know how

To Roast a Swan?

“ Take three pounds of beef, beat fine in a mortar,
Put it into the swan—that is, when you’ve caught her !
Some pepper, salt, mace, some nutmeg, an onion,
Will heighten the flavour in gourmand’s opinion.
Then tie it up tight with a small piece of tape,
That the gravy and other things may not escape.
A meal paste (rather stiff) should be laid on the breast,
And some ‘ whitey-brown ’ paper should cover the rest.
Fifteen minutes at least ere the swan you take down,
Pull the paste off the bird that the breast may get brown.”

The Gravy.

“ To a gravy of beef (good and strong), I opine,
You’ll be right if you add half a pint of good wine ;
Pour this through the swan—yes, quite through the belly—
Then serve the whole up with some hot currant-jelly.”

N.B.—The swan must *not* be skinned.

TWENTY YEARS' MOVEMENTS IN AGRICULTURE.

RARELY is an age able to fully realise the tendencies and processes of transition that are going on with it, until these have impressed themselves upon it by the positive fact of change. And it is only when we compare the present with the past that we awake to a consciousness of what we have been going through. In the case of the elements of our material prosperity our perceptions are sensibly quickened; but even with regard to these, it is only by contrasting two epochs with each other we can reach an accurate estimate of the changes that have taken place. No particular branch of industry has been more closely watched than the fluctuating fortunes of agriculture; and yet it is only by means of a retrospect that we can form a precise idea of either its present position or possible future.

It has been truly enough said that within the past fifty years British farming has been transformed from a comparatively simple to a most complex process, requiring the exercise of much greater ingenuity, forethought, and scientific knowledge than was necessary for the elementary agriculture of the olden times. Money, manure, and motive power, with just enough enterprise and wisdom to ensure that these agents should be fairly active and moderately faithful to their respective functions, were sufficient in "the good old days of fifty years ago" to maintain the agricultural fabric in a robust and flourishing condition. The first three great agencies are of course still essential; but to direct and manipulate them so as to achieve

success—so as to successfully combat the new and stubborn difficulties opposed to them,—in short, to bring out a product which shall realise more than its cost of production—demands the exercise of a very different mental agent from what was sufficient in former eras. Now much more depends upon the controlling mind; now it is mind, money, manure, and motive power.

Farming has indeed become far more a game of science than of brute force. New difficulties have arisen—difficulties undreamt of half a century ago. Disease amongst live stock, insect and fungoid attacks upon crops, impaired fertility of soil, advance in cost of labour, a vast and ever-growing volume of foreign competition in farm products, and a great decline in prices,—all these and other obstacles little known to his forefathers beset the path and impede the operations of the modern farmer.

In the forty-eight years which have elapsed since the chemical torch of Liebig gave new light to the agricultural world, many changes have taken place in the condition and practice of farming. In the preface to the third edition of his great work, 'The Book of the Farm,' the late Mr Henry Stephens remarked that ever after the enunciation of Liebig's chemical discoveries and theories in 1840, practical and scientific agriculture had "marched hand in hand, in the joyful assurance of achieving great things in future." That preface was written in 1871, and the writer was able to say that, with the reviving aid of science,

the progress of agriculture, although intermittent, had been great and substantial; and he had such confidence in the soundness and solidity of the condition of British agriculture, and the system then being pursued, that he believed his classical work, 'The Book of the Farm,'—to the preparation and perfecting of which, with untiring zeal, he devoted a great part of his active and useful life—might, in the light of that period, be made to "assume a permanent character" as a "guide for the use of young men wishing to become practical farmers."

How many freaks and surprises, how many new developments and modifications of old conditions, the next twenty years had in store for British agriculture, no one living in 1868 could have easily predicted. Nor, indeed, until the two periods are narrowly looked at, and, so to speak, laid side by side and mentally compared and contrasted, are the changes from the old order of things to the new—from the agriculture of 1868 to that of 1888—very clearly apparent to any one now living.

In the fourth edition of 'The Book of the Farm,' the First Division of which has just been issued,¹ Mr Macdonald, into whose able and experienced hands the task of revising this standard work has most fitly been intrusted, gives expression to the striking impression which the changes in the agricultural situation in the twenty years since his predecessor laid down his pen have made upon him. In the Preface to the new edition of this work it is remarked, that in the comparatively short

period of time—hardly twenty years—that has elapsed since the preparation of the third edition of 'The Book of the Farm,' British agriculture has seen its highest point in prosperity, and almost its lowest in depression. Up to 1875 the progress was steady and rapid, but a reverse of fortune was close at hand. Since 1879 the agriculture of this country has indeed been subjected to sore trials. Climatic conditions have been as adverse as could well be conceived—a dispensation to be accepted uncomplainingly. In spite of a largely increased population, and much greater purchasing power on the part of the consuming public, the prices of nearly all varieties of farm produce have declined to a serious extent. Other countries might perhaps have attempted to prevent this by keeping out or taxing the mass of foreign produce which has flooded our open ports, to a large extent supplanting the produce of British farms. We are not to say that this should or should not have been done; we are not to discuss in any way the merits of either Fair Trade or Free Trade. We are simply rehearsing bare facts which have helped to introduce into the agriculture of this country an entirely new order of things.

With a free will, and with our eyes open, we have exposed our agriculture to the full force of a whole-world competition. Virgin soils and cheap labour in far-off lands combine with low freights on the thoroughfares of the sea to pour in at our open ports the low-priced produce of foreign countries. To the consumer, who is imbued with

¹ Stephens' Book of the Farm. Fourth Edition, Revised and in great part Rewritten by James Macdonald of the 'Farming World.' William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London. 1888.

the practical spirit of this supremely utilitarian age, and who cares not where his bread is grown or baked, the foreign article is as welcome as the home-raised. With the consumer it is purely and simply a question of price and quality, and upon these lines it has become

a determined and formidable struggle between the home and foreign producer.

The extent and character of the foreign competition which British farmers have now to face will be seen at a glance in the following figures:—

TWENTY-ONE YEARS' IMPORTS OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE.

	1866.		1887.		Increase in Twenty-one Years.
	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	
		£		£	£
Cattle, . . Nos.	237,739	4,092,294	295,961	4,438,805	346,511
Sheep, . . "	790,880	1,504,312	971,403	1,645,837	141,525
Swine, . . "	76,541	242,606	21,965	64,424	...
Dead meat, cwt.	1,230,534	3,620,102	6,693,120	15,071,283	11,451,181
Wheat, . . "	23,156,329	12,983,091	55,784,685	21,335,902	8,352,811
Wheat-flour, "	4,972,280	3,796,911	18,056,545	10,020,433	6,223,522
Other corn, "	38,815,236	13,266,350	65,342,425	16,462,962	3,196,612
Lard, . . "	228,459	806,951	906,190	1,601,635	794,684
Butter and } margarine, }	1,165,081	5,962,455	2,788,000	11,886,717	5,924,262
Cheese . . "	872,342	2,801,579	1,834,467	4,508,937	1,707,358
Eggs, . . "	...	1,105,633	...	3,080,561	1,974,908
Vegetables, cwt.	...	389,663	...	2,192,725	1,803,062
Hops, . . "	85,687	567,760	145,298	428,250	...
Wool, . . lb.	235,741,101	17,277,720	574,196,058	24,280,593	7,002,873
Total, . . .		68,417,447		117,019,064	48,919,309
Deduct decrease in value of swine, £198,182, and of hops, £139,510, .					317,692
Net increased value of agricultural imports in twenty-one years, .					48,601,617

It will be observed that the increase in the "quantities" is even greater than in that of "values," for the consumer gets the foreign as well as the home produce at prices which are from 20 to 40 per cent lower than prevailed twenty years ago. Taking the "values," we find that for every man, woman, and child in the United Kingdom, the agricultural imports now amount to about £3, 3s., or about 18s. 6d. per head of the population more than in 1866.

It is interesting to look narrowly at this table and note the directions in which the imports have shown the greatest and the least

expansion. The increase has been greatest of all in dead meat, and next in order of growth come eggs, wheat-flour, butter and margarine, lard, wheat, and cheese. The increase in the imports of live stock are comparatively insignificant; but in regard to hops it will be observed that while there has been a decline in the value, there has been a very large increase in the quantity of the imports.

From another point of view, a consideration of these figures as to imports will be interesting. What proportions do the imports of the principal products bear to the total consumption of these articles in

this country? It has been estimated that twenty years ago only about 8 per cent of our meat-supply came from abroad. Now the foreign proportion is rather over than under 20 per cent, and it is believed that in some years since 1880, fully one-fourth of the meat consumed in this country was imported. Major Craigie estimated that in 1885 the imports of beef alone formed about 16 per cent of our supply of beef, and about 8 per cent of the total consumption of meat. The imports of the flesh of the pig make up a larger, and those of mutton a smaller, proportion of the quantities consumed. Of bakers' bread—that is, wheat and flour—the proportion derived from abroad is very much greater. Indeed, for every home-grown loaf now supplied to us we consume two grown in some foreign country. Then as to dairy produce, it is calculated that rather more than one half of both the butter and cheese consumed in the United Kingdom now comes from other countries.

It is not the intention to discuss here the delicate question as to how far the decline in agricultural prices is due to growth in foreign competition, or as to what part other influences, such as general trade depression at home and abroad, may have played in effecting this falling off. Let us see, however, what the past twenty years' movements in agricultural prices have really amounted to. Grain has sustained the heaviest share of the decline. It has been greatest of all in wheat. From about 50s. in 1866, wheat fell to 32s. per quarter in 1887—a decline of 18s. per quarter in twenty-one years. In the same period barley fell back about 11s. and oats 8s. per quarter; wool

from 1s. 9d. to from 10d. to 1s. per lb.

Since 1866 beef has had many “ups and downs” in prices. It reached its highest point about 1875, when it went as high as 84s. per cwt. For a few years it maintained a very high level; but from 1883 to 1887 it declined rapidly, until in the latter year it was lower than it had been twenty years before. At the London Metropolitan Market the average wholesale prices of home-fed beef per stone of 8 lb., sinking the offal, were from 3s. 8d. to 5s. 6d. in 1866, 4s. 4d. to 6s. in 1876, and from 3s. 3d. to 4s. 10d. in 1886. Since then, as will be seen presently, an upward movement has set in with both beef and grain.

Mutton has more successfully retained its position in the range of prices. The average wholesale price of home-fed mutton in the London Metropolitan Market, per stone of 8 lb., sinking the offal, was from 3s. 9d. to 6s. 2d. in 1866, from 5s. 2d. to 6s. 11d. in 1876, and from 4s. 2d. to 6s. in 1886.

Pork is not much lower than twenty years ago, but much below the high point it reached in 1876. Its average wholesale price per stone of 8 lb., sinking the offal, in the London market, was from 3s. to 4s. 10d. in 1866, from 4s. 6d. to 5s. 8d. in 1876, and from 2s. 6d. to 4s. 6d. in 1886.

It is thus seen that the decline in the prices of grain has been much greater than in the prices of meat. The latter are not much below the level they presented twenty years ago, but are far short of the high range of prices attained between 1870 and 1883.

Naturally the systems of cropping and general farm management pursued throughout the United Kingdom have moved in

sympathy with these changes in prices. Between 1867 and 1887 the extent of cultivated land—arable land and permanent pasture—increased by nearly three million acres,—exactly 2,870,714 acres. Yet notwithstanding this increase in the cultivated area, a smaller extent is now being tilled than twenty years ago. Indeed in that period no fewer than 833,393 acres have gone from regular tillage into permanent pasture.

Then if we look narrowly into the division of that which is still arable land, we observe several changes of significance. The corn crops have lost ground to the extent of about 40 acres in every 1000 acres of arable land. Grasses under rotation have increased by nearly a million acres, or exactly 58 in every 1000 acres of arable land. The break for green crops of various kinds has also increased by about 7 acres in every 1000 acres of arable land. One crop of wheat cannot now bear two years' rent and labour; and so the area of bare fallow has declined by nearly 50 per cent.

A view of the relative positions of the individual crops, in regard to extent, shows that wheat has had to yield the premier place to oats. There has been little change in barley, but beans have fallen off by 30 per cent. Turnips have lost about 5 per cent of the proportion they occupied twenty years ago; but potatoes, mangels, and minor green crops have more than held their own.

A glance from these cropping statistics to the figures relating to live stock, indicates that the main current of British agriculture is changing its course. Corn-growing has lost its supremacy. Increased reliance is being placed upon live

stock. There are now nearly two million head more cattle in the United Kingdom than twenty years ago; and it is important to note that with the great improvement in all kinds of cattle, and the much greater rapidity with which they are now matured and fattened, this increase represents a much larger growth in the national wealth in cattle and in the yearly supply of home-raised beef than the mere numbers would indicate. Unfortunately similar activity cannot be pointed to in the case of sheep. The stock of sheep in the United Kingdom has fallen off by no fewer than $4\frac{1}{2}$ million head during the past twenty years. But at last there is reason to believe that the tide has turned, and a period of growth in sheep-farming interests set in. It is not to the credit of the farmers of Great Britain that they have given so little attention to pig-rearing. They give even less now than twenty years ago, although in Ireland the pig industry has grown substantially, with much benefit to all concerned.

The development of the railway system has not had the anticipated effect upon the breeding of horses. Instead of lessening the necessities for draught-horses, it has had an exactly opposite influence. The stock of horses in the United Kingdom has increased in the past twenty years by nearly 200,000 head, and yet the supply is unequal to the demand.

It is thus obvious that a prominent feature in the agricultural movements of the past twenty years is a contraction of corn-growing and an expansion of the live-stock interests of the kingdom. How far that contraction and this expansion are likely to go on, it would be fruitless to speculate. After so many years of

adverse fortune to corn-growing, one is gratified to feel that the latest symptoms are not so unfavourable to that important branch of British agriculture.

“Have we at last reached the bottom?” This question, often asked, is not easily answered. To attempt to do so confidently would be unwise, for assuredly in things agricultural, prophecy is unsafe speculation. Still we do indulge the hope that the bright specks which have at last appeared on the horizon foretell the approach of a revival of agricultural prosperity. In prices of farm produce a decided upward tendency has set in. Not for many years—not often, indeed, when beef was selling at over 80s. per cwt.—have feeders of cattle realised more substantial profits than they have obtained since November 1887. This is no doubt mainly due to the low price at which the stock had been purchased in lean condition; but it is also to a considerable extent accounted for by a rise in the price of beef, and by the low price of purchased foods. The tone of the dead-meat trade began to improve towards the end of last year, and it kept on improving until the top price of beef exceeded 70s. per cwt. in August last. In the London dead-meat market, the price for prime Scotch beef in September was 4s. 4d. per 8 lb., being 1s. 3d. above the quotation in the corresponding month last year. Mutton has all along maintained a higher level than beef, and the London price for Scotch mutton in September was 5s. 8d. for 8 lb.—exactly 1s. higher than twelve months ago.

This advance in the price of mutton, supported by more hopeful prospects generally, and by the probability of abundant winter

food at moderate cost, gave rise to a very keen demand for store-sheep during the past few months. A slightly contracted supply provided additional stimulus to the sheep trade, and an advance of from five shillings to ten shillings a-head over last year's prices for lambs and older sheep has been quite general. Whether such a gigantic advance as this be fully warranted, time alone can tell. We trust it may prove so, but we confess to have some misgivings. Sudden spurts of this kind in the store-stock trade are by no means at all times healthy or encouraging symptoms of agricultural prospects. An advance in the price of dead meat is so much clear gain to the agricultural interest. An increase in the price of lean stock may mean nothing more, or at any rate little more, than a transference of farming capital from the pocket of one farmer to that of another—the enriching of the breeder at the expense of the feeder. The solid all-round welfare of the farming interest is best promoted by a national, steady, and healthy relation between the price of lean stock and that of dead meat. But, apart from the excesses of recent sales of sheep, we think there is good reason to believe that an improvement of considerable solidity has taken place in the prospects of both breeders and feeders, alike of cattle and sheep.

Then in grain the recent advance in price is still more striking. In the Edinburgh market in the first week of November, wheat was selling at an average of 39s. 8d. per quarter—no less than 11s. 5d. in advance of the average price twelve months before. In the price of barley there has been a slight decrease; but oats rose

from 17s. 9d. in November 1887 to 20s. per quarter on an average in November last, when the top price was 25s.

