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JULY—DECEMBER 1880.



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BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

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DR WORTLE'S SCHOOL.—PART III.

CHAPTER VII.—ROBERT LEFROY.

FERDINAND LEFROY, the man who had in truth been the woman's husband, had, during that one interview which had taken place between him and the man who had married his wife, on his return to St Louis, declared that her brother Robert was dead. But so had Robert, when Peacocke encountered him down in Texas, declared that Ferdinand was dead. But Peacocke knew that no word of truth could be expected from the mouths of either of them. But seeing is believing. He had seen Ferdinand alive at St Louis after his marriage, and by seeing him, had been driven away from his home, back to his old country. Now he also saw this other man, and was aware that his secret was no longer in his own keeping.

"Yes, I know you now. Why, when I saw you last, did you tell me that your brother was dead? Why did you bring so great an injury on your sister-in-law?"

"I never told you anything of the kind."

"As God is above us you told me so."

"I don't know anything about that, my friend. Maybe I was cut. I used to be drinking a good deal them days. Maybe I didn't say anything of the kind,—only it suited you to go back and tell her so. Anyways I disremember it altogether. Anyways he wasn't dead. And I ain't dead now."

"I can see that."

"And I ain't drunk now. But I am not quite so well off as a fellow would wish to be. Can you get me breakfast?"

"Yes, I can get you breakfast," he said, after pausing for a while. Then he rang the bell and told the girl to bring some breakfast for the gentleman as soon as possible, into the room in which they were sitting. This was in a little library in which he was in the habit of studying and going through lessons with the boys. He had brought the man here so that his wife might not come across him. As soon as the order was given, he

ran up-stairs to her room, to save her from coming down.

"A man;—what man?" she asked.

"Robert Lefroy. I must go to him at once. Bear yourself well and boldly, my darling. It is he, certainly. I know nothing yet of what he may have to say, but it will be well that you should avoid him if possible. When I have heard anything, I will tell you all." Then he hurried down and found the man examining the book-shelves.

"You have got yourself up pretty tidy again, Peacocke," said Lefroy.

"Pretty well."

"The old game, I suppose. Teaching the young idea. Is this what you call a college, now, in your country?"

"It is a school."

"And you're one of the masters."

"I am the second master."

"It ain't as good, I reckon, as the Missouri College."

"It's not so large, certainly."

"What's the screw?" he said.

"The payment, you mean. It can hardly serve us now to go into matters such as that. What is it that has brought you here, Lefroy?"

"Well, a big ship, an uncommonly bad sort of railway car, and the ricketiest little buggy that ever a man trusted his life to. Them's what's brought me here."

"I suppose you have something to say, or you would not have come," said Peacocke.

"Yes, I've a good deal to say of one kind or another. But here's the breakfast, and I'm wellnigh starved. What, cold meat! I'm darned if I can eat cold meat. Haven't you got anything hot, my dear?" Then it was explained to him that hot meat was not to be had, unless he would choose to wait, to have some lengthened cooking accomplished. To this,

however, he objected, and then the girl left the room.

"I've a good many things to say of one kind or another," he continued. "It's difficult to say, Peacocke, how you and I stand with each other."

"I do not know that we stand with each other at all, as you call it."

"I mean as to relationship. Are you my brother-in-law, or are you not?" This was a question which in very truth the school-master found it hard to answer. He did not answer it at all, but remained silent. "Are you my brother-in-law, or are you not? You call her Mrs Peacocke, eh?"

"Yes, I call her Mrs Peacocke."

"And she is here living with you?"

"Yes, she is here."

"Had she not better come down and see me? She is my sister-in-law, anyway."

"No," said Mr Peacocke; "I think, on the whole, that she had better not come down and see you."

"You don't mean to say she isn't my sister-in-law? She's that, whatever else she is. She's that, whatever name she goes by. If Ferdinand had been ever so much dead, and that marriage at St Louis had been ever so good, still she'd been my sister-in-law."

"Not a doubt about it," said Mr Peacocke. "But still, under all the circumstances, she had better not see you."

"Well, that's a queer beginning, anyway. But perhaps you'll come round by-and-by. She goes by Mrs Peacocke?"

"She is regarded as my wife," said the husband, feeling himself to become more and more indignant at every word, but knowing at the same time how necessary it was that he should keep his indignation hidden.

"Whether true or false?" asked the brother-in-law.

"I will answer no such question as that."

"You ain't very well disposed to answer any question, as far as I can see. But I shall have to make you answer one or two before I've done with you. There's a Doctor here, isn't there, as this school belongs to?"

"Yes, there is. It belongs to Dr Wortle."

"It's him these boys are sent to?"

"Yes, he is the master; I am only his assistant."

"It's him they comes to for education, and morals, and religion?"

"Quite so."

"And he knows, no doubt, all about you and my sister-in-law;—how you came and married her when she was another man's wife, and took her away when you knew as that other man was alive and kicking?" Mr Peacocke, when these questions were put to him, remained silent, because literally he did not know how to answer them. He was quite prepared to take his position as he found it. He had told himself before this dreadful man had appeared, that the truth must be made known at Bowick, and that he and his wife must pack up and flit. It was not that the man could bring upon him any greater evil than he had anticipated. But the questions which were asked him were in themselves so bitter! The man, no doubt, was his wife's brother-in-law. He could not turn him out of the house as he would a stranger, had a stranger come there asking such questions without any claim of family. Abominable as the man was to him, still he was there with a certain amount of right upon his side.

"I think," said he, "that ques-

tions such as those you've asked can be of no service to you. To me they are intended only to be injurious."

"They're as a preface to what is to come," said Robert Lefroy, with an impudent leer upon his face. "The questions, no doubt, are disagreeable enough. She ain't your wife no more than she's mine. You've no business with her; and that you knew when you took her away from St Louis. You may, or you mayn't, have been fooled by some one down in Texas when you went back and married her in all that hurry. But you knew what you were doing well enough when you took her away. You won't dare to tell me that you hadn't seen Ferdinand when you two mizzled off from the College?" Then he paused, waiting again for a reply.

"As I told you before," he said, "no further conversation on the subject can be of avail. It does not suit me to be cross-examined as to what I knew or what I did not know. If you have anything for me to hear, you can say it. If you have anything to tell to others, go and tell it to them."

"That's just it," said Lefroy.

"Then go and tell it."

"You're in a terrible hurry, Mister Peacocke. I don't want to drop in and spoil your little game. You're making money of your little game. I can help you as to carrying on your little game, better than you do at present. I don't want to blow upon you. But as you're making money out of it, I'd like to make a little too. I am precious hard up,—I am."

"You will make no money of me," said the other.

"A little will go a long way with me; and, remember, I have got tidings now which are worth paying for."

"What tidings?"

"If they're worth paying for, it's not likely that you are going to get them for nothing."

"Look here, Colonel Lefroy; whatever you may have to say about me will certainly not be prevented by my paying you money. Though you might be able to ruin me to-morrow I would not give you a dollar to save myself."

"But her," said Lefroy, pointing as it were up-stairs, with his thumb over his shoulder.

"Nor her," said Peacocke.

"You don't care very much about her, then?"

"How much I may care I shall not trouble myself to explain to you. I certainly shall not endeavour to serve her after that fashion. I begin to understand why you have come, and can only beg you to believe that you have come in vain."

Lefroy turned to his food, which he had not yet finished, while his companion sat silent at the window, trying to arrange in his mind the circumstances of the moment as best he might. He declared to himself that had the man come but one day later, his coming would have been matter of no moment. The story, the entire story would then have been told to the Doctor, and the brother-in-law, with all his malice, could have added nothing to the truth. But now it seemed as though there would be a race which should tell the story first. Now the Doctor would, no doubt, be led to feel that the narration was made because it could no longer be kept back. Should this man be with the Doctor first, and should the story be told as he would tell it, then it would be impossible for Mr Peacocke, in acknowledging the truth of it all, to bring his friend's mind back to the condition in which it would have been had this intruder not been in the way. And yet he could not

make a race of it with the man. He could not rush across, and all but out of breath with his energy, begin his narration while Lefroy was there knocking at the door. There would be an absence of dignity in such a mode of proceeding, which alone was sufficient to deter him. He had fixed an hour already with the Doctor. He had said that he would be there in the house at a certain time. Let the man do what he would, he would keep exactly to his purpose, unless the Doctor should seek an earlier interview. He would, in no tittle, be turned from his purpose by the unfortunate coming of this wretched man. "Well!" said Lefroy, as soon as he had eaten his last mouthful.

"I have nothing to say to you," said Peacocke.

"Nothing to say?"

"Not a word."

"Well, that's queer. I should have thought there'd have been a many words. I've got a lot to say to somebody, and mean to say it, precious soon too. Is there any ho-tel here, where I can put this horse up? I suppose you haven't got stables of your own? I wonder if the Doctor would give me accommodation?"

"I haven't got a stable, and the Doctor certainly will not give you accommodation. There is a public-house less than a quarter of a mile further on, which no doubt your driver knows very well. You had better go there yourself, because, after what has taken place, I am bound to tell you that you will not be admitted here."

"Not admitted?"

"No. You must leave this house, and will not be admitted into it again as long as I live in it."

"The Doctor will admit me."

"Very likely. I, at any rate,

shall do nothing to dissuade him. If you go down to the road, you'll see the gate leading up to his house. I think you'll find that he is down-stairs by this time."

"You take it very cool, Peacocke."

"I only tell you the truth. With you I will have nothing more to do. You have a story which you wish to tell to Dr Wortle. Go and tell it to him."

"I can tell it to all the world," said Lefroy.

"Go and tell it to all the world."

"And I ain't to see my sister?"

"No; you will not see your sister-in-law here. Why should she wish to see one who has only injured her?"

"I ain't injured her;—at any rate not as yet. I ain't done nothing;—not as yet. I've been as dark as the grave;—as yet. Let her come down, and you go away for a moment, and let us see if we can't settle it."

"There is nothing for you to settle. Nothing that you can do, nothing that you can say, will influence either her or me. If you have anything to tell, go and tell it."

"Why should you smash up everything in that way, Peacocke? You're comfortable here; why not remain so? I don't want to hurt you. I want to help you;—and I can. Three hundred dollars wouldn't be much to you. You were always a fellow as had a little money by you."

"If this box were full of gold," said the schoolmaster, laying his hand upon a black desk which stood on the table, "I would not give you one cent to induce you to hold your tongue for ever. I would not condescend even to ask it of you as a favour. You think that you can disturb our happiness by telling what you know of us to Dr Wortle. Go and try."

Mr Peacocke's manner was so firm that the other man began to doubt whether in truth he had a secret to tell. Could it be possible that Dr Wortle knew it all, and that the neighbours knew it all, and that, in spite of what had happened, the position of the man and of the woman was accepted among them? They certainly were not man and wife, and yet they were living together as such. Could such a one as this Dr Wortle know that it was so? He, when he had spoken of the purposes for which the boys were sent there, asking whether they were not sent for education, for morals and religion, had understood much of the Doctor's position. He had known the peculiar value of his secret. He had been aware that a schoolmaster with a wife to whom he was not in truth married must be out of place in an English seminary such as this. But yet he now began to doubt. "I am to be turned out, then?" he asked.

"Yes, indeed, Colonel Lefroy. The sooner you go the better."

"That's a pretty sort of welcome to your wife's brother-in-law, who has just come over all the way from Mexico to see her."

"To get what he can out of her by his unwelcome presence," said Peacocke. "Here you can get nothing. Go and do your worst. If you remain much longer I shall send for the policeman to remove you."

"You will."

"Yes, I shall. My time is not my own, and I cannot go over to my work leaving you in my house. You have nothing to get by my friendship. Go and see what you can do as my enemy."

"I will," said the Colonel, getting up from his chair; "I will. If I'm to be treated in this way it shall not be for nothing. I have

offered you the right hand of an affectionate brother-in-law."

"Bosh," said Mr Peacocke.

"And you tell me that I am an enemy. Very well; I will be an enemy. I could have put you altogether on your legs, but I'll leave you without an inch of ground to stand upon. You see if I don't." Then he put his hat on his head, and stalked out of the house, down the road towards the gate.

Mr Peacocke, when he was left alone, remained in the room collecting his thoughts, and then went up-stairs to his wife.

"Has he gone?" she asked.

"Yes, he has gone."

"And what has he said?"

"He has asked for money,—to hold his tongue."

"Have you given him any?"

"Not a cent. I have given him nothing but hard words. I have bade him go and do his worst. To be at the mercy of such a man as that would be worse for you and for me than anything that fortune has sent us even yet."

"Did he want to see me?"

"Yes; but I refused. Was it not better?"

"Yes; certainly, if you think so. What could I have said to him? Certainly it was better. His presence would have half killed me. But what will he do, Henry?"

"He will tell it all to everybody that he sees."

"Oh, my darling!"

"What matter though he tells it at the town-cross? It would have been told to-day by myself."

"But only to one."

"It would have been the same. For any purpose of concealment it would have been the same. I have got to hate the concealment. What have we done but clung together as a man and woman should who have loved each other, and have had a right to love? What have we done of which we should be ashamed? Let it be told. Let it all be known. Have you not been good and pure? Have not I been true to you? Bear up your courage, and let the man do his worst. Not to save even you would I cringe before such a man as that. And were I to do so, I should save you from nothing."

CHAPTER VIII.—THE STORY IS TOLD.

During the whole of that morning the Doctor did not come into the school. The school hours lasted from half-past nine to twelve, during a portion of which time it was his practice to be there. But sometimes, on a Saturday, he would be absent, when it was understood generally that he was preparing his sermon for the Sunday. Such, no doubt, might be the case now; but there was a feeling among the boys that he was kept away by some other reason. It was known that during the hour of morning school Mr Peacocke had been occupied with that uncouth stranger, and

some of the boys might have observed that the uncouth stranger had not taken himself altogether away from the premises. There was at any rate a general feeling that the uncouth stranger had something to do with the Doctor's absence.

Mr Peacocke did his best to go on with the work as though nothing had occurred to disturb the usual tenor of his way, and as far as the boys were aware he succeeded. He was just as clear about his Greek verbs, just as incisive about that passage of *Cæsar*, as he would have been had Colonel Lefroy re-

mained on the other side of the water. But during the whole time he was exercising his mind in that painful process of thinking of two things at once. He was determined that Cæsar should be uppermost; but it may be doubted whether he succeeded. At that very moment Colonel Lefroy might be telling the Doctor that his Ella was in truth the wife of another man. At that moment the Doctor might be deciding in his anger that the sinful and deceitful man should no longer be "officer of his." The hour was too important to him to leave his mind at his own disposal. Nevertheless he did his best. "Clifford, junior," he said, "I shall never make you understand what Cæsar says here or elsewhere if you do not give your entire mind to Cæsar."

"I do give my entire mind to Cæsar," said Clifford, junior.

"Very well; now go on and try again. But remember that Cæsar wants all your mind." As he said this he was revolving in his own mind how he would face the Doctor when the Doctor should look at him in his wrath. If the Doctor were in any degree harsh with him, he would hold his own against the Doctor as far as the personal contest might go. At twelve the boys went out for an hour before their dinner, and Lord Carstairs asked him to play a game of rackets.

"Not to-day, my Lord," he said.

"Is anything wrong with you?"

"Yes, something is very wrong."

They had strolled out of the building, and were walking up and down the gravel terrace in front when this was said.

"I knew something was wrong, because you called me my Lord."

"Yes, something is so wrong as to alter for me all the ordinary ways of my life. But I wasn't thinking of it. It came by accident,—just because I am so troubled."

"What is it?"

"There has been a man here,—a man whom I knew in America."

"An enemy?"

"Yes,—an enemy. One who is anxious to do me all the injury he can."

"Are you in his power, Mr Peacocke?"

"No, thank God, not that. I am in no man's power. He cannot do me any material harm. Anything which may happen would have happened whether he had come or not. But I am unhappy."

"I wish I knew."

"So do I,—with all my heart. I wish you knew; I wish you knew. I would that all the world knew. But we shall live through it, no doubt. And if we do not, what matter. 'Nil conscire sibi,—nulla pallescere culpa.' That is all that is necessary to a man. I have done nothing of which I repent;—nothing that I would not do again; nothing of which I am ashamed to speak as far as the judgment of other men is concerned. Go, now. They are making up sides for cricket. Perhaps I can tell you more before the evening is over."

Both Mr and Mrs Peacocke were accustomed to dine with the boys at one, when Carstairs, being a private pupil, only had his lunch. But on this occasion she did not come into the dining-room. "I don't think I can to-day," she said, when he bade her to take courage, and not be altered more than she could help, in her outward carriage, by the misery of her present circumstances. "I could not eat if I were there, and then they would look at me."

"If it be so, do not attempt it. There is no necessity. What I mean is, that the less one shrinks the less will be the suffering. It is the man who shivers on the brink that is cold, and not he who

plunges into the water. If it were over,—if the first brunt of it were over, I could find means to comfort you.”

He went through the dinner, as he had done the *Cæsar*, eating the roast mutton and the baked potatoes, and the great plateful of currant-pie that was brought to him. He was fed and nourished, no doubt, but it may be doubtful whether he knew much of the flavour of what he ate. But before the dinner was quite ended, before he had said the grace which it was always his duty to pronounce, there came a message to him from the rectory. “The Doctor would be glad to see him as soon as dinner was done. He waited very calmly till the proper moment should come for the grace, and then, very calmly, he took his way over to the house. He was certain now that Lefroy had been with the Doctor, because he was sent for considerably before the time fixed for the interview.

It was his chief resolve to hold his own before the Doctor. The Doctor, who could read a character well, had so read that of Mr Peacocke’s as to have been aware from the first that no censure, no fault-finding, would be possible if the connection was to be maintained. Other ushers, other curates, he had occasionally scolded. He had been very careful never even to seem to scold Mr Peacocke. Mr Peacocke had been aware of it too,—aware that he could not endure it, and aware also that the Doctor avoided any attempt at it. He had known that, as a consequence of this, he was bound to be more than ordinarily prompt in the performance of all his duties. The man who will not endure censure has to take care that he does not deserve it. Such had been this man’s struggle, and it had been altogether successful. Each of the two understood the

other, and each respected the other. Now their position must be changed. It was hardly possible, Mr Peacocke thought, as he entered the house, that he should not be rebuked with grave severity, and quite out of the question that he should bear any rebuke at all.

The library at the rectory was a spacious and handsome room, in the centre of which stood a large writing-table, at which the Doctor was accustomed to sit when he was at work,—facing the door, with a bow-window at his right hand. But he rarely remained there when any one was summoned into the room, unless some one were summoned with whom he meant to deal in a spirit of severity. Mr Peacocke would be there perhaps three or four times a-week, and the Doctor would always get up from his chair and stand, or seat himself elsewhere in the room, and would probably move about with vivacity, being a fidgety man of quick motions, who sometimes seemed as though he could not hold his own body still for a moment. But now when Mr Peacocke entered the room he did not leave his place at the table. “Would you take a chair?” he said; “there is something that we must talk about.”

“Colonel Lefroy has been with you, I take it.”

“A man calling himself by that name has been here. Will you not take a chair?”

“I do not know that it will be necessary. What he has told you,—what I suppose he has told you,—is true.”

“You had better at any rate take a chair. I do not believe that what he has told me is true.”

“But it is.”

“I do not believe that what he has told me is true. Some of it cannot, I think, be true. Much of it is not so,—unless I am more de-

ceived in you than I ever was in any man. At any rate sit down." Then the schoolmaster did sit down. "He has made you out to be a perjured, wilful, cruel big-amist."

"I have not been such," said Peacocke, rising from his chair.

"One who has been willing to sacrifice a woman to his passion."

"No;—no."

"Who deceived her by false witness."

"Never."

"And who has now refused to allow her to see her own husband's brother, lest she should learn the truth."

"She is there,—at any rate for you to see."

"Therefore the man is a liar. A long story has to be told, as to which at present I can only guess what may be the nature. I presume the story will be the same as that you would have told had the man never come here."

"Exactly the same, Dr Wortle."

"Therefore you will own that I am right in asking you to sit down. The story may be very long,—that is, if you mean to tell it."

"I do,—and did. I was wrong from the first in supposing that the nature of my marriage need be of no concern to others, but to herself and to me."

"Yes,—Mr Peacocke; yes. We are, all of us, joined together too closely to admit of isolation such as that." There was something in this which grated against the schoolmaster's pride, though nothing had been said as to which he did not know that much harder things must meet his ears before the matter could be brought to an end between him and the Doctor. The "Mister" had been prefixed to his name, which had been omitted for the last three or four months in the friendly intercourse

which had taken place between them;—and then, though it had been done in the form of agreeing with what he himself had said, the Doctor had made his first complaint by declaring that no man had a right to regard his own moral life as isolated from the lives of others around him. It was as much as to declare at once that he had been wrong in bringing this woman to Bowick, and calling her Mrs Peacocke. He had said as much himself, but that did not make the censure lighter when it came to him from the mouth of the Doctor. "But come," said the Doctor, getting up from his seat at the table, and throwing himself into an easy-chair, so as to mitigate the austerity of the position; "let us hear the true story. So big a liar as that American gentleman probably never put his foot in this room before."

Then Mr Peacocke told the story, beginning with all those incidents of the woman's life which had seemed to be so cruel both to him and to others at St Louis before he had been in any degree intimate with her. Then came the departure of the two men, and the necessity for pecuniary assistance, which Mr Peacocke now passed over lightly, saying nothing specially of the assistance which he himself had rendered. "And she was left quite alone?" asked the Doctor.

"Quite alone."

"And for how long?"

"Eighteen months had passed before we heard any tidings. Then there came news that Colonel Lefroy was dead."

"The husband?"

"We did not know which. They were both Colonels."

"And then?"

"Did he tell you that I went down into Mexico?"

"Never mind what he told me.

All that he told me were lies. What you tell me I shall believe. But tell me everything."

There was a tone of complete authority in the Doctor's voice, but mixed with this there was a kindness which made the schoolmaster determined that he would tell everything as far as he knew how. "When I heard that one of them was dead, I went away down to the borders of Texas, in order that I might learn the truth."

"Did she know that you were going?"

"Yes;—I told her the day I started."

"And you told her why?"

"That I might find out whether her husband were still alive."

"But——" The Doctor hesitated as he asked the next question. He knew, however, that it had to be asked, and went on with it. "Did she know that you loved her?" To this the other made no immediate answer. The Doctor was a man who, in such a matter, was intelligent enough, and he therefore put his question in another shape. "Had you told her that you loved her?"

"Never,—while I thought that other man was living."

"She must have guessed it," said the Doctor.

"She might guess what she pleased. I told her that I was going, and I went."

"And how was it, then?"

"I went, and after a time I came across the very man who is here now, this Robert Lefroy. I met him and questioned him, and he told me that his brother had been killed while fighting. It was a lie."

"Altogether a lie?" asked the Doctor.

"How altogether?"

"He might have been wounded and given over for dead. The

brother might have thought him to be dead."

"I do not think so. I believe it to have been a plot in order that the man might get rid of his wife. But I believed it. Then I went back to St Louis,—and we were married."

"You thought there was no obstacle but what you might become man and wife legally?"

"I thought she was a widow."

"There was no further delay?"

"Very little. Why should there have been delay?"

"I only ask."

"She had suffered enough, and I had waited long enough."

"She owed you a great deal," said the Doctor.

"It was not a case of owing," said Mr Peacocke. "At least I think not. I think she had learnt to love me as I had learnt to love her."

"And how did it go with you then?"

"Very well,—for some months. There was nothing to mar our happiness,—till one day he came and made his way into our presence."

"The husband?"

"Yes; the husband, Ferdinand Lefroy, the elder brother;—he of whom I had been told that he was dead. He was there standing before us, talking to us,—half drunk, but still well knowing what he was doing."

"Why had he come?"

"In want of money, I suppose,—as this other one has come here."

"Did he ask for money?"

"I do not think he did then, though he spoke of his poor condition. But on the next day he went away. We heard that he had taken the steamer down the river for New Orleans. We have never heard more of him from that day to this."

"Can you imagine what caused conduct such as that?"

"I think money was given to him that night to go; but if so, I do not know by whom. I gave him none. During the next day or two I found that many in St Louis knew that he had been there."

"They knew then that you——"

"They knew that my wife was not my wife. That is what you mean to ask?"

The Doctor nodded his head.

"Yes, they knew that."

"And what then?"

"Word was brought to me that she and I must part if I chose to keep my place at the College."

"That you must disown her?"

"The President told me that it would be better that she should go elsewhere. How could I send her from me?"

"No, indeed;—but as to the facts?"

"You know them all pretty well now. I could not send her from me. Nor could I go and leave her. Had we been separated then, because of the law or because of religion, the burden, the misery, the desolation, would all have been upon her."

"I would have clung to her, let the law say what it might,"

said the Doctor, rising from his chair.

"You would?"

"I would;—and I think that I could have reconciled it to my God. But I might have been wrong," he added; "I might have been wrong. I only say what I should have done."

"It was what I did."

"Exactly; exactly. We are both sinners. Both might have been wrong. Then you brought her over here, and I suppose I know the rest?"

"You know everything now," said Mr Peacocke.

"And believe every word I have heard. Let me say that, if that may be any consolation to you. Of my friendship you may remain assured. Whether you can remain here is another question."

"We are prepared to go."

"You cannot expect that I should have thought it all out during the hearing of the story. There is much to be considered;—very much. I can only say this, as between man and man, that no man ever sympathised with another more warmly than I do with you. You had better let me have till Monday to think about it."

CHAPTER IX.—MRS WORTLE AND MR PUDDICOMBE.

In this way nothing was said at the first telling of the story to decide the fate of the schoolmaster and of the lady whom we shall still call his wife. There certainly had been no horror displayed by the Doctor. "Whether you can remain here is another question." The Doctor, during the whole interview, had said nothing harder than that. Mr Peacocke, as he left the rectory, did feel that the Doctor had been very good to him. There had not only been no horror, but an expression of

the kindest sympathy. And as to the going, that was left in doubt. He himself felt that he ought to go;—but it would have been so very sad to have to go without a friend left with whom he could consult as to his future condition!

"He has been very kind, then?" said Mrs Peacocke to her husband when he related to her the particulars of the interview.

"Very kind."

"And he did not reproach you?"

"Not a word."

"Nor me?"

"He declared that had it been he who was in question he would have clung to you for ever and ever."

"Did he? Then will he leave us here?"

"That does not follow. I should think not. He will know that others must know it. Your brother-in-law will not tell him only. Lefroy, when he finds that he can get no money here, from sheer revenge will tell the story everywhere. When he left the rectory, he was probably as angry with the Doctor as he is with me. He will do all the harm that he can to all of us."

"We must go, then?"

"I should think so. Your position here would be insupportable even if it could be permitted. You may be sure of this;—everybody will know it."

"What do I care for everybody?" she said. "It is not that I am ashamed of myself."

"No, dearest; nor am I,—ashamed of myself or of you. But there will be bitter words, and bitter words will produce bitter looks and scant respect. How would it be with you if the boys looked at you as though they thought ill of you?"

"They would not,—oh, they would not!"

"Or the servants,—if they reviled you?"

"Could it come to that?"

"It must not come to that. But it is as the Doctor said himself just now;—a man cannot isolate the morals, the manners, the ways of his life from the morals of others. Men, if they live together, must live together by certain laws."

"Then there can be no hope for us."

"None that I can see, as far as Bowick is concerned. We are too closely joined in our work with other people. There is not a boy

here with whose father and mother and sisters we are not more or less connected. When I was preaching in the church, there was not one in the parish with whom I was not connected. Would it do, do you think, for a priest to preach against drunkenness, whilst he himself was a noted drunkard?"

"Are we like that?"

"It is not what the drunken priest might think of himself, but what others might think of him. It would not be with us the position which we know that we hold together, but that which others would think it to be. If I were in Dr Wortle's case, and another were to me as I am to him, I should bid him go."

"You would turn him away from you; him and his—wife?"

"I should. My first duty would be to my parish and to my school. If I could befriend him otherwise I would do so;—and that is what I expect from Dr Wortle. We shall have to go, and I shall be forced to approve of our dismissal."

In this way Mr Peacocke came definitely and clearly to a conclusion in his own mind. But it was very different with Dr Wortle. The story so disturbed him, that during the whole of that afternoon he did not attempt to turn his mind to any other subject. He even went so far as to send over to Mr Puddicombe and asked for some assistance for the afternoon service on the following day. He was too unwell, he said, to preach himself, and the one curate would have the two entire services unless Mr Puddicombe could help him. Could Mr Puddicombe come himself and see him on the Sunday afternoon? This note he sent away by a messenger, who came back with a reply, saying that Mr Puddicombe would himself preach in

the afternoon, and would afterwards call in at the rectory.

For an hour or two before his dinner, the Doctor went out on horseback, and roamed about among the lanes, endeavouring to make up his mind. He was hitherto altogether at a loss as to what he should do in this present uncomfortable emergency. He could not bring his conscience and his inclination to come square together. And even when he counselled himself to yield to his conscience, his very conscience, — a second conscience, as it were, — revolted against the first. His first conscience told him that he owed a primary duty to his parish, a second duty to his school, and a third to his wife and daughter. In the performance of all these duties he would be bound to rid himself of Mr Peacocke. But then there came that other conscience, telling him that the man had been more "sinned against than sinning," — that common humanity required him to stand by a man who had suffered so much, and had suffered so unworthily. Then this second conscience went on to remind him that the man was pre-eminently fit for the duties which he had undertaken, — that the man was a God-fearing, moral, and especially intellectual assistant in his school, — that were he to lose him he could not hope to find any one that would be his equal, or at all approaching to him in capacity. This second conscience went further, and assured him that the man's excellence as a schoolmaster was even increased by the peculiarity of his position. Do we not all know that if a man be under a cloud the very cloud will make him more attentive to his duties than another? If a man, for the wages which he receives, can give to his employer high character as well as work, he

will think that he may lighten his work because of his character. And as to this man, who was the very phoenix of school assistants, there would really be nothing amiss with his character if only this piteous incident as to his wife were unknown. In this way his second conscience almost got the better of the first.

But then it would be known. It would be impossible that it should not be known. He had already made up his mind to tell Mr Puddicombe, absolutely not daring to decide in such an emergency without consulting some friend. Mr Puddicombe would hold his peace if he were to promise to do so. Certainly he might be trusted to do that. But others would know it; the Bishop would know it; Mrs Stantiloup would know it. That man, of course, would take care that all Broughton, with its close full of cathedral clergymen, would know it. When Mrs Stantiloup should know it there would not be a boy's parent through all the school who would not know it. If he kept the man he must keep him resolving that all the world should know that he kept him, that all the world should know of what nature was the married life of the assistant in whom he trusted. And he must be prepared to face all the world, confiding in the uprightness and the humanity of his purpose.

In such case he must say something of this kind to all the world: "I know that they are not married. I know that their condition of life is opposed to the law of God and man. I know that she bears a name that is not, in truth, her own; but I think that the circumstances in this case are so strange, so peculiar, that they excuse a disregard even of the law of God and man." Had he courage enough

for this? And if the courage were there, was he high enough and powerful enough to carry out such a purpose? Could he beat down the Mrs Stantiloups? And, indeed, could he beat down the Bishop and the Bishop's phalanx;—for he knew that the Bishop and the Bishop's phalanx would be against him? They could not touch him in his living, because Mr Peacocke would not be concerned in the services of the church; but would not his school melt away to nothing in his hands, if he were to attempt to carry it on after this fashion? And then would he not have destroyed himself without advantage to the man whom he was anxious to assist?

To only one point did he make up his mind certainly during that ride. Before he slept that night he would tell the whole story to his wife. He had at first thought that he would conceal it from her. It was his rule of life to act so entirely on his own will, that he rarely consulted her on matters of any importance. As it was, he could not endure the responsibility of acting by himself. People would say of him that he had subjected his wife to contamination, and had done so without giving her any choice in the matter. So he resolved that he would tell his wife.

"Not married," said Mrs Wortle, when she heard the story.

"Married; yes. They were married. It was not their fault that the marriage was nothing. What was he to do when he heard that they had been deceived in this way?"

"Not married properly! Poor woman!"

"Yes, indeed. What should I have done if such had happened to me when we had been six months married?"

"It couldn't have been."

"Why not to you as well as to another?"

"I was only a young girl."

"But if you had been a widow?"

"Don't, my dear; don't! It wouldn't have been possible."

"But you pity her?"

"Oh yes."

"And you see that a great misfortune has fallen upon her, which she could not help?"

"Not till she knew it," said the wife who had been married quite properly.

"And what then? What should she have done then?"

"Gone," said the wife, who had no doubt as to the comfort, the beauty, the perfect security of her own position.

"Gone?"

"Gone away at once."

"Whither should she go? Who would have taken her by the hand? Who would have supported her? Would you have had her lay herself down in the first gutter and die?"

"Better that than what she did do," said Mrs Wortle.

"Then, by all the faith I have in Christ, I think you are hard upon her. Do you think what it is to have to go out and live alone;—to have to look for your bread in desolation?"

"I have never been tried, my dear," said she, clinging close to him. "I have never had anything but what was good."

"Ought we not to be kind to one to whom Fortune has been so unkind?"

"If we can do so without sin."

"Sin! I despise the fear of sin which makes us think that its contact will soil us. Her sin, if it be sin, is so near akin to virtue, that I doubt whether we should not learn of her rather than avoid her."

"A woman should not live with a man unless she be his wife." Mrs

Wortle said this with more of obstinacy than he had expected.

"She was his wife, as far as she knew."

"But when she knew that it was not so any longer,—then she should have left him."

"And have starved?"

"I suppose she might have taken bread from him."

"You think, then, that she should go away from here?"

"Do not you think so? What will Mrs Stantiloup say?"

"And I am to turn them out into the cold because of a virago such as she is? You would have no more charity than that?"

"Oh, Jeffrey! what would the Bishop say?"

"Cannot you get beyond Mrs Stantiloup and beyond the Bishop, and think what Justice demands?"

"The boys would all be taken away. If you had a son, would you send him where there was a schoolmaster living,—living——. Oh, you wouldn't."

It was very clear to the Doctor that his wife's mind was made up on the subject; and yet there was no softer-hearted woman than Mrs Wortle anywhere in the diocese, or one less likely to be severe upon a neighbour. Not only was she a kindly, gentle woman, but she was one who had always been willing to take her husband's opinion on all questions of right and wrong. She, however, was decided that they must go.

On the next morning, after service, which the schoolmaster did not attend, the Doctor saw Mr Peacocke, and declared his intention of telling the story to Mr Puddicombe. "If you bid me hold my tongue," he said, "I will do so. But it will be better that I should consult another clergyman. He is a man who can keep a secret." Then Mr Peacocke gave him full

authority to tell everything to Mr Puddicombe. He declared that the Doctor might tell the story to whom he would. Everybody might know it now. He had, he said, quite made up his mind about that. What was the good of affecting secrecy when this man Lefroy was in the country?

In the afternoon, after service, Mr Puddicombe came up to the house, and heard it all. He was a dry, thin, apparently unsympathetic man, but just withal, and by no means given to harshness. He could pardon whenever he could bring himself to believe that pardon would have good results; but he would not be driven by impulses and softness of heart to save the faulty one from the effect of his fault, merely because that effect would be painful. He was a man of no great mental calibre,—not sharp, and quick, and capable of repartee as was the Doctor, but rational in all things, and always guided by his conscience. "He has behaved very badly to you," he said, when he heard the story.

"I do not think so; I have no such feeling myself."

"He behaved very badly in bringing her here without telling you all the facts. Considering the position that she was to occupy, he must have known that he was deceiving you."

"I can forgive all that," said the Doctor, vehemently. "As far as I myself am concerned, I forgive everything."

"You are not entitled to do so."

"How—not entitled?"

"You must pardon me if I seem to take a liberty in expressing myself too boldly in this matter. Of course I should not do so unless you asked me."

"I want you to speak freely,—all that you think."

"In considering his conduct, we

have to consider it all. First of all there came a great and terrible misfortune which cannot but excite our pity. According to his own story, he seems, up to that time, to have been affectionate and generous."

"I believe every word of it," said the Doctor.

"Allowing for a man's natural bias on his own side, so do I. He had allowed himself to become attached to another man's wife; but we need not, perhaps, insist upon that." The Doctor moved himself uneasily in his chair, but said nothing. "We will grant that he put himself right by his marriage, though in that, no doubt, there should have been more of caution. Then came his great misfortune. He knew that his marriage had been no marriage. He saw the man and had no doubt."

"Quite so; quite so," said the Doctor, impatiently.

"He should, of course, have separated himself from her. There can be no doubt about it. There is no room for any quibble."

"Quibble!" said the Doctor.

"I mean that no reference in our own minds to the pity of the thing, to the softness of the moment,—should make us doubt about it. Feelings such as these should induce us to pardon sinners, even to receive them back into our friendship and respect,—when they have seen the error of their ways and have repented."

"You are very hard."

"I hope not. At any rate I can only say as I think. But, in truth, in the present emergency you have nothing to do with all that. If he asked you for counsel you might give it to him, but that is not his present position. He has told you his story, not in a spirit of repent-

ance, but because such telling had become necessary."

"He would have told it all the same though this man had never come."

"Let us grant that it is so, there still remains his relation to you. He came here under false pretences, and has done you a serious injury."

"I think not," said the Doctor.

"Would you have taken him into your establishment had you known it all before? Certainly not. Therefore I say that he has deceived you. I do not advise you to speak to him with severity; but he should, I think, be made to know that you appreciate what he has done."

"And you would turn him off;—send him away at once, out about his business?"

"Certainly I would send him away."

"You think him such a reprobate that he should not be allowed to earn his bread anywhere?"

"I have not said so. I know nothing of his means of earning his bread. Men living in sin earn their bread constantly. But he certainly should not be allowed to earn his here."

"Not though that man who was her husband should now be dead, and he should again marry,—legally marry,—this woman to whom he has been so true and loyal?"

"As regards you and your school," said Mr Puddicombe, "I do not think it would alter his position."

With this the conference ended, and Mr Puddicombe took his leave. As he left the house the Doctor declared to himself that the man was a strait-laced, fanatical, hard-hearted bigot. But though he said so to himself, he hardly thought so; and was aware that the man's words had had effect upon him.

BEATTIE.

IN the contrast between the literary life of the last century and that of our own days, perhaps the most striking feature is the absence in the former of the spirit of provincialism which for good or evil exercises so strong an influence on contemporary destinies. By provincialism, we mean the tendency to judge culture and taste by a reference to some local standard, and to attribute imperfections real or imaginary to the fault of locality. It is natural that a metropolitan city should become the centre of a nation's higher refinement, should attract to itself the proper arbiters of letters and arts, and should consequently claim to exercise a just influence over the other parts of the country. It is equally natural that this influence, when admitted, should be abused; and that the abuse should take the form of that affectation of superiority over less advantageously situated neighbours which gives rise to the very comprehensive term "provincialism." The contempt for provincials is as old as the days when men first began to build cities: the Athenian sneered at the stupid Bœotian; the Romans imagined they saw their own antithesis in the rudeness and ignorance of the Sabines; and the Parisians of the *ancien régime* assigned the "provinces" the exclusive right of producing dullards and bores. But it is only since the French Revolution that "provincialism" has assumed its present significance and become a powerful force. Metropolitan cities are no longer satisfied with claiming their fair share of political power and social consequence; they must have all or nothing. They are no longer content to be great nerve-centres of

their various bodies; they must be the brains upon which all the rest of the nerve-centres depend. An aid to national power no doubt, but aiding at the risk of national paralysis.

We see this in our own midst, and never with more distinctness than when we compare a literary career of the last century with the life of a writer in the present day. The Provinces, as they are now called, held their own in literary power against the Metropolis until a good many years of the present century had sped, and not unfrequently London thought no shame to yield the palm to smaller cities. In Scotland especially, at a time when literature as a profession was contemned in London, and Grub Street was the proverbial residence of the man of the pen, there were literary circles that commanded a respect and exercised an influence scarcely conceded to the critics of the metropolis. Hardly any of the larger cathedral cities in England, and of the university towns in Scotland, in the last century, but could boast of their little coteries of *litterati*, and often of names that were familiar beyond the spoken limits of the English language. Every year the independent literary life of the provinces is becoming more limited and more difficult of maintenance. The young literary man with his heart open to the inspirations of nature, and returning with love the boons she has bestowed upon him, may resolve to keep aloof from Babylon, and to woo the muses in that rural *angulus terrarum* that is most dear to him. How many of his predecessors in the field of letters or poesy have not done the same?

Are there not secluded retreats all over the country, whither enthusiasts make pilgrimages, where poets, historians, and novelists have lived and worked, apart from the turmoil of life and the base struggle for gain? So there are, and our young friend is loath to abandon the idea that he cannot follow examples commending themselves so much to his taste. He may struggle at first against the forces which he feels drawing him towards London; but sooner or later he finds himself sucked into the literary maelstrom. Whether it be that he is glad to avail himself of the necessary advantages of journalism or of fugitive writing for the serials until fame makes him independent of drudgery, or that success has brought him golden temptations to join the battle which he cannot withstand if he wishes to make the most of his career, he must in the end yield to the magnet-like attraction of the metropolis.

In the profession of letters as followed in the last century, there is much that is fascinating, by contrast with present conditions, to the writer of our own day. Life went slowly and noiselessly on then compared with the express rate at which we run nowadays. Time was not a matter of such moment then, we would think, and rapidity of writing must have ranked only as one of the minor literary virtues. Men balanced their periods and pointed antitheses, and sought for similes from the four winds of heaven; and it was no work of supererogation to rewrite a book if it did not satisfy the rigid canons of contemporary criticism. With all these additional pains the old authors must have had plenty of leisure, else how could they have found time for the voluminous and elaborate correspondence in which they engaged? In no respect is the changed con-

dition more manifest than in that of letters and letter-writing. Biography was an easy task in general for writers of the Georgian era, for men wrote their lives and their opinions in their daily correspondence with such fulness and elaboration that little more was left for the compilers of their lives than to act the part of a Greek chorus as they went on. Lives of recent men of letters show a sad falling off both in the quality and in the quantity of their correspondence. Letters now are merely used as means of business communication, or as links of social intercourse for which the writer feels inclined to be apologetic if he allows himself to overrun the statutory weight carried under a penny postage-stamp. When we read the polished letters of Mrs Montague or of Miss Carter, which—never intended to meet the public eye or to minister to pleasure other than that of the persons to whom they were severally addressed—now fill volumes, we are sensible that a superabundance of time must have been bestowed upon these compositions, which few people of the present day could afford out of their limited leisure. Perhaps it was that there was less public demand for ingenious writing then than there is now, and that many fine ideas and clever expressions must have either moulded in one's brains, or been intrusted, for fault of a wider audience, to the correspondent who was most likely to appreciate and to turn them over in society. But now, when everything worth bringing to market readily meets with a purchaser, and only the dross is a drug, it would be little short of extravagance to waste our mercies in such a manner. If a good thing does occur to us, we straightway bethink ourselves of utilising it in this magazine or that review, where all our friends can read it for them-

selves; and as for bestowing style and polish upon our private correspondence, we might just as well make people a present of the sum which these qualities command in the columns of any newspaper that has the privilege of counting us among its contributors. No; whether it be want of leisure, or the greater pressure of existence, we miss the fine old lives that were lived in correspondence, and we cannot think the world is any gainer by the blank.

Letter-writing was the link that in the last century bound together those literary coteries that we would now sneer at as "provincial," and in the interchange of epistles we get glimpses of literary life that are as vistas of green fields and fresh waters to the writer of the present day. The cultured leisure recognised as the natural necessity of thought, the slow and deliberate workmanship by which alone such thought could be insured fitting expression, the exact balancing of a period, the close scansion of feet, and the delicate ear-ringing of rhymes, have to the mass of writers of the present time the same picturesque and charming antiqueness that the stage-coach has to the hurried traveller who must perform his journeys by express train. We flatter ourselves that we can do all that our predecessors did in much less time and with decidedly less fuss. This may be true; but still, when we examine closely, we discover that we are in a great measure reaping where they have sowed, and that our present haste is largely indebted to their leisure. And whatever we may say when we find our pens in request, and when study is so much time wasted that might have been given to reproductive writing, the old ideal of the literary life is the only one that will commend itself to the truly literary man.

There is no doubt a vast inspiration derivable from society, from the society of books as well as of men, and from the manifold influences which Art in our day exercises upon us; but such can at the best be but a shadow of the real inspiration which Genius gives, and which we so seldom meet with that we rarely recognise it at first sight. If we accept Sir Joshua Reynolds's definition—and we are not likely to light upon a better—"Genius is supposed to be a power of producing excellences which are out of the reach of the rules of Art: a power which no precepts can teach and which no industry can acquire,"—if that is so, Genius must go to Nature for its nurture; and though it may drink intoxication from what society provides it with, it can only continue to do so at the risk of the substance passing into the shadow. The true literary spirit must ever feel the higher demands that Nature has upon it, and must ever count as disadvantages the barriers that separate it from her, even though these should be of gold.

"O how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields!
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields:
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even;
All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of Heaven:
O how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven!"

Thus sang Beattie, expressing with as much truth as poetry the aspirations of the purer minds of his generation; and it is in a retrospect of Beattie's character that the remarks which we have just made have had their origin. No life can be selected with more propriety as typical of the provincial man of

letters of the last century, or one that will stand out in clearer contrast with literary careers nowadays. Spending his life in a remote Scotch town, a region quite hyperborean to the philosophers of Fleet Street and the Temple, he yet managed to wield a literary power that was as readily acknowledged in the most refined circles of the metropolis as in his humble lecture-room in the Marischal College of Aberdeen. There he lived a true artistic life, turning to Nature for the strength that he needed to nerve his genius, and reposing himself in her friendly arms when his task was done. A calm, placid, joyful life, undisturbed by all those graver evils that surround the literary struggle nowadays, — working under pressure whether of time or of circumstances; putting forth work that the author feels to be unequal to his ideals; writing for the passing crowd when he would rather be working for posterity; trifling when he would be serious. These are all disadvantages which the successful writer has to contend with; but Beattie resolutely refused to follow up success to the point where such perils begin. Fame brought him numerous temptations to better his condition by approaching more closely the centres of literature and taste; but he was not to be turned aside from the counsels he himself had given for the culture of the poetical character. The high priest of Nature in his day, he would not be drawn away from her altars for a grosser, if more attractive, cult. Yet there was nothing misanthropic, nothing selfish in his character, as is so often the case when people affect retirement because they cannot tune their minds into unison with society. His letters throughout show the delight with which he sought the fellowship of kindred genius; while the warm attachment

with which he inspired some of those whose friendship was most courted by the world, speaks of strong reciprocal qualities on his part.