Unfortunately, the very late harvest of this year will deprive many farmers of the full benefit of this upward movement in the grain market. To the main body of farmers, however, the advantage will be very substantial; and although the rise has not been large enough to bring back the full glory of those bygone days when wheat was rarely below 50s. per quarter, it has nevertheless been sufficient to inspire farmers with fresh hope and renewed buoyancy.

It is right to note that among the agricultural movements of the past twenty years, there have been some not altogether unfavourable to the tenant-farmer. Several important Acts of Parliament have been passed for his special benefit—notably those relating to game and compensation for improvements. Then beyond the domain of the Legislature there have been some changes which, while not in themselves happy changes, have tended to lighten the burden of the farmer. Chief amongst these is the reduction of rent. This in itself is assuredly not a desirable or gratifying thing. It is good for no one, and is a serious calamity to an influential class, impairing, as it has done and is doing, wealth which lies at the very foundation of our country's greatness. It is true, indeed, that a period of low rents may be a disastrous one for farmers. In the good times of past years farming was much more prosperous with high rents than it is yet, even where the reduction of rent has been greatest. Apart altogether from the individual interests of the landowner, the neces-

sity for a reduction of land rent is much to be regretted. But the necessity has arisen; and a very general reduction of from 20 to 30 per cent—in many cases it has been far more—has so far helped farmers to meet the altered circumstances of the times.

Among other and more gratifying changes which deserve to be noticed is the great reduction in the prices of manures and feeding-stuffs. This reduction has been greater than most people, before looking narrowly at the figures, would perhaps be prepared to believe. Taken as a whole, the prices for manures and feeding-stuffs are as near as might be 30 per cent below their average for the twenty years up to 1887. Peruvian guano has fallen 40 per cent; crushed bones and dissolved bones about 15 per cent; superphosphate, 37 per cent; nitrate of soda, 26 per cent; and sulphate of ammonia, 35 per cent. Muriate of potash, now extensively used, was little known twenty years ago. Since 1872 it has fallen about 30 per cent. Linseed-cake is fully 30 per cent cheaper than twenty years ago; while cotton-cake is nearly 40 per cent cheaper than when it came into general use from about 1870 to 1874. Maize has fallen fully 25 per cent, and bran from 20 to 23 per cent.

This all-round decline in the cost of manures and feeding-stuffs is of great importance to British farmers. It has materially lessened the cost of producing both meat and bread-stuffs, thus considerably modifying the effect of the depression. It has also benefited the owners of land; for had the prices of manures and feeding-stuffs remained as high as formerly, then assuredly rents would have been still more seriously

curtailed than has been the case. The reduction in the price of foods and manures has thus been one of the best and most gratifying of all the agricultural movements in the past twenty years.

Much has been heard of the so-called neglect on the part of the Government of this country to provide State aid to agriculture. Nothing would be easier than to overestimate the influence which the best Agricultural Department which can be devised could exercise in helping practical farmers to increase their profits or lessen their losses; yet a well-equipped Agricultural Department, such as is, at last, about to be established—thanks to the persistent efforts of several influential agriculturists, efforts ably focussed by Mr Jacob Wilson—will undoubtedly be capable of doing much good to farming interests.

Independently, however, of any special State aid, a vast deal has been done during the past twenty years in the promotion of agricultural education. The average farmer of to-day cannot help knowing a great deal more than the best-informed farmer knew a quarter of a century ago as to the economical manuring of his land and the profitable feeding of his stock. This fresh knowledge has undoubtedly invested the farmer with much additional "power." It has enabled him to produce a better result at a smaller outlay. Then in the devising of new machines and implements, and the improvement of old ones, the last two decades have conferred great benefit upon agriculture.

And amongst the movements of the past twenty years which have been advantageous to agriculture, may we not venture to mention an improved and cheapened agricul-

tural press? The great increase in the circulation of farming papers is not altogether due to the cheapening of their price, but partly also to the advance of education, and to the fact that now greater attention is given to the preparation of papers calculated not merely to amuse and edify the farmer, but likewise to actually help him to turn his land, his crops, and his live stock to better advantage. Not less noteworthy is the increase of our agricultural literature in all its branches, from complete treatises like the work now before us, down to special manuals dealing with particular sections of farming industry. The publication of the new edition of 'The Book of the Farm,' thoroughly revised, as it has been, by Mr Macdonald, dealing with the minutest details, with the altered conditions of cultivation, and embodying the most recent information connected with the subject, is an event of very great importance in the literature of agriculture.

Recent years have introduced considerable improvement in marketing facilities. In this connection, the most noteworthy feature is the remarkable development of the auction mart, and its encroachment upon the old open market system. There are, to be sure, differences of opinion as to the influence of the auction mart, but we think there is a good deal to be said in its favour. Strenuous efforts are being made in various ways,—witness, for instance, the movement for the introduction of the weigh-bridge in disposing of live stock,—to curtail the incursions of the "middleman," but that ubiquitous individual still contrives to divert to his capacious pockets a pretty substantial slice of the farmer's produce.

There have been a few other changes relating to agriculture which have exercised varying influences, but these must be passed over. The cost of labour has considerably advanced since 1868. This, of course, also tells against the farmer; but he makes no complaint on this score. He is pleased to observe the improvement it has effected in the comfort and intellectual status of the labourer and his family.

Whatever individual opinion as to the significance of this or that particular movement in agriculture may be, there cannot be any doubt that at the present time the difficulties which farmers have to contend against are exceptionally formidable, both in number and character. Yet there is no reason for giving way to despair. Better times are in store for British agriculture. Its prospects are brightening already. Present indications all tend to encourage and strengthen the hope—which one would fain call a belief, if not even a conviction—that the worst is behind us. It may be too soon, perhaps, to build high hopes upon the betokened improvement, yet the revival is sufficiently marked to impart a fresh stimulus to the enterprise of the farmer.

Meantime the farmer has a hard struggle to pay his way and make ends meet. At best, modern farming is a difficult and complex process. More than ever, agriculture teems with technicalities and abounds in uncertainties. As of old, it is ever at the mercy of sun and wind. The farmer, as has been well said, is in partnership with nature—a partner with old-world habits, full of freaks and surprises. Modern developments of science and commerce, as we

have seen, have brought fresh difficulties into the way of the British farmer; and it is assuredly no easy matter to conduct farming in this country so as to yield a profit. Upon the old easy-going lines of half a century ago, it certainly cannot be made to pay. Even the comparatively enlightened, methodical, and enterprising, if somewhat over-confident, "high-farming" of the "seventies," will not now suffice to keep the mill-wheel turning.

Circumstances have altered, and farming customs must adapt themselves accordingly. Already the depression in prices has considerably slackened the agricultural pace. A less active system of cropping than was pursued formerly now obtains. Not only has a much larger extent of land gone into permanent pasture, but the diminished proportion which still continues within the domain of the plough is being worked in a different manner—at a slower pace, and upon less expensive and safer methods. To lessen the bills for labour and manure, the land is allowed to lie longer in grass. In sympathy with the decline in the price of wheat, the wheat area has contracted. Potatoes have maintained their ground, but turnips, which are both expensive and risky, are being curtailed in extent. With the slackening of the pace in tillage-farming, there comes an increased activity in stock-rearing, and in the allied interest of dairying.

Thus the broad outlines of old well-tried systems, that perhaps have to some extent outlived their day, are being gradually modified. Many changes in the details of farm-work must be introduced. New contrivances for lessening outlays demand attention. There

must be more perfect method in management, greater precision in practical work, and all through the spirit of thrift and economy must be paramount.

The successful farmer of the future must be well grounded in the general and technical knowledge of his business. He must look closely and more carefully into the internal working of his farm than was necessary in former times. He must watch keenly every movement of the foreign producer, study the condition and prospects of the markets, and be prepared to produce such commodities as are likely to bring him the best return. He must not tie himself to the growing of certain crops and the rearing of certain stock merely because his forefathers did so, or because he himself found them profitable in times gone by. He must cul-

tivate an "open mind"; be ready and willing to avail himself of any new system or modification of practice calculated to benefit him, —being careful, of course, not to attempt upon a large scale practices that are risky or have not been proved by actual test. He must not be above giving his attention to little points of detail, or to tiny dribblets of income, for in agriculture the "day of small things" has assuredly come. Method, precision, industry, forethought, economy, sound and ready judgment and intelligence—these are the elements of successful business. They are as essential to the farmer of to-day as to the busiest business man in our greatest commercial centre. Conducted by a race of farmers thus qualified, there need be no fear as to the future of British farming.

THE OLD SALOON.

It is a curious sign of the inclination of the reading public towards those records of individual life which, if "the proper study of mankind is man," are the most easy way of carrying it out—that the works of all others which most abound upon our library tables are biographical. From month to month and year to year, as we come to the accumulation of books which succeed each other in the Old Saloon, we continually find that the greater part of these volumes are memoirs of lives, busy or quiet, great or obscure, in all paths and manners of life. To be sure, if the dignity of the precincts did not keep within measure the still greater drift of light literature, we might say with equal truth that the majority of Anglo-Saxon books were novels. But notwithstanding the enormous amount of production under this head, we doubt whether the number of novels which attract, or are fitted to attract, the attention of any rational person, does materially increase from generation to generation. This age, however, is pre-eminently one for the biographer. A man is no sooner dead than his drawers and desks are ransacked for material, and his portrait, with more or less power of representation, placed upon the easel. Whenever this is done with any reality, the result is interesting more or less. Those who are still in the earliest periods of life—in which time seems boundless, and we are ourselves conscious of being patterns to other men, instead of studying models in them—are perhaps less moved by this branch of literature; but to those who are in the midst of the struggle and bustle of exist-

ence, as to those who have perhaps stepped beyond the immediate arena, there is no such attraction as in those records which show how other men have laboured and suffered, and afford a ceaseless contrast or parallel with their own experience. It is not necessary that our lives should be shaped upon the same lines to make us capable of this silent and deeply interesting comparison. It has the charm of the best fiction, with something superadded from the consciousness that it is true,—that demand which is the first question of the child, and which comes back to the elder mind with the same enhancement of interest. It is the best kind of history, the truest revelation. The Gospel itself is a biography, and all the chronicles of Holy Writ are lives of individual men and women. Thus the highest of sanctions has been given to the universal instinct which seeks in such narratives the most comprehensible and clear of all teaching.

Biography, however, if anything could have discredited it, might have been brought down from its high place by the flood of spurious stuff which has lately been poured upon us,—the froth and scum of foolish recollections which the general reader, in a silly mood, has been persuaded to take for the clear and living stream of personal experience and wisdom. This flood of foolishness, however, we are glad to think, seems to have run out, or to have at least disgusted the public, that capricious recipient whose discrimination of good from bad is so fitful and uncertain. The "nummers," who are so indignantly surprised to have their eminence doubted; the "society

clowns," who perhaps are excusable, seeing how we fool them, in supposing all their little affairs to be interesting,—begin to fail of the first enthusiastic hearing which carried Mr and Mrs Bancroft through edition after edition. New examples of this kind of book-making have happily not caught the public attention, and the maunderings of living egotists will thus, it is to be hoped, be in some measure checked and restrained; for dear as it always is to talk about one's self, an unprofitable venture which does not even bring notoriety will chill the warmest self-admiration. It is well that the stream should be checked before it succeeded in making the delightful art of biography, and still more of autobiography, ridiculous, which it seemed in a fair way of doing a few months ago. Mr Sims Reeves and Mr Toole fortunately call for no mention; neither do Mr Gros-smith and Mr Corney Grain. Let us hope that even the most frivolous reader thirsts for this kind of weak and washy outpouring no more. The men who are at present before us are real and serious figures, personages of genuine eminence and influence, whose successes and failures count for something in modern history, or illustrate some important phase of national life. The great Ambassador, the great Tribune, though distance may withdraw a little of their prestige and perhaps diminish the awe with which we once held our breath at their names, can never cease to hold a place in the records of their century: and the names alone suggest each a national crisis of the greatest importance, of which all of us know

something, and which are well worthy a closer study.

Since the death of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, eight years ago, a memoir of the "Great Elchi" has been anxiously expected, and now every one must be gratified that the preparation of his biography has fallen into the hands of so competent a writer as Mr Stanley Lane-Poole.¹ When we say that the memoir is in every way worthy of its subject, we have exhausted all necessary criticism. We have now the strong-willed, overmasterful, and often passionate man, as well as the dignified and skilled diplomatist, who, when clothed in that mantle of British authority which so well became him, attracted the eyes of all Europe, brought back prominently to our recollection. Among the many finished portraits which Mr Kinglake draws for us in his 'Crimean War,' not one is more boldly and firmly outlined than that of Stratford, and now Mr Lane-Poole has filled in for us the lights and shades. To Eastern Europe Lord Stratford was British power incarnate; and the potential bearing of the man lent justice to the idea. What Palmerston was in the popular imagination of Western Europe, that and more the Great Elchi was in the East. The ambassador whom Nicholas could not dare to admit within the Court of St Petersburg, who lectured the Sultan and made the Divan tremble, is more suggestive of the days of ancient Rome than of English Liberal Government; and yet for a considerable period of Stratford's career, the phrase "*civis Romanus sum*" had a place in the Englishman's handbook of Continental travel-talk. It is impossible to re-

¹ The Life of the Right Honourable Stratford Canning, Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe. By Stanley Lane-Poole. Two Vols. Longmans & Co.: 1888.

call, without a feeling of national pride, that eloquent passage in Kinglake, descriptive of the change wrought by the Great Elchi's arrival at Stamboul, when the Porte was plunged into the abyss of despair with Mentschikoff's arrogant demands and threats of Russian vengeance :—

“On the morning of the 5th April of 1853, the Sultan and all his Ministers learned that a vessel of war was coming up the Propontis, and they knew who it was that was on board. Long before noon the voyage and the turmoil of the reception were over, and except that a corvette under the English flag lay at anchor in the Golden Horn, there was no seeming change in the outward world. Yet all was changed. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe had entered once more the palace of the English Embassy. The event spread a sense of safety, but also a sense of awe. It seemed to bring with it confusion to the enemies of Turkey, but austere reproof for past errors at home, and punishment where punishment was due, and an enforcement of hard toils and painful sacrifices of many kinds, and a long farewell to repose. It was the angry return of a king whose realm had been suffered to fall into danger.”

This is the picture of a viceroy, a ruler, not a mere man of protocols and *pour-parlers*; and as such the reader will find Stratford to be in Mr Lane-Poole's volumes. Such an ambassador would, we fear, be impossible in our days, even if one were forthcoming ready for occasion. Lord Stratford was fitted to circumstances quite as much as he fitted them to himself; and now that all errors and misconceptions about his public career are wiped away, his place as our “Greatest Elchi” does not seem likely to be speedily challenged.

Stratford Canning's early experience in being placed in a diplomatic position of the highest

responsibility and extreme difficulty, without training to speak of, and when he had little more than escaped his teens, was a unique one. The Foreign Office has never acted on his case as a precedent; and his intimate friends blamed this “misfortune of having had things made too easy for him in early life” for that “exceeding masterfulness” which was so distinctive a characteristic of his disposition. Had he had to work his way up the ladder, had he gone through the regular diplomatic curriculum, he would have acquired patience, the habit of submission, and would have been less ready to exercise the high hand. But, as Mr Poole remarks, “had things been different, we might never have had the Great Elchi,”—and we quite agree with Mr Poole's view. How many young men of ability, judgment, and firmness of character have entered the diplomatic service, only to find all their independence of mind crushed out of them by the routine of the Foreign Office, and the often immoral acquirements of shifting party Governments, so that by the time they attain a position of responsibility and importance, they are good for little else than to play a part in a Court ceremonial, or bandy commonplaces with a Foreign Minister! Stratford Canning could never have gone through such an ordeal of routine; and the chance which left him at the age of three-and-twenty our representative plenipotentiary at the Porte, and forced him to rely almost solely on his own judgment, at once made him a diplomatist. We have difficulty in sympathising with his account of his troubles, when we see how readily and successfully he overcame them. His most serious difficulty in these early years 1810-

1812 was in obtaining from the Porte protection for British shipping in Turkish waters, and redress for the capture and plunder of our vessels by French privateers. The Porte had the dread of Napoleon constantly before it; and though it could not afford to quarrel with the English envoy, still less, it thought, could it venture to irritate the representative of Buonaparte. Canning's demands were met with fair promises; these were never fulfilled: then came evasions, pleas for delay, denials, and finally explosions of wrath, and threats to ignore the British envoy and to deal directly with Lord Wellesley. But Canning never flinched, and when the moment came in which the Porte had to invoke the mediation of Great Britain between itself and Russia, Canning, although he must have felt flattered, insisted upon the shipping matter being settled before he would intervene in the greater question of peace or war. He loathed his position; he could take no interest in his work beyond that which his duty prescribed; but even this early experience initiated him into all the mazy intrigues of Turkish diplomacy, and laid a sure foundation for that mastery of the devious tactics of Turkish rulers and statesmen which he was afterwards to acquire.