We cannot apologise for this paper on the ground that Beattie is dropping out of sight in English poetry. He may not be read so extensively as those whom gilt and French morocco enshrine on the drawing-room table as “popular poets;” nor may his lines be constantly upon the tongue of that portion of the public which the author addresses as the “general reader,” whose range of reading, however, upon close examination, commonly turns out to have been very special. But no critic, no student of poetry, is ignorant of Beattie’s place in the literature of last century, or insensible to the influence which he has continued to exercise upon that of our own day. His place in criticism is as clearly defined as his place in poetry, although in general it is not so well known; and it will the more easily assist us in our attempt to estimate his poetry if we first take into account the part which he played in framing the taste of his time.

There is no phrase more common in the mouths of critics than that “the modern school of criticism begins with Lessing and the publication of the ‘Laocoon.’” This statement has so often passed unchallenged that people have come to accept it as a historical fact. But if we carefully sum up the labours of the Scotch school of critics from Gerard to the elder Alison, we shall easily convince ourselves that we had little to learn from Lessing or any other foreign authority. Gerard’s ‘Essay on Taste,’ published in 1759, struck the key-note of modern criticism both here and in France, where it speedily went through two editions, and was reviewed by

Voltaire, Montesquieu, and D'Alembert. Then came Dr Campbell and Lord Kames, who, between them, very nearly perfected a code, of which all subsequent attempts at systematising the principles of literary criticism can only be called expansions. In France the progress of the Scotch school of criticism excited so much interest as to arouse the jealousy of Voltaire, who thus repays Lord Kames's unfavourable estimate of the 'Henriade,' in one of his 'Lettres à un Journaliste':—

“Permit me to explain to you some whimsical singularities of the 'Elements of Criticism,' by Lord Makames, a justice of the peace in Scotland. That philosopher has a most profound knowledge of nature and art, and he uses the utmost efforts to make the rest of the world as wise as himself. He begins by proving that we have five senses; and that we are less struck by a gentle impression made on our eyes and ears, by colours and sounds, than by a knock on the head or a kick on the leg. Proceeding from that to the rules of time and space, M. Home concludes, with mathematical precision, that time seems long to a lady who is about to be married, and short to a man who is going to be hanged. M. Home applies doctrines equally extraordinary to every department of art. It is a surprising effect of the progress of the human mind, that we should now receive from Scotland rules for our taste in all matters, from an epic poem down to a garden. Knowledge extends daily, and we must not despair of hereafter obtaining performances in poetry or oratory from the Orkney Islands. M. Home always lays down his opinions as a law, and extends his despotic sway far and wide. He is a judge who absorbs all appeals.”

Although it may seem of the nature of a challenge to say so, when we lay down Lord Kames

we find we have little to learn from Lessing; and there are few principles enunciated in the 'Laocoon' that had not already come under the consideration of the Scotch school. But Gerard, Campbell, and Kames only put together the framework of criticism; they devised a mechanism complete indeed, but which waited for a vital force to animate it. And here it is that Beattie comes in. He it was who clothed the dry bones, and gave them life and grace and energy. He it was who supplied what had been conspicuously wanting in the speculations of Gerard, Campbell, and Lord Kames—the poetic insight, the fine perception of Nature and of its ideals, the elasticity of the imagination and the reverence of truth. Blair duly profited by Beattie's labours, and if he added nothing to the previous store, his graceful treatment of the researches of his predecessors entitles him to a place in the Scotch school. The elder Alison,* next to Beattie, infused genius and poetry into the system, and by brilliancy of style and clearness of reasoning, elevated it almost to the rank of a creed. If Beattie had held up Nature as the highest ideal by which taste could be directed, Alison no less successfully dealt with beauty as the highest expression of Nature manifest to mortals. And last of all, the Scotch school culminates in Wilson, who seems to have united in his own person all the powers of his predecessors, and who put their principles to such a practical test as to lay every other system of criticism prostrate in the dust before them.

Wilson placed Beattie far above the rest of the Scotch school for

* Readers of 'Maga' will remember with pleasure that the literary genius of the Gerards and the Alisons has cropped up in our own younger generation in the authoresses of 'Reata.'—ED. B. M.

artistic penetration and true poetic insight ; and time after time in the columns of 'Maga' we find the great critic reminding literature of its debt to the Aberdeen professor. "Beattie," exclaims North at one of the "Noctes"—"Beattie was a delightful poet, and, Mr Alison excepted, the best writer on literature and the fine arts Britain ever produced, full of feeling and full of genius." How much of this feeling and genius came purely from natural endowment, the readers of Beattie's life must be well aware. The early education of the future *arbiter elegantiarum* was imparted in a humble parish school in Kincardineshire, one of those admirable institutions that were the nurseries of so many scholars.

"Oh be his tomb as lead to lead
Upon their dull destroyer's head ;
Here 'Maga's' malison is said."

Thence to Marischal College in Aberdeen, which, scanty as its resources were, could at the time boast of Gerard among its professors, and of Blackwell as its principal—a learned old Grecian, whose remains show him to have been far ahead of contemporary classical studies in Scotland. After some years spent in teaching in the country, his attainments secured him the very respectable position of a mastership in the Aberdeen Grammar School, a foundation dating from the thirteenth century. He was now brought in contact with possibly the largest collection of learned men that ever were gathered together in so small a town. Besides Gerard and Blackwell, there were Campbell, then deep in his 'Philosophy of Rhetoric ;' Thomas Reid the metaphysician, who had not yet gone to Glasgow ; the famous Dr John Gregory, just then thinking of bettering his fortunes in Edinburgh ; the two Skenes, David and

Robert, both naturalists of repute ; Trail, who afterwards became Bishop of Down and Connor ; and "Tullochgorum" Skinner, then moving about with the circumspection that was most conducive to the comfort of a nonjuring clergyman. After the fashion of the day, these *savants* must of course have their club ; and so the Philosophical Society of Aberdeen was founded, out of which sprang directly such works as Reid's 'Inquiry,' Campbell's 'Rhetoric,' Gregory's 'Comparative View of the State and Faculties of Man,' and Beattie's essays on "Poetry and Music" and "Laughter and Ludicrous Composition." We shall therefore, probably, not be very far wide of the mark if we regard the "Wise Club" of Aberdeen, as it was called, as the cradle of the two Scotch schools of metaphysics and of criticism. The society Beattie was thus thrown into was enough to put any man on his mettle who was possessed of literary tastes. An essay was read by a member at each meeting of the Club, and some question of interest connected with the literary and philosophical studies of the day, notably the philosophy of the senses and the standards of taste, was proposed for general discussion. We know how keen an interest Beattie took in these subjects, and how great importance the other members attached to his views ; and in this little arena he was all the while training himself in his own fashion for appearing before a wider audience, which his elevation to the chair of moral philosophy in succession to Gerard in no long time enabled him to do.

In addition to good classical scholarship, in which most of the other members of the Club were at least his equal, and to his genius and poetic tastes, Beattie had made himself acquainted with both

French and Italian literature, the latter rather an unusual accomplishment at the time, even among men of letters, in consequence of Addison's not very intelligent estimate of the Italian poets, who had declared with Boileau "that one verse in Virgil is worth all the clinquant and tinsel of Tasso." Beattie was not of this opinion; and in his lyrical pieces we meet with both a full swell and a delicate rhythm, which we do not hesitate to trace to his Italian studies. In English he acknowledged Addison as his master, and took him for his model, or at least imagined he did; for Beattie's style is essentially his own, and if it wants the crispness and homely Saxon flow of Addison's periods, it has perhaps the advantages of free and copious diction and of poetic grace. For Addison and the other English essayists Beattie had always a warm regard; and when the Edinburgh edition of Addison's prose works was published in 1790, it was Beattie's intention to preface it by an elaborate critique, which was not only to be an exposition of style, but a protest against the corruptions which rapid and slipshod writing was even then introducing into the language. His health unfortunately prevented his carrying out a resolve which would have been so serviceable to English literature; but all through his letters and essays he never loses sight of the Addisonian English as a standard which it was worth a struggle to maintain. In a letter to Mr Arbuthnot regarding the difficulty which the succeeding generation of annotators professed to have in distinguishing between the style of Addison and that of Steele, he says:—

"This alone would satisfy me that the annotators were no competent judges either of composition or of the English language; which indeed ap-

pears from the general tenor of their own style, which is full of those new-fangled phrases and barbarous idioms that are now so much affected by those who form their style from political pamphlets and those pretended speeches in Parliament that appear in newspapers. Should this jargon continue to gain ground among us, English literature will go to ruin. During the last twenty years, especially since the breaking out of the American war, it has made an alarming progress. One does not wonder that such a fashion should be adopted by illiterate people, or by those who are not conversant in the best English authors; but it is a shame to see such a man as Lord Hailes give way to it, as he has done in some of his latest publications. If I live to execute what I purpose on the writings and genius of Addison, I shall at least enter my protest against this practice, and by exhibiting a copious specimen of the new phraseology, endeavour to make my reader set his heart against it."

Though his critique had been written, it would most likely have only furnished a parallel to Mrs Partington's mop; but his wish to stem the rising tide will endear him to all who regret to see the well of English, once undefiled, polluted by foreign catch-words and native slang.

The sources of Beattie's literary influence are apparent on the surface of his writings, both prose and poetic, and may be distinguished even by an uncritical eye. His attachment to Nature made him keenly sensitive of her manifestations and of the just expression of these by art, as well as painfully conscious of any unworthiness or wrong done her. Nature is a tribunal from which there is no appeal; and by its closer or more remote approach to her standard must all efforts at expression be judged. We have truth before us as a goal, and taste as a guide on our way. And we must not shrink

from or despise the guidance of taste because it may seem to us at times variable. "Its principles," says Beattie, "are real and permanent, though men may occasionally be ignorant of them. Very different systems of philosophy have appeared; yet Nature and truth are always the same. Fashions in dress and furniture are perpetually changing; and yet, in both, that is often allowed to be elegant which is not fashionable—which could not be if there were not in both certain principles of elegance which derive their charm neither from caprice nor from custom, but from the very nature of the thing." A proof of this is that there are works both of literature and of art that have satisfied the taste of all ages; and that taste which is thus gratified we may assume, therefore, to be both natural and permanent, while dissent from it can only spring from ignorant or vitiated views of Nature, and must be of merely temporary or passing influence—" *Opinionum commenta delet dies; nature judicium confirmat.*" His qualities of style he drew directly from the attributes of Nature; "for," says he, "nothing but what is supposed to be natural can please; and language as well as fable, imagery, and moral description, may displease by being unnatural." But language may possess the rhetorical qualities of perspicuity, simplicity, grace, strength, and harmony, and yet not be natural; for it must be suited to the supposed condition, circumstances, and character of the speaker, as well as to the matter which is the subject of his discourse. This is a very simple canon; but it is one that supplies critics with a wide and unailing test; and all the long-winded lectures on style that we daily and weekly read, set forth in the well-worn *argot* of newspaper reviewers, are merely sermons upon

Beattie's text. And as a style thus regulated is capable of yielding the highest literary pleasure, so a departure from it is fraught with corresponding pain, whether the error be on the side of monstrosity or meanness. If so genial a man as Beattie ever lost his temper, it was over bad writing; and when we consider how delicate was his critical faculty, we can almost pardon him his exasperation over such passages as this from Blackmore's 'Paraphrase of Job':—

"I solemnly pronounce that I believe
My blest Redeemer does for ever live.
When future ages shall their circuit end,
And bankrupt Time shall his last minute
spend,
Then He from heaven in triumph shall
descend."

"How grovelling," cries Beattie, "must be the imagination of a writer who, on meditating on a passage so sublime, and a subject so awful, can bring himself to think and speak of bankruptcy! Such an idea in such a place is contemptible without expression." The present age, we fear, can hardly afford to enter into Beattie's feelings in such a matter; and we fancy we see the appreciative critic italicising the line in question to call attention to the "appropriateness" of the metaphor and the "balance of its members."

This stand-point of Nature, upon which Beattie took up his position, was one from which it was particularly appropriate for addressing the age. Few epochs of English society have been more foolishly artificial than the period from the death of Caroline of Anspach, George II.'s consort, until the time when the disasters of the American war recalled the nation to sobriety. Sterling English sense had grown maudlin over echoes of the 'Nouvelle Heloise,' and affected a Voltairian indifference to reli-

gious systems. The Chesterfieldian code of "manners without morals" was the revelation by which society was ruled. Nor did the Church do much to infuse more earnest feelings; for it took some time to replace the Hoadleys of the day, whom Whig unscrupulousness had placed on the bench, by a higher order of prelates. A Christian poet like Gilbert West was cited as "the miracle of the moral world." Mrs Montague, who was no austere judge of her fellow-sinners, avers that the young ladies of the day learned their religion from a dancing-master, their sentiment from a singer, and their manners from the chambermaid. In short, in aping the style of the Louis Quinze school, English society had caught its affectation without its dignity, its looseness without its wit. And what made its weaknesses more absurd was that, at bottom, it was not nearly so wicked as it wished to be reputed. Natural taste and just criticism were both at a very low ebb; for Johnson, whose influence could alone have benefited letters, had neutralised his strength by his arrogance and eccentricities. Perhaps for a healthy and sincere tone we must turn to the "Blue Stocking" coteries that gathered round Mrs Montague and a few other ladies of taste, which, though perhaps liable to some of the sarcasm attaching to the 'Précieuses Ridicules,' present an agreeable relief to the assumed hollowness and indifference of the rest of society. In Dr Beattie Mrs Montague and the others immediately greeted a natural ally, and they readily accepted his standards of criticism, and became the patronesses of his poetry. Mrs Montague, whose great wealth and undeniable *esprit* gave her an authority in literary circles which no single woman could wield nowadays, received Beattie into the circle of her inti-

mate friendship, and did much by her feminine delicacy and sympathy to soften the cross in the poet's loss springing from his wife's mental affliction. In Mrs Montague's voluminous correspondence there are no letters more womanly, more full of kindness, and less affected, than those which she addresses to Beattie in his northern retreat; and the interesting letters of the poet in reply, give us a more candid and familiar insight into his views on letters, art, and philosophy than he could trust himself to express in works intended to come under the public eye.

The incident which brought Beattie more prominently before the world, and which provided him with a foundation for building his literary and lasting reputation upon, was his opposition to Hume's attacks upon revealed religion. This controversy bulks largely in Beattie's life, and he himself evidently considered that the part which he there played would constitute his chief claim upon the recollection of posterity. But Beattie had a genius too delicate for metaphysical wrangling, and he was too sensitive to the issues involved, to figure with advantage in such a discussion. Hume's attack as well as Beattie's defence have both passed into the regions of historical metaphysics, and there we are content they should remain. But as sceptical critics of the present day seek to turn the share which Beattie took in the discussion to his prejudice both as a poet and as a critic, we think it right to quote from his own words the circumstances which led him to challenge Mr Hume's views:—

"In my younger days I read chiefly for the sake of amusement, and I found myself best amused with the 'classics' and what we call the *belles lettres*. Metaphysics I disliked; mathematics pleased me better; but I found

my mind neither improved nor gratified by that study. When Providence allotted me my present station, it became incumbent on me to read what had been written on the subject of morals and human nature: the works of Locke, Berkeley, and Hume were celebrated as masterpieces in this way; to them, therefore, I had recourse. . . . I found that the sceptical philosophy was not what the world imagined it to be, nor what I, following the opinion of the world, had hitherto imagined it to be, but a frivolous, though dangerous, system of verbal subtilty, which it required neither genius, nor learning, nor taste, nor knowledge of mankind, to be able to put together; but only a captious temper, an irreligious spirit, a moderate command of words, and an extraordinary degree of vanity and presumption. . . . I want to show that the same method of reasoning which these people have adopted in their books, if transferred into common life, would show them to be destitute of common-sense; that true philosophers follow a different method of reasoning; and that, without following a different method, no truth can be discovered. I want to lay before the public in as strong a light as possible the following dilemma: our sceptics either believe the doctrines they publish or they do not believe them; if they believe them they are fools—if not, they are a thousand times worse. I want also to fortify the minds against this sceptical poison, and to propose certain criteria of moral truth, by which some of the most dangerous sceptical errors may be detected and guarded against."

Thus conscious of his unfitness for metaphysical wrangling, and with his heart set upon more æsthetic studies, Beattie undertook to answer Hume, partly because by his literary position it seemed specially incumbent upon him to take up the gage, and mainly because he was urged into the field by the arguments of his friends. It would be idle now to seek to decide the measure of his success or failure in a controversy which necessarily

ended exactly where it began; but the manner in which Beattie acquitted himself procured him the esteem of all the orthodox thinkers of the day, as well as the personal friendship of some of the most eminent prelates on the Episcopal bench.

Within two years after the appearance of his 'Essay on Truth' and the 'Minstrel,' Beattie was received with open arms in the best literary circles in London; while on his former visit to town ten years before, the only intimacy he had formed was with Mr Miller, his own bookseller. His biographer, Sir William Forbes, thinks it "without a parallel in the annals of literature," that an author almost totally a stranger in England should, merely on the reputation earned by these two works, "emerge from the obscurity of his situation in a provincial town in the north of Scotland into such general and distinguished celebrity without the aid of party spirit, or political faction, or any other influence than what arose from the merit of these two publications, which first brought him into notice, and his agreeable conversation and unassuming manners, which secured to him the love of all to whom he became personally known." He was graciously received by the King, who subsequently conferred on him a pension. Oxford made him a Doctor of Laws, at the same time as Sir Joshua Reynolds received the degree, amid many demonstrations of applause; and when he went back to the North, besides Mrs Montague, his list of correspondents included such names as Bishop Porteous of London; the Duchess-Dowager of Portland; Lord Lyttleton; Bishop Percy, of ballad fame; Sir Joshua Reynolds; Markham, Bishop of Chester; the Archbishop of York, who did his best to induce Beattie to enter holy orders; Mrs Delany,

and many names of eminence both in society and literature. In Scotland he was most intimate with Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo—in whom he had a most able and disinterested adviser—Dr Gregory, Dr Blacklock, Jane Maxwell, the witty and eccentric Duchess of Gordon, and a large and attached circle of less note. The subscription list for his 'Essays,' published in 1776, might be taken as a complete guide to the taste and learning of the time; and we could point to no readier or more practical proof of the high estimation in which he was held by his contemporaries.

As an illustration of the soundness of Beattie's critical instinct, we may refer to the part he took in the famous Ossianic controversy. The appearance of Macpherson's 'Ossian' took the world by storm; and though many doubted the genuineness of the poems, the genuineness of the poetry was supposed unchallengeable. The most extravagant laudations were pronounced over them, and their beauties were gravely weighed alongside those of the 'Iliad' and 'Paradise Lost.' Poor Dr Blair was carried away with the crowd, and wrote a "Critical Dissertation" upon Ossian, which still unfortunately remains among his works to qualify our admiration for his penetration. Beattie from the first was doubtful of the merits of Macpherson's work, apart altogether from his views about its authenticity. The lam-bent glimmer upon the surface of the poems did not dazzle his eyes so that he could not see how artificial was its structure, any more than the heroic play of words and arms deceived him into the belief that a new epic had been brought to light. Applying his own tests, he unhesitatingly declared 'Ossian' to be a defective production:—

"If accurate delineation of character be allowed the highest species of poetry (and this, I think, is generally allowed), may I not ask," says Beattie, "whether Ossian is not extremely defective in the *highest* species of poetry? . . . Ossian seems really to have very little knowledge of the human heart; his chief talent lies in describing inanimate objects, and therefore he belongs (according to my principles) not to the highest, but to an inferior order of poets."

So long as he stood fast by these principles, it was not likely that Beattie could be deceived; but it must have taken a good deal of firmness to thus place himself counter to the almost unanimous taste of the times; for with the exception of Dr Johnson, whose known prejudices against the Highlanders caused his opinion to be left out of count, most of the critical authorities of the day went into ecstasies over Ossian. His friends were anxious, for Beattie was not then the authority that he subsequently became, but he held firm to his opinion.

"The particular beauties of this wonderful work," he writes to Mr Arbuthnot, "are irresistibly striking, and I flatter myself I am as sensible of them as another. But to that part of its merit which exalts it, considered as a whole, above the 'Iliad' or 'Æneid,' and its author above Homer or Virgil, I am insensible. Yet I understand that of critics not a few aver Ossian to have been a greater genius than either of these poets. Yet a little while, and I doubt not the world will be of a different opinion. Homer was as much admired about three months ago—I speak not of the present moment, for Ossian just now is all in all—I say Homer was lately admired as much as he was three thousand years ago. Will the admiration of our Highland bard be as permanent? And will it be as universal as learning itself?"

There was even a greater danger of his being misled by Sir William Jones's imitations of Eastern poetry,

which were received with an enthusiastic unanimity of favour little short of that which greeted Ossian. The pseudo-oriental air, which has always a certain fascination about it, deceived many, but could not lead away Beattie. After pointing out that imitations can never have the same literary value as translations, as they do not convey the original ideas of those whose pattern is copied, he expresses a suspicion "that the descriptions are not just," and that "it is not *nature* which is presented, but the dreams of a man who had never studied nature." Sir William Jones's poetry is now wellnigh lost sight of; but any one who will compare his oriental verses with the severe but faithful translations from the Sanscrit which Dr John Muir has from time to time put forth, will readily see that Beattie has instinctively hit upon the true source of their weakness.

His opinion of 'Clarissa,' in which the enthusiastic readers of the day would see no defects, was similarly bold, and anticipates the verdict which modern criticism, after a century's reflection, now passes upon that novel. Beattie instinctively probes all the faults of 'Clarissa,' while he readily discerns its merits, and estimates at its proper importance the place which Richardson gave to human nature and to mental analysis in fiction. He notes the superfluity of scenes, the excessively parenthetical style, and foresees the objection which is most readily raised to the *dénouement* of 'Clarissa' at the present day; that Lovelace is really not punished in falling in a combat accounted honourable, and that the immediate cause of his death was not his wickedness, but some inferiority to his antagonist in the use of the small-sword. If space would permit us to compare

the judgments passed by Beattie upon all the contemporary works which have come down to our day with the estimates of current criticism, we would have no difficulty in showing that the principles by which his opinions were guided have had at least the quality of permanence, and have outlasted not a few phases of popular taste. It is this that furnishes us with the true measure of a critic's ability, rather than the coincidence of his opinions with our own, which too often proves to be but cheap flattery. We do not say a man is more likely to be right because he deliberately sets himself up against the views of his contemporaries, but he has probably given the matter more consideration, before taking up so invidious a position, than one whose aim was merely to run with the stream, would take the trouble to bestow upon it.

It was not merely in literary questions that Beattie showed himself in advance of his age. In matters of art, in religious questions, and in social economics, his views were such as would readily command a hearing in our own day. He was a devoted patron of the drama, a friend and admirer of Garrick; and though it was not so long since the Kirk had made an example of John Home, and had "dealt" with his fellow-offender "Jupiter" Carlyle, for their patronage of the drama, Beattie was an avid playgoer whenever an opportunity presented itself. "I well remember, and I think I can never forget, how he [Garrick] once affected me in 'Macbeth,' and made me almost throw myself over the front seat of the two-shilling gallery. I wish I had another opportunity of risking my neck and nerves in the same cause. To fall by the hands of Garrick and Shakespeare would ennoble my memory to all gene-

rations." Although the slightest savour of Popery was calculated to cause the Presbyterians of the day more alarm than even Shakespeare himself would occasion, Beattie declares himself strongly in favour of instrumental music in churches, and "somewhat more decorum and solemnity in public worship," even if these had to be borrowed from the Papists; while he considers Protestant "nunneries or convents much wanted in this country as a safe and creditable asylum for ladies of small fortunes and high breeding."