As if he had not then troubles enough indigenous to the spot, the advent of Lady Hester Stanhope came to him as the proverbial last straw. His tiff with her eccentric ladyship is amusing enough to us now; but we can easily understand and sympathise with the boy-ambassador, who, though quite prepared to beard the Sultan, the Grand Vizier, and the Reis Effendi together, and to defy the might of Buonaparte through his representative, M. de Maubourg, shrank with

sensitive nervousness from being laughed at across political dinner-tables and in drawing-rooms in London. Lady Hester at Constantinople, who was "dying to see Napoleon," suddenly resolved on a journey to Paris, and clandestinely endeavoured to interest M. de Maubourg in her project. This came of course to Canning's ears; and failing to induce her to give up the idea, he begged that at least she would obtain permission from the Government at home, or wait until Mr Liston, the expected ambassador, came out. Lady Hester retorted by snubbing her young monitor, who dignifiedly told her "that if such were her determination, neither I nor any of the persons immediately attached to his Majesty's mission here could go to her house again." They parted courteously enough; but a few days after, Canning received a copy of a letter from Lady Hester, which she informed him she had forwarded to the Marquis Wellesley. Lamenting that "Mr Canning is young and inexperienced, full of zeal, but full of prejudice," Lady Hester goes on to say:—

"Although it is evident that Mr C. has not been educated in your lordship's school of gallantry, yet I give him full credit for acting from the most upright and conscientious principle; and if his zeal has carried him a little too far, there is no one so willing to forgive him as I am, or so little inclined to turn him from what he considers to be the execution of his duty. . . . But as he is both a religious and political methodist, after having appeared to doubt my love for my country, he will next presume to teach me my duty to God. Before I conclude, I must request your lordship not to receive Mr C. with dry bows and wry faces, or allow the fine ladies to toss him in a blanket. The best reward for his services would be to appoint him commander-in-chief at

home and ambassador-extraordinary abroad to the various societies for the suppression of vice and cultivation of patriotism. The latter consists in putting one's self into greater convulsions than the dervishes at the mention of Buonaparte's name."

Canning foresaw with horror the ridicule with which he would be covered if Lady Hester's description of him, which, with a great deal of malice, had just enough of truth to make it sting, were to get abroad in town. "A horrible vision of her letter going the round of the Cabinet in a red despatch-box rose before his eyes," and he wrote to George Canning to stand between him and danger, although he had not moved a muscle when the Reis Effendi had threatened to complain of him direct to his Majesty's Government. But nothing more was heard of the letter, whether it reached Lord Wellesley or not; and some time after, Lady Hester condescended to resume intercourse with Canning, as if there had never been a difference between them.

The Treaty of Bucharest was Canning's first diplomatic triumph; and though the memory of it was soon to be superseded by the general European settlement of Vienna, it was a remarkable achievement for a man so young, and quite left to his own resources. His task was a singularly difficult one; and though the progress of events favoured the course which he had marked out to himself, the fears and suspicions of the Porte combined at every step to obstruct his progress. The first successes which the Porte obtained against the Russian armies, although speedily followed by reverses, and the somewhat apathetic way in which Russia conducted the campaign, buoyed up the Turks with false hopes; while the insinuations

of the French, then meditating war with Russia, made the Sultan's Ministers hesitate to incur Buonaparte's resentment. Canning's best arguments were exerted to convince the Porte that its safety lay in peace and neutrality during the coming struggle.

"France, triumphant, would doubtless share the Turkish provinces with Austria in return for Galicia. If Russia were the victor, it was not to be expected that the Czar would offer better terms, or terms half as good as he offered in the hour of anxiety. Russia and France reconciled—the only other alternative—meant the partition of Turkey as already proposed by Buonaparte."

Still the Turks shuffled. The territorial demands of Russia were at first heavy enough; but Turkey had yet more to lose if she could only realise the fact. Canning was indefatigable in pressing both sides to an understanding. To the Porte he showed a secret plan, drawn up at Vienna, with the apparent consent of the French Emperor, for the partition of Turkey at the first opportunity. At St Petersburg, and to the Russian envoy at Bucharest, he revealed the then secret information that Austria and Turkey had been pressed to join in an anti-Russian alliance. The Turks delayed until the eleventh hour; but at length, thanks to Canning's firmness with the Divan and influence with the Russian envoy, the Porte yielded. Bessarabia and part of Moldavia were ceded, and the Russian army of the Danube was set free to grapple with the great invader. It is not saying too much to indicate the peace of Bucharest as a turning-point in the struggle with Napoleon. Had Russia had to meet him, with a war on the Danube already upon her hands, the result of the Moscow campaign

might have been different. The great Duke clearly perceived this, although he gave the credit to his brother, the Foreign Secretary, who had not shown the slightest interest in the negotiations. During the two years in which our interests in Eastern Europe were confided to this young gentleman, then passing from the twenty-third to the twenty-fifth year of his age, he received only sixteen despatches from the Foreign Office, "and not one of these valuable documents had any bearing upon the intricate and momentous negotiations which Canning was then conducting at the Porte." Seven of these were receipts, one was a general order to use thicker envelopes, and the rest items of public news or cautions against any "impostor or adventurer" who seemed likely to include Stamboul in his travels. Such was the aid Canning received from his Government in concluding the Treaty of Bucharest,—a service for which, according to Wellington, if the author of it "had never rendered to his own country or the world any other service, his name would have gone down to posterity as the man who had foreseen and had afterwards seized the opportunity of rendering to the world the most important service that ever fell to the lot of any individual to perform."

We pass over, as interludes in Stratford Canning's career, the years that elapsed between his departure from Constantinople in 1812, and his mission to St Petersburg, which once more plunged him into the midst of the Eastern question, in 1825. A political career at home had the greatest attractions for him; but he was without means, except his allowance as an unemployed diplomatist, which would have ceased with

his entry into Parliament. He was, besides, no warm admirer of party statesmanship. His ideal of a statesman was that which we have as yet failed to realise, and for which we shall have probably to wait until doomsday—"some man with enough of the ascendancy of genius to frighten the fools at home into their proper places, and to direct the public resources with vigour and effect against our enemies abroad." As he had already been plenipotentiary, he could not take a second place in a mission; but at last Switzerland was opened up to him, and he went there as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, in the fifth grade of the diplomatic service as it then stood. He attended the Congress of Vienna, and served on the Committee for settling the Swiss Federal Constitution, and was on several occasions called into the deliberations of the General Conference. Of his life in Switzerland, and his career in America, where he served as our Minister for over three years, Mr Lane-Poole has made, by the aid of Canning's letters, two very interesting chapters, and to these we gladly refer the reader. In both countries he won the confidence of his Government, Lord Castlereagh remarking that Switzerland, "although not generally a leading station, was converted by events into a conspicuous theatre for the display of his fitness for high diplomatic trust." At Washington he did much to smooth down American susceptibilities, ruffled by the recent war, extorting even from his arch-enemy, Mr Adams, the admission that "there was nothing false about him. As a diplomatic man, his great want is suppleness, his great virtue sincerity."

Canning's mission to St Petersburg in 1825 can scarcely be said

to have had much influence on the Greek question, which was then in crisis. The account which Lord Stratford de Redcliffe himself published ten years ago of his early connection with the struggle for Greek independence is now very largely supplemented by Mr Lane-Poole. Russia had put forth a project of settlement under the suzerainty of the Porte, but the Greeks absolutely repudiated it. They would have no intervention from the Holy Alliance. The Porte was equally averse to interference; Russia wished for a conference which Canning could not join unless at the request of one or other of the disputants, and with a pledge from the Powers that force would not be resorted to. He was kept outside the Greek deliberations during the greater part of his stay in St Petersburg, and only when he was about to take leave did Nesselrode and the Czar seek to sound him as to the views of the English Cabinet. Complimentary generalities were exchanged on both sides; and the Conference, as might have been expected, came to nothing. Canning, however, was able to satisfy himself where Russia's difficulty lay,—in the conflict going on in the Czar's mind between sympathy for his co-religionists and his innate detestation of revolutionary principles. Mr Lane-Poole records what Lord Stratford de Redcliffe in his modesty had omitted to state, the diplomatic skill with which Canning sounded Nesselrode's views. "He possessed in reality no power whatever in joining the Conference." But had he admitted this, he would have had no chance of "probing the Russian Government's intention." It is important to note that he did not meet the future Emperor Nicholas during this mission: he only saw

him once when the Allies were in Paris; and thus an old charge of personal ill-feeling, out of which much political capital was subsequently made, disappears. Canning indeed seems to have left very favourable impressions behind him in St Petersburg.

The Greek manifesto of 2d August 1825 appealed to England for mediation, to which George Canning heartily responded, and his kinsman was once more despatched as ambassador to the Porte. Neither Greek nor English interests had been very efficiently represented by Lord Strangford, who had fallen somewhat under the influence of the Austrian Internuncio, who, like his master, Metternich, had no sympathy with the Greek insurgents. On his way out, Canning had an interview with Mavrocordatos and Zagrophos, who put their views before the English envoy. On the same day he heard of the death of the Emperor Alexander, which introduced another element of uncertainty into the situation. He found the Porte obstinate on the subject of the Greeks, and Canning so far recognised the strength of its position that he felt arguments to be powerless. Still he plied the Sultan's Ministers with every plea that could be thought of. The Turkish barbarities in the Morea were a reproach to civilisation; the Greeks on their part were quite as atrocious. English shipping was suffering from the piracy engendered by the war; the pirates were mainly Greeks. Clearly nothing was to be got from the Porte except under pressure, and that was not to be heedlessly applied. The Protocol of St Petersburg, to which France afterwards acceded, although the diplomatic foundation of Greek independence,

did not shake the Porte. The Porte formally refused mediation in June 1827. The Treaty of London of the following month made no greater impression. Even the "untoward incident" of Navarino, in October of the same year, did not bend Mahmoud; and the ambassadors of the three Powers took the extreme step of asking for their passports. These were refused, but no obstacle was thrown in the way of their quitting Constantinople. The conference held at Poros is notable, not merely for the attempts to fix a boundary for the future Greece, but also as the origin of the first idea of Greece as an independent state. But its deliberations were nullified by the nervousness of Lord Aberdeen, who had taken over the Foreign Office, and who had begun to give proof of that high capacity for muddling and mismanagement which he afterwards turned to such disastrous account in the Crimean epoch. The result was a quarrel, in which Canning lost his temper, and Lord Aberdeen superseded him with anything but a good grace. Canning had expressed his willingness to go to the Porte and press the recommendations of Poros, approved of course by the London Conference, but intimated his resignation in case of the British Government restricting the area of liberated Greece to the Morea. Lord Aberdeen quibbled over Canning's statements, and sent out his brother, Sir Robert Gordon, to press upon the Porte the conditions of Poros, which he had already strongly censured Canning for having agreed to.

When Lord Palmerston became Foreign Secretary under Earl Grey's Government in 1831, Canning was once more induced to

bring his influence to bear upon the situation at Constantinople. He had now better prospects of support at home than he had been able to calculate on since his kinsman's death, and events had decidedly brought the Porte nearer to the point of yielding on the Greek demands. It had already, pressed by the Russian war, accepted the Treaty of London. But the London Conference had since adopted three other Protocols (3d February 1829) which were far more unpalatable. These embraced the complete independence of Greece and its erection into a hereditary sovereignty, with boundaries analogous to those arranged at Poros. It was to secure assent to this that Canning was sent out. The Porte was obstinate as before, and although he and his French and Russian colleagues struggled unitedly with the Divan, the negotiations might have been indefinitely protracted but for a private negotiation which Canning by himself set on foot with the Sultan, through the Greek Stephanaki Vogorides, afterwards Prince of Samos. Mehemet Ali was then showing symptoms of rebellion, and Canning, by privately promising the good offices of England, procured the personal intervention of the Sultan in the Greek negotiations, and the boundary "arrangement" of 21st July 1832, which held good until its revision under the Treaty of Berlin, nearly half a century afterwards, was conceded.

Of Canning's uneventful career in Parliament there is little to be said. He never shone as a speaker, and it was not surprising that he was not offered office. A more interesting subject is the Czar's refusing to receive him as Ambassador at St Petersburg. Mr Lane-Poole is unable to throw any

fresh light upon this much-debated question. That he had given no personal offence to the Czar is clear. That Madame Levien and Nesselrode together could have moved the Czar to take such an extreme step is more than doubtful; but that the unflinching way in which Canning had maintained British interests, and his known "masterfulness" of disposition, coupled with the dislike which the *disjecta membra* of the Holy Alliance felt for his great kinsman, combined to make him an unwelcome acquisition to St Petersburg Court society, is more than probable. The slight, however, fell chiefly upon the Government, and the only disadvantage to Canning was, that it supplied his enemies with an unfounded charge of personal hostility to Russia at a very critical time. When Canning returned to the Porte in 1841-42, it was in a fit of pique against Peel's Government, which had again overlooked his claims to office, and with something of a left-handed benediction from Lord Aberdeen, who was again Foreign Secretary. There were no special diplomatic aims to be prosecuted; and Sir Stratford prescribed for himself the task of endeavouring to bring Turkey within the sphere of European civilisation by promoting equal justice among all classes of her subjects, abolishing religious distinctions, putting down torture, and purifying the corrupt sources of administration. To effect these objects, he applied himself with a vigour and singleness of purpose that could not fail to make some impression even upon the immobile elements of Turkish government. In this stage of his career we can pause to notice only three incidents—the first of which was his obtaining from the Porte a reversal of the death penalty for

apostasy from Islam. It is rather amusing to find that the chief argument by which Sir Stratford prevailed upon the Porte, was his own gloss upon certain passages in the Koran, which he held to specify death eternal rather than death temporal as the penalty of defection from the faith. Mr Lane-Poole is too good a Mohammedan scholar to endorse this latitudinarian view; and nothing is more certain than that the whole spirit of the Koran, as well as the letter of the law of Islam, dooms the apostate to death. Sir Stratford, originally at his own expense, promoted Mr Layard's researches, and thus led to the acquisition by Great Britain of the priceless relics of the Old World's great monarchies. The last incident belonging to this period was a daring feat of diplomacy, which threw the issues of peace and war on the scales. Sir Stratford had supported Turkey in a course of dignified neutrality through the revolutionary year of 1848, had prevented her from falling into the toils which Russia had prepared for her in Wallachia, had induced the Porte to refuse the surrender of the Hungarian refugees; and when the Austrian and Russian ambassadors quitted Stamboul, supported the resolution of the Porte by ordering the Mediterranean fleet into the Dardanelles. It was a serious step for the Ambassador to take, but he had Lord Palmerston to fall back upon, as well as the public sentiment which he might be assured the subject would call forth in England. Lord Palmerston was as stanch on this occasion as he was in that of Bulwer at Madrid eight years afterwards: Canning's measures were approved; and Russia and Austria were allowed an honourable retreat from the

dangerous position they had taken up. It has never been sufficiently recognised how perilously near a great war Europe was on that occasion. With the exception of France where the revolution had succeeded, England which had escaped it, and Turkey which was involuntarily placed in the light of a sympathiser, every Power in Europe had bitter cause to combine against the insurrectionary spirit of the Continent, and to vindicate the principles of the Holy Alliance in what would have proved a general, bloody, and uncertain war. The danger which Canning then averted has been taken too little account of, even by so discriminating a biographer as Mr Lane-Poole.