We have dwelt at such length on the critical side of Beattie's literary life, that we have not much space left for a retrospect of his poetry. As, however, it is the poetical side of his genius that stands most clearly out to the present generation, there is less need for treating it in detail. But we must observe that Beattie has suffered not a little from the selections which his admirers generally place before the public. A few picked stanzas from the "Minstrel," his "Hermit," and fragments of one or two of his minor pieces, are all that readers are asked to form an opinion of his genius upon; and these selections are so often quoted, that we feel as if we had blunted their delicate edge and they had become hackneyed. There are few poets from whose works it is so difficult to pick samples with either justice to the poet or satisfaction to the critic. His poems are so finished, so dependent for their beauty on their symmetry and elegance as a whole, that to select particular pieces from them is like breaking a china vase for the sake of a painting on its side. Moreover—although the fact may be held to detract from the merits of his poems—there is always an undercurrent of continuous idea running through his verse that,

when broken off, allows the essence of the poetry to escape. We should bear in mind, too, that none of our great poets were less self-satisfied with their own performances, and more diffident of submitting their efforts to public criticism. And as Beattie's critical faculties strengthened, his literary shyness increased, and one after another of his earlier poems were excluded from the final editions, until he left in the end only the "Minstrel" and half-a-dozen short pieces for the public to remember him by. Most of his editors have, however, very pardonably done violence to his modesty, and have printed many of the pieces which the poet himself had rejected from his later editions. The worst of these are not without value to the student of Beattie, for they afford a clearer insight into the poet's character than is to be got by means of pieces in the composition of which he had been at more pains to keep his individuality in the background. Even his lines on the proposal to erect in Westminster Abbey a monument to Churchill—whose coarse attacks on Scotland and the Scots had elevated him into the importance of a national enemy—though merely railing in rhyme quite unworthy of Beattie's genius, are of consequence as showing what has been frequently controverted, that Beattie was one of Scotland's national poets. We owe to Professor Wilson a spirited vindication of the nationality of Beattie's muse; and it needs but a few references to his works to convince any one that though English verse was the general form of his poetry, his inspiration came from sources as purely Scottish as that of Scott or Burns himself. The latter would not have blushed to have the authorship imputed to him of so deliciously Doric a description as this:—

“ Oh bonny are our greensward hows,
Where through the birks the burnie rows,
And the bee bums, and the ox lows,
And saft winds rustle,
And shepherd lads on sunny knoos
Blaw the blythe whistle.

For Scotland wants na sons enew
To do her honour.

I here might gie a skreed o' names
Dawties of Heliconian dames!
The foremost place Gawin Douglas claims,
That pawky priest;
And wha can match the first King James
For sang or jest?

Montgomery grave, and Ramsay gay,
Dunbar, Scot, Hawthornden, and mae
Than I can tell; for o' my fay
I maun break aff;
’Twould tak a live-lang simmer day
To name the half.”

While in the following spirited stanzas on the birthday of Lord Hay, the heir of the house of Errol, which owes its nobility to the stand made by its peasant ancestor when his countrymen were flying before the Danes in the battle of Luncarty, we think we can discern not a little of the “light-horseman” dash and chivalry of Scott:—

“ For not on beds of gandy flowers
Thine ancestors reclined,
When sloth dissolves, and spleen de-
vours
All energy of mind
To hurl the dart, to ride the car,
To stem the deluges of war,
And snatch from fate a sinking land,
Trample th' invader's lofty crest,
And from his grasp the dagger wrest
And desolating brand.

’Twas this that raised th' illustrious
line
To match the first in fame!
A thousand years have seen it shine
With unabated flame:
Have seen thy mighty sires appear
Foremost in glory's high career
The pride and pattern of the brave:
Yet, pure from lust of blood their fire,
And from ambition's wild desire,
They triumphed but to save.”

Throughout the “Minstrel” the descriptions are entirely drawn from the scenery of the north-east coast of Scotland, and from the vales and glens that slope down from the

Grampians to the sea. It is a peculiarity of Beattie's descriptive poetry, highly characteristic of genius, that he strikes a feeling, and trusts to the associated images rising of their own accord. So suggestive are Beattie's outlines that we involuntarily fill in the light and shade for ourselves. Thus, how complete is the picture which the much admired stanza on “Retirement” brings before our imagination!—

“ Thy shades, thy silence now be mine,
Thy charms my only theme;
My haunt the hollow cliff, whose pine
Waves o'er the gloomy stream,
Whence the scared owl on pinions
grey
Breaks from the rustling boughs,
And down the lone vale sails away
To more profound repose.”

The dark fir-woods and rugged cliffs of a glen in the Mearns rise up around us as we read. The sun, already dipping behind the Angus hills, casts his rays aslant over our heads, but the light does not reach us in the hollow, while the dark cliff that hangs over us throws its shadow over the darkening water, already brown with Grampian peat-moss, that sweeps away down to the valley spreading out beneath us in turns and windings, until the pine-covered heights that shut out the sea from our view press together to grip it into a gorge, where the startled bird may rest with confidence until night emboldens it to stir abroad. Those who have been over Beattie's haunts can readily detect the local charm of his descriptions; while even those who have not, can draw from his poems a vivid picture of the country where his muse was nursed. According to Professor Wilson, there never was sketch more Scottish than that presented in the following stanzas:—

“ Lo! where the stripling, wrapt in
wonder, roves

Beneath the precipice o'erhung with pine,
 And sees, on high, amidst th' encircling
 groves,
 From cliff to cliff the foaming torrents
 shine :
 While waters, woods, and winds in concert
 join,
 And Echo swells the chorus to the skies."

Wilson declares that "Beattie pours them like a man who had been at the Linn of Dee."

The strength of the "Minstrel," indeed of the most of Beattie's poems, lies in picturesque and poetic description. His theory of association kept him clear of the crude notion that in word-painting, as well as in colour-painting, the first thing is to catch the fancy. With those who hold this view, freshness and vividness are the qualities most in request; and we derive no higher pleasure from their works than the momentary gratification that they yield to the eye or the ear. It was, however, the higher affections and their associations to which Beattie sought to address his descriptions of Nature. By thus compelling the reader's co-operation in bringing about the effect which the poet wishes to produce on his mind, a deeper and more permanent impression is secured than when a picture has been only, so to speak, flashed across the senses. This is the marked difference between Thomson and Beattie. Where Thomson places before us a complete picture, fully coloured and perfect down to its minutest details, Beattie simply picks up the more picturesque features in the landscape; but these he presents with such force to the imagination that it involuntarily fills up the rest for itself. Beattie therefore has the advantage in simplicity over the florid and verbose panorama of the "Seasons," and with much less effort a higher artistic effect is gained. We can hardly say that Beattie was quite conscious of the advantages of his method, for he

accounted the close approach which he supposed himself to have made to Thomson as the best measure of his success; but it was one of these cases where genius leads a man unconsciously into the right way. We are sensible of the vigour and power of Nature herself speaking to us through his lines, as when he bids us

"Hail the morn
 While warbling larks on russet pinions
 float,
 Or seek at noon the woodland scene re-
 mote
 Where the grey linnets carol from the
 hill."

How vast is the canvas which the imagination can fill up for itself out of the two following stanzas! How numerous are the recollections awakened, the ideas suggested, by each feature in the landscape as it is put before us!—

"And oft he traced the uplands, to
 survey,
 When o'er the sky advanced the kindling
 dawn,
 The crimson cloud, blue main, and
 mountain grey,
 And lake dim-gleaming on the smoky
 lawn :
 Far to the west the long, long vale with-
 drawn,
 Where twilight loves to linger for a
 while ;
 And now he faintly kens the bounding
 fawn,
 And villager abroad at early toil.
 But lo ! the Sun appears ! and heaven,
 earth, ocean smile.

And oft the craggy cliff he loved to climb,
 When all in mist the world below was
 lost.
 What dreadful pleasure ! there to stand
 sublime,
 Like shipwrecked mariner on desert coast,
 And view th' enormous waste of vapour,
 tossed
 In billows lengthening to th' horizon
 round,
 Now scooped in gulfs, with mountains
 now embossed !
 And hear the voice of mirth and song
 rebound—
 Flocks, herds, and waterfalls along the
 hoar profound !"

It would be difficult in the whole

range of English poetry to find two such perfect scenes presented with less effort on the part of the artist, and more satisfaction to the reader's imagination. And it will be noted that in both these pictures Beattie strikes at feelings that cannot fail to arouse the most elevated associations. It must, indeed, be a callous nature that remains unimpressed by the influence which morning, and Nature reawakening amid her own solitudes, cast abroad; or that has not drunk in loftier and purer feelings with the returning light. Those also who have experienced the sensation of looking down upon a sea of vapour, shutting them out from the world below, and inspiring them with the weird feeling that they are cut off from the rest of humanity, will not fail to appreciate the "dreadful pleasure" of which the poet speaks. And but that we are rapidly running to the limits of our space, we would like to expatiate at length over the other exquisite morning scenes which he opens up to his Minstrel in embryo, and which we can only venture to quote:—

"As on he wanders through the scenes
of morn,
Where the fresh flowers in living lustre
blow,
Where thousand pearls the dewy lawns
adorn,
A thousand notes of joy in every breeze
are borne.

But who the melodies of morn can tell?
The wild brook babbling down the moun-
tain-side;
The lowing herd; the sheepfold's sim-
ple bell;
The pipe of early shepherd dim descried
In the lone valley; echoing far and wide
The clamorous horn along the cliffs
above;
The hollow murmur of the ocean-tide;
The hum of bees, the linnet's lay of love,
And the full quire that wakes the univer-
sal grove.

The cottage curs at early pilgrim bark;
Crowned with her pail the tripping milk-
maid sings;
The whistling ploughman stalks afield;
and, hark!

Down the rough slope the ponderous
waggon rings;
Through rustling corn the hare astonished
springs;
Slow tolls the village clock the drowsy
hour;
The partridge bursts away on whirring
wings;
Deep mourns the turtle in sequestered
bower,
And shrill lark carols clear from her aerial
tour."

One other extract, not less perfect, though drawn with easier touches, a glowing picture of "evening" from his fable of the "Hares," and we have done:—

"Now from the western mountain's brow,
Compass'd with clouds of various glow,
The sun a broader orb displays,
And shoots along his ruddy rays.
The lawn assumes a fresher green,
And dewdrops spangle all the scene;
The balmy zephyr breathes along,
The shepherd sings his tender song,
With all their lays the groves resound,
And falling waters murmur round;
Discord and care were put to flight,
And all was peace and calm delight."

Throughout his poetry Beattie is unwavering in his fealty to Nature; and while his descriptions aim at adding to her pleasing qualities, so as to suggest openings for the imagination, he gives her no alien attributes, no unworthy interpretations. And it is one of the highest tributes to Beattie's genius that no one can read his verse without finding one's perceptions of natural beauty enlarged, and one's appreciation of it deepened, in a remarkable degree. In fact, we might almost say that a transfer of taste takes place from the poet to the reader. And his direct aim ever is to impart his own feelings; for while we are always tempted to doubt whether the Thomsonian poets really admired Nature as much for herself as for the effect which, in their hands, she might be made to produce, Beattie's chief desire is that all mankind might share in the pleasure which he himself derives from the contemplation of her perfections.

It is impossible that a great poem could have been based on the fundamental idea of the "Minstrel." The design was "to trace the progress of a poetical genius, born in a rude age, from the first dawnings of fancy and reason, till that period at which he may be supposed capable of appearing in the world as a minstrel." A theme so subjective could only be made of poetic interest by means of very picturesque accessories; and it is to such descriptions as those which we have quoted above that the poem owes what vitality it possesses. With the furtherance of an idea so metaphysical, incident would of course have interfered; and so there is little or none of it in the poem. We cannot follow Edwin, the hunter, through his experiences until the heaven-given genius, fostered by Nature and guided by the wisdom of age, finds expression in song. Nor do we think that Beattie is altogether true to nature when he makes the ardent youth, full of curiosity to fathom the ways of life, urged on by the promptings of romantic fancy, and with genius, health, and imagination all propelling him forward, pause and turn back on the threshold of the world because a querulous old sage, who has fled to the wilderness sated with society, assures him that within all is vanity and vexation of spirit. It is not like youth to accept its experience thus at second-hand; it must pay its own price for the fruit of the tree of knowledge. In Edwin's case the progress of poetry proceeds with a most unpoetic smoothness. He preserves his genius unsullied by the contaminations of the world, by keeping well aloof from them; he shows his bravery by remaining apart from the combat. In the feelings of Edwin we see reflected much of Beattie's soul, and we value the

poem accordingly as a confession of minor emotions, but we cannot accept it as approaching to a fair illustration of the growth of poetic genius. Passion, without which there can be no poetry; the love of woman, which first opens our lips to sing,—are both wanting among the components of the poetic character. Yet when we have carried fault-finding as far as it will go, we stop to own that the "Minstrel" deserves a high place among the classics of English poetry; and whatever objections we may take to its conception and structure, are but slight blemishes compared with the pure spirit breathed from every line, the flow of natural beauty, the rich but chaste imagery, and the lofty yet delicate sentiment that pervades the whole. We would not lay over-much stress upon Lord Lyttleton's opinion, though it was of considerable weight at the time; but his critique on the "Minstrel" has all the air at least of sincerity, and is so aptly expressed, that we must quote it. "I have read the 'Minstrel' with as much rapture, as poetry, in her sweetest, noblest charms, ever raised in my mind. It seemed to me that my once beloved minstrel, Thomson, was come down from heaven, refined by the converse of purer spirits than those he lived with here, to let me hear him sing again the beauties of Nature and finest feelings of virtue, not with human but with angelic strains,"—a dainty compliment even for the days when graceful compliments were cultivated as a fine art.

Since Professor Wilson, in the pages of 'Maga,' called attention to the similarity of ideas between the "Minstrel" and the "Excursion," and to the internal affinities of the two poems, the belief has generally been accepted that Beattie supplied Wordsworth with the suggestion

that gave birth to his greatest work. And much as we admire Wordsworth, we think not the less of the "Excursion" that it traces its origin to this source. They both fail mainly in the same respect—the poetic treatment of a prosaic theme; while the chief claims of both upon the recollection consist in their beautiful glimpses of Nature at rest, and in the vein of pure and noble sentiment running through them. If we were to put passages in parallels, we could show many identities of idea, and not a few coincidences in imagery, between the "Minstrel" and the "Excursion;" but we do not look upon this fact as detracting in any way from Wordsworth's genius, or as in the least attaching to him a suspicion of plagiarism. We are rather pleased to recognise a community of sentiment between two of Nature's pure and simple-minded interpreters, and to think that Beattie should have been thus far instrumental in preparing the way for one who, with more mastery over the lyre, was destined to establish in the eyes of the world those poetic truths which the elder had only been able to put forward in theoretical form.

The coincidence in idea between Beattie's "Judgment of Paris"—a piece which he excluded from the later editions of his poems—and Tennyson's "Ænone," has hitherto escaped notice, but is not the less remarkable on that account. The "Judgment of Paris" was one of Beattie's earlier pieces, written soon after his first journey to London, and before his powers were fully known to the public. His object was to draw a moral from the Greek fable by taking the three goddesses as the personifications of wisdom, ambition, and pleasure, very much as Mr Tennyson has done in "Ænone." The poem was a failure, being, as Sir William

Forbes remarks, "too metaphysical," while its beauties scarcely compensated for this defect. But in his rendering of the legend, Beattie has completely anticipated Tennyson, if indeed he has not suggested the whole poem of "Ænone." The description of the

"Valè in Ida, lovelier
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
The swimming vapour slopes athwart the
glen,
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine
to pine,"

is to be found in all its details in Beattie, who makes the deities appear to Paris, where,

"Far in the depth of Ida's inmost grove,
A scene for love and solitude designed,
Where flowery woodbines wild, by Nature
wove,
Formed the lone bower, the royal swain
reclined.
All up the craggy cliffs, that towered to
heaven,
Green waved the murmuring pines on
every side,
Save where fair opening to the beam of
even,
A dale sloped gradual to the valley
wide."

The similarity in the descent of the goddesses, too, is noteworthy. In Beattie the description is more elaborate, as well as more meretricious perhaps—

"When slowly floating down the azure
skies
A crimson cloud flashed on his startled
sight;
Whose skirts, gay-sparkling with unnum-
bered dyes,
Launched the long billowy trails of
flickering light.
That instant, hushed was all the vocal
grove,
Hushed was the gale, and every ruder
sound,
And strains aerial, warbling far above,
Rung in the ear a magic peal profound;"

than Tennyson's—

"One silvery cloud
Had lost his way between the piney sides
Of this long glen. Then to the bower
they came."

Much as we admire the stately sim-

plicity of Tennyson's picture of Pallas,—

“Where she stood
Somewhat apart, her clear and bared limbs
O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed spear,
Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,
The while, above, her full and earnest eye
Over her snow-cold breast and angry
cheek
Kept watch;”

we may still compare it with this perhaps more florid but strictly Olympian description,—

“Milder the next came on with artless
grace,
And on a javelin's quivering length
reclined.
Th' exalt her mien she bade no splendour
blaze,
Nor pomp of vesture fluctuate on the
wind,
Serene though awful on her brow the light
Of heavenly wisdom shone; nor roved
her eyes,
Save to the shadowy cliff's majestic height,
Or the blue concave of th' involving
skies”—

We think, moreover, it does not require much ingenuity to find the germ of Tennyson's “Idalian Aphrodite beautiful” in Beattie's “queen of melting joy, smiling supreme in unresisted charms:”—

“Her eyes in liquid light luxurious swim,
And languish with unutterable love:
Heaven's warm bloom glows along each
brightening limb,
Where fluttering bland the veil's thin
mantlings rove,
Quick blushing as abashed she half with-
drew:
One hand a bough of flowering myrtle
waved,
One graceful spread, where, scarce con-
cealed from view,
Soft through the parting robe her bosom
heaved.”

The resemblance increases as we go on, until the echo in “Cenone” of the “Judgment of Paris” becomes very distinct indeed. By both poets Here is made to proffer Paris power, and to dilate on the future that lay before him if he selected it in preference to the bribes which the other goddesses had to give. In Tennyson she promises him wealth

“From many a vale
And river-sundered *champaign* clothed
with corn,
Or labour'd mines undrainable of ore.”

In Beattie she points the arbiter for his reward to where

“Toil decked with glittering domes yon
champaign wide,
And wakes yon grove - embosomed
lawns to joy,
And rends the rough ore from the moun-
tain's side.”

In the speech of Pallas, the Laureate has by far the advantage of Beattie; for while the noble vindication of “self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control” in the former is made to stand out in power and poetic contrast to the ambitious promptings of Here and the voluptuous allurements held out by Aphrodite, Beattie makes Minerva preach a lengthy sermon on virtue and wisdom, much after the admired model of Dr Blair, which by its tediousness goes far to justify Paris in passing over her claims. In the pleadings of the Queen of Love, also, there are some fine stanzas, that go a long way to redeem the poem from the oblivion into which Beattie had relegated it, and from which its parallelism with the verses of the Laureate has furnished us with an excuse for once more reclaiming it. The following description of the haunts of Pleasure, as contrasted with the bloody and perilous paths of Ambition, and as opposed to the austere ways of Virtue, will bear comparison with some of the sweetest stanzas in the “Minstrel:”—

“She loves to wander on th' untrodden
lawn,
Or the green bosom of reclining hill,
Soothed by the careless warbler of the
dawn,
Or the lone plaint of ever-murmuring
rill.
Or from the mountain-glade's aerial brow,
While to her song a thousand echoes
call,
Marks the wide woodland wave remote
below,

Where shepherds pipe unseen and
waters fall.

The frolic Moments, purple - pinioned,
dance

Around, and scatter roses as they play :
And the blithe Graces hand in hand ad-
vance,

Where with her loved compeers she
deigns to stray ;

Mild Solitude, *in veil of russet dye,*
Her sylvan spear with moss-grown ivy
bound ;

And Indolence *with sweetly languid eye,*
And zoneless robe that trails along the
ground."

Though there is a music and a charm in "Ænone," due as well to the sweetness of Tennyson's verses as to our sympathy with the woes of the deserted maiden, and to the simple plaintiveness with which she tells over her sorrows, we can still turn to the "Judgment of Paris" without any sense of great descent from the poetic level. That there is a connection between the two pieces is clear ; that "Ænone" was suggested by the "Judgment of Paris" appears more than probable : but we must leave it for students of Tennyson to decide in what relationship this Idyll stands to the older poem. At all events, the Laureate is to be congratulated that he has tided over the "too metaphysical" difficulty in the story, and made "Ænone," in spite of its strongly subjective cast, one of the most popular poems in our language.

We have said that a literary career such as that of Beattie seems strange and incomprehensible to writers of the present day. From the quiet seclusion of his northern university he looked out at the progress of letters around, never a silent spectator, often emerging to take up his share in the work, but always shrinking back into his former retirement when his task was over. In our day we are apt to think that, away from the centres

of taste and enlightenment, the range of ideas becomes more limited, the intellectual feelings pinched, for want of suitable nourishment. In short, unless a man can read his 'Times' wet from the printing-press, our theory is that he must necessarily fall behind time and become "provincial." But we are seriously inclined to question whether one of the greatest wants of the day is not more of such "provincial" criticism as Beattie and his associates supplied to their generation. In the strain which is generally put upon the literary life in our time, there is far too great temptation for the formation of rapid judgments ; and critics have so little faith in the permanency of their own opinions, that they do not consider it worth while, when there are difficulties on both sides of the balance, taking the trouble to strike an accurate mean. And the literary life of our day is so manifold, branching into so many channels, bringing the writer under the influence of so diverse interests, and into connection with so many other competitors, that the possibilities of impartial and dispassionate criticism are greatly diminished. Such criticism as Beattie's, were it possible in our day, coming from a watchful spectator, apart from the turmoil of the crowd, to whom the workers were nothing and the work everything, with time and ability to subject the efforts of his contemporaries to tests as careful as a chemical analysis, would really be one of the greatest boons that could befall modern criticism. The premium placed upon haphazard writing by an age that forgets to-day everything that it read yesterday, and that nightly clears its recollection for the reception of its next day's views from next morning's papers, is too high not to exercise a seriously prejudicial effect upon the literature of the time.

A LAY CONFSSIONAL.

(PLENARY INDULGENCE.)

THE BOX, Monday Evening.

DEAR E.,—You are always interested in studio life and incidents, and as I have no news to tell you, instead of writing you a letter I have sketched an experience of this morning, and thrown it into a dramatic form, thinking it may amuse you. Don't try to guess the persons, and do not be deceived by its form into supposing this to be a play. It is only a series of scenes, without beginning, middle, or end—with only the unities of time and place, and perhaps a certain likeness of character, to recommend it, but making no pretence to completeness, and being purely fragmentary and episodal. Do not be disappointed that it ends in nothing. So many things do in real life.—Ever yours most faithfully,

VICTOR HELPS.

Dramatis Personæ.

VICTOR HELPS.

LADY SELINA MUNDANE.

LADY JANUS.

MARIETTA—a Model.

SCENE.—*A painter's studio. The walls hung with old tapestries, and silks, and satin tissues. Étagères covered with vases, Venetian glasses, and bric-a-brac. A broad faded satin couch. Stuffs of every kind and hue scattered about. A tall cheval mirror. Tiger-skins on the floor. Sketches, portfolios, and half-finished canvasses. Victor is seated at an easel painting Marietta.*

Victor. What is that song that you are singing to yourself; is it not "La Donna Lombarda"?

Marietta. Sì, signore.

Vic. Ah! I thought it was. How it brings back the old Roman days when I was first beginning to paint! Dear old Rome! how I should like to see it again!

Mar. È bella, ma bella, Roma—non é vero, signore?

Vic. Davvero, I used to like its very dirt. I'm afraid it's been terribly cleaned up since it became the capital of Italy—eh, Marietta?