The complications arising out of the difficulty about the Holy Places brought Lord Stratford de Redcliffe hurriedly back to the Porte in the spring of 1853. He found Prince Mentschikoff before him endeavouring to bully the Divan into not merely a settlement of Russia's claims for the custody of the Holy Places, but an admission of the Czar's protectorate over the Greek Church and Orthodox subjects of the Porte. The Czar had already committed himself to that overmastering impulse which, had it been more clearly recognised at the time, would have prepared the Western Powers for inevitable war. Since 1844, when he had come to an understanding, as he thought, with Lord Aberdeen on Turkish questions, Nicholas had been waiting his opportunity. Now Lord Aberdeen was again in power; the concessions which Count Leiningen had wrested from Turkey in favour of Austria, betrayed weakness at the Porte. Now, it seemed to Nicholas, was the time for action. Early in the spring

he mobilised two army corps on the Turkish frontier without consulting any of his advisers. Mentschikoff was despatched to the Porte with arbitrary demands, of which even Nesselrode seems to have been ignorant; but the British Ministry refused to appreciate the gravity of the situation even down to the outbreak of hostilities. Coming fresh from St Petersburg to London, Count Vizthum, the London ambassador, was struck by the *insouciance* of the English Ministers, who, he found, were unshaken in their confidence in the Emperor's peaceful aims. Not so their representative at Constantinople. Practically the Porte had made up its mind to reject the Russian proposals before his arrival, and his efforts were directed to give this rejection as accommodating an appearance as possible. He directed the Turkish treatment of Prince Mentschikoff's proposals; he separated the question of the Holy Places from the ulterior and impracticable demands of Russia, and conducted this matter to a satisfactory conclusion; and he induced the Porte to assent to every reasonable concession and guarantee in favour of its Christian subjects, short of altogether transferring them to the arbitrament of the Czar. The victory was with Stratford, who throughout all this period showed clearly that he regarded peace as the greatest triumph diplomacy could secure. Through his skill Russia was practically put out of court; and had he not been on the spot, there is every reason to suppose that the Allied Powers would have failed to carry with them the collective sympathies of Europe in the war they had soon to undertake.

In the futile diplomacy which wasted the months from June to October, the only chance of peace

lay in Stratford's efforts to effect an accommodation between the independence of Turkey and the honour of Russia. Had he been left in as isolated a position at the Porte as during the days of his first mission, there was some chance that he might have succeeded. But diplomatic confusion was worse confounded by the advent of the telegraph. The ambassadors of the four Powers at Vienna had formed themselves into an informal conference, and Austria was anxious to engross the lead. Mr Lane-Poole does not note what had a great deal to do with the feeble, varying, and futile conclusions arrived at in Vienna—the fact that a wholesome dread of Napoleon's future preponderance in Europe formed a prime element in the views and policy of both Austria and Prussia. When the celebrated Vienna Note, which really gave Russia all she wanted, was agreed to, Lord Stratford and the other three ambassadors at Constantinople had induced the Porte to prepare an ultimatum embodying a protest against the Russian occupation of the Principalities, along with copies of the firmans which had since Mentschikoff's departure been issued in favour of the Greek Church and Orthodox subjects. This was sent through Vienna, but the conference not unnaturally superseded the Ultimatum in favour of its own Note. This, as Mr Lane-Poole remarks, was "a grave responsibility," and yet there is no reason to believe that the issue would have been altered had the other course been taken, except so far as the diplomatic position of Turkey was concerned. The Czar of course accepted the Vienna Note; the Turks stoutly declined it. Lord Stratford, in doubt about the real intentions of his own

Government, and knowing well that Lord Clarendon was groping in the dark, hesitated to press the Note on the Porte until he received definite instructions. When these arrived, and when it was found that the Porte was not to be moved, then he and his three colleagues advised a middle course. But it was not taken, and who could blame the Turks? That the Crimean War was certainly not "Stratford's war," as it has been called, his letters and despatches afford conclusive proof. He saw further than the diplomatists at Vienna or Downing Street, and perceived that this was a very serious phase of the ever-recurring Eastern Question, and that the opportunity should not be passed over without some attempt towards a definite settlement. He writes to Lady Stratford (31st August)—

"Do not infer that your ancient is a chimera breathing fire and flame. He is neither for peace nor for war. He is for the Question—for its settlement—its settlement on fair and durable grounds. If we are mistaken about the Question,—if it has been exaggerated, and has not the importance we have hitherto attached to it,—let that be made clear. I will be the first to recant, and to recommend the best piece of tinkering that diplomacy can offer. If, on the contrary, we are really in presence of the great Eastern Question,—if it knocks at our door, stands on tiptoe and looks in at our window,—it may be an ugly and frightful object, but we must look it in the face, and deal with it as men and statesmen ought to do."

In this letter we discover the ground of divergence between Stratford and the Vienna mediators. Stratford regarded the crisis as a development of the Eastern Question, which ought to be strictly dealt with as such. The ambassadors at Vienna were providing for hypothetical contingencies in the general politics of Europe.

When the war fever at Constantinople, fostered by the neighbourhood of the fleets of the Allied Powers, and the anxiety of the French to push forward conclusions, had once broken out, Lord Stratford could do but little to calm the belligerent spirit of the Porte, and induce it to listen to moderate counsels. By keeping the British fleet out of the Bosphorus until the last moment, and by doing his utmost to restrain the war party within bounds, he placed the Turks in a position to claim the sympathy of Europe for their patience and moderation. If war must be, Lord Stratford was resolved that Turkey should have a just cause to take the field with. "Concession to Russia might mean revolution at Stamboul. Yet it was essential, if possible, to place Turkey in the position of acquiescence in the wishes of the Powers, so that there should be no doubt that Russia was the real obstacle to peace." He had a scheme of pacification ready when the massacre of Sinope made war inevitable; and even in the last days of 1853 he had brought the Porte to consent to terms of pacification which were rendered ineffectual by the naval operations. Henceforth Lord Stratford's reputation must be freed from any reproach of having urged the Turks on to the Crimean quarrel. His attitude at the Porte was undoubtedly that of an earnest and sincere peacemaker; and left to himself, there can be little doubt that he would have guided the difficulty to a peaceful issue.

Here Lord Stratford's diplomatic career practically ended. The Elchi now gave place to the administrator when the Allies arrived.

"He was now apparently Commissary-General, head of the Intelligence Department, Quartermaster-General, Director of Transports, and provider-in-chief of everything that the British war departments had forgotten to supply for the use of the expedition. He was even credited with the functions of Surgeon-General to the forces. Such, at least, is the impression produced by a study of the various demands made upon him by officials of every rank and description. At one time it is the Duke of Newcastle who wants Lord Stratford to find boots to go over the trousers of 30,000 British soldiers, and who apparently expects that the bazaars of Stamboul will furnish an admirable supply of Wellingtons. Then it is Lord Raglan who depends upon him not only for reinforcements of Turkish infantry and artillery, but for planks for the hutting of the troops, and warm winter clothing for their comfort; or again it is the London newspapers who angrily ask why the ambassador has not had the forethought to store up a sufficient quantity of lint and physic and bed-clothes for the sick and wounded at Scutari. And finally, there were those who reproached the diplomatist because he had not gone to the relief of the beleaguered fortress of Kars."

For the details of these herculean labours during the eventful years 1854-55, we must refer the reader to the volumes of Mr Lane-Poole or the picturesque pages of Kinglake. It is sad to think that so great efforts were to be followed by so little recompense. "I would rather have cut off my right hand than have signed such a treaty," said the Great Elchi, when he heard of the terms of the Peace of Paris. The Eastern question was cicatrised, not healed, and ready to burst out again with time and opportunity as the *immedicabile vulnus* of European diplomacy.

There can, we think, be little doubt that the two large volumes¹

¹ Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell, the Liberator. Edited by W. J. Fitzpatrick, F.S.A. Two vols. Murray, London.

in which the gleanings of O'Connell's correspondence are again presented to the world, will be a disappointment to those who expect to find in them any real reflection of the large and burly Liberator—full of fire and fun and endless energy, and the enthusiasm of a purpose which, if it was not pure patriotism, was at least a lively determination to carry Daniel O'Connell on the crest of a wave which could be nothing but Ireland to the highest attainable heights of fame and fortune—who once occupied so large a place in the foreground of public life. The importance of the work which he accomplished can scarcely be exaggerated; and yet all prognostics, and even all serious judgments made in his generation as to his place in history, have already been completely falsified. So far from being "the greatest man this or any other country ever produced," according to an enthusiastic biographer, or even "one of the most remarkable men who ever existed," which is the judgment of the caustic and cynical Greville, he has already fallen into a limp and flabby image of fictitious or adventitious greatness, in which there seems little or no heart of reality at all; and all his prodigious influence has fallen with him. Once he carried what looked like a unanimous nation behind him. Now that nation has forgotten all his principles and teachings, and his real services and his fictitious influence, remembering nothing of him but the pernicious habit of perpetual agitation and excitement, a habit which requires ever stronger and stronger stimulants, like every other kind of intoxication. It is humiliating to human nature to see how dead is O'Connell and all his ways, but it is at the same time reassuring, for no doubt

just as dead to the next generation will be Mr Parnell and his crew; and there is always the chance that the next popular leader may be of nobler mould than either, and lead by a better way—notwithstanding that experience gives us little encouragement in that sanguine thought.

It is deeply disappointing, however, to find so little that is not dull and dreary in those sweepings-up of the great Liberator. They ought to have been full of the large and exuberant life which carried him through such prodigious labours and tumults, at least in the first part of his career, and of the immense readiness and emotional if not intellectual mastery of human nature which made him so great a force in his day. Business letters, however, dashed off in all haste, and chiefly referring to the machinery of popular movements, are apt to make agitation of any kind look paltry,—a system of wire-pulling and small intrigue, rather than of large sympathetic influence. No doubt O'Connell commanded much of the latter. He was full of the magnetism that moves a multitude, far beyond anything that reason or argument can accomplish. His voice, large, mellow, and unctuous, his big presence, the roll of thunderous words, the abuse and vituperation, the triumphant national blarney and self-applause, each modified by that twinkle in the eye which his sympathetic audience perceived and responded to, with a perception of humour in exaggeration which we used to think was purely national too—all combined to form an irresistible individuality, which was not only O'Connell but Ireland embodied, at least, according to all our conceptions of Ireland in those days. The rollicking, fighting, jesting, vocif-

erous, but never ungenial or unsympathetic type of man which everybody once called Paddy, reached a sort of apotheosis in the great Dan. The cloudy countenance, never far from storm, yet swept by sudden radiances of sunshine, the warm impulses and personal lavishness which hid so many acquisitive instincts, the power of enthusiasm which was at once real and fictitious, flaming in a righteous cause, and lit up with real patriotic fervour, yet never without a swift calculation of self-interest behind, were all, at least according to our limited perceptions then, identical with the race which had in its mingled contradictory captivating character so many points of interest for the looker-on. All that has been swept away nowadays. The amusing sweep of rhetorical extravagance which one felt it cruel to stigmatise as falsehood, so strong was the humorous self-consciousness of characteristic exaggeration behind, has altered into a big mouthing of lies with no fun in them. Humour has died altogether out of the practical joking, which consists in torturing cattle, and sowing fields with needles. O'Connell's swagger and bluster were not always amusing, and there were times when his swing of rhetoric carried him to the verge of brutality; but who would not welcome now his genial rant about "the finest pisantry that ever breathed,"—his celebration of the "first flower of the earth, and first gim of the sea"?

This book, however, will throw little light to the younger generation upon the influence of O'Connell. His bargainings about parliamentary seats and election expenses, his anxieties about the Tribute, his brags of influence in high quarters, and alternate ex-

citations and repressions of his official representatives in Dublin, to do or not to do, according as suited his interest, show by no means an agreeable side of his character. The heroic portion of his career, during which the battle of Catholic emancipation was fought and won, occupies only about a third part of the first volume. His object then was so entirely patriotic and necessary—a genuine liberation from chains that were a greater disgrace to those who inflicted than to those who wore them—that no enthusiasm seems misplaced which hailed the chief agent in so great a deliverance. Had he been twenty times the demagogue he was, that alone is enough to have secured the gratitude not only of Ireland, but of Great Britain. For if he liberated his own section of the race, he at the same time delivered the rest of us from the worse evil of wrong-doing, and a great national scandal. Even upon this point, however, there is a side-light of droll criticism in the book, which no doubt had some truth in it.

"On the night that Catholic Emancipation passed, when both stood witnesses of the incident, Carew O'Dwyer slapped him on the shoulder, exclaiming, 'Othello's occupation's gone!' 'Gone!' cried the Liberator, with an arch smile; 'isn't there a Repeal of the Union?'"

And from that moment the second agitation began. It fell into abeyance during a considerable portion of his career, when he saw the advantage of supporting a Ministry from which possible and practical aid to Ireland might come; but it was avowedly only for this purpose that he laid his special weapons by. And but for the Repeal agitation nothing would probably ever have been heard of the great "Rint" which formed the chief part of O'Connell's in-

come. He seems to have been fully justified in accepting this by various competent judges—Mr Greville, for instance, not a very mild or lenient critic. And there can be no doubt that he relinquished a successful career at the bar, unusually lucrative and progressing, to take up the cause of his country, and fight a dozen different battles on her behalf. At the same time, the element of disinterestedness commends itself, above everything in politics, to Englishmen and Scotsmen, though not apparently to Ireland; and it is difficult to think with equal admiration of the patriot who serves his country for nought and of him who receives an abundant living by her bounty. Mr Fitzpatrick, the editor of these volumes, and the son of the ever-faithful and stanch adherent who organised and collected the O'Connell Tribute, reckons that from 1829 to 1834 "the total amount collected was £91,800." This in five years, as the more or less voluntary offering of an impoverished country, is something wonderful to think of. Were all that Ireland has thus given to the promotion of agitation within this century to be reckoned up, what a pretty sum it would make, and how many fishing-boats and harbours, drainages and industrial beginnings, might have been got out of it! Neither wealthy England nor thriving Scotland has been saddled with any such impost, happily for them. It is a singular proof of the faith, the docility, the unreasoning obedience to an impulse sufficiently strong and continuous to reach the lowest levels, that it should always be possible apparently to extract the means of support for certain chosen leaders from the most abject poverty of the Irish race; and it is scarcely less remarkable that

these leaders should invariably have looked for and accepted such a tribute from the needy multitudes whose poverty and wretchedness afford such fine subjects for rhetoric and the impassioned elocution which is as natural as that poverty on the one side and these perpetual exactions on the other. No such exactions are known in the two other countries of the Union. It is only in Ireland that a gentleman—whether landed proprietor or learned counsellor—has ever consented to live by such means.

The history of Catholic emancipation is but lightly touched upon in this collection, but several interesting points are brought out. It is curious to note the agitational intelligence which resisted violently the attempts on the part of Government to add certain restraining possibilities to the complete emancipation, and how Rome, then as now, was willing to act as a moderator and peacemaker between the two sides. That the authorities should have a power of veto in the appointment of Roman Catholic bishops, was a condition which the Pope, through his secretary, announced his intention of accepting, but which was indignantly refused by the popular leaders. It is a restraint, we believe, which exists even in Catholic countries; and there is no doubt that it would have had an extremely wholesome and sobering effect in Ireland. In the same way, any Government provision for the parish clergy seems to have been equally discouraged. "If they enact restrictions," says O'Connell, "the effect will be worse than the present state of affairs. The Crown priests will be despised and deserted by the people, who will be amply supplied with enthusiastic anti-Anglican

friars from the Continent. There is a tendency already to substitute friars for any priests who are supposed to favour the veto."

Notwithstanding this, some of the gentler prelates, Dr Murray, Archbishop of Dublin, in particular, accepted, or was willing to accept, the veto; while others fulminated against the pernicious document of Monsignor Quarantotti, the Pope's representative, just as the Pope's deliverance in recent days has been treated. It is remarkable that the wisdom of Rome should thus have taken on two occasions the sober side, in face of the heated absolutism of the popular party. The other question of paying the clergy, which O'Connell at a later period seemed willing to accept, was denounced by other members of the Irish hierarchy. "If," says Dr Doyle, "the prelates were led to approve of a provision emanating from the Treasury—if the ministers of Christ were to be paid by the Ministers of State for dispensing the mysteries of God—then in that case I would not make dissension among them; but sooner than my hand should be soiled by it, I would lay down my office at the feet of him who conferred it; for if my hand were to be stained by Government money, it should never grasp a crosier, or a mitre ever afterwards be fitted to my brow." In face of these sentiments, it is curious that England should now be blamed for not making provision for the Catholic clergy—a censure which is often to be heard. No doubt, however, these resistances were admirably adapted to further the ends of agitation, and to secure the priesthood of Ireland from rendering that valuable aid to the cause of quiet, order, and law which may be relied upon in almost every other country, even when the so-called

clerical party is in most determined opposition. The greatest evil of dissent—which is that of holding the natural leaders of a community in dependence upon the prejudiced and immature opinions of the crowd, and tempting those who should guide and check to gain popularity by heading and stimulating its passionate impulses—was thus conjoined with the greatest risk of the priestly office, that of being able to consecrate to the ignorant almost any methods which have its sanction. The conjunction of these two dangers has had an incalculable influence on the condition of Ireland from that time to this; and it is interesting to find at two important epochs that the influence of Rome, to which the island of saints has always professed so high a devotion, should have been quite ineffectual, when exercised in favour of those rational restraints which might have kept national violence in check, and fostered the growth of a better judgment.

The curious calculation which lies behind so much stormy vehemence in the discussion of Irish questions from that time forward, could scarcely be expressed with more freedom than in the following words:—

"I do solemnly assure you that I have the strongest and *most quiet* conviction that temperateness, moderation, and conciliation are suited only to precipitate (perpetuate?) our degradation; but that, if we want to succeed, we must call things by their proper names—speak out boldly, let it be called intemperately—"

When the great boon of Catholic emancipation was obtained, O'Connell's conviction was, "It is clear that, without gross mismanagement, it will be impossible to allow misgovernment any longer in Ireland." This opinion, however,

does not seem to have produced any practical effect upon him. For some time he seemed to waver as to the object of his next effort—notwithstanding the reserve of the repeal which he seemed to have had in contemplation from the first—and occupied himself with general political schemes, such as securing the election of suitable candidates for Parliament, with the curious addition of organising “a penny-a-man subscription in each parish, to be applicable for the support of the electors of that parish in their voting honestly and independently”—a very singular proviso. Early in the year 1830, however, the O’Connell Tribute—“which in some subsequent years rose to £16,000 and higher”—was projected by Mr Patrick Vincent Fitzpatrick, with the aid, apparently, of Mr Jeremiah Murphy, “my excellent, *excellent* friend,” to whom O’Connell returned his “most sincere and cordial thanks.” He was able to provide a place for one of these friends, and for the son of the other, in later days, so that their labours were not un-recompensed: but the fact of this provision no doubt settled his fate as a professional politician. He had been obliged to relinquish his bar work for the sake of the Catholic emancipation. Possibly he might have found it difficult to take it up again. But there can be little doubt that the immense income thus secured to O’Connell must have stimulated his perception of the wrongs Ireland had to be redressed, and the many things that had to be done for her. He was bound to make a return for the subsidies so generously bestowed—a noisy, palpable, vociferous return, such as the poorest of his paymasters could not mistake. The curiously mingled web of such

a character as O’Connell’s forbids us to stigmatise any of his proceedings as absolutely insincere, or to imagine him capable of inventing in cold blood the grievances he combated. But, no doubt, this must have been a most powerful incentive to keep up the tide of agitation at the fullest pressure. The worthy working-men members of the present House of Commons, who, on the whole, behave themselves so modestly, and with so little demonstration of the peculiar dangers of their position, occupy a very different place, with their frugal allowances, from that of the big bustling member for Ireland, with his lordly income and his subservient “Tail.” Surely no better way of making political mischief was ever invented. The letters in which, towards the end of his life, he expresses anxiety and alarm as to the failure of this long-continued income, his appeals to Fitzpatrick to know the truth as to the proceeds of the Tribute, are pitiful as well as pathetic. We know nothing of the methods by which so large a yearly income was extracted from the pockets of the people; though it would have been interesting to know how the millions of humble contributors were kept up to the mark for nearly twenty years. This strange liberality is one of the many features in the Irish character which it is very difficult for other nationalities to understand. So poor—so eager in acquisition as they prove themselves—so little indifferent to pay and place in their own persons: yet always capable of having their pennies squeezed out of them to maintain somebody in luxury. Sixteen thousand a-year would be a large income even for the most successful lawyer.

It must be added, however, that though O'Connell spent his entire life in agitation, his methods were very different from those employed by his successors. He did many doubtful things—recommending a run upon the banks, for one thing, and indignantly commenting upon the fact that English currency is gold, while that of Ireland is paper—not very long after the time when Scotland was nearly roused to revolt by threats of taking away her one-pound notes, and Sir Malachi Malagrowther rose to the rescue. This difference between the two peoples is whimsical as well as important.

“It is a very formidable advantage that the English have over us,” said O'Connell, “that their currency is of actual value as an article of commerce, being gold; and that we Irish should have no other currency but mere paper—in itself, as an article of commerce, of no kind of value whatsoever. It is too bad that the welfare of Ireland should be thus postponed, as it were, to serve England. . . . Call, therefore, on the people—the most unsophisticated people—to send in the bank-notes of every description, and to get gold. Take this as a measure of precaution everywhere; let it spread far and near; and then at last we will be so far on a par with England.”

He established a bank of his own later, and did not like it when a run was made upon that; but these are trifling details. O'Connell, unlike his successors, never paltered with crime. He spoke out boldly on the subject of outrage and lawlessness, and would never, we may be sure, have condoned “occasional deviations.” “The atrocious Whitefeet” were then the murderers and moonlighters of Ireland, and not any organisation sanctioned by her leaders; and as to these men, O'Connell's verdict is very decided:—

“They have played the game which the enemies of Ireland wished them to play. The execration of every good and honest man is upon their crimes: the vengeance of God will sooner or later be visited upon their wickedness.”

And here is O'Connell's version of the Home Rule programme, which shows how far we have travelled since his time:—

“Of course I will not join in any violation of the law. My plan is to restore the Irish Parliament, with the full assent of Protestants and Presbyterians as well as Catholics. I desire no social revolution, no social change. The nobility to possess lands, titles, and legislative privileges as before the Union. The clergy, *for their lives*, their full income—to decrease as Protestantism may allow that decrease. The landed gentry to enjoy their present state, being residents.

“Every man to be considered a resident who has an establishment in Ireland.

“In short, salutary restoration without revolution. An Irish Parliament. British connections. One king, two legislatures.”

Absenteeism is the only crime of the landlords which O'Connell notes: and that he would have heavily taxed. And he does not go the length of desiring the Established Church to be destroyed,—he would only lessen its endowments to the extent of its wants. The real enemies of Ireland, to his thinking, as to Miss Edgeworth's, were the absentees and the secret societies; but the first were even more grievous offenders than the last. And he implores the Lord Lieutenant to send more troops into the country, as the only means of dealing with agrarian crime—crime over which he never for a moment threw even the shadow of his shield. Many other points upon which the popular sentiment seems to have entirely changed might be quoted,

but none more striking than the following. O'Connell was addressing a meeting at Bandon shortly after the accession of her present Majesty :—

“We must be—we are—loyal to our young and lovely Queen, God bless her! Oh, if I be not greatly mistaken, I would get in one day five hundred thousand brave Irishmen to defend the life, the honour, and the person of the beloved young lady by whom England's throne is now filled. Let every man in this vast and multitudinous assembly stretched out before me, who is loyal to the Queen, and would defend her to the last, lift up his right hand.” The entire assembly responded to the appeal. “There are hearts in those hands,” he went on to say; “I tell you that, if necessity required, there would be swords in them.”

The Irish have got since that time everything except Repeal for which O'Connell struggled. Tithes and Church are alike gone. Instead of the absentee landlord rioting abroad with the money drawn from Irish soil, there is an impoverished squire, half-besieged in his own house—and going in danger of his life from the sons of those whose panacea for happiness to the country was to bring him home, and keep him there. But there is no longer a multitude to shout for her Majesty, God bless her! or band themselves under the title of “Friends of the Queen”; no longer a leader who denounces crime with full and hearty vehemence. No longer anything indeed but the perpetual Tribute—always paid for somebody—always producing thousands of pounds out of the abysses of want and poverty—always delusive and oppressive. That in Ireland seems the only thing that does not change.

Another difference of a very marked description may be better

pointed out by means of O'Connell's justification of his own proceedings as a landlord, than could be done in any other way. The ‘Times,’ with which paper and its proprietor he had a long-standing war (a condition apparently inevitable to an Irish agitator), had sent a commissioner to Darrinane to prove that the Liberator himself as a landlord liked to have his rent paid, and did not refrain from eviction when necessary. He writes to a Conservative paper which had insisted upon having justice done to the great Irishman, protesting against the conclusion “that I had admitted having evicted some of my tenantry.”

“The obvious inference being,” he continues, “that I was a guilty participator in the clearance system. I certainly intended no such admission, for I could not make it consistently with fact. The clearance system consists in putting out tenants without substituting others in their places, thus clearing the land of the people. I never did any such thing. Whenever I have been under the necessity of putting out one tenant, I immediately substituted another for him, giving to the outgoing tenant, in all recent instances, the fine paid me by the incoming tenant. I had thus introduced the principle and practice of tenant-right on my property.”

How antiquated and old-world were O'Connell's proceedings, and how entirely his successors have changed all that! “The clearance system” is now a method transferred from persecuting landlords to those brave “pisantry,” their country's pride, whom the Liberator flattered, fleeced, and ruled. To his unenlightened eyes the wrong lay, not in replacing the tenant who did not pay by one who did, but in leaving the land vacant and empty. Had he lived to this time, he would no doubt be under police protection—if indeed he had not

perished on his way to Mass, by means of a bullet from behind a hedge.

Notwithstanding the wonderful success of his career, and the enormous pluck, energy, and courage of the man, he died dismally enough, lost in the contemplation of his own miseries and sufferings, keeping his chaplain close to him night and day, never let out of his sight for more than a quarter of an hour, a very limp and tragical wreck, such as it grieves the heart to see. He had been very exemplary in all his domestic relations, writing the fondest letters, in which he declares himself to "doat upon" and "rave of" his wife and children. But his wife was dead, and no one of his many children seems to have been with him at the end of his life.

It is curious to step from this agitated and bustling existence into the extreme quiet, discipline, and good order of a certain virtuous¹ and intellectual circle which, to their own thinking at least, made Norwich in the end of last century into a sort of provincial Athens. We have already heard a great deal about the Taylors of Norwich; and to hear a great deal about any one, without actual demonstration of his excellence, is apt to produce that bored and impatient sensation which is a natural accompaniment to the constant holding up of a model. The Taylors did not do much except assume this obnoxious place. One of them was a great German scholar and translated 'Lenore,' thereby, perhaps, stimulating Scott into poetry, or so at least that large and generous admirer of other people's gifts once said. And the special member of the family whom Mrs Ross celebrates, Mrs John Taylor, did

nothing at all except to be exemplary, to know some celebrated people, and to write very grand letters, or, as she would no doubt have said, to excel in epistolary correspondence, after the following model:—

"Think how this pleasing agitation is increased when I reflect upon the excellent young man to whom I am soon to be indissolubly united! when I consider that my state in life is shortly to undergo a total alteration, and that new duties are coming upon me which require my most serious and constant attention! You are too well acquainted with Mr Taylor's merits to render any encomium needless; you also will perceive, without my pointing them out, the many agreeable circumstances attending this affair."

To have a great-grandmother capable of writing like this is no doubt a feather in any one's cap; but we cannot pretend to any particular interest in the Taylors, who may, we think, be considered to have had enough of honour and glory, and be permitted to retire into those respectable shades to which they belong. The daughter of these good people—Sarah Austin—is, however, a personage in whom some human interest remains; and there is a strong strain of pathos—nay, even of tragic interest—in her life, which her biographer, with natural piety, dwells upon but little, but which raises her many struggles and courageous warfare with difficulties to a far higher level than any of the respectabilities among which she had her birth. We have had a great many records of the woman's part in the life of a sensitive and fastidious man of genius—the soothing, the healing, and sustaining power of a wife's influence over the shattered nerves and ex-

¹ Three Generations of Englishwomen. By Janet Ross. Murray, London.

citabile temper of one of those sensitive personages who are so often supposed, and so invariably suppose themselves, to be made of finer clay, and actuated by more delicate impulses than their fellow-creatures. But it is very seldom that we have any picture of this conjunction from the woman's side, or can realise the heart-sickness of such a life, the hope continually disappointed, the impatience, the exasperation of the one sole spectator who has to stand patiently by and see her every expectation come to nothing—painfully labouring all the time to make up the deficiencies, to stimulate if possible the ever-flagging purpose, to excuse and cover from others the failure of which she is more keenly aware than any one. This was the tragedy of Mrs Austin's life. She describes herself on her engagement as "the happiest girl in the world," engaged to a man who has "confessedly superb talents, and who will, I know, study hard for my sake." "I have great doubts, dear Mary, whether he will entirely please you, as he is certainly stern," she writes with charming natural feeling to a friend; "at any rate, if you don't like him, never tell me so. You know I love you dearly, and it would give me pain. So, dear, let him be all perfection, will you? If you tell me he is not, I shall doubt your word or your penetration for the first time in my life." These words strike a somewhat pathetic key-note to the life which was to follow. John Austin seems to have kept his reputation for "confessedly superb talents" as long as he lived, but never accomplished much. "Sensitive and nervous to the highest degree, he could do nothing rapidly or imperfectly; he distrusted himself, and was deficient in readiness and

self-reliance." A certain amount of external misfortune followed the steps of the man who had no energy to stand against it. Failing in the actual exercise of his profession, he was appointed to a chair in the newly formed London University, and began with considerable hope; but what with ill-health and weakness, and the unsatisfactory state of the institution, soon began to flag. His wife's account of these early struggles are among the most interesting things in the book.

"Many times since I wrote last he has entirely despaired of being able to commence his public career, and I have held myself in a state of constant preparation for any decision he might take, and have accustomed myself to look steadily at the abandonment of all our prospects here for ever. Indeed, those who know what a life of prolonged uncertainty and suspense is, will not wonder at me for wishing that the worst were come, and nothing left to hope or fear. Not that I do not see the terrible consequences to a hypochondriacal man of living without a fixed employment."

A little later, when the worst had come, and "he had actually no class," she resumes the story:—

"At first he bore the shock wonderfully, considering what it must be to a man who has devoted the whole of such a mind as his and all its stores to that one object. He did not flag or despond in the least. He merely said, which was sufficiently evident, that it was now decided we could not live here; that he would go through his course as well as if his class were ever so numerous, and at the end of it, send in his resignation. In all this I acquiesced; but as I could not endure that he should quit the University and England, and leave no proof of what a man the institution and country were sending forth for want of all encouragement, or even the most humble means of subsistence, I entreated him to publish the earlier part of his course, con-

taining the basis of Jurisprudence, which I knew to be separable from the less generally interesting details. At first he quite rejected the idea; but on my placing before him many arguments which appeared to me weighty, he consented, only saying that he could incur no risk, neither could he send for a publisher, but that if I would find one and negotiate everything, he would print them. You may imagine I was not slow to undertake nor to accomplish this. I cannot express to you the approbation this move of mine has received from all his and my friends; many have told me that it was the best thing I ever did, and could not fail to establish his reputation. But what avails all this while everything here is pursued not as a science, but merely as a craft? We cannot live on air, but must go somewhere where our little means will support us. Plan we have none. You know how much my inclinations are with Germany. He at present seems rather to think of Paris, where, he says, he would devote himself entirely to constructing a complete Corpus Juris—such a one as might live for ever, and be a text-book for all future codifiers. You may imagine that I could willingly make any and every sacrifice for so noble a project."

This was in 1831. Mr Austin died in 1860, and it was only after his death that his wife succeeded in publishing a second edition of the work on Jurisprudence, long received as a text-book and authority, but which he had never energy enough to revise and prepare for republication. His wife, evidently in a moment when her heart was full of the exasperation of disappointment, explains on one occasion, to her constant and affectionate correspondent M. Guizot, how this was.

"The edition has been exhausted for many years. John Murray has applied to Mr Austin several times, though with great delicacy, for a second edition. His first reply (which he made me write) was that he could

not reprint it without considerable corrections and additions, to which Murray gladly assented. So the matter rested—again for years; but as he had bound himself by this notion of a revised and altered edition, *and* a second volume, the result is that he has never touched it, *and never will*. I can give you no idea of the flattering, and more than flattering, solicitations from all quarters. The only effect of a fresh one is to make him look as if everybody had hit him a blow. He never makes the least answer or observation. How can he? What reason can he give to me or to himself? The truth is, that many causes, and among them some very sufficient ones, long ago conspired to disgust him with men and their judgments and affairs, and he has made this an excuse to himself for obeying his own reluctance to set about work.