Mar. Che so Io? Si dice.

Vic. Niccolina used always to be singing the "Donna Lombarda" while she sat to me. It was a great favourite of hers. I have not

thought of it for years; and now that you hum it, it seems to bring back all Rome—

"Donna Lombarda perchè non mi ami? Perchè ho marito! se hai marito, falo morir."*

That's the way it begins, isn't it?

Mar. Sì, signore.

Vic. How charmingly simple! how delightfully moral! "se hai marito, falo morir." It is certainly a short way of getting rid of an obstacle to one's happiness.

Mar. Dunque le piace questa canzone? You like-a?

Vic. Immensaménte, morals and all. But speak English; I'm very lame with my Italian. Indeed I always was, and now I've almost

* Why, Lombard Lady, do you not love me?
Because I've a husband.
If you've a husband, cause him to die.

entirely forgotten it. The Donna Lombarda follows the advice of her lover, and kills her husband, does she not?

Mar. Ma non, signore! You no remember. Her lover he tell her go down in garden, find-a serpente; pesta what you call crush-a his head for poison husband—and she go, as he say, and make-a Bibita for drink-a, wiz veleno of serpente—e poi ze husband he come “tutto sudato,” all what you call sweaty, and ask-a drink-a. She give-a drink-a, e poi, la bambina in culla; come si dice bambina in culla?

Vic. The baby in the cradle.

Mar. Two, tree, four months old; she speak-a and dice, “Non lo prende. You no take-a, is poison.” And he no take-a, and he very arrabiato; how you say, aingry.

Vic. And then he turns the tables and kills her, I suppose?

Mar. Credo; non mi remember. I suppose-a. Perchè non?

Vic. Why not, indeed? It's quite primitive and natural. Have you a husband, Marietta?

Mar. Dio me ne guardi.

Vic. Perhaps you would treat him in the same manner if you did not like him and he treated you badly.

Mar. Oh, signore!

Vic. No! You're a good girl, I think, Marietta. You would grin and bear it, then, as the saying is—eh?

Mar. Non so, signore.

Vic. Sing me the “Donna Lombarda,” will you?

(She sings it partly, and then breaks off, and says—)

Mar. I not know the rest. Basta cosi.

Vic. Manythanks. What a pretty air it is! But you have so many pretty songs in Italy; so many charming little “saluti” and “ritornelli,” as you call them, I think. Do you know any of them?

Mar. Oh, tanti.

Vic. Sing me some, will you? Stop a moment. Turn your head a little more towards me, and sit a little further back. That's right. Now for the song.

Mar. Me sing-a little canzone traduced in Angleesh by Mossu Smitti, suo amico, quello lungo, colla barba rossa.

Vic. Who?

Mar. Signor Smitti, ze long man wiz red beard.

Vic. What! has Smith translated one? Oh, come, let me hear it.

(She sings.)

Flower of the Bean,

Oh the joys we have known, oh the days we have seen!
When Love sang, the world was so glad and so green,
O flower of the Bean!

Flower of the Brake,

Life had but one blossom; and oh, for your sake
I plucked it, and gave it! now let my heart break,
O flower of the brake!

Flower of the Rose,

The rain ever rains, and the wind ever blows,
And life since you left me has nothing but woes,
O flower of the Rose!

Flower of the Gorse,

All the love that I gave you comes back like a curse
No peace will be mine till I'm laid in my hearse,
O flower of the Gorse!

Vic. Those are very sad songs.

Mar. Sì, signore, davvero—sono triste, ma vere. Life is what you call trist sempre,—cioè, per noi altre femmine—for ze women, not for ze men.

Vic. Nonsense!

Mar. Ridete! You laugh. Eppure, ze men zey forget very easy; ze women zey remember very long,—zey suffer—ze men laugh.

Vic. Pho! Marietta—one would think, from your tone, that you had been ill-used and jilted by somebody.

Mar. Pazienza, signore.

Vic. Scusa.

Mar. Non c'è remedio, signore. Si sa.

Vic. I beg your pardon. I'm so sorry. I did not mean. Can I help you?

Mar. Grazie. When ze storm blows, ze ozier bows—when he no bow, he break. It is useless. When ze hail kill ze vine-blossoms, zere will be no grapes. Out of a stone nobody can squeeze blood. Nemmeno Sansone—not even Samson. It is no use to cry. What was, was—and what is, is.

Vic. That is true philosophy.

Mar. I not know philosophy. But what I say is true—zat I know. He was bad man. He treat me very bad. No matter. I very aingry; zat's ze reason I cry.

Vic. I daresay he was not worthy of you.

Mar. He! no; he no heart. He sweet and grazioso outside; he smile-a and speak-a dolce parole—tutto sugo—all juice, as a peach-a with a stone for a heart.

Vic. It was lucky, perhaps, that you did not marry him. He might have made your life very unhappy.

Mar. Dat is what I say. But it is of no use. Ma il Buon Dio lo punirà. Ze good God will punish him. Zat I know. Why punish me, and not him? Ma non. It is

not so in zis world. Lascia andare. He no worth crying for. E un infame!

Vic. Don't think of him any more. I'm so sorry for you, but perhaps it is all best as it is.

Mar. He come under my window. He play his mandolina, and sing—

“Alla finestra affacciati,
Nenello di sto core.”

And I was fool to listen, and to go to ze window; and he talk my heart out of me wiz dolce parole: and so it was. And mamma disse, “Tu sei stolta, Marietta—you are fool;” and I was fool. But he talk-a so sweet, I no believe; and he promise so fair, and I was ver young: and so it was. And zen he deceive me, and go way, and he laugh at me; and he come no more to sing about my beautiful eyes—ah non! He sing to Nina, Nina la bella, ah lo credo, molto bella, because she was rich, and had belli coralli, and a dote of cinque cento scudi.

Vic. Did she marry him?

Mar. She! ah, non! she laugh at him. Era fiera lei. She very proud. “Io mi marito con un signore, disse, non con te, disse—bah! I marry a signore, not a contadino—bah!” El lui si arrabbidò. He was very aingry, and he threaten her; and, poi c'era una scena, e poi her brother interpose; and Antonio gli dava una coltellata he stab her brother, but he no kill him; and he was imprigionata in ze prison. And wen I went to talk to him at the grillo, he menace me and cry, “Eri tu che m' hai fatto tutto. It was thou that did it all.” Io! who never said a word. I try to disculp myself, but in vain; and then I cry, and he sream, “Vat-tene stolta, ti disprezzo;” and I go home and have a fever. And so when I was get well, zey tell me Antonio was gone away, and no-

body know where. And I never see him after that, and I not know where he is; and now it is three years. But I am here wiz my father, and I make model for bread; and nobody I know to speak to me, and give me consolation.

Vic. I will write to Rome, and see if I can find out something about Antonio, if you like, and if you will give me his name and address. Most probably he went there.

Mar. Oh, grazie; but I know nothing, if he be in Rome or other-where—ah non! E inutile. E poi he detest me; e poi e un cattivo uomo—a bad man. No: I no want to hear of him no more. Ma grazie, sa, per la sua bontà.

Vic. Well, think of it, Marietta; and if I can help you, I will, with pleasure. Think of it, and let me know.

Mar. Grazie.

(Victor rises and throws down his palette and brushes.)

Mar. Ha finito, signore?

Vic. Yes; it is impossible to paint in this light. You can go now; and come back to-morrow at ten—can you?

Mar. Sì, signore.

Vic. And remember, if I can do anything for you, I shall be glad to do it.

Mar. Grazie: dunque, a suoi comandi, a rivederla.

Vic. A rivederla.

(MARIETTA goes out.)

Vic. (alone). Poor Marietta! It is always the same old story. Who is heart-whole that has any heart? Who that lives does not suffer? What skeletons there are in every house! We artists are really almost as much confessors as clergymen and doctors; and I suppose we make much the same mess in giving advice and consolation. However, it is some consolation at least to empty one's heart at times,

if only in words, into a sympathising ear.

What a day! There is positively no light. The air is so cold and gnawing that it eats into one's very bones; and the wind moans through the panes like a despairing spirit. What shall I do? I cannot sit here and brood over my own thoughts. How lonely life is! Ah! if I could only—— But let me not look back, or I shall grow melancholy as an owl.

Shall I go and see Clara—Lady Janus, I mean? I beg her pardon. No; it's her day of reception. I shall be sure to find her surrounded by fine ladies and dawdling men, and I'm in no humour for court intrigue and scandal and chatter.

Poor Clara! how she labours at her life like a galley-slave at his oar! and does it bring her all the harvest of happiness she seeks? No, no; I fear not. In her best nature she rebels at what her worldly ambition craves; and yet her ambition is so strong an instinct that it rules her life. What a strange double nature it is! one half artistic and ideal, one half positive and worldly. Full of passion, sentiment, and tender feeling, and yet so avid of social distinction, that she is ready to sacrifice even her happiness for it. Longing for rest, and yet constantly in action. Well, as far as her ambition is concerned, she ought to be satisfied; and yet she is not. No; for her heart cries out to be fed, and will not be contented with the husks and thistles the world offers her. She is envied; but those who are envied are not loved, and it is love she needs and craves. But with love alone she could never be contented, and that was all I had to offer, and it was useless to offer that. Did I make a mistake as far as her happiness is concerned? Well, no. But as far as mine is

concerned—ah! that is another question, which I decline to answer. There is no use to regret; and nothing is so foolish as to look back and wish things were other than what they are.

Since I can't paint, let us see what there is to read. Ah! here is that new volume of poems by Ganda. Let me see what there is in it. A new book has always a promise of something. First, a little more coal on the fire. That's it. Now for an hour of peace.

(Throws himself in his chaise-longue, and begins to cut the pages; reads at random—)

“Above us, a passion-flower, opens the sky,
And the earth in its languor half closes its eye;
And Time is a cloudlet that passes us by,
And Love is a vision, and Life is a lie.”

Now, does that mean anything?

“And Love is a vision, and Life is a lie.
Tum de dum, diddle dum, diddle dum die.”

It is like the jingle of a barrel-organ, but “so full of melody, you know,” everybody says. Melody indeed! Twopenny-ha'penny melody, where the words have run away with the sense. *Wörter ohne Lieder*; or rather, *Wörter ohne everything*.

(Bell rings.)

Who can that be?

(Rises and opens the door—enter LADY SELINA MUNDANE.)

Oh, Lady Selina, is that you? Pray come in.

Lady S. You're sure I'm not intruding? You're sure I'm not interrupting one of your moments of inspiration?

Vic. I never have inspirations. I was bored to death by myself. Pray come in. It is too dark to work; and besides, I am perfectly stupid to-day.

Lady S. Fie! not stupid; no one would accuse you of that but your-

self. But I am so glad to find you unoccupied, for I want to ask your advice and assistance on a very important matter. Oh, you needn't look alarmed; it isn't anything very dreadful. But you're sure, you're really sure, that I'm not breaking in upon one of those grand inspirations? Oh, I know you artists; you always have such beautiful ideas and imaginations, that when we poor mortals, who haven't any, you know, come in, I daresay you wish we were in Jericho, don't you, now—really? Oh, you needn't say you don't.

Vic. But I do say so. My brain is as empty as a sucked egg-shell, and a charming woman is always the best of all inspirations, and I am delighted to see you. Pray take a seat, here by the fire, and tell me how I can be of any service to you. There's nothing so pleasant as to give advice. It's so much pleasanter and easier than to take it.

Lady S. Well, you are the only person I know who can really advise me in this matter. I know you have such wonderfully good taste, and such talent at invention, that I have ventured to come to you; for I really don't know what to do by myself—and Sir John told me he knew you'd help me: and you must lay all the blame on his shoulders if I've done wrong.

Vic. I shall lay the blame on nobody's shoulders. It will be a pleasure to me to assist you if I can.

Lady S. Oh, you can if you choose. Well, it is this. You know I'm to have a costume-ball on the 18th (you got your card, I hope, and you mean to come, don't you? Oh, I'm so glad! I count on you). I've only a week before me now; and do you know, I'm still perfectly undecided about my costume. I can't make up my mind what would be best. It's perfectly

dreadful. I've talked it over with all my friends, and with Sir John, and even spent days in looking over all the books of costumes; and this morning Sir John said, "Why don't you go and ask Mr Helps? I'm sure he will be able to suggest something satisfactory." And you know I jumped at this; for you are so clever, I'm sure you'll be able to tell me the very thing I ought to wear.

Vic. Have you thought of anything?

Lady S. Oh, I've thought of so many things, that I'm quite worn out with thinking; for as soon as I've almost decided upon one thing, somebody or other urges me not to have it, because it will be unbecoming, or improper, or something, so that I have to give it up, and I am really *au bout de mes forces*. First I thought of an Egyptian dress, because it would be so strange and odd; but then I should be obliged to wear sandals and naked feet, and that was objected to. And then an old Greek dress was proposed; but I'm afraid of that too—and then there are always the sandals; and besides, the Egyptians were really too *décolleté*, and so were the Greeks. I wonder how they could go so; but I suppose it was the fashion. And then there was the Marquise dress; but that is so hackneyed, you know—one sees it everywhere—though one must admit that the powder is very becoming, when you're not really grey. And then there are the old Venetian dresses. They are very rich, of course; but I don't know—they look so queer and so bundled up, and I am afraid they would not suit my style. And then there are the old Elizabethan dresses, with farthingale and high ruff, and all that; but I think they are very ugly,—don't you? And then I thought of going as Night,

with stars all about me, and diamonds. My diamonds are really fine, and I have several stars that I might wear on my head. But I don't know—what do you think?

Vic. There will be twenty Nights at the least at your ball, and your dress would certainly not be unique, as it ought to be.

Lady S. Yes, so I am told. But my diamond stars would come in well, wouldn't they? But what would you propose? Oh, do tell me!—that's a good man.

Vic. It is not so easy. Let me think. Something oriental would suit you.

Lady S. Yes; that is what I first thought—but what?

Vic. Suppose you went as the Queen of Sheba.

Lady S. Oh dear me! That is quite a new idea. But I don't know what her dress would be. Would the stars come in?

Vic. Perfectly. You might wear them as a coronet round your head.

Lady S. Oh, capital! capital! What a clever man you are!

Vic. And then Sir John might go as Solomon—with a long beard and a sheik's robes.

Lady S. Oh, Sir John is going as Cæsar Borgia. He is decided. But have you any pictures of the Queen of Sheba?

Vic. I daresay I have. I will look over my books and portfolios, and see if I can find anything: of course it must be very rich and oriental, with a long flowing veil; and you may arrange it with a great *agrafe* of diamonds; and put on all the jewels you have. They will all come in. I will make you a sketch, and bring it to you if you like, and explain it.

Lady S. Oh, thanks, so much, you know. If you only would be so kind.

Vic. I will think it out for you,

and make you a sketch. But how goes on the ball? All the world of beauty and fashion will be there, of course.

Lady S. Oh yes; everybody is coming, I believe, except the Cabinet Ministers, and I'm so vexed. They say it will not do for them to appear in masks and costumes. It would not be dignified, and would expose them to all sorts of satires and caricatures in 'Punch,' and they would never hear the end of it. But I know who put that notion into their heads. It was Lady Janus. She is jealous of me, and wants to ruin my ball if she can; and there is no end to the intrigues she has entered into to prevent them from coming. She first convinced her husband, and he and she then convinced them all; and it has been done purely to spite me. I'm sure I should think she might be satisfied with what she has got, without trying to take everything from everybody. She does, she really does, you know. I never saw such a woman.

Vic. Oh, I think you are quite mistaken. I will answer for it with my life that she is incapable of such pettiness.

Lady S. Oh, but I know she has. Everybody says she has, and it's just like her.

Vic. Oh no; you do her great injustice.

Lady S. Well, then, who could have put such a stupid idea into their heads?

Vic. They themselves, probably.

Lady S. No; I cannot believe that. Why should they not come in costume? You can't imagine how vexed I am. I went to Lady Janus this morning, and I told her pretty plainly what I thought, for I do consider it very unkind of her.

Vic. And what did she say? Did not she deny it?

Lady S. Oh, of course. She said she had never done anything of the kind, and that she was exceedingly interested that my ball should be a great success. But she had to admit that she thought they were right not to appear in costume. So you see, after all, it was owing to her influence that they have refused to come.

Vic. No; I am sure you are mistaken. If you like, I will go and see her, and talk it over with her.

Lady S. Oh, do! It would be so kind. I really do hope that she will not be so disagreeable as to try to do me such an injury.

Vic. Be sure of it, and leave it to me.

Lady S. I'm so much obliged to you for all you offer to do. (*Rising.*) And I will trust you entirely. But I must not keep you any longer from your beautiful work; and you will send me the sketch, won't you? So here you are among all your wonderful creations. How I envy you artists! I should like to stop and spend hours in looking at them; but I suppose I must go now. You will let me come back again another time, won't you, when I shall not disturb you, to admire your pictures? Oh, you artists! you artists! what a delightful life you lead—without any of the vexations we have! That is a pretty piece of embroidery—lovely! Oriental, isn't it? And you've such a quantity of pretty things—quite gems. I wish I had time to examine them. And such ceramics—or ceramics I believe they call them now,—but why, I don't know. What a nice old chair! Where do you pick up such pretty things? So you won't forget to send the sketch, will you?

Vic. Depend on me.

Lady S. And do persuade Lady Janus not to spoil my ball, and—

what was I going to say? No matter; I'm so much obliged to you. Yes—really. The Queen of Sheba—that does sound very nice, very nice indeed. And we shall depend on seeing you. Have you your costume? Titian?

Vic. Oh no; that's a secret.

Lady S. Oh dear! Then I must not be indiscreet. Well, good-bye,—a thousand thanks. Don't trouble yourself. *What a charming frame!* Good-bye—*au revoir*. I'm so busy, you know. Oh, there is a perfect piece of oriental satin! That would come in well for some sort of costume, wouldn't it? But I shall be tempted to carry away some of your treasures if I look at them any longer. Only think, after all our discussions you have hit off the very thing. What a clever man you are! The Queen of Sheba! Oriental—and my diamonds will really come in very well. Horrid day, isn't it? It's really quite unbearable. Well, *au revoir*, and a thousand thanks, you know. (*Goes out.*)

Vic. (alone). Ouf, ouf, ouf! What a woman! What a tongue! Poor Sir John! what must life be with her perpetually at one's side—buzzing all day long, like a fly against a pane of glass! Poor Lady Janus! how she must have suffered under that interview this morning! But one must pay penalties for high positions. If fruit grows on high trees, the world will, of course, throw stones at it.

Well; let me see if I can get anything else out of Ganda's poems. He's an excellent fellow, but it's a pity he—

(*Bell rings, and VICTOR goes to the door. Enter LADY JANUS.*)

Vic. (surprised). Lady Janus!

Lady J. Oh, my dear friend, let me take refuge here with you!

Vic. What is the matter? Has anything happened?

Lady J. Nothing—everything. Oh, here at least there is peace—here there is repose! I am vexed—I am tired to death of life and the world. Let me stay here a little while—will you? You can go on with your work. I will be quite still—that is, I will try to be.

Vic. My dear Lady Janus, what can I do for you? what has occurred to vex you?

Lady J. What is always occurring. Is there anything new in it? It is always the same thing. The tread-wheel always goes round, and I always must keep it going. I am tired of life—tired of the world—tired of myself. When will it end? when shall I find peace?

Vic. Be calm, Clara. Here, take this seat. Let me draw it near to the fire. There. Pray be calm. Tears! why these tears?

Lady J. Let me weep. I am nervous—I am over-excited. Nothing particular has happened; but I must cry. It helps me. You don't mind it, do you? Forgive me. I have been smiling so long with that vapid smile of pretence, that I am sick at heart. It will not do for me to weep anywhere, and sometimes I feel that I can resist no longer. Smiles, smiles—compliments, inanities, phrases—words that mean nothing—lies, lies; it is all lies. How long shall I be able to go on thus? Oh, here, at least, let me break out, and give vent to all that troubles me within. You must not mind me.

Vic. Weep, if it relieves you. Say nothing, or say all, as you will. Treat me as an old friend who only desires to help you. Confide in me. Whatever you say, it will be as if you said it to no one but yourself. I understand. I think you know you can trust me.

Lady J. Oh yes, I am sure of

that, or I should never have come. But there are times when one cannot help rebelling against the false masking of life, and when one must break out or die. O heaven! shall I never be able to lead a tranquil life—a serene life—a life such as you, for instance, can command, outside of all these *tracasseries*—these irritations—falsehoods of society? Society indeed! How I hate the very word! all is so vile, so mean, so selfish. One must coin one's lips to pretty sayings, and profess so much when one feels so little. What do I really care for all the ambitions and vanities of the world? What are they worth, after all, when one has toiled and gained what are called the prizes? One cries after a crown, and it makes one's head ache to wear it. Why must I lead such a worthless life? I, who only want peace, and long days of devotion to something ideal that feeds the heart. Oh to be away out of this,—far, far in some secluded place with quiet—with love—with happy, simple interests!

Vic. I'm afraid you would tire of that too, after a time.

Lady J. Oh no. How little you know me! You think I am ambitious. Well, so I am; but not for a public rôle. What does it all bring of solid and real satisfaction? Nothing. What do I care who is Minister, and who shall have this post, and who that? What do I care to have people bowing and kotooing before me, and pointing me out, and pretending to court me—all for what they can get? There is no real heart in it. All these intrigues disgust me. I was not made for them.

Vic. Ah, well, you strive to do too much, and you don't take it quietly enough. Of course, there are reactions; but you have compensations. You would not be

happy if you were utterly outside what is called the world.

Lady J. Everybody has his say against me. Try all I can, I can never make things go right. There is always something wrong—in the household, in politics, in society, everywhere. As soon as I wake in the morning it begins. I must have the cook in to discuss the dinner, and I must arrange who shall be asked. What do I care for the dinner, or the people who eat it? Then comes the butler for this, and the housekeeper for that; and how would my lady like this? and how would my lady like that? And when these petty irritations and necessities of daily life are over, Lady One and Mrs T'other are waiting to see me; and each has her little petition—her concert, or ball, or subscription, or something—which I must advise about and help. Then Mrs Somebody comes to urge the claims of her husband, or brother, or cousin for some office. Oh, I must do it. A word from me will do everything. Could I prevail upon my husband to interest himself? If I do for one, the other hates me. But how can I do for everybody? Think of it! This very morning Selina Mundane rushes in upon me, and must see me. She has heard that I have been intriguing to prevent the Ministers from going in costume to her costume-ball—all a lie, of course; and she falls to weeping and sobbing, good heavens, as if she had lost a child! and all because I cannot, you know I cannot, urge Janus to go in costume and play the buffoon, and make himself ridiculous before all the world, for his enemies to point at him and deride him. With all the responsibilities and cares of his position, how can he go and play the fool at her ball? And all for what?

Just because, in her petty little mind, her ball is the one thing in the world at present. I'm sure I wish her well. I hope it will be a great success. I would do anything I could to help her, but this I cannot do. What would the Opposition say? What sarcasms, what caricatures, would appear in the papers! And because I will not expose my husband to this, Selina Mundane comes and weeps, and accuses me, and makes a great scene, until I am so worn out that I said, "Janus, help me, or I shall go mad." Poor Frederick! I must plague him too, and he has now more on his shoulders than he can bear. What can he do, poor man, if he has all these petty bothers in addition?

Vic. Ah yes. You have too many responsibilities, and you in your good heart try to do too much. You take things too hard.

Lady J. I suppose I do; but I was born so. I was never meant for such a life.