"My husband is to me the object of the profoundest veneration and the most tender pity. He is to me sometimes as a god, sometimes as a sick and wayward child—an immense, powerful, and beautiful machine, without the balance-wheel which should keep it going constantly, evenly, and justly."

This domestic tragedy, so silent, so covered over with shields of affection and respect, and all the decorums of life, is by far the most interesting thing in this book. It is wrapped up in innumerable envelopes of detail, and fold upon fold of more or less unimportant letters, the correspondence of the wife, who so rarely discloses her troubles, and of the friends who surrounded her: and a careless reader, not too much interested perhaps in the effusions of M. Barthelemy de St Hilaire, or even MM. Cousin and Guizot, might easily miss that real and most affecting episode of life—but it adds the highest elements of tragedy to the record. During all this lifetime of trouble, Mrs Austin carried on, it is to be supposed for the supply of the wants of the

household, a ceaseless course of literary activity. She translated book after book, article after article—not attempting, as her granddaughter explains, out of modesty, to write original matter, although evidently full of information and observation. She had, however, the consolation of social success, and wherever she was, attracted round her the best people in the place, the most amusing and interesting society—a kind of success which requires a gift as particular as any other, and is not given to every woman, even when endowed with literary talents as great or greater than those of Mrs Austin. She seems to have maintained, besides a very large amount of work, the most wonderful correspondence, writing and receiving endless communications, chiefly from notable persons. These, however, we think, are less interesting than the names of the correspondents would lead us to expect, and indeed are not striking at all, though they form in bulk the greater part of the two volumes, and are evidently considered by the editor the most important part of them. The reader, however, we suspect, will find but a mild interest in the letters, which are full of the news of the time, scarcely venerable enough to have gained the interest of history, but too old in their manifold allusions to events of the moment to hold the general interest. M. Guizot, one of the greatest and most highly esteemed of Mrs Austin's friends, has not, for instance, kept the spotless place which he was once supposed to hold. Disagreeable shadows of Spanish marriages and other unhappy things come between us and the page upon which all his admirable qualities are recorded, and incense offered to his name. Even Mrs Austin's own letters are by

no means so interesting when she discusses general events and the politics and morals of the day, as when she confides to her sister, or, on a rare occasion, to the French oracle, the facts of her own life. That meek and uncomplaining struggle with poverty, discouragement, disappointment, and the continual spectacle by her side of opportunities neglected and powers unused, gives us a new and powerful suggestion of a phase of feminine existence which is rarely understood. When such secret troubles are betrayed to the world unadvisedly, our indignation against the person who thus unveils the secrets of domestic life is apt to counterbalance our pity. But there is no betrayal in the reserved and momentary confession at one or two supreme moments of this underlying tragedy. And it can scarcely be said that the husband, with his nervous wretchedness, his self-consuming weakness, his fastidious delicacy and severity of taste, so eloquent, so hopeless, so conscious of his own utter failure, is less interesting than the wife, "the busiest woman living," as she thinks, who has to soothe, to stimulate, to humour, and finally, in the last melancholy indulgence of despair, to accept him for what he is, without any distracting hope that he may yet be something different. On her part, she had happily not much time to brood over her bitter disappointment. Translating Ranke's endless volumes, and many a great German tome beside, catching a lighter article of interest, if we may use the word, while still on the wing, and transferring it to an English review or even newspaper—with her attention always alert and on the watch for something translatable, whether book or event, and at the same time all the duties of the other side of life,

—the small domestic economy to keep going, the little daughter to train, the comforts of the house to look to, and, most pressing of all, the correspondence to keep up—her days were full of activity and toil. The only period of brightness, unchecked by work or anxiety, which seems to have fallen to her share, was some three years in Malta, when Mr Austin was appointed Commissioner to inquire into the grievances of the natives, and where his wife was one of the greatest ladies in the place, and fully enjoyed the position and influence, which she put to the very best use. A warm regard for the people, who understood and appreciated her courtesy and kindness—treatment apparently very different from that which they had received from the ordinary run of English officials—seems to have sprung up in her mind, and she was happy in her husband's occupation, and in the active and useful work which, for once in his life, he seems to have thrown himself fully into. But these halcyon days did not last long.

There is something very touching and pathetic in the conclusion of this much occupied life. After many wanderings, life in Dresden, life in Paris, life in London, always in the best society, and with the most dignified correspondents, the Austins settled in a quiet English country place, taking a cottage at Weybridge (which must have been of considerable dimensions, since it accommodated on occasion many visitors). Their only child had been married some years before, and the now elderly couple settled down in that affecting reunion which often brings a husband and wife more closely together at the end of life than they have been in its beginning. By this time evidently he had relinquished

all thought of work, or of any struggle against the languor of his natural being, and was a calm spectator of his wife's activity, without any attempt to emulate it. When he died, the survivor—though in their active life she had known contrarieties enough—felt herself altogether alone and abandoned. Her description of her desolate condition is very touching:—

“The last eleven years of our life have been spent in an almost unbroken *tête-à-tête*. I went out each autumn for a short time, to lay in a store of health and spirits for the winter. But excepting those absences, which he always urged upon me, there was hardly a day in the year which we did not spend together and alone. So far from finding this dull or tedious, we both became more and more fond of our retirement and of each other. I will confess it to you, he had not always been a very tender husband to me, nor easy to please. Ill-health, disappointment, and anxiety, had, naturally enough, made all things distasteful to him. But since he had given up the conflict with fortune, and especially since we had settled down in our quiet retreat, he had gradually come to a state of mind and temper which I can only call heavenly,—so gentle and noble, so without all alloy of unsatisfied cravings, or vain repinings, or harsh passions, or low desires, was it. In this blessed frame of mind all his youthful and passionate love for me seemed to return, mingled with a confidence and intimacy which only a life passed together can produce. I was too happy. It pleased God, after many years of care and toil and suffering, to permit me to taste of this tranquil happiness. Do not think me unthankful for the blessing; at present I can only feel that all is gone, that I have no purpose or object in life, and that every thought and act of mine, which had him for their true aim, will now wander painfully in search of what they will nevermore find.”

There is no greater consolation

after a life of storms than this drawing together at the end. Mrs Austin survived her husband seven years, a part of which time she devoted to reprinting his book, and deciphering and arranging the fragmentary manuscripts he had left, and which had been intended as additions or corrections to it. She thus vindicated to the world, and no doubt in a measure to herself, the man who had failed so lamentably in life, and yet was worthy to stand as an authority among men. The mixture of love for him and pride in him, with an anxious desire to make it evident that he had been all she believed him to be, no longer mingled with shame or misgiving, is very affecting and genuine. She lived to see her beloved grandchild and biographer married, and the family life expanding into great-grandchildren; and at seventy-four, still working, still writing letters to her dear M. Guizot, her very dear St Hilaire, died quietly in her cottage, planning a little expedition with her last breath—a woman full of courage, full of energy, and also, which does not always happen, appreciated everywhere, and surrounded all her life long by love and praise.

If there is a word to say, it is that this excellent woman was not unaware of her own claims upon everybody's admiration. "We both came into the world," writes her friend Mrs Grote, "endowed with the choicest gifts of the fairy god-mother, personal and mental." Why an old lady who has become something like an ideal witch should not exchange such compliments with another old lady who has grown fat, it would be hard to say: there is no valid reason against it. Vanity becomes pleasant, as (of this kind) it is always amusing, on such lips; and so far as Mrs

Austin is concerned, it was strictly true.

Mrs Austin's only child, Lady Duff Gordon, furnishes another sketch, and one that is full of interest. She was, perhaps, less remarkable than her mother, and less was required of her in the fight and struggle of life. But she had the gift of bearing a long and fluctuating illness with beautiful sweetness and courage, and of keeping a brave face to misfortune in its most crushing aspect. In the very midst of all pleasant things, a high-spirited, beautiful young woman, admired and surrounded by friends, with the inheritance of many of her mother's allies, and even more than her mother's social gifts, she had to leave society and all its joys, and her family and everything she cared for, to go away alone to the end of the world in search of health—a search less hopeful than now. There is no explanation of the fact that she went alone, and perhaps none is required. Probably her own boundless courage and buoyant strength of mind were the reasons why no guardian or companion was necessary; but it is difficult not to feel a pang of pity for the young sufferer, with husband, children, and mother all left behind, going out upon a long solitary voyage, now to the Cape, now to Egypt, in the first out of all power even of communication with her family for the weary weeks of the sea-voyage, of which, however, her indomitable spirit makes a charming narrative, as if it had been nothing but enjoyment, as soon as she gets to land. She never recovered her health, and, after various comings and goings, settled, if we may use the word, in Egypt for the last six years of her life, living chiefly in Thebes, a strange centre for the

life of an English lady. But whether from one place or another, and in whatsoever phase of her lingering malady, her letters are always delightful, full of charming gaiety and brightness. They have been published in successive volumes, from the Cape and from Egypt, so that it is not now that it is necessary to speak of those wonderful communications of the invalid, in which we are brought face to face, not with any record of suffering or waning strength, but with the brightest panorama of novel life,—a hundred lively figures, sketches of scenery radiant with Eastern sunshine, and studies of Eastern manners and modes of thought. Whenever the sick lady went, a crowd of friends started up round her. Servants and humble neighbours turned into a crowd of worshippers, and every one within reach felt the charm of her presence. Here is the opinion of one of her attendants touching his mistress, and, as represented by her, the English “hareem”—*i.e.*, woman-kind in general.

“I heard Saleem Effendi and Omar discussing English ladies one day lately, while I was inside the curtain with Saleem’s slave-girl, and they did not know I heard them. Omar described Janet, and was of opinion that a man who was married to her could want nothing more. ‘By my soul, she rides like a Bedawec, she shoots with the gun and pistol, rows the boat; she knows many languages and what is in their books, works with the needle like an Efreet; and to

see her hands run over the teeth of the music-box (keys of the piano) amazes the mind, while her singing gladdens the soul. How then should her husband ever desire the coffee-shop? Walláheec! she can always amuse him at home. And as to *my* lady, the thing is not that she does not know. When I feel my stomach tightened, I go to the divan and say to her, “Do you want anything—a pipe or sherbet, or so and so——?” and I talk till she lays down her book and talks to me, and I question her and amuse my mind—and, by God! if I were a rich man and could marry one English hareem like these, I would stand before her and serve her like her memlook. You see I am only this lady’s servant, and I have not once sat in the coffee-shop, because of the sweetness of her tongue. Is it not true, therefore, that the man who can marry such hareem is rich more than with money?”

“I nearly laughed out at hearing Omar relate his manœuvres to make me ‘amuse his mind.’ It seems I am in no danger of being discharged for being dull.”

Yet this bright creature lived and died alone among the sands of the desert, brave and gay and full of courage to the last. There is something almost incredibly heroic and tragical in the fact that the intimation of her death, so far away, came in a telegram written by herself the day before she died. Thus undaunted, solitary, without a sigh, this brave spirit faced and entered the unknown. There is something which rends the heart in the contemplation of self-command so extraordinary and so complete.

TO THE EMPRESS FREDERIC.

On her arriving in England, 19th November 1888.

WHEN England sent thee forth, a joyous bride,
A prayer went through the land, that on thy head
Might all best blessings bounteously be shed,
And his, the lover-husband by thy side ;
And England marked with ever-growing pride,
As onwards still the years full-freighted sped,
How wrought in both the grace of worth inbred,
To noblest acts and purposes allied.

With eyes of longing, not undimmed by tears,
England now greets thee, desolate and lone,
Heart-stricken, widowed of the twofold crown
Of love and empire ; and the grief endears,
Remembering all the cherished hopes o'erthrown,
When at their height thy heart's lord was struck down.

THEODORE MARTIN.

THE LESSONS OF THE RECESS.

THE short interval which has elapsed between the rising of Parliament for its summer holiday and its reassembling for an autumn session, has thrown no new light upon the political horizon. According to the novel fashion of the day, the great questions which are supposed to agitate the public mind have been discussed at various meetings, and by statesmen of different calibre, from one end of the country to the other. But no new solution of those questions has been suggested, and no advance appears to have been made towards their solution by any of the methods heretofore proposed by any responsible statesman or irresponsible agitator. The Unionist Government, indeed, holds its own, and by consistently enforcing respect to the law in Ireland, has done much to counteract the mischievous and utterly unconstitutional theories with respect to the duty of obedience to the laws, which have been freely advanced by Gladstonian - Parnellite orators. But in the tone and temper of the latter there has been no diminution of virulence, no abatement of demand for things impossible to be granted, no recognition of the verdict given by the country at the general election of 1886. On the contrary, Gladstonian and Parnellite speeches have been one incessant protest against the justice of that verdict, the consideration of which has at length become so unpalatable to the leader of the Separatist party, that he has actually succeeded in proving to his own satisfaction that the verdict was a mistake altogether, and that if the possessors of more than one

vote could be deducted from the gross polls at the general election of 1886, the results of that election would be found to have been in his favour, instead of being reckoned as a complete condemnation of his Irish policy.

It would be a pity to destroy the comfort which Mr Gladstone seems to derive from the arithmetical illusion which his fertile brain has conjured up in relief of the disappointment which an ordinary mind would have experienced in a total and general defeat such as that which was sustained by the Separatist party at the last general election. Nor would it serve any practical purpose to follow the veteran calculator through the intricate arithmetical meshes out of which he weaves consolation for his suffering soul, and succeeds in persuading himself that a notable triumph was achieved by his friends when the rest of the world believed them to have suffered an utter reverse. If it is balm to Mr Gladstone's wounded spirit to believe that owners are, as a rule, an objectionable class, that they are doubly objectionable when they happen to own property in more than one county or division of a county, and that if a proper limitation of their voting power had been in force at the general election, he would still be Prime Minister of this country, it would be cruel to deprive him of the precious balm so curiously manufactured. To be sure, the premisses from which he draws his conclusions are absurdly unsound, and his position ludicrously untenable, being based upon assumptions as regards the number of double-owner voters, their politics, and the distribution

of their votes, none of which is susceptible of proof, and the most important of which are almost beyond doubt the reverse of the truth. For when we consider the immense number of voters now upon county registers, it is unlikely to the last degree that the result of county elections can be materially affected by any "double-owners," or indeed by "owners" at all, unless Mr Gladstone means to include among the enemies of his policy those small owners throughout the country whose number the Liberal party have always professed a desire to increase, and who are undoubtedly among the most independent voters in the constituencies. Any one who has been connected with the working of county elections in former days will be able to tell Mr Gladstone that it was the occupiers of other men's land who were generally accounted as the Conservative strength, and that the Liberals always claimed the small owners of freeholds as to a large extent their supporters. The point, however, is really not worth serious argument, and Mr Gladstone's assertions thereupon would have been generally encountered with an incredulous smile had they been advanced by any one else but Mr Gladstone.

There are other matters, however, in connection with the present position of political parties, and the issues about to be tried between them, which have been the subject of discussion during the recess, and which deserve to be noticed at the present moment. Much, indeed, of the elocutionary vigour which has recently been displayed may be passed over without more than brief comment. Lord Hartington and Mr Balfour have undoubtedly done yeoman's service to the good cause: the first,

by the further display of that sterling common-sense which is so conspicuous in all his public speeches, and which refuses to be confused or beguiled by Gladstonian sophistry; the latter, by the complete exposure of Gladstonian-Parnellite mendacity, by which, on more than one occasion, he has shown to the world what kind of enemies are those against whom British statesmen and honourable men have to do battle in the present state of political parties. No reputation has in our time risen more rapidly than that of Mr Balfour: his courage, vigour, and determination have won praise from loyal men of every grade and every opinion; and the abuse lavished upon him by Separatist orators, from their leader downwards, only seems to exalt him still higher in the estimation of all men who are able to appreciate the best qualities of British statesmanship. Secure in the approval of such men, and indeed of all who value sterling worth and conspicuous ability, Mr Balfour can well afford to treat with contempt the torrent of abuse which is poured upon him by his unscrupulous opponents. To be reviled, indeed, by such men is an honour rather than the reverse; and although they had pursued with equal virulence those Gladstonians who preceded Mr Balfour in his office, it is satisfactory to see that they have surpassed themselves in their abuse of the present Chief Secretary. For, undoubtedly, the reason of this excess of violence is to be found in the fact that Mr Balfour has met exaggerations and falsehoods, by whomsoever advanced, at every point; has gallantly held his own against every attack, chivalrously defended those subordinates who have been exposed to the cowardly vituperation

of parliamentary grievance-mongers, and ruthlessly exposed the tactics by which the cause of Home Rule has been forced down the throats of that portion of the Irish people which has not had the wisdom to perceive or the strength to resist the pernicious influences which have been at work. Every Unionist—and indeed every loyal man in Great Britain and Ireland—owes a debt of gratitude to Mr Balfour; and if his life be spared, there may be predicted for him a future of no ordinary brilliancy, and of no small advantage to his country.