Vic. Nobody could do your duties better or so well. You are admirable; you are devoted; you have the kindest heart and the readiest hand, and a true desire to serve everybody. But it is impossible to content all. How you manage to steer so skilfully through all the currents of society without running aground is a mystery to me. Anybody else would make shipwreck, but I only hear praises of you. All lives have their troubles, and we must forget them if we cannot avoid them. If you had a colder heart and a less susceptible nature you would feel these troubles less; but, on the other hand, you would lose the compensations—for instance, those of art.

Lady J. That is true. Think, yesterday morning Gossoff came and played to me an hour; and then

all life seemed so light, the clouds cleared away, and there was not an ounce's weight on my heart. I was really carried away into an ideal world, and forgot everything; and then came Selina Mundane this morning to spoil it all. Ah, how calm you are here! no noise, no intrigues—all is peaceful. How I envy you! There are no Lady Selinas to vex you here.

Vic. Oh, I beg your pardon. She was here half an hour ago, and she told me the whole story of her ball, and of the Ministers refusing to come, all on account of you. But I told her that was all folly, and I promised her a sketch of a costume, and she went away quite composed.

Lady J. Really! She came to you! How strange! Well, you can tell her when she comes again that I will do anything for her, except to persuade the Ministers to go in costume.

Vic. Ah! But don't let us think any more about her. I merely meant to say that we artists too have our Lady Selinas, and worse. Don't think it is always easy and serene even here. We have our black days too.

Lady J. Yes, yes, doubtless; but not like mine. You are not a slave. You can rave and rage to your heart's content; but I must feign and smile and play a part always.

Vic. It is sometimes amusing to play a part—particularly when one does it well, as you do. It is more exciting to drive a skittish four-in-hand from a high box, with the world looking on in admiration, than to prod along a donkey, as some are forced to do.

Lady J. Proding along a donkey is sometimes amusing.

Vic. Sometimes, perhaps, but not as a rule. I doubt if you would like it as an occupation. I

admit that to a nature like yours the intrigues of politics, and the exigencies of the world and society, must at times be irritating; but, after all, you would not be quite happy in exile from public life. You like the game you play on the whole, and you play it well,—and confess, it has its pleasures.

Lady J. I will not say that it has not. The sense of power is always pleasant. It is better to drive than to be driven, but the cost of it is very great; and then, to be so misunderstood—to be open to such stabs in the dark—to be exposed to such bitter and unfounded accusations, after one has done one's best!

Vic. You should laugh at them.

Lady J. That's very easy to say. The laughing would be like that of the Spartan boy with a fox under his arm biting him all the while.

Vic. He liked it.

Lady J. Did he?

Vic. Yes. He was conquering a difficulty. He was successfully playing a part. That is always a pleasure.

Lady J. Does it pay for the suffering?

Vic. That depends on the sufferer.

Lady J. What is the use of life except to give us happiness?

Vic. What is happiness? It is a mere matter of the scales, and which outweighs the other. Of course, there is always something in both.

Lady J. And at times you must confess the wrong scale goes down, as it does with me now. I dare say it all seems very despicable and unheroic to you, but there are times when there is no vent to accumulated feelings but tears. It is our woman's solace. I suppose you never yield to such weaknesses: and to-day I had to cry, and I had

to pour out my griefs to somebody; and so, as you are an old friend, I thought you would forgive me. You see, Janus is so different; and then I dislike so to trouble him, poor man! He is so calm of nature, that he would not understand it, you know. He tries to understand me, and to help me; but when I get into a state of excitement, and want sympathy, to talk to him is as if a furious wave in all the turbulence of its passion dashed itself against a rock. So I came here.

Vic. I thank you. It was a proof of confidence that I deeply feel. You may be sure of my sympathy. We have known each other a long time. I know what you feel. It has been good for you to cry it out; and now it is good for you to smile. Never is the sunshine so sweet as when it breaks through a cloud.

Lady J. Yes; you know what I feel, for you are an artist. You live in another world, in a little paradise, it seems to me, with ideal persons and fancies. You can evoke the sunshine, and play with the storm, for they are not real to you; and when real life annoys you, you can always retire into your ideal world. But I have no such resource, no such refuge. Not that I am afraid to encounter a real storm. No; if it were only once in a while, I could meet it, and struggle with it, and brave it. It is not this, it is the constant irritation, the petty intrigues, the little rasping troubles, that spoil life by their constant wearing. Violent passion one can pardon, but not perpetual nagging. It is like being bitten to death by vermin, eaten by ants.

Vic. Don't think about it. As for Lady Selina, I will see her, and set all that matter right; and as for the rest, count upon my affection

as much as you will—you never will count too much.

Lady J. Thanks, thanks! You have already done me so much good. I have had my cry out, and I am calmer; I am quite calm indeed. How much a little word in the right place and time can do! I am afraid I have been very foolish. Will you forgive me?

Vic. There is nothing to forgive. There is everything to be grateful for. You have shown me a confidence which tempts me almost to — No matter. (*Rises and walks across the studio, pauses, and then returns.*) But it is all over now. Smile—let me see you smile. Take heart, if you don't wish to see me break down. Take heart; help me, for I too have something to bear, as you know. But you see I bear it. I say nothing.

Lady J. No. You have always been too kind, too good. You have never taken advantage of my weakness—of my folly.

Vic. Do you remember? No, it's of no use to remember; though it is impossible to forget, Clara.

Lady J. Victor!

(*A pause.*)

Vic. Let us say no more. What a gloomy day it is!

Lady J. You have forgiven me? I thought you had forgiven me.

Vic. There is nothing to forgive. I was unfortunate. That is all.

Lady J. Ah, if you only knew! But what is the use of explanation? We should only make things worse. How different all might have been if, if—well—if they were not as they are!

Vic. You would not have been happier on the whole. I am not such a fool as to think that. I should have been, not you. If all had been different, I should have been—well—different too. But where is the use of regretting?

There is no reclaiming the past: when one's cup is broken, it is broken; when one's wine is spilt, it is lost. Stop! let me show you two pictures.

Lady J. Would it be well for me to see them?

Vic. No; on the whole, I will not show them to you. They are only reminiscences.

Lady J. Let me see them.

Vic. Not now; another time.

Lady J. Now, now.

Vic. (*goes and takes out a picture, and places it on the easel.*)

There is one picture. It is a wood, as you see, and a silent pathway leads down among the thronging green trees. It is morning in June. Soft sunlight and shadow dapple the sward, and glint against the smooth beech-trunks, catching here and there sprays of wild roses that stretch out into the light. You do not hear the birds singing, but they are there; I hear them. Their song is of love. The world has not wandered that way; but nature is there, and love. Over that green slope enamelled with flowers droop low branches, and a little breeze is stirring in the leaves; and there two figures are sitting, while a stream babbles musically at their feet. They do not speak; only the whispering voices of nature, and the song of birds, stir the dreamy silence. But there, to one at least of those figures, is the centre of the universe. There is hope, and the divine dream of love, that transfigures all things. She is half turned away. He is gazing at her. They are both dreaming. They have been painting, but at this moment their brushes and colours are dropped on the grass. There is something going to be said, but it is not yet said. The whole world is waiting for it. What will he say? What will she answer? Will

they ever paint there again? All this was in the mind of the artist who painted it, but it needs the imagination to supply the great voids of expression. What will be the answer, think you?

Lady J. Ah, Victor, you have not forgiven!

Vic. That is one picture. Here is the other—the pendant. Would you like to see that also, since you have seen the first?

Lady J. Oh, the first is enough. I do not wish to see the other. Better let me imagine that.

Vic. Yes; you must do me the favour to see the pendant. It is not without interest.

Lady J. Show it to me, then. It is written, as it seems, that I must see it. If it please you, I cannot refuse.

Vic. (*places it on the easel*). There. The season has changed. It is late autumn. A drought is over all. A storm has passed that way, and scattered the roses and broken down one of the main branches from the principal tree. The stream has dried up, and bubbles no longer; the grass is withered, the flowers dead. The sunshine is shrouded; twilight is coming on; and a grey, monotonous veil of cloud covers the sky. A figure is seated there alone. His head is buried in his hands. You cannot see his face. A snake is crawling through the grass around that rock, and lifting its quivering head. On a dead branch a melancholy owl is seated above. His plaintive note is all that breaks the stillness—the lark and the nightingale have long since fled. The wind stirs sadly in the trees and moans among the dead leaves. The sear leaves that are left on the beeches are slowly dropping. There is a smell of mouldy earth pervading the air. Over all is a sense of regret—use-

less regret for what cannot be undone, for what is gone beyond recall—useless but inevitable as long as life goes on.

Lady J. Ah yes! it is inevitable.

Vic. Perhaps.

Lady J. How perhaps? Is it not sure?

Vic. Life is what we choose to make of it; we have it always in our hands to shape—it is plastic to our use.

Lady J. Perhaps.

Vic. How perhaps?

Lady J. No; destinies shape themselves. What is past, indeed, we cannot recall; but accidents mould events and beget mistakes, terrible mistakes sometimes, that nothing can remedy. There is much that is only too true in the ancient idea of fate, against which it is useless to strive. What is lost is lost. We have to pay the penalty of our folly, even though we could not act otherwise, constrained by fate.

Vic. We make mistakes with the best intentions, and we often shut our ears to the counsels of our better genius. But there is always one thing left to us at least, and that is to make the best of what remains. What might have been, who knows? All we can say is, that it is not.

Lady J. And if it were? If one could take all back and begin again?

Vic. New mistakes—new blunders. Who knows where any path leads until one has trod it to the end? In life, for the most part, we break the deep and clear silences of feeling with noise and clatter, and call it pleasure.

Lady J. Nothing is what it ought to be—nothing is what we wish it to be. Whatever we have seems worthless—whatever we desire seems precious. We lose our way so easily in the track of life,

among its tortuous thickets; and a seductive path too often leads us to a quagmire or a precipice, and we know not the way back.

Vic. There is no way back. The path of life closes up behind us, and loses itself and is obliterated. There is no going back.

Lady J. Save in one's thoughts, and then nothing is so dear as what we have lost. What is past and lost has a consecration that nothing we own in the present can have. The present is a hard fact, and the past a tender regret. We are never satisfied. Something has gone or something is to come which did or will crown our life. We struggle on—we laugh and pretend to be happy; but the laugh is hollow and the happiness a sham. Nothing is really good but love and art.

(Bell rings—VICTOR opens—enter Servant.)

Serv. I beg your pardon, Mr Helps, but Lord Janus is below in the carriage, and wishes to know if Lady Janus is here, and if she would like him to take her home.

Lady J. Tell him I will come immediately.

(Exit Servant.)

Lady J. You see here has been an oasis of ideality; now for the desert of reality—for the false smiles again, the vapid enjoyment, the intrigues, the business of life. Farewell, dear dreamland—dear land of the impossible! Farewell, Victor! It is well that we were interrupted as we were—all is inevitable. Let us bear it.

Vic. When will you come again?

Lady J. When life becomes intolerable, and I long for consolation, and can bear the world no longer. Farewell! You have calmed me, but you have made me very unhappy too—unhappy in the good sense of the word. But it is not well for either of us to wander too often into the past. Try to think well of me. We have been in another world, and, perhaps, a forbidden one; but how could we help it? Farewell, dear friend! do not forget me, and, if you can, forgive me.

(Exit LADY JANUS.)

Vic. Dear Clara!

COUNTRY LIFE IN PORTUGAL.

THERE has been some stagnation in the book-market this season, and we are the more inclined to feel grateful towards authors who have come forward with contributions to enliven the dulness. But Mr Crawford, with his 'Portugal Old and New,'* needs no stretch of kindly consideration. In this book we have at least one volume of travel which is singularly thoughtful and instructive. Though in speaking of his 'Portugal' as a book of travel, we may possibly give a somewhat false impression of it. It is rather the fruit of many wanderings through the country, and of the varied experiences and information he has accumulated in the course of prolonged residence. It is a kind of encyclopædia of spirited sketches—historical, literary, and archæological; political, agricultural, and social. It would be impossible, in the limits of one short article, to follow the writer to any good purpose over the comprehensive range of subjects he has himself been compelled to condense; and accordingly, it is with Portugal and the Portuguese in the more picturesque aspects of rural scenery and manners that we propose chiefly to concern ourselves.

Considering the intimate political relations we have long maintained with it, and that the bar of the Tagus and the Rock of Lisbon lie within three and a half days' steaming of the Solent, Portugal is a country of which we are strangely ignorant. Englishmen generally have a vague idea that we carry on a very considerable import trade in port wine, cattle, and those delicately-flavoured onions that come

in so admirably with saddle of mutton. Historically, they have heard of the memorable earthquake; of the famous defence of the Lines of Torres Vedras, and possibly of the hard-fought battle of Busaco, and the dashing passage of the Douro. They may even remember that Napier saved a dynasty as the genius of the great Duke assured the independence of the nation. And not a few of them have reason to be aware that the Portuguese are under other obligations to us, besides those that are more or less sentimental, since of a funded debt of nearly £80,000,000 a large proportion must be held in England. They have heard something, besides, of the beauties of Portuguese scenery. Byron sang the praises of Cintra—a spot, by the way, that has been extravagantly overrated, where Beckford, dreaming of Arabian Nights, raised a palace-villa of *rococo* magnificence, among the cliffs he turned into terraced gardens and clothed in a blaze of rare exotics. Many a British passenger outward-bound has driven round the parks and gardens of Lisbon, and climbed the streets to the points of view that command the course of the yellow Tagus. But there our acquaintance with the country ends; and for that it must be confessed there are plausible reasons, to some of which Mr Crawford adverts. The scenery, though often striking and occasionally singularly beautiful, is seldom sublime; while there are great tracts of tame and sombre forest, broken ranges of rugged and repulsive *sierras*, broad stretches of what

* Portugal Old and New. By Oswald Crawford, her Majesty's Consul at Oporto; Author of 'Latouche's Travels in Portugal.' London: C. Kegan Paul & Co. 1880.

the Spaniards call *dehesas* and *de-poblados*; and in Algarve, the most southerly province, bristling wastes of scrub-covered sand, which give one a very tolerable notion of the inhospitable deserts of Africa. The climate in the fine season is trying to foreigners; and the late autumn, which is perhaps the most agreeable season of the year, has the evanescence with the beauty of the "Indian summer." The inns are primitive, and scattered about at haphazard; the roads are unpleasantly dusty when it is dry, and may be well-nigh impracticable when the rains are descending in a deluge; and the travelling arrangements are such as might be expected in a land whose inhabitants are the reverse of restless. Above all, there is the difficulty of making one's self understood, to say nothing of conversing pleasantly and fluently. Mr Crawford, who doubtless knows the language well, pronounces it one of the most difficult in Europe; nor do previous acquirements in Latin, French, &c., go far towards even lifting you over the threshold. All that notwithstanding, Portugal is a fascinating and interesting country; and if the tourist must make up his mind to discomforts, and must almost necessarily resign himself to a preliminary education, yet he will find that he has many compensating pleasures, and that some study of the language will be richly rewarded.

It is the tourist who is the father of the luxuries of travel; and accommodation grows up on the track of those passing strangers who follow the highroads of commerce or pleasure. But Portugal, as it happens, lies in a corner of the Peninsula, and, except for the vessels that coast its seaboard, on the way to nowhere in particular. Consequently, the Portuguese have been much left to themselves, save by the little colony of English merchants who make their living

or their fortunes out of the vintages of the Douro. There have been times when the forbidding strength of their natural fastnesses has served the inhabitants of the hill districts well. They held their own in the northern provinces against the aggressions of the Moors, when the waves of the Saracenic invasion were surging over Spain to the Pyrenees, as Mr Crawford describes in his opening chapter. And in the wars of the beginning of the present century, the flying detachments of invading columns seldom dared to straggle far from the main body. Napier gives a most vivid picture of the difficulties of Junot's march from Alcantara on Lisbon in 1808. By the by, and by way of confirming our assertions as to the ignorance of the ordinary Briton on the subject of Portuguese geography, we may quote Mr M'Corkindale's remark in Aytoun's "Glenmutchkin Railway," when suggesting the feasibility of an "Alcantara Union" scheme: "Hang me," says Bob, "if I know whether Alcantara is in Spain or Portugal! but nobody else does." Begging pardon for the parenthesis, we return to General Napier; and what he writes is this: "Nature alone had opposed his progress; but such were the hardships his army had endured, that of a column which had numbered 25,000 men, 2000 tired grenadiers only entered Lisbon with their general: fatigue and want and tempests had scattered the remainder along two hundred miles of rugged mountains, inhabited by a warlike and ferocious peasantry, well acquainted with the strength of their fastnesses, and proud of many successful defences made by their forefathers against former invaders." When the country was evacuated by the contending armies, brigandage sprang into a flourishing institution. Disbanded levies,

who had been demoralised and unfitted for peaceful labour, took naturally to a light and congenial occupation; and after the civil war, which came to an end with the submission of Don Miguel, brigandage was more thriving than ever. Borrow, who made his start from Lisbon on his way to carry the Bible into Spain, narrates some travelling experiences which were more exciting than agreeable. Personally he escaped by the good fortune which never failed him; but everywhere he tells of armed escorts, of innkeepers notoriously in league with the enemy, and of districts in the immediate vicinity of cities habitually terrorised by the robber bands. The mystery is how the ruffians managed to get a living out of a population at once panic-stricken and poverty-stricken; for when wayfarers ventured to stir abroad, they gathered in bodies for mutual protection. It is certain that any wealthy stranger, compelled to book his place beforehand by the post, or to ride on horseback by easy stages, would have had his approaching advent heralded in advance, and must have regularly run the gauntlet of ambushes. No wonder that tourists were rare, and that those who, like Lord Carnarvon, visited Portugal even a little later, made a literary reputation on the strength of their daring.

But now all that is entirely changed. Mr Crawford mentions as a matter of course, and in favourable contrast with the adjacent Spain, that brigandage has ceased out of the land. As for the "ferocious peasants" of Napier, who had their bristles raised to resent the Gallic invasion, if they are not become positively refined in their manners, at all events they are exceedingly friendly to strangers. If you are benighted, and gone astray, as may well befall you, you are sure of getting shelter somewhere, or of

being courteously directed on your way with no peremptory demand on your purse or your saddle-bags. Hospitality, indeed, is a Portuguese virtue, as it is of most simple-minded peoples, who live in comfort, if not in affluence. Mr Crawford, and Borrow too, recall grateful memories of chance acquaintances who welcomed them heartily to their homes, placing the houses, with their contents, absolutely at their disposal, and by no means, like the Spaniards, as a matter of form. And it must be no slight ease to the anxious mind to know that, should the worst come to the worst, you may hope to find a friend in the first human being you meet. For when travelling on horseback, as you will naturally choose to do, you may easily lose yourself in a labyrinth of tracks, when the "highroad" buries itself in the cover of the woodlands or strikes across wastes of heath or sand. The accommodation of the public conveyances is simple purgatory, where you are penned up in the stifling interior, and dare hardly let down the rickety glasses under pain of being suffocated by the penetrating dust; while, on the other hand, there must be times of exhilaration or rapture in each day passed in the saddle. The glare of the noon-day sun may be terrible; the afternoon atmosphere may be sultry in the extreme; your horse may hang heavy on your tired bridle-hand, and trip and stumble as he drags listlessly along. But horse and rider revive together as they emerge from close bedchamber and stall to the crisp air of early morning; as they leave the sun-glare for the forest shade, cooled by the rush of the air down the bed of the torrent beside you; or as the freshening breeze springs up at evening, when the sunset is glowing on the distant horizon, and shimmering on the pine-tops in burnished gold.

And how good a thing is the mid-day siesta! Not that siesta described by Mr Crawford, when you withdraw into the darkness of some inner chamber to escape the intolerable nuisance of the flies, which are always most lively and aggressive in the light; but the repose under the green covering of the branches when, after the frugal mid-day meal, the half-smoked cigar slips from your lips, and when you are lulled to sleep by soporifics in the hum of the bees, and the balmy fragrance of the oozing resin.

In the most civilised countries of tourist-haunted Europe, the beggar and the professional showman are prominent figures in the landscapes. In Italy the mendicants swarm in every gorge, replacing the banditti who have been hunted down by the *bersaglieri*. In Switzerland they beset you at each pass and *col*, whining at your heels as you enter the villages and leave them. Even in Germany, where "the begging is 'am strengsten verboten,'" they make silent appeals while the carriage changes horses, and limp nimbly along at the side by the fore-wheel, where they have you at an advantage when pulling up a steep. In the rural districts of Portugal there is no nuisance of the kind. An excellent system of voluntary relief generally supersedes the hard imposition of our poor-rates: the country is decidedly under-populated, and the peasants, for the most part, are well to do. In some provinces they are worse off than in others; but everywhere they are well fed and comfortably clothed; while in the more fertile and populous parts of the north they may be said to be relatively rich. What should we think of a labourer in this country whose wife carried golden ornaments on her person of a Sunday of the value of from £5 to £20? And the good-

man himself has his gay *vesta* clothing, with buttons of silver on glossy velveteen, and rejoices in the dandyism of a spotless white shirt-front, lighted up by a gold stud in the central frill. He works hard, to be sure: sometimes his toil, in the long days of midsummer, will extend to sixteen hours; but then, like our own hard-working colliers and miners, he lives uncommonly well. He can even afford to be something of an epicure, and he rejoices in a variety of diet that our labourers might well envy. His bill of fare includes beef and bacon, dried cod-fish—which is the common delicacy of all classes—lard, bread, and rice, olives and olive-oil, with a luxurious profusion of succulent vegetables. He is allowed gourds and cabbages *à discretion*, nor can anything be more suitable to a sultry climate. And, like the Frenchman, and his nearer neighbour the Spaniard, he is always something of a cook. Not that he has studied refinements of *cuisine*; but he can dress the simple ingredients of his banquets in a fashion that is inimitable so far as it goes. The belated wayfarer, who is asked to sit down to the stew that has been slowly simmering in the pipkin over the embers—it is, in fact, the Spanish *olla podrida*—has, assuredly, no reason to complain. Then his wine, though it is "green," and potent, and heady, and only to be appreciated by one born to the use of it, is infinitely superior to the adulterated beer the Englishman buys at the village "public." As Mr Crawford remarks, "It is meat and drink to him; and while its strength recruits exhausted nature, its acidity is most grateful to the parched palate."

The amateurs of strange superstitions will find them in abundance among a race of uneducated rustics who live much apart, and whose minds are naturally tinged by the

sombre character of their surroundings. The peasant who drives his ox-cart in the dusk through the gloomy shadows of the pine-forest; the shepherd who sleeps among his flocks in the bleak solitudes of the mountains,—hear wild voices in the shrieks and sighings of the wind, and see phantoms in the waving of the boughs, and the dashing of the waterfalls down the rocks. The belief in ghosts is very general; but the most fantastic of the prevalent superstitions is that of the *lobis-homem* or *wehrwolf*. It is an article of firm faith in most rural households, that there are beings who are doomed, or permitted by the powers of evil, to transform themselves periodically into wolves, with the bloodthirsty instincts of the animal. Introduced into the service of some unsuspecting family, they have rare opportunities of worrying the children. In his former volume of 'Travels in Portugal,' Mr Crawford gives one most characteristic legend of the kind, related to him circumstantially by a respectable farmer. A superstition which ought to be more embarrassing to travellers, which is universal in oriental countries, and which the Portuguese may possibly have inherited from the Moors, is that of the existence of hidden treasures. Archæological researches would probably be set down to a hunt after buried gold, in which the stranger was guided by supernatural intelligence. And it must be remarked that the Portuguese are confirmed in that fancy by incidents of treasure-trove from time to time. It is an undoubted fact that, in the troubles of the country, considerable quantities of valuables were concealed by fugitives who never came back to reclaim them.

A thriving and representative class in Portugal is that of the small landed proprietors, answer-

ing to our yeomen, and ranking a degree or two above the labourer. In the length of a country which experiences almost every variety of climate, from the storm-swept mountain-ranges in the north, down to semi-tropical Algarve on the Atlantic, there are several different systems of land-tenure, which Mr Crawford minutely describes. Among the most characteristic of these, as he says, is that of the "emphyteutic," under which copyholders, who are virtually owners of the land, sit permanently at fixed and moderate quit-rents. The story of their tenure is a curious one—mixed up as it is with the history of the country. Unfortunately we cannot go into it in detail; but briefly, it is the legacy of the prolonged struggle between the great land-owning corporations of the Church on the one hand, and their tenants, backed up by the Crown, on the other. There was a time when those small farmers were ground down by extortionate rack-rents, legal fines, and arbitrary exactions. Now they have been absolutely relieved of the latter; while, by the steadily increasing value of the holdings, the rack-rents have been reduced to moderate quit-rents. Take them all in all, they seem to be as enviable a body of men as agriculturists of similar station anywhere. But assuredly it is not their enterprise they have to thank for the easy circumstances that often amount to opulence. With a single exception, their system of farming has hardly altered in any respect, since they were liable, at any moment, to be called from their labours to repel the raids of their fierce neighbours beyond the Spanish frontier. That important exception is the introduction of maize, which, happening to suit both the soil and the climate, has materially increased the value

of their produce. As for the implements of husbandry in common use, there can be nothing in the country more interesting to the antiquarian — not even excepting the Roman remains, which have here and there rewarded the investigations of archaeologists. In fact, the ploughs, harrows, and carts, have been handed down almost unaltered from generation to generation, since they were brought from Italy by the military colonists who followed the Imperial eagles. So, by the way, the grape-growing, and the making of the wine beyond the limits of the famous districts on the Douro, are almost a repetition of processes in use in Latium when Horace used to amuse himself with his Sabine farming. The plough has but a single stilt, and neither coulter nor mould-board.

"The harrow is also of the rudest construction, having fifteen to twenty teeth of iron or wood set quincunx fashion into a strong, oblong, square, wooden framework with two cross-bars. Rollers are unknown; but as a substitute the harrow can be reversed and weighted with stones, and then drawn sledgewise over the land."

As for the cart, it creaks and groans on wheels of solid wood, without either spoke or iron tire, which are attached to the axle that painfully revolves with them. The "slow-moving wain" is dragged by sluggish oxen, yoked by the neck, and sometimes by the horns.

The conspicuous feature of Portuguese farming is the small capital with which it may be profitably carried on. The husbandman dispenses with drainage, for the soil being light and porous, the rainfall runs off only too quickly. Though he raises cattle, he spends nothing on oilcake—the animals, which are stall-fed for the most part, seeming to fatten kindly upon straw. As for the sheep, they are driven out to the hill-pastures; and the pig,

though as popular in the kitchen and on the table, as it is politely ignored in respectable society, leaves much to desire in point of breeding. But if the bones are big and the bristles coarse, compared to our own "Hampshires" and "Berkshires," that is of the less consequence that the pork is reserved for home consumption. When the Portuguese does spend some money, it is on indispensable irrigation works, and these are simple. He leads the water on to his land through adits driven into the springs in the hills; or pumps it up in the circle of buckets attached to the primitive wheel. In most of the more level low-country districts maize is the staple article of growth, being often mixed in the sowing with some other cereal or vegetable.

The chief secret of the farmer's easy prosperity is in his being able to set our rules of rotation at defiance. Year after year, in the summer heats, the same land may be sown with the remunerative maize. He manages this upon shallow soil that is naturally the reverse of rich, by the use of two "simples," to borrow the phrase of the blacksmith who interviewed Sir Walter Scott when the poet visited Flodden Field; and these simples, in his case, are water and home-made manure. The fertilising effects of water on friable soil under a semi-tropical sun are extraordinary (we have seen flourishing market-gardens in the environs of Alexandria on what seemed to be nothing but desert sand intermixed with the dust of crumbling masonry), and the land is enriched by a manner of manuring altogether peculiar to Portugal. Mr Crawford believes it "to be the solution of the problem of the continuous corn-cropping," and thinks the idea might possibly be turned to some account by our own agriculturists. The straw is almost entirely used for cattle-food. The

litter "is supplied by dried gorse, heather, and the various wild plants, such as bracken, cistus, rock-rose, bent-grass, and wild vetches, which usually grow in their company." Most farmers have a patch of wild forest-land in the neighbourhood; in other cases they have rights of cutting. The decaying manure made from that litter is extraordinarily potent, thanks to the power of the twigs and stems in absorbing gases and moisture; while the economy of a plan is self-evident, by which all the straw grown on the land is returned to it.

But while everywhere in the more carefully cultivated districts you come on those snug peasant homesteads, there is no such thing to be seen as the counterpart of the English hall or manor-house. The Portuguese gentleman is emphatically a Cockney, and a Cockney of limited education and ideas. Having few mental resources, and no special taste for rural pursuits, he likes society in towns where he can take life easily among his equals. The great nobles who own wide tracts of territory, which are roughly farmed either by bailiffs or by tenants who go shares with the proprietors in the produce, have their palaces in the capital or the great cities. Moreover, there are many mansions of no small pretensions in the provincial towns still inhabited by the representatives of old families in decay. The soldiers of fortune and the successful adventurers, who went to push their fortunes in the Brazils and the Indies, often came back with considerable wealth. Being generally men of humble origin, they did not care to repair with their fortunes to Lisbon, where they would have been eclipsed and looked down upon by the ancient nobility. They preferred to settle in the smaller towns, where they might become personages of consequence, and where money went a long way.

So their descendants are still to be found, having taken rank with the aristocracy in course of generations, and forming so many out-of-the-world societies. Yet any change from those dead-alive places is welcome at the dullest season of the year, when the towns become intolerably hot; and the Portuguese are fond of playing at farming in their *villegiatura*, when the country is most pleasant in late summer and autumn. The life within doors is rough enough, and, in fact, turns into a perpetual picnic, where the inconveniences are faced with un-failing good-humour. As Mr Crawford describes it, the Portuguese gentleman's country-seat must be much like those villas in the Apennines, where the bare bedchambers open from a bleak central hall, and the scanty furniture, though solid in its build, is nevertheless become rickety with the wear of generations. But then, except for purposes of sleeping and eating, one is almost independent of roof and walls. Are you not beneath skies of unchanging serenity? while you may lounge and laugh away your existence in sunshine that is tempered by the trellised shades of intertwining vine-tendrils and luxuriant climbing-plants. Like Bottom and his comrades in the "Midsummer Night's Dream," you may make each green brake your retiring, if not your tiring, room. Mr Crawford professes to avoid picturesque description, and, indeed, he deals in it only too charily. So for once we extract one of his very occasional pictures, painting the surroundings of a villa of the highest class.

"As in the case of the smaller villas, the house is connected with a farm, and the grounds and garden mingle in the same pleasant fashion with the appurtenances of the farmstead. A long, straight, over-arching avenue of canellia and Seville orange trees terminates in a broad, paved

threshing-floor. In a little dell below the house, under a dense shadow of fig and loquat trees, is the huge water-wheel worked by six oxen, and raising a little river from the depths below. The terraced fields, the orange and olive groves, and the orchards, are all surrounded by broad walks, overshadowed by a heavy pleached trellis supporting vines, and here in the hottest summer day is cool walking in the grey half-shadow of the grapery overhead. Rivulets of water course along in stone channels by the side of every path and roadway, and the murmur of running waters—a sound of which the ear never tires in the South—is heard everywhere and always.”

Those villas are so many Generalifes on a small scale,—and any one who has passed some days at Grenada in the hot season, must remember the oriental fascinations of that delicious retreat. Like the Generalife, the grander of those Portuguese Edens have their grounds, with terraces and balustraded walks, fish-ponds, and falling fountains. Acclimatisation has been at work embellishing the gardens; and Mr Crawford remarks how Portugal has been beautified by the exotics imported from her colonies and elsewhere, which have taken kindly to a congenial climate. None of these ornamental importations have the value of the homely maize, but they add a rare glory to the beautiful landscapes.

“Camellias from Japan have long been the chief ornament of every garden, growing to the size of apple-trees in England. The loquat from China surpasses, as a giver of shade, the fig itself. . . . The gum-trees of Australia, and especially the blue-gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*, the fever-tree), have positively altered the aspect of the more inhabited parts of the country within the last twenty years, so that a modern painter, to make a characteristic landscape, must needs introduce into the picture this species of gum-tree, with its slender, polished trunk, its upright branch-growth against the sky-line, and its long drooping leaves, rich in winter time,

with a mellow splendour of russet red and yellow.

“Again, there is the *Bella sombra*, a large forest-tree from Brazil, which has taken most kindly to Portuguese soil and climate; but finest of the imported trees is the great-flowered magnolia from Carolina and Central America—a forest giant in its native lands, and where it finds a damp and congenial soil, nothing less in size in this country. The age of the very oldest magnolia in Portugal cannot exceed a hundred and twenty years, and yet already some of them tower to a height exceeding that of the tallest English oak-tree, rearing aloft huge clouds of shining, laurel-like leafage, starred here and there in spring and summer time with their great white and scented blossoms.”

So when the Portuguese go to the country in the autumn, they go to lay in health for the rest of the year. They carry no books with them—indeed they have few to bring—and the precarious arrival of the post is a matter of serene indifference. They lounge away the long day out of doors, in those glorious natural shrubberies, in their gardens, vineyards, oliveyards, and orangeries. It is a somewhat tame life, though a healthy one, for its pleasures, such as they are, are strictly confined to the home-circle. It is not the fashion to fill the houses with young men to flirt and play lawn-tennis with the daughters of the household; and to bright-eyed beauties it must seem an abuse of the blessings of Providence to sit alone, or in the company of father and brother, in the scented bowers of those umbrageous magnolias. But there are occasions when the head of the family forgathers with his friends and neighbours. The Portuguese landed proprietor is a sportsman in his way, and gets up *battues* in the peculiar fashion of his country. There are districts where the wolves which haunt the forests go about on the prowl in the winter

snows, and they are excessively destructive to the flocks in the lambing season. They kill more than they carry away, and worry out of pure mischief. And it might be well worth while to get up a grand hunt, such as is common in the woodlands of Brittany, to which the whole country rallies *en masse*, armed promiscuously with anything from rifles to horse-pistols. Mr Crawford does not describe anything of that kind; and his sporting pictures savour so much of caricature, that he has to make solemn attestation to their general fidelity. The Portuguese has excellent pointers of the stanch old Peninsular breed, but he cares little for solitary shooting over dogs. What he likes is a great sporting *funcion*, where at least he is sure of plenty of fun and joviality. "His motto, if he have one, is, the *greatest amusement of the greatest number (of men and dogs)*; . . . and to the sportsman's motto must be added, *with the least possible expenditure of game.*" The covers ought to be excellent; there is every variety of wood and undergrowth; but as, apparently, there is no law of trespass, and as any one may carry a gun who takes out a ten-shilling licence, naturally there is no superabundance of game. On the other hand, the liberality of Portuguese ideas makes anything a prize that can be brought to bag, from a fox or hare down to a black-bird.

A dozen or so of gentlemen turn up at the meeting-place. Half of them are equipped with firearms—generally the cheapest productions of Liege or Birmingham; the other half are provided with quarter-staves. The pack is a more mixed lot than the masters—made up of "lurchers, terriers, greyhounds, and even pointers."

"In a long and irregular line we range though the great pine-forests or

the chestnut woods, poking our sticks into the matted gorse and cistus, banging the tree-trunks with resounding blows that echo among the hollow forest aisles. The dogs hunt a little; wrangle, bark, and fight a good deal, and would do so still more but for the occasional flight in their midst of a well-directed cow-stick."

A special providence seems to throw its protection over the party, otherwise there could hardly fail to be an accident in the heavy cross-firing, when anything happens to be started or flushed. It is true, those incidents are rare enough, but then they are all the more thrilling when they do happen. Now a woodcock will get up, or an owl that is mistaken for a cock. Now it is a fox that presents an easier mark; but the most common objects of excitement are the rabbits, which in size seem to resemble the English rat. The odds are rather against the more lumbering hares getting away, since they have to clear the jaws of the mongrel pack that are ranging everywhere around, and may probably be caught and "chopped" in the thickets. Not that it makes the smallest difference to the dogs, who are equally keen upon the hares alive or dead. You must be quick indeed if you are to secure the unmangled carcass of hare or rabbit that has dropped to the volleys,—so much so, that stout needles and pack-thread are a recognised part of the sportsman's equipment. The tattered fragments of the game are rescued from the pack by a free use of expostulations and quarter-staves; and then they are cleverly stitched together and deposited in a bag brought for the purpose. It is a primitive way of amusing one's self, and scarcely *selon les règles*, according to our English notions. But foreigners are radicals in matters of sport; and after all, when healthful recreation is the main

object, there may be more ways than one of arriving at it. Some people might say that there was more of manly amusement in a long day's ranging through the wild forest, than in firing point-blank at home-bred hares, and potting the simple hand-fed pheasants, which have been beguiled into a fond faith in man's humanity. In England, the "big days" usually come off at a season when you may be soaked, or chilled to the bone, as you stand kicking your heels in the mud at the cover-corners. In Portugal, you are exhilarated by the buoyant atmosphere, and by the fresh aromatic odours of the flowering shrubs that fill the air with balmy fragrance as you crush them under your feet.

The chapter in which Mr Crawford sings the praises of port will have a charm for many a venerable *bon vivant*. It is a valuable contribution to the history of a wine which has had extraordinary ups and downs in popular estimation. Among the many extremely suggestive points which he makes, is one relating to the famous vintage of 1820. A proof it is, as he tells the story, of the short-sighted vision of the most intelligent experts. Growers and merchants hailed that memorable year as one that must spread the reputation of their wares, as it went far towards making some handsome fortunes. Never had they shipped more luscious wine; and it had all the qualities that improve with keeping. It "was as sweet as syrup, and nearly as black as ink; it was full of naturally-formed alcohol, and of all the vinous constituents, most of them far beyond the analysis of the ablest chemist, which go to make of wine a liquor differing from all other liquors." But its brilliant merits actually compromised the growers, by introducing their best customers to an exceptional standard

of excellence. Thenceforward would-be connoisseurs insisted upon a dark, sweet, and slightly spirituous wine before everything; and the genuine vintages of the Douro are ordinarily of a bright ruby tint. So the merchants had to doctor to suit the market; though Mr Crawford maintains, as a matter within his knowledge, that the doctoring was always done as innocuously as possible. Logwood was never used, for the simple reason that it is a dye that would not answer the purpose. Dried elder-berries were employed; but the elder-berry is harmless; and brandy was infused more freely than before, in order to check the fermentation of the must. But those who object to the introduction of such foreign elements as elder-berries, may take comfort from the information that they are gone out of use with a change in the fashion. The traditions of the 1820 wine, with its more or less spurious imitations, have been steadily dying out; and now the public are content with port of the natural garnet colour. And if they do desire to have it darker, it is found that, in practice "there is a much cheaper dye and a far more beautiful one always at hand in Portugal; it is the natural colour of the darker varieties of the port-wine grape." In short, as Mr Crawford sums up—and we must refer our readers to his pages for his full argument—"port wine is pure, because there is nothing so cheap as port wine itself to adulterate it with." We can only add, that we should find more satisfaction in his assurances had we less belief in the malevolent ingenuity of the chemical experts of Cete and Hamburg. The wines that are shipped from Oporto may be pure, but who shall answer for the ports of the ordinary dinner-table?

A word as to Portuguese inns and we are done, though perhaps

they might have been brought in more naturally in the prologue than in the epilogue. And as to these, we may remark, that either they or else the opinion of the author must have changed considerably for the better since he wrote his 'Travels in Portugal.' But from the facts he gives, we come to the conclusion that even in the small towns in the more out-of-the-way provinces, the traveller can have no great reason to complain. Even now he tells us that, comfort, after the ideal of it which we have come to form in England, is not to be found in these inns—the comfort, that is, which consists in neatness, warmth, bright hearths, plenty of carpets and arm-chairs, soft beds, bustling waiters, attentive porters, and smart chamber-maids." But then, in a hot climate, warmth, heavy carpets that harbour vermin, and soft beds in which you sink and swelter, are very far from being so desirable as when you have been shivering in chilly English fogs. After a rough day passed in the sunshine on horse-back, though a cushioned elbow-chair might be a luxury, it is by no means indispensable. With comparative coolness under cover, you can sleep soundly anywhere; and the appetite, sharpened by riding, is independent of elaborate cookery. But really the *menu* of a Portuguese bill of fare, which you can command at five minutes' notice anywhere, is by no means unappetising.

"First they" (the travellers) "will have soup—a thin *consommé* of beef, with rice, cabbage, and probably peas, floating in it. This is followed by the piece of beef and the little piece of bacon which have made the soup; and as the soup is served up very hot, so is some degree of variety skillfully obtained by the *bouilli* always being half cold. Then follow several indescribable stews, very good to eat, but inscrutable as to their ingredients. After this, when one has ceased to expect it,

comes fish broiled—almost always hake, which in Portuguese waters feeds on sardines, and is, therefore, a better fish than our British hake, which feeds less daintily; then rice made savoury with gravy and herbs; after that come *beefés*—a dish fashionable in all parts of Portugal, and in whose name the Portuguese desire to do homage to our great nation—the word being a corruption of 'beef-steaks,' and the thing itself quite as unlike what it imitates as its name. Then follow, in an order with which I cannot charge my memory, sweet things, chiefly made of rice; the dinner invariably ending with a preserve of quince."

He must be fastidious indeed who cannot make a tolerable meal off such a variety of satisfying fare; and the traveller who is too curious as to the ingredients of his *entrées*, has mistaken his vocation, and should have stayed quietly at home. The lofty, bare, cool *salon* from which the sun has been excluded by thick wooden shutters, is, as Mr Crawford observes, wonderfully soothing to the spirits when eye and brain have been strained in the sun-glare; and exercise in the air is the surest of soporifics, even when one is condemned to lie down on a *paillasse* of straw. It is true that Portuguese sociability shows itself in its most disagreeable aspect when a cheery society will prolong their conversation through the small hours in a suite of dormitories that are divided by the most flimsy of screens. But mischances like these may happen to any tourist; and when wandering in a country as interesting as Portugal, he must be content to accept the rough with the smooth. Upon the whole, the latter decidedly preponderates; and if he get over the initial difficulty of the language, and provide himself with introductions to the warm-hearted natives, we know not where, within easy reach of England, he could pass an autumn holiday more profitably.

SCHOOL AND COLLEGE.

At the present moment when so much importance is given to education, and when the new-fangled ways of school boards and compulsory instruction stir up so many resistances, and originate so many petty grievances throughout the country, without yet having had time to show whether or not their real advantage is equal to the momentary harm which can sometimes be traced to them, it is interesting and instructive to turn to a much older and long-established system—invented many hundred years before the school boards, and which far more intimately concerns the bulk of, for example, the readers of 'Maga,' than any popular system, the design of which is to force the children of the poor into a reluctant acquaintance with the three standards, or the three R's, if the public pleases,—the system under which boys are trained for the highest offices of the State, and for the functions of the higher order in the social hierarchy of England. This system is not new—it is not a matter of theory, but of fact; it has its history running over hundreds of years, both for good and evil. It is like England itself, a growth of centuries, and, like the British Constitution, built upon all kinds of expedients and compromises. It has evolved itself, not out of a fertile brain, but out of the slow progress of the ages, changing reluctantly, yet yielding a little to every new wave of moral pressure. Such a great school as Eton, for example, is an illustration less of any theoretical system than of the manner in which the English mind resists, yet follows, the greater tide of intelligence, lying quiescent if not stagnant as long as

national feeling permits; rarely taking any lead in mental progress, but yet never long behind in any revolution. The difference between our method of training our own sons, and those which we think it right to adopt for the children of the people, is very curious. For the latter, every new innovation is taken into consideration, schemes of all kinds for the forming of the intelligence, and for the breaking down into digestible form of the masses of information with which it is the mission of the age to gorge its young; while for the former, we cling tenaciously to the old methods, and keep fast hold upon the old lore with as little admixture as possible. In all this there is a perversity which is almost paradoxical—since, if any system could be perfected by wealth, by leisure, by long assurance of superiority and tranquil possession, it ought to be the public-school system of England, which yet remains, in its chief lines, very much what it was at the period of its establishment; whereas in the new system of popular primary instruction, we anxiously seek every modern improvement, and study as a duty the best and most improved methods of conveying information.

Let us consider, for instance, what would be the fate in our new schemes of such an institution as Latin verse. After centuries of examples to prove that this exercise is a torture to the soul of youth, without any compensating advantage save in a very few cases, Latin verse still holds its place triumphantly as part of the work of every lad who goes through a correct classical education. It has been fought over from gen-

eration to generation. Fathers and grandfathers who have been subjected to its laborious process, with, they know best, how little efficacy, not only permit, but prefer that their boys should continue the same exercise which had brought themselves so much woe. But in their parish schools they would put a stop to any similar infliction with indignant promptitude; or if they stood for a moment in doubt on the subject, would be assailed with correspondence in the newspapers full of indignation and complaint. So it is that while we thus take all the pains we can, sometimes officiously, fussily, with more zeal than discretion, for the completion and improvement of those processes by which the children of the people are to be drilled into the primary rules of knowledge, we are as little satisfied as ever, and as little perfect as ever in the system which trains our own successors,—the generation which is to rule the world after us, and lead its thought—or which, at least, we hope will do so, unless the revolutionary principles which alarm some of us should be more swift in their working than any of us divine or reckon upon. The public schools have been discussed lately in several contemporary publications with more or less censure and praise—but scarcely any of their various critics have expressed real satisfaction with them, or any conviction that their methods were of essential excellence. We are told that the boys lead a happy life; that those who will learn may learn, though those who will not, cannot be compelled to do so; that, on the whole, the working is improved and the standard higher than might have been expected: but no one ventures to say that the system is perfect, or that the highest attainable level is reached. We boast that the new

patches which we have put on the old garment show what excellent stuff the old fabric was to sustain these new and alien incorporations; and fling up our caps and hurrah for the old school which has become scientific without ceasing to be classical, and adopted the new without giving up the old. How it has mollified the Cerberus of science by cunning sops—adding museums, observatories, nay, even workshops, without relinquishing one scrap of Latin composition; and how, with all its additions and postscripts, it is still the same place in which we defied all the powers of pedagogy to put more than the smallest amount of information—little Latin and less Greek—into our own brains,—is a subject of general triumph. Commissioners have sat upon the subject, and witnesses have been examined, and reports written—but at bottom we do not believe that there is any real desire in the mind of the upper classes in England to reform the constitution of the public schools.

Now and then, however, a storm rises in one of our great educational institutions. A small boy, who has been over-disciplined for his good by his schoolboy superior, is so lost to all the traditions of the school as to cry out lustily and rouse his parents and the public; or, at another time, it is a college fray, suddenly throwing open the noisy world of undergraduate life, and calling the attention of the world to the fact that young men are as silly as boys, though, unfortunately, beyond the reach of flogging, and put their governors to sore shifts to know how to punish and restrain them. These two cases are yet fresh in the public mind. The last has not yet ceased to be a subject of lively conversation, though, happily, the newspapers have had enough of it; and it is so far more important than

the other, that it has thrown the most uncomfortable light upon the helplessness of university authorities, and the difficulties for which they seem to have found no solution. The difficulties of the school boards are bad enough. Whether a child which is doing essential service to its parents and family, either by taking charge of its younger brothers and sisters, or by actually earning money to aid the family pittance, ought to be forcibly removed from those high uses to be crammed with reading and 'rithmetic, is a hard problem. But, at all events, for the moment it is encountered with dauntless courage and a high hand—and is solved arbitrarily, whether for good or evil. On the higher levels we scarcely venture on the same trenchant practice. Nobody is bold; and when matters are perhaps once in a way carried with a high hand, the heart fails after the hand has smitten, and the sudden stroke is healed with anodyne plasters before it has had time to work.