It would indeed be easy to eulogise the speeches which Mr Balfour has delivered during the recess, just as it would be pleasant to deal with some of the harangues of his opponents. Pleasure, however, would be tempered with pity if we were to indulge in criticisms upon those of Lord Spencer and Sir George Trevelyan, whose oratorical efforts during the recess have been principally directed towards the abnegation and disproof of the characters for efficiency and patriotism with which they had been credited during their conduct of the Irish Government. These two excellent gentlemen would apparently have us believe that their determination to uphold the law and maintain the Queen's authority in Ireland, has been greatly exaggerated, and that if they *did* imprison any agitators and suppress any seditious meetings, it was all a mistake, and they are very sorry for it.

We are the less desirous of dwelling upon these speeches, because, in the first place, they signify very little to the real issues upon which the battle of the future has to be fought; and because, in the second place, we are well as-

ured that if, in the time to come, either of the two speakers should in any degree be responsible for the peace and safety of Ireland, there would not be wanting those qualities of vigour and determination—provided always the exercise of these were in accordance with the policy of their party—which are temporarily suspended by the political exigencies of the moment. These, however, with other extra-parliamentary utterances, may be passed over for the present, whilst we consider two speeches, or rather two sets of speeches, which, for different reasons, appear specially worthy of the attention of serious men and thoughtful politicians. We refer to the speeches delivered at the end of October and beginning of November, by Mr Goschen in Scotland and Mr Gladstone in the Midland counties. As long as Mr Gladstone remains the active leader of the largest section of the Liberal party, his speeches and letters must, of course, be regarded with an interest alike due to his personal character and political position. His recent "progress" and "utterances" are invested with all the greater importance from the attendant circumstances of time and place by which they were accompanied. These circumstances must be carefully considered and fairly taken into account, before we can fully and justly estimate the value of the performance of the great Separatist leader, and the probable outcome of all the demonstrative efforts which heralded that performance to its commencement and accompanied it to its conclusion. There can be no doubt at all as to the intention of the progress or the signification of the utterances. Birmingham, the stronghold of Liberal Unionism, was to be in-

vested. Liberal Unionists were to be once for all unmistakably shown that they had no longer any part or share in the Liberal party. The union (*absit omen* to the Separatist mind—but there is no other word with which to replace it)—the union of the whole Liberal party under their great leader was to be proclaimed as an accomplished fact; and all that was Conservative, unwholesome, or Unionist, was to be thrust out and cast away for ever. Lest there should be any mistake in the matter, let us quote the words of that veracious organ of Gladstonianism, the ‘Daily News,’ the day following the chief oration of the week:—

“Never was the Liberal party more enthusiastic, more united, more confident in itself, more certain of speedy triumph, than it is to-day. Liberalism has lately been ‘purged by the sword and purified by fire.’ *Its grosser and baser elements* have fallen away. The halting, the half-hearted, the pusillanimous, the double-minded have sought a refuge elsewhere, and Mr Gladstone is relieved of all the hindrances which baffled his labours in the cause of the people from 1868 to 1886. The simple issue before the country, the choice between coercion upon the one hand and conciliation upon the other, has separated the sheep from the goats.”

Without stopping to criticise the good taste or veracity of these bombastic sentences, they show, without doubt, the object and intention of the Birmingham “progress” and speeches. Gladstonian Liberals from all parts of the country flocked to the centre of Liberal Unionism to protest against the independent action which the free citizens of Birmingham had taken for themselves upon this question of imperial policy. Like the hosts of Senna-

cherib, these Gladstonian Assyrians came up and encamped against the political Jerusalem which had dared to defy “the great king” of the Separatists, and it remains to be seen whether any more lasting and living effect of their invasion will be left than in the case of the unfortunate army which the “grand old man” of Assyria expended in his fruitless advance upon the faithful city. Certain it is, at all events, that the coming invasion had no terrors for the burgesses of Birmingham, who evinced the firmness of their Unionist principles by so decided a Unionist victory at the municipal elections that the unhappy ‘Daily News’ is driven to claim it as a triumph that the Gladstonians, whilst making no impression upon the Unionist seats, only lost two out of four—that is, one-half—of the Gladstonian seats which had been attacked by their opponents. So that up to the very day of Mr Gladstone’s arrival in Birmingham, there had evidently been no change in the Unionist sentiments of the locality.

It is something more than doubtful whether these sentiments have been altered by the proceedings of the week. Of course no one will attempt to deny that great crowds of people assembled and cheered Mr Gladstone; that the meeting at Bingley Hall was probably one of the largest public meetings ever held in a building in England; that there was much enthusiasm, much “tall talk,” and much determination evinced by the Gladstonians present. But nobody ever denied that there are plenty of Gladstonians in the densely populated town of Birmingham, and that a crowded meeting to hear Mr Gladstone could have been obtained even without the im-

portation of thousands of strangers to swell the numbers of the audience. Neither has any one ever attempted to dispute the fact that an eloquent orator who habitually appeals to the masses—*i.e.*, to the most numerous body of the community—and who makes the most ardent profession of being guided in his policy by the highest and noblest of Christian principles, will never want for crowded audiences, and, if supported by clever party organisations, can always command a satisfactory and successful “demonstration.” From the splendour and magnitude of that demonstration we seek to detract nothing, nor do we grudge Mr Gladstone and his friends one atom of the comfort which they may have derived from the week’s exertions. But when the week had come to a close, when the noise of the cheering had died away and the strangers had departed from Birmingham, the hard-headed people of the place will probably have looked to the speeches delivered and the principles enunciated by Mr Gladstone, and will have asked themselves whether there can be found therein any reason for altering the opinion to which they came in 1886, or for believing that the policy which they then rejected as unsafe and unwise can now be adopted with wisdom and with safety to the State.

If we criticise closely Mr Gladstone’s speeches during the week in question, and more especially that which is called the “great speech” in Bingley Hall, it will be very difficult to find anything which would be likely to induce the men of Birmingham to confess that they were wrong in the verdict which they gave against Mr Gladstone’s Irish policy in 1886.

It had indeed been currently reported that the opportunity would be taken by Mr Gladstone to proclaim in some respects a new policy, or at least to indicate some revised programme upon which all sections of the Liberal party might unite for that great object of turning out the Tories which is the one aim and object of the place-hunting section of the Gladstonian party. Those, however, who entertained any such idea, should have reflected that no modification of Mr Gladstone’s Irish policy is possible at the present moment without the consent of Mr Parnell and his band of eighty-five, and that their retention as his supporters is one of the first conditions of Mr Gladstone’s political existence. One modification had indeed been possible—namely, the retention of the Irish members at Westminster—as a part of any future scheme of Irish Home Rule; but this was not dwelt upon in the Birmingham speeches. There were good reasons why it should not be placed in the foreground; for no one knows better than Mr Gladstone that it is a question full of difficulties in the practical working, and that although it may be conceded in words to-day, in order to conciliate or evade the opposition of those who have insisted upon it as a *sine qua non* condition of their support, yet his hands must be left free to repudiate it at the proper time, when almost insuperable objections will be urged to either giving a double representation to Irish members, or allowing members of the Imperial Parliament to be restricted as to their votes, or to sit upon terms of inequality with their fellows. This point, then, was not dwelt upon by Mr Gladstone, nor indeed were there any but the vaguest and most gen-

eral declarations of policy. Men had expected the speech of a statesman, instead of which they had to listen to the mob-oratory of an election candidate. In breadth of view, in scope of argument, in large reviews of the principal questions of the day, and in enlightened suggestions as to their solution, this "great" speech was singularly and lamentably deficient. A large portion of it was taken up with one-sided recitals of particular incidents which had already been discussed, in and out of Parliament, and which, however important in themselves, were trivial and unimportant points in comparison with the enormous issues which are before the country. Then there was the usual routing out of a doubtful story of some obscure historian, of course to the discredit of England and of British rule in Ireland; there was the habitual travesty of history; the stereotyped attempt to prove that his political opponents were nearly as inconsistent as himself, and the usual abuse of those opponents, and more especially of those charged with the administration of Irish affairs. Of a truth Mr Gladstone may be excused for his attacks upon Mr Balfour, for no man has so mercilessly and so completely exposed his inconsistencies and demolished his fallacies, both in and out of Parliament. But amid all the declamation, the misuse of history, and the denunciation of his opponents, we look in vain for anything in Mr Gladstone's speech which displays that breadth of thought, or that capacity for grasping the whole bearings of a question, which one might have expected from so experienced a politician and so distinguished a statesman. Read the speech from beginning to end, and we shall find

no indication of any intention or desire save that of "turning out the Tories" as soon as the speaker can, and of being again intrusted with the power of "settling the Irish question."

With regard to the probability, or even the possibility, of this "settlement" being accomplished by Mr Gladstone, there is one fact beyond all others to be noted—he has once had the opportunity, and has signally failed. In other words, he has once been able to put before the country, in measures submitted to Parliament, a practical legislative application of the principles of Home Rule. Those measures absolutely failed to satisfy Parliament, whose rejection of the same has been emphatically endorsed by the country. Surely, therefore, before we intrust the man who has once failed with the power of making another attempt, we have a right to demand that he shall indicate some other lines upon which he proposes to proceed. But this is just what Mr Gladstone deliberately refuses to do. He indignantly denies that "Home Rule is dead;" he loudly proclaims that it is alive, and leaves it to be inferred that he, and he alone, can apply the principle in a manner satisfactory to the country. He demands an implicit confidence: "Trust me not at all, or trust me all in all;" and it is this absolute surrender of independence, and implicit submission to his will, which he requires of a political party whose independence was formerly the very germ of its existence, and who, until the present degenerate times, has always prided itself upon the fact that its members thought for themselves and would submit to no dictator. The change which has come over "the spirit of their dream" is one

which Liberals will do well to consider ; but with respect to those who have already shown their independence by joining the Unionist flag, Mr Gladstone can hardly expect to turn them back either by his bitter denunciations of their leaders, or his refusal to inform them of any deviation from that policy by which he has already driven them from his side. To these men his Bingley Hall speech was little less than an insult, and can hardly have had any other effect than to confirm the alienation which already existed. It can have been no gratification to them to hear the abuse of their trusted leaders, and little amusement to listen to the *réchauffé* of Irish inventions and exaggerations to which they were treated by the leader of the Separatist Liberals. It is true that Mr Gladstone kindly spared them — and himself — any allusion to the Dopping incident, his apology for his treatment of which should be still kept fresh in the minds of those who listen to his version of “ incidents ” in Irish history, past and present. But the Mitchelstown riot was dragged again into light, and illustrated by photographs which may or may not be correct, but which, in his anxiety to show the “ lawless conduct ” of those who were engaged in upholding the law, Mr Gladstone, of course, assumed to have been taken from certain points, and to prove certain conclusions, which reasonable men will require to be established by more impartial evidence. Wonderful to relate, the case of Mr Mandeville was also introduced into this strange speech, as another instance of Irish suffering and Irish wrong. And yet what is the case of Mr Mandeville ? He was duly imprisoned under a

legal sentence. He left prison declaring that he “ was not a feather the worse,” and had only lost three pounds in weight. He proceeded to lead his usual life, took an active part in the agitation then going on, caught a bad cold after a wetting, and died, *seven or eight months after his discharge from prison*, of a disease of which the doctor swore that the seeds could only have been in his body for a very short time. After his death, it was alleged that he died in consequence of a disease which had its origin in his treatment in jail. A coroner’s jury was found to endorse this view, and Mr Gladstone at once adopted it as his own, and prates about the coroner’s jury as a “ legal tribunal,” as if it or any other tribunal had the power of turning black into white, and of making untrue the plain simple facts, which render it impossible that Mr Mandeville could have died of any disease contracted during his imprisonment. These were the variations from the abuse of the Liberal Unionists to which Mr Gladstone treated his Bingley Hall audience ; and we have seldom risen from the perusal of a speech by a party leader with deeper feelings of disappointment at its utter failure to meet the exigencies of the moment. Such a speech leaves behind it an impression which it is difficult to resist, that the aim of the leader of the Separatist party is to hold his followers together by general professions of political faith and disparagement of the present Government, without having in his mind or intentions any definite policy, or any idea of how the differences upon the Home Rule question are to be settled, which must of necessity spring up again the very moment that any

attempt is made to deal with that question by means of practical legislation.

If it be thought that this is a harsh and uncharitable view to take of the veteran leader of whom we speak, let the records of the past be searched, and we shall find that other statesmen have dealt with their followers after a very different fashion. When great questions were before the country, and the Conservative party looked to Sir Robert Peel for direction and advice, a distinct policy was proclaimed in the famous Tamworth manifesto of 1835, and definite principles laid down for the guidance of the party. In 1868, and again in 1874, both Mr Disraeli and Mr Gladstone himself issued addresses, which distinctly avowed the lines upon which their policy would be based, and clearly indicated the differences existing between the two political parties into which the country was divided. But at the present moment, whilst clamouring for a dissolution of Parliament, and expressing the most unbounded confidence in the result, Mr Gladstone declines to take his followers into his confidence, and goes no further in his promises than the old nursery distich—“Open your mouth and shut your eyes, and see what I will give you.”

It is refreshing to turn from an oratorical exhibition of so disappointing a character to the speeches lately delivered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer at Aberdeen and Perth. The one great feature of those speeches is the comprehensive spirit in which the great questions of the day are discussed. There is no attempt to impute base and unworthy motives to the opponents of the speaker, or to drag into the front of the argumentative battle petty

details and exaggerated instances of individual wrong. The whole subject of Home Rule—its real meaning and actual bearing upon the greater question of imperial unity—is clearly placed before us in plain and intelligible language, and, as we read, we feel ourselves elevated above the din of mere party strife, and as it were conveyed to a vantage-ground from which we are better able to review the whole battlefield, and to form an impartial opinion upon the issues which are involved in the struggle. Mr Goschen successfully combats and overthrows four allegations which have been the stock-in-trade of the Separatist party ever since the commencement of the controversy. The first of these is the declaration that to be Unionist is to be “reactionary and illiberal”; the second, that the question is one simply between “conciliation” and “coercion”; the third, that the Unionists have broken their pledges upon the subject of “coercion”; and the fourth, that the opponents of Home Rule are the enemies of the Irish people. These calumnies, often advanced, cannot be too often refuted, since, although it is doubtless true that “lies have no legs, they cannot stand,” it is equally so that “they fly”; and these particular falsehoods have been urged so constantly and by men of such authority, that it is necessary again and again to expose their utter want of foundation.

Mr Goschen was especially happy in pointing out, that if to be a Unionist was to be “reactionary and illiberal,” this is precisely what Mr Gladstone himself has been up to the close of the year of grace 1885. Still more telling was his argument

that, since Mr Bright and many others who have been during the whole of their political existence in strong hostility to anything which could be called "Tory" or "reactionary," are now found amongst the warmest supporters of the Unionist cause, it was highly improbable that it could with any shadow of truth be called "the cause of illiberality and reaction." As to the second charge, it scarcely required the ability of Mr Goschen to show that the question is not one of conciliation *v.* coercion, but of coercion *v.* coercion; that is to say, of coercion of the peaceful and loyal subjects of the Queen by a nefarious conspiracy, or the coercion of the conspirators by the power of the law. It is the latter kind of coercion of which the Unionists are the supporters; and if Mr Gladstone and his friends prefer to connive at the former, let them at least have the honesty to refrain from casting upon their opponents an odium which in reality belongs much more truly to themselves. The accusation of broken pledges is really unworthy of notice. It may possibly be the fact that individual cases may be found in which the election professions of a particular candidate may seem inconsistent with his subsequent support of the Acts passed for the prevention of crime in Ireland. But whilst in such cases it will probably turn out on inquiry that altered circumstances justified the course taken by such individuals, as a general rule it will most certainly be found that both Liberal and Conservative Unionist candidates, while trusting that the law would be observed without the necessity of further special legislation, at the same time felt

and expressed no other determination than that at all hazards law and order should be maintained and the Queen's authority upheld in Ireland.

"Coercion" and "eviction" are two words which have been called in to the aid of the Home Rule party with ceaseless energy and persistent reiteration. Yet, if we look calmly at their real signification in connection with the present state of affairs, we shall find that coercion simply means that enforcement of the law which is absolutely necessary in every civilised country; whilst eviction only signifies the last action by which a man can recover his own property from another man who persists in holding it without discharging the legal obligation which he undertook before he held it at all. When special coercive laws are passed by a Legislature, their passing implies that there are bad men abroad who will not obey the ordinary law of the land; and that such men should afterwards howl against coercion is as natural as it is unnatural and discreditable that statesmen of responsible character and position should re-echo that howl in order to damage their political opponents. When evictions take place, in the vast majority of cases it is because the persons evicted, either through the evil advice of some political society, or because of their own belief in the sympathy which will be excited by their complaints, have preferred that such eviction should take place rather than restore to the owner the property which was his own, or make an effort to satisfy his legal claims, in most instances largely reduced in order to meet the exigencies of the case. Both words, however, have played and will continue to play the game

of the agitators ; and it is only by constant explanation and exposure that the public can be made aware of the truth.

But perhaps the fourth allegation is the most dangerous, as it is the most presumptuous and the most untruthful of the four. It is said that the Unionists are the enemies of the Irish people in their opposition to Home Rule ; that, actuated by fear of what might follow, they stand in the way of the "generous" intentions of Mr Gladstone ; that they are on the side of "the landlords" against the people ; and that all patriotism and national Irish feelings should in consequence be ranged against them under the Home Rule banner. But after we have heard and read such sentiments from the "Irish leaders" (who have been raised into a certain position of prominence by this Home Rule question, and to whom its settlement would in many cases be political ruin), let us once more turn to the calm and sober words of Mr Goschen, and find out for ourselves where the truth lies. Why should Unionists, why should any Englishman or Scotchman, be the enemies of Ireland in any manner or in any degree ? Not only is there no reason for any such hostile feeling, but, as a matter of fact, it does not exist. The feeling of the great party which supports the Union is not an anti-Irish feeling, neither is it a feeling in favour of the landlord as against the tenant class ; for, as Mr Goschen well put it, "If every landlord in Ireland should join Mr Parnell, it would be our duty none the less to conduct the struggle to the same end." The dominant feeling in the Unionist mind is affection for,

integrity of the empire, of which England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales are component parts, and the preservation of which is at least as great an object to Ireland as to the other three countries. The actual absolute difference in fundamental principle between the Unionists and the followers of Mr Gladstone, if worked out and well considered, just comes to this, —the Unionists desire and regard as their most important object the joint empire of the four countries and the common citizenship of the united whole, whilst their opponents would exalt the separate nationalities which go to build up that joint empire, not perceiving that the welfare of the whole may be imperilled by the undue exaltation of any one of its component parts. It cannot be too often repeated that this constant flattery of particular nationalities, now in Ireland, now in Wales, in which Mr Gladstone is wont to indulge, is not only mischievous and opposed to the general interests of the empire, but is positively of a reactionary tendency, entirely contrary to the spirit of the age in which we live. America refused separation to her Southern States (though it is due to Mr Gladstone's consistency to remember that he believed in that separation). Germany has consolidated her empire. The unity of Italy has been achieved—not without the sacrifice of "nationalist" feelings upon the altar of a larger and wider patriotism. Yet we, who were before these great nations in the consolidation of our empire, and who have, in fact, set the example to them, the wisdom of which they have recognised, are now, forsooth, to be called upon to retrace our steps, to divide instead of to consolidate, and to make a backward

move in the direction of separation at the bidding of the leader of the "Liberal" and "progressive" party. Mr Goschen's treatment of the whole of this question was so clear and so impressive, that one could wish his speeches to be in the hands of every voter in the three kingdoms.

Without taking into account the position of Ulster, or the fact that the wealth and education of Ireland are still to a preponderating extent upon the Unionist side, we may say boldly, because truthfully, that we are the true friends of the Irish people. We do not, indeed, seek to conciliate them by the gift of other people's property, or to cajole them by promises of the "abolition of landlordism," in the same breath with which we hold out to them visions of each peasant being himself an owner of his own land—*i.e.*, a landlord. We do not seek to make use of agrarian distress to further political projects, nor do we endeavour to deceive the Irish tenant into the belief that a Home Rule Parliament will, in some incomprehensible manner, bring prosperity to his door. If there be men who do this, these are the real enemies of the Irish people. The Unionist, on the contrary, is their best friend, because he tells them the truth, and puts the real facts of the position plainly before them. No Legislature will or can do more for the Irish tenant than the Imperial Parliament has done, and is ready to do if further legislation is required. If there was a Home Rule Parliament in Dublin to-morrow, they could hope for no legislation of a more favourable nature than that which they have received, and, if need be, will receive, from the Parliament at Westminster. But a Home Rule Parliament they cannot have, because Ireland being only

one of the four countries which constitute the home dominions of the Queen, the majority of the people of those countries—not from ill-will to Ireland, but from goodwill to the whole empire—deem one united Parliament the best. And here again is a point upon which the use of dubious and uncertain language has wrought much evil upon this question. Men talk freely about what may or may not be given to Ireland so as to satisfy her legitimate demands without the surrender of the important principle of "one Imperial Parliament." Vague language upon this point is unsatisfactory in itself, and cruel to the Irish people. Subject to due securities, Great Britain will give to Ireland, as she will give to England, Scotland, and Wales, such development of self-government as may be proved to be desirable in the interests of economic and efficient administration, and the satisfaction of local wants by local agencies. For the furtherance of such objects, and their legitimate extension if necessary, it may be well to have meetings of local bodies, by whatever name called, in Dublin or other convenient place, as circumstances may require. All this is perfectly legitimate, and can in no degree trench upon imperial objects or imperial action. But the line must be strictly drawn between the status, position, and duties of such bodies and those of a Legislature. There must be but one Legislature for the United Kingdom, every member of which must, as now, enjoy equal rights with his fellows, and in which every portion of the kingdom must be fairly represented. No truthful man can deny that Ireland has even more than her share of representation in the present Parliament. If, then,

she disclaims the desire for separation, what is it that she really wants?

Once for all, let it be noted that to establish a Parliament in Dublin, in any way similar to that which was terminated by the Act of Union, is an impossible thing to be sanctioned by any Imperial Parliament composed of loyal and sensible men. What limitations would it be possible to impose upon such an Irish Parliament? The popular candidates at every election would undoubtedly be the candidates who "went in" for the abolition of limitations, and in a very short time there would be an "Irish question" as complicated and as difficult as any of recent years. Against any such Home Rule proposal it is our duty to strive, as much at least in the interests of Ireland as in those of the empire.

This is the fundamental principle of Unionism, and it is one easily intelligible to the common-sense of the people of these islands. Stripped of the extraordinary verbosity which obscures Mr Gladstone's meaning even in his most important utterances, he must be understood to propose to the Irish people something more than that extension of local self-government to which we have alluded. What that "something more" may be it is impossible to foreshadow or to imagine. This much, however, is certain. It will either be something which, when put into practical shape, will bitterly disappoint and disgust the Nationalist Irishmen who at this moment regard Mr Gladstone as their champion, or it will be something which cannot be accepted by the Imperial Parliament and people.

As to our knowledge of Mr

Gladstone's policy, we are no further advanced than upon the day of the rejection of his Home Rule bills by the Parliament of 1885; and although there are doubtless many persons who, from sheer weariness of the "Irish question," would almost prefer to let Mr Gladstone settle it rather than that it should much longer remain unsettled, yet to those who think the matter out soberly and seriously it must be as clear as daylight that any such settlement as Mr Gladstone has as yet even hinted at in his public speeches, would be a settlement which would unsettle everything in Ireland, and would give rise to fresh demands and fresh agitation, of which men now living would scarcely see the end. If any lesson is to be drawn from the public discussions during the recess, and from the general aspect of Irish affairs, it is a lesson which should teach us that the watchwords of our Irish legislation should be "Firmness and fairness"; and that whilst the Imperial Parliament should continue to meet with readiness any reasonable demand on the part of Ireland, it is at the same time bound to support the present Government in their steady determination to vindicate and uphold the supremacy of the law.

It should be observed, moreover, that whilst the Government are thus firm in their resolution to resist disloyalty and to suppress seditious and illegal practices, they have never for a moment lost sight of those ameliorating measures which they, at the outset, professed themselves ready to introduce for the benefit of the Irish people. The working of Lord Ashbourne's Act has proved so popular in Ireland that its extension has ap-

peared obviously important to those who really desire that the spirit of contentment should be engendered and fostered among the Irish people. The conduct of "her Majesty's Opposition" upon this question has instilled into the minds of thoughtful men the gravest doubts as to whether they can be fairly credited with such a desire. No sooner had notice been given of the intention of Government to introduce a bill for the extension of Lord Ashbourne's Act, than Mr Gladstone himself gave notice of an amendment, and that which should have been a combined attempt of both sides of the House to improve the condition of Ireland upon principles which both sides had sanctioned, was at once dragged down to the level of a party fight by the very man who has been so widely and ostentatiously parading his professed sympathy with the Irish tenants. Mr Gladstone's actual proposal with respect to Irish arrears, whether it be right or wrong, was not incompatible with the bill of the Government. The motive, however, which prompted its introduction by way of amendment to the Government measure was sufficiently transparent, and once more we have seen unhappy Ireland made the battlefield of party, and an honest attempt to improve her condition encountered by factious opposition from those who, whilst seeking to monopolise the title of "the Friends of Ireland," have again and again proved themselves her worst and most mischievous enemies.

The acquisition of their holdings by the tenants under Lord Ashbourne's Act would appear to have rendered such tenants more averse than heretofore to the tactics of the National League, and to

the agitation which has been so useful to the party of Home Rule. That tenants should become contented through the agency of a Conservative Government could, of course, be only one degree less hateful to the Gladstonian-Parnellite mind than that such a Government should acquire popularity by means of their judicious legislation. The thing must be stopped at all hazards. And if this could not be done by open and fair attack upon the position of the Government, let it be done by means of some of those refinements of strategic art which are so well known to the "old parliamentary hand." Let the issues be confused; let it appear as if the Government was substituting this proposed extension for some other measure still more favourable to the rent-paying Irishmen, and at any rate by hook or by crook, by any device which can be invented by human ingenuity, let a spoke be put in the wheel of that direst of all possible calamities — the popularity of a Tory Government. It may be, however, that the leaders of the Opposition have in this case over-shot their mark. So evidently thought the independent "Gladstonians" who refused to follow Mr Gladstone in his opposition to the bill. The Irish tenant knows his own interest tolerably well, and will not be slow to detect where lies his real advantage. He has certainly been taught by Mr Gladstone that the easiest road to prosperity for the Irish tenant is the robbery of his landlord, and would probably have no great objection to a further experiment in the same direction upon the question of arrears. But a more substantial and permanent advantage is to be derived from the acquisition of his holding

under the tempting provisions of Lord Ashbourne's Act, and it is possible that the tenant may consider no gratitude to be due to the party which, for its own political ends, strives to throw obstacles in the way of such an acquisition. Mr Dillon, indeed, in his anxiety to defeat the Government and the bill, and in his desire to invoke against both the caution of the British tax-payer, did not scruple to hint at a policy of repudiation which might hereafter be preached, and the difficulty which might in consequence be experienced in obtaining the punctual payment of their "instalments" by the purchasing tenants. It is easy to understand that as long as agitation can be made to pay, a basis will always be found for the formation of a National party, whether to preach "repudiation" or "separation" from Great Britain, or any other doctrine which may be able to supply the *raison d'être* of

such an agitation. But the best counteracting power to such a party and its unpatriotic and mischievous founders will be found in the large numbers of tenants from whom the desire to agitate will have been taken by the satisfying of their legitimate aspirations. When multitudes of tenants have become landlords, there will be less charm to their ears in the advocacy of the "abolition of landlordism." And when it becomes apparent that prosperity is best to be obtained by turning a deaf ear to the selfish politician and professional agitator, who has so long been the curse of Ireland, we may hope that his trade will at length fail and become unprofitable, and that the wise and generous policy towards Ireland which has been adopted and pursued by the present Government may bring a rich reward at once to its patriotic originators and to the people on whose behalf it has been supported and maintained.

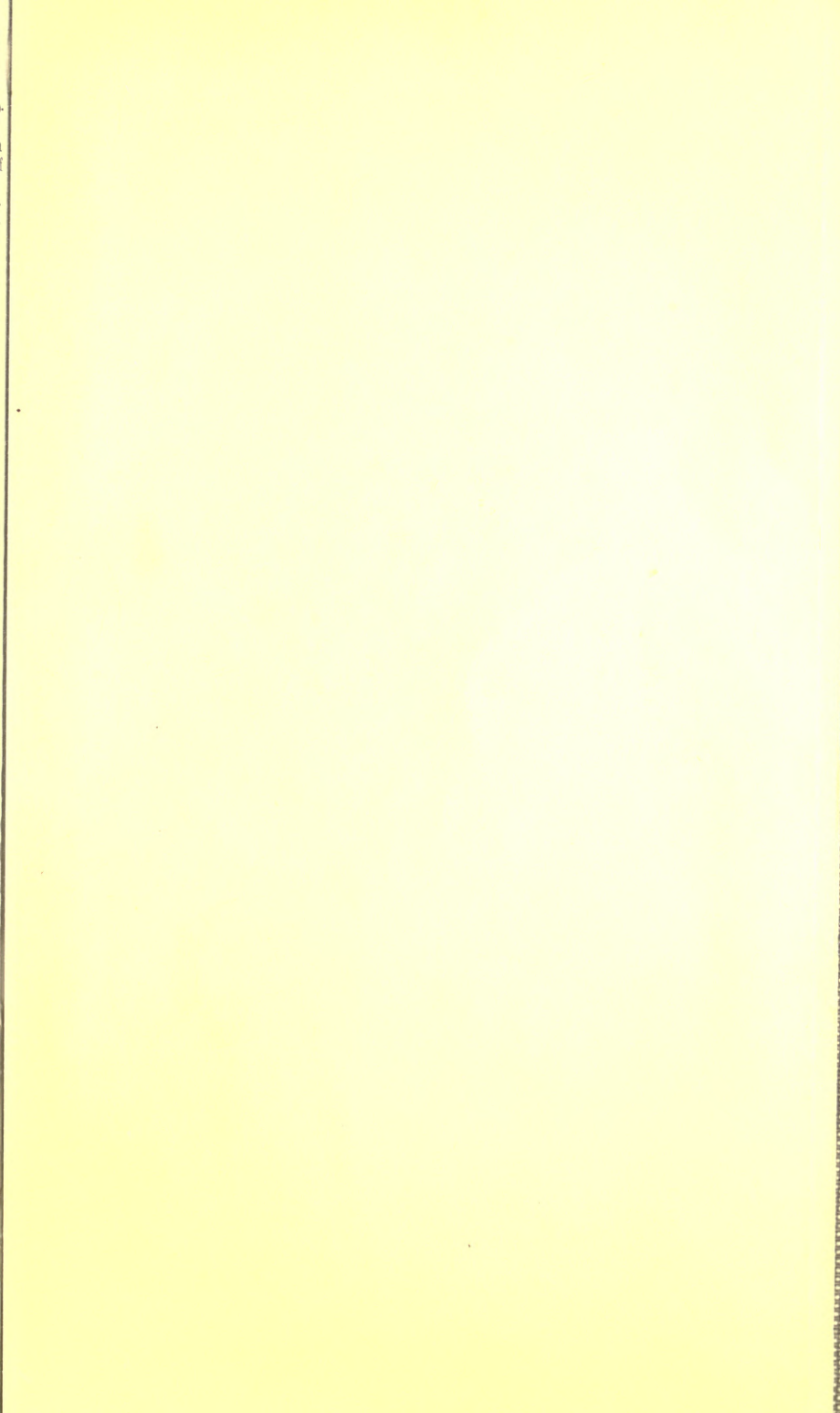
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