Both school and college are, however, put unofficially upon their trial every time that any scandal occurs in either; and the same lines of attack and of defence are followed without much result. We do not hope to be much more successful than our neighbours in the discussion of these questions; and yet there are some practical lights to be thrown on the subject which we think worth consideration. School is the point upon which both attack and defence are most easy, and on that we will limit ourselves to description, taking Eton as the example of the public school. It has the advantage or disadvantage of being, in point of numbers, the greatest of English schools; perhaps, we may add, in point of social influence and importance also. It is more largely repre-

sented in the ranks of the governing classes, in Parliament—even in the successive Ministries that rule over us. It has thus a sort of secret backing-up of affectionate prejudice among those who sway the minds of the world. Its assailants, on the other hand, are chiefly strangers; and the chorus of voices which declare periodically that its standards are low, and its working indifferent, rise in most part from critics inadequately qualified, without any actual knowledge of the system they condemn. A great many of them, as is very natural, treat of the Eton of twenty, nay, of fifty years ago, applying censures quite applicable then, to the Eton of to-day, to which they are wholly inapplicable; for no institution in the kingdom has changed more within these periods than this,—headquarters of scholastic conservatism and aristocratic prejudice as it is. Within the recollection of many Eton taught nothing but classics,—and these without any special precautions taken that they should be taught well. The supply of masters was kept up by a regular routine,—successful enough on the whole, though with no more right to be successful than any other kind of hereditary succession. Boys with certain influential qualifications were entered upon the foundation—"into college," according to the ordinary term—as King's scholars, receiving the advantage of an almost gratuitous education, without any proper preliminary test of talent or preparation. They passed on, in due time, still without any real examination, to scholarships at King's College, Cambridge; then, after their due term of residence there, to fellowships in that college, and thence back again to Eton as masters,—never perhaps, during the whole time, having gone through any searching process of investigation into their intellectual claims to

these advantages. This was all according to the institution of the royal and saintly founder,—a very fit way in his time, no doubt, of securing a proper supply of instructors, and in more modern days a most comfortable system, insuring a good career and a tolerable income to a certain number of privileged families. And as King Henry knew nothing of modern science, there was no provision in his school for anything but that study of the dead tongues and their literature which was the sole learning of his time. The first master who ever taught mathematics at Eton, or made the schoolboy students of Ovid and Demosthenes aware of the existence of Euclid, was, or rather is, the Rev. Stephen Hawtrej, a gentleman still vigorous enough to be the popular head of a large school formed upon the model of Eton, St Mark's School at Windsor, where an interesting experiment is being tried as to the possibility of forming a new establishment on the old lines, at prices suited to the requirements of parents not rich enough to send their sons to Eton, but ambitious of a similar training for them. Mr Hawtrej began the mathematical school at Eton with not more than one or two duly qualified assistant masters,—sundry subordinates of quite inferior pretensions being kept on hand as good enough to convey the early precepts of arithmetic to the youthful mind. These were the sole representatives, along with two masters of modern languages, occupying then a not very clearly defined position, of all that modern information, science, and culture have done for the world.

This is now entirely changed—the mathematical faculty has developed naturally into science in all its most important branches, and if it does not quite balance the classical,

is almost threatening to do so. Men of eminent reputation in most of these departments share in the training which still remains, in the first place, in the hands of the classical tutors, now chosen on principles very different from those which prevailed in the old days when it was enough to be a Fellow of King's.

“Perhaps the greatest and most important of all the changes made in Eton since I first went there,” says a recent scholar, “is in the appointment of the masters. The old system of confining the Eton masterships to King's men has entirely died out. A new master occasionally appears who has gone through the regular course, from ‘college’ at Eton to a scholarship, and subsequently a fellowship at King's; but this is no longer the rule. Not only do men appear who, though old Etonians, were oppidans during their school career, and have graduated at different colleges, or even at another university, but men who were not at Eton at all, and whose only claim is that they are the best scholars of their day. And these new masters, fresh from the universities, do not, as was the custom when I first went to Eton, begin with the lower forms and rise by seniority, by the time the gloss of their learning is rubbed off, to the higher levels. They have each, indeed, a division low down in the school, but they also assist in the teaching of the boys at the top. It is an old custom that every boy in the first three divisions (now in the first four), known under the general name of the first hundred, must choose two ‘extra subjects’ to be studied at special lectures, besides the ordinary school-work. And it has recently been the rule to give the classical extra subjects to some of these distinguished young scholars, so that their scholarship is

made at once of advantage to the higher boys."

"The Eton education is now much more general than it was. It embraces not only classics, mathematics, and foreign languages, but also most of the branches of natural science, and even, since the last innovation, practical mechanics; while special prizes encourage the study of history and English composition. I remember, on the other hand, when even mathematics was looked upon as an unimportant part of the education, and French lessons were given in a sort of extra school in the spare hours of the morning, the 'shirking' of which met with a far less heavy penalty than the missing of any other lessons. So much, indeed, was it considered an extra, that the general excuse proffered by an absentee was that he had 'forgotten it.' This, of course, is entirely changed at present, and the study of French forms a part of the regular course of lessons as important as any other."

While these changes have taken place in respect to masters and systems of teaching, the tests to which the boys themselves are subjected have also been made much more severe. Formerly, after a certain period, the examinations, never very searching, dropped altogether, and a tolerably well trained boy of fifteen or sixteen, having passed his "upper division trials," might rise to the head of the school without any further competition; while his unsuccessful class-fellow on the lower levels, not able to pass that bridge, might vegetate on in the inferior parts of the school, an ignominious "lower boy," till a formidable growth of whiskers and six feet of stature compelled his parents to withdraw him. So far as the school was concerned, he might have remained a lower boy

till he was forty. Now every step has to be fought for; and if the youth cannot pass a certain standard at a certain age, he has to leave Eton, whatever his other qualities may be.

In point of discipline, another sweeping change has been made at Eton. In the times which we have been discussing, the boarding-houses were of two kinds,—masters and dames; the latter a little cheaper than the former. In some of the dames' houses the discipline might be good, but there was no safeguard whatever, nor any particular reason why it should be so. The ladies appointed to these posts held them by interest alone, and required no special training or qualifications to fit them for the charge, out of school hours, of some twenty or thirty bold schoolboys accustomed to the utmost freedom. These dames' houses have been entirely swept away, with one remarkable exception. "Evans's still exists, mainly, I believe," says our informant, "because even the present rage for reform at Eton dares not disturb such an old and beloved institution." When women do a thing well, they generally do it very well; and there is one such popular house. But all the other "dames" are abolished and ended. The houses have passed into the hands of masters—no longer exclusively classical, as in the old days, but not less perfectly trained or qualified because their departments are those of modern sciences and languages. These gentlemen often retain the title of their predecessors, and are generally called "my dame" by the matter-of-fact schoolboy, when they do not happen to be "my tutor" as well. But the invidious distinction between the houses of tutors and those of dames exists no longer; and the discipline and order of the respective houses are dependent up-

on the individual character of the house-master alone.

The tie between tutor and pupil at Eton is, however, a very close one. Sometimes it is a bond of real affection, and always involves constant intercourse and a great amount of mutual knowledge. All the pupil's work, or nearly all, goes through the tutor's hands before it comes up to the master under whom the boy may be placed in school; all the special preparations that may be necessary for any forthcoming examination, are, if not actually superintended, at least arranged by him. If the character of a boy is wanted, it is to the tutor that the reference is made; if a complaint has to be sent in to the head-master about a boy, his tutor's consent must be first obtained; if a pupil gets into any serious difficulty, a consultation with his tutor is the readiest and surest method of obtaining assistance. It will be seen from all this, that the relations between the tutor and the pupil are of the most intimate description at Eton. We shall see, later on, the different significance of these two correlative terms when the boy is settled at Oxford.

When the tutor has no house, many of his duties, and much of the closeness of the connection, are transferred to the house-master, under whose eyes he spends his life; and there are thus two persons whose first professional object it is to keep him in wholesome and beneficial control. And though nothing in the world looks a more complete impersonation of freedom than this frank and fearless English boy, going where he wills in his own smiling neighbourhood, to be met with upon the bright reaches of the river, or miles off under the glorious trees of Windsor Park, or in the winter running with the beagles, or skating on all

the frozen ponds within reach, to the consternation and admiration of all foreign observers, without the shadow of a spy or a watcher near him; yet this liberty is not without its bonds. Three hours is the longest period a boy can be free from the continually recurring roll-call, named "absence" with characteristic incorrectness. Wherever he may be, his tether makes itself felt at these moments, and he can neither plan nor do anything outside of the hours which are limited by this ceremonial. At lock-up he has to be indoors, not to issue forth again save by special permission and under special guarantees; in short, this boundless freedom is so entirely regulated by the most rigid law—law which has all the support of public opinion, is rarely infringed and never rebelled against—that no system of surveillance and repression could be more absolute. When the school goes astray *en masse*, or rather when it commits a fault similar to that which has lately made University College the subject of general discussion, and the special culprits do not give themselves up—a thing most rare in schoolboy experience—a request from the head-master that the imposition or *poena* demanded from the entire school should "be brought at one," goes to the very heart of Eton. That means the sacrifice of the best play-hours of the day, the loss of the game, whatever it may be, the infringement of all habits and liberties. A general order to "come at one," would be far more effectual than Dr Bradley's "sending down." It would punish without hurting, and it would punish the offenders and the offenders' aiders and abettors, not their parents, who were ignorant and innocent of the whole matter. It is at once a more effectual, a more generally felt, and a

far more refined punishment; but then it is boys, not men, who are to be dealt with—and in this, no doubt, the whole harshness of the problem lies.

From the dominion of all those wholesome rules, and from a life which is so free in appearance, but in reality so carefully hedged and walled about, the schoolboy of eighteen or nineteen steps into the very different life of Oxford, emancipated, and often lawless as it is, without any intermediate passage. He has looked forward to it for years, but it is not always so agreeable as he had hoped. Probably, if the change took place a year or two younger, the results would be more satisfactory. As it is, the commonplace members of the community have the best of it; and those who have attained distinction and eminence at school—those for whom the university ought to do most—are the ones to whom the transfer is least satisfactory. Delightful as university life is universally supposed to be, this cannot but be a painfully disenchanting process to a clever boy. He is in a different atmosphere altogether. The little world which has hitherto contained him, melts away into many worlds, each one of which is as great and important as that which once gave him so much honour and dignity, and made him feel himself, with all the self-importance of youth, on a level with the rulers of society everywhere. A boy at the head of the school has no superior. He may regard with friendly respect the university man who has preceded him by a few years, and so has gained a step above him in literary honours, but he feels on a par with him or with any man. Even when the Prime Minister pays a visit to the school, the captain of the oppidans will scarcely yield more than that reverential

regard for a great equal which implies the highest respect for one's own office and position. He is on the level of all the potentates, and however modest he may be, cannot but be conscious of his elevation. But the moment he sets foot in the university this rank is over. He falls from a high level to a low one. He loses at once the external safeguards of rules and laws cunningly devised to restrain without wearing the appearance of restraint, and the great moral protection of an elevated position on which his words and ways are noted by an inferior crowd, ready to criticise or to copy with all the eagerness of retainers. All this is gone from him in a moment when, from being a sixth-form boy, he becomes a freshman of a college, holding the lowest rank not only in the university, but in that small part of the university to which he is specially attached. It is impossible but that this downfall must be—but it increases in a large degree the risks to which the change of rules and loosening of bonds exposes him. He has become insignificant. It is no longer his to give the tone to his surroundings, to refrain from indulgence lest his juniors should take advantage of his yielding. Nothing but the intoxication of the newborn freedom, of the new sense of manhood, of the sensation of independence which fills the air, would make up to him for his descent; but these influences do make up for it, and the very loss he has sustained often makes him more free to take his own pleasures, now that it is in his power to do so, without restraint.

In other countries the young man, having reached this stage, is left to his own devices, and made the arbiter of his own conduct; but in Oxford, along with the new endowment of freedom, the sense

that there is no longer any compulsion, there exists at the same time a system of discipline which is very elaborate and very cumbersome, and sometimes very vexatious, but not a perfect or indeed an effective system at all. We remember to have heard a lady speaking of the routine of her son's life at Sandhurst to another whose sons were at the university. "He must be on parade every morning at eight," said the one. "They ought to be at chapel at the same hour," said the other. The first speaker was an acute and intelligent woman. "Ah," she said, "but there is a great difference between *ought* and *must*." This is the difference between school and college, as well as between the rule of the university and that which prevails in the world outside. For those who think, as we confess we ourselves do, that the "must" is the most prevailing of all rules, it will appear a very strong plea against the university system that, until the very last stage of resistance is reached, there is no *must* in it. The authorities may remonstrate, plead, argue—they may stop the undergraduate's food, or order him to keep within the college walls after a certain hour—but they cannot compel him to do anything, except go away from Oxford. This was the curious dilemma in which Dr Bradley and his fellows found themselves the other day. They could have "gated" the young men in a body—a step which, in all probability, would have produced so many more noisy parties within the college that the unpopular dons would have had a hard time of it; but failing this mild measure, there was nothing they could do beyond the violent and extreme step of "sending them down." It seems to us that great allowances must be made in such a case for the con-

scious impotence of perplexed authority, knowing that there is but one penalty which it can really exact. In face of all that rebellious youth, what were the dons to do? They might have winked mercifully, which, in most cases, is the wisest thing, especially when there is a want of power to punish—but it is a thing which is not always possible to flesh and blood: and that exasperation should now and then get the better of prudence is a necessary consequence of human weakness. But such an act must, to justify itself at all, be thoroughly and sharply successful. If it fails, as it has done in this case, it is a great deal worse than if it had never been attempted. This, however, is the only real arrow in the university quiver. In former days, when the word rustication was used, it had an ominous sound, enough to awe any parent's soul; and it was used sparingly, with a due sense of the awfulness of the penalty. But now the name of the punishment is lighter, and so is the estimation in which it is held. A "man" is "sent down" for not doing enough work, for neglecting lectures, sometimes for trivial breaches of propriety. We remember to have heard of one youth who was "sent down" because he could not resist the temptation of firing at a rook from his window. He ought not to have fired at a rook—a denizen of his college almost as respectable as any don; but if it had been a don he could not have received (from the college) a more severe punishment. To be sure, in the latter case, the "sending down" would have been a final one.

The rule of Oxford life is a two-fold rule. There is the authority of the college, and there is the authority of the university—the one entirely independent of the

other. All the educational processes are in the hands of the former, though the greatest and most important prizes and distinctions are given by the latter. The relations between the undergraduate and the authorities of his college are very different in different examples. In some colleges the work is entirely done by the younger tutors, while the head looks on serenely, and only condescends to interfere in the affairs of the college in cases when an exceptionally troublesome undergraduate has to be publicly rebuked or punished. In other societies the head is as energetic as any of the others, and lets nothing go on without his personal superintendence. Again, in some places, attendance at lectures, and compliance with all the tutor's wishes, are imperative; while in others it seems rather to be understood that Oxford is a place where a student may work and improve himself if he feels so disposed, but that to interfere or try to coerce an unwilling pupil, would be officious and ill-bred in the highest degree. The relations of pupil to tutor afford the best illustration of this. In the so-called "reading" colleges the tutor occupies a rather important place in the pupil's life: he has it in his power to be of great service to the pupil's studies, or, by displaying a want of interest in his progress, to damp the ardour even of an industriously disposed young man. He can also by his intercession often save a favourite pupil from the consequences of a breach of discipline, or any similar fault; while, by an unfavourable word, sometimes even by silence, he can magnify the most trifling delinquencies of those who have unfortunately offended him, till they seem to be misdeeds of the direst description, and deserving of the severest penalties that the college can inflict. In

such cases as these it is obviously the interest of the undergraduate to make a friend of his tutor. But there are many colleges in which the tutor becomes almost a nonentity. We remember well the amusement and surprise with which we heard (not without much sense of superiority in the arrangements of our own society) from an undergraduate of a college not distinguished for work, that his connection with his tutor was limited to the duty of calling upon him at the beginning of term, and going to say "Good-bye" to him before leaving Oxford at the end of it. It is in cases like this that the greatest anomaly of the Oxford system appears. It need hardly be said that the youth just mentioned belonged to that numerous class who are quite satisfied if they can get through the pass-examinations in a reasonable time, and have no thought of honours; but even for this modest ambition a certain amount of work is required. Now, as the time becomes shorter, and the necessity for work more urgent, we should naturally think that our undergraduate would at last have recourse to the services of his neglected tutor; but such is not the habit: instead of this, he, in the elegant phraseology of the place, "puts on a coach"—that is, reads with some man of another college of higher standing and abilities than himself—generally a clever young graduate who has taken his honours, and is now waiting in Oxford for a chance of a fellowship. And perhaps the most curious part of it all is, that the college authorities strongly encourage this, and even in the strict colleges consent to waive some of their claims upon an undergraduate's time, in order that he may be able to do more for his unofficial tutor.

A still more curious anomaly—or rather a development of the

one just stated—is, that a young man who is not very industrious, or doing badly in his work, is often “sent down,” or recommended to “go down” to “read.” Sometimes an energetic undergraduate, anxious to get on with his studies, will ask permission to miss a term and stay “down” at his home, or at a private tutor’s “to read.” It is impossible to contemplate such a state of affairs without amazement. That a university so important and influential, made up of smaller corporations so learned, so wealthy in all the appliances of learning, with such a staff of teachers, and such a tradition of scholarship, and with so long a history behind, and such complete time and leisure to have tried and tested all methods, and to have chosen the best, should thus confess its own incapacity to manage any case which is difficult or troublesome, is one of the strangest things to think of. “Unfortunately,” says a timid and gentle young don, “we succeed best with those whom it is no credit to us to be successful with.” The fathers of the young men may on their side remark that private tutors or “coaches,” either at the university or away from it, are supplements which they never took into calculation; and that if a “coach” is more effectual than a college, it would be better to admit the fact and save a great deal of time and trouble. This, however, of course, refers to those alone who consider Oxford from the point of view of letters and instruction: there are many to whom the education of its society, the grinding together of the young men themselves, and the training they give each other, is considered as the most important part of the university system—not to speak of the class which considers Oxford, as it considers Eton, a sort of royal road to gentility, and holds

that the university gives the stamp of gentleman better than any other known agency. But after all, education, as generally understood, consists largely of instruction, and the elaborate apparatus of tutors and lecturers, and all the state and weight of collegiate institutions, are curiously out of place if they are on one side to afford merely a dignified screen to the altogether independent processes by which their pupils train each other; or, on the opposite side, furnish but a final tribunal to sanction the labours of private workmen, possessing none of their own *prestige* and power. Of course it is chiefly in difficult cases that such means have to be resorted to; but it is never creditable to any artificer that he has to hand over his hard pieces of work, or those which are delicate and complicated, to other hands. We have heard, without, however, vouching for it, of a still more extraordinary transference of power, in cases where the private tutor is the appointed dispenser not only of instruction but of discipline and punishment. As a rule, when a youth is advised by his college authorities to go down from the university and spend some time with a private tutor, the action is supposed to be dictated by a paternal regard for himself, and meant rather as a kindly method of offering him further opportunities of study, than a vindictive way of subjecting him to a more severe system of discipline. Yet, astonishing as it may seem, this appears to be occasionally the case, and a severe punishment is disguised under the pretext of affording assistance. The idea of an educational *succursale* to a college is an anti-climax which may be amusing, but that of a college penitentiary can scarcely fail to awaken less amiable feelings.

Lectures which hold so large a

place in all other university systems except those of England are treated in an almost equally anomalous and uncertain way. They are, if not a new thing, at least an institution which has but recently been approved and universally received as part of the college training. They are now prescribed and known as part of the regular work which is appointed to every undergraduate, and the neglect of them is a matter which involves various penalties. But at the same time they are openly undervalued by most of the older authorities, and feebly supported by the younger; and it has certainly not ceased to be considered as quite a legitimate thing that an undergraduate should count them as so much time lost, and, in short, as good as refuse to attend them at all. In the latter part of his course, when he is approaching the momentous period of the schools, he is almost permitted, in many cases, to decide for himself which, or how many (or probably, rather, how few), he will attend. We rather think that if he boldly makes a stand against them, and does not, as a matter of principle, pay any attention to them at all, the authorities themselves, little assured of any advantage to be found in them, will give in, and allow the refusal, rather with applause than blame. The recusant on principle, will be justified and encouraged; but the truant who "shirks" or neglects, from no principle at all, is liable to complaint, censure, and punishment, for a fault which to the outside spectator is the same in both cases. This, too, is certainly a very strange position of affairs. Surely it might be possible for the colleges to come to a distinct understanding on such a subject. To approve a bold youth for refusing to attend a course of instruction which a weaker or more timid one may be actually "sent down" for neglecting—and to pre-

scribe a system one hour, and speak of it with disrespect another—must be a mistake. So far as we can judge, the current of opinion is against them; yet they are an invariable part of the required work; and while everything he hears tends to make the young man think that it is a sign of superiority to disregard them, he is at the same time subject to vexatious penalties if he does so in any but the most defiant way. On this point, however, it is but fair to show what can be said by a competent authority upon the other side:—

"About lectures it is impossible to lay down any universal principle. It is an undoubted fact that there are some men endowed with a special gift of lecturing, who in an hour can teach the student more than he would probably get from private reading in three or four; but it is as certain that men do lecture at Oxford whose labour is only of assistance to the undergraduate in that it saves him the trouble of looking up the authorities or references necessary for himself—a doubtful favour, which, by diminishing the trouble of acquiring knowledge, takes away in the same ratio from the chances of retaining it. And as there is a difference in lecturers, so we must draw a distinction between two sorts of students. It requires a great power of application for an undergraduate to have in one morning, say, one lecture at ten and another at twelve, without losing anything by it. If we suppose him to be working pretty hard and regularly, he may be ready to begin at a quarter or half past nine: if he thinks it worth while to begin at all, he can only settle down to work for about half an hour, when he has to go off for his first lecture. This over, he may, if both lectures are delivered in his own college, manage to get nearly an hour's reading before he has to go to

the second, which again brings him to within half an hour or so of lunch-time. Now it is evident that even for a youth with great power of settling down quickly to work, such a cutting-up of the morning cannot but be harmful; while to a weak or indolent student, the temptation to cast aside the short intervals as useless is very strong and very dangerous. I think that this state of affairs—the division of lecturers into those who can and those who cannot produce an absolutely good effect with their lectures, and of students into those who can and those who cannot attend them, with all their inseparable inconveniences, without any palpable bad effect—may go some way to justify the anomaly complained of,—viz., that tutors recommend lectures to their pupils (which they do, by the way, invariably in proportion to what they think necessary for the particular pupil), while, at the same time, they speak in a derogatory manner of the system as a whole, and allow a pupil to throw off its restraints as unfitting his particular case, if they think him of sufficient ability and understanding to be a competent judge of the question at issue. Of course it would be useless to deny that nearly all of those to whom this liberty of choice is given exercise it by reducing as much as possible the number of their lectures; but this is saying nothing more than that the abler undergraduates endorse the general opinion of the university. When, some years ago, the project was mooted of diminishing the Oxford vacations in general, and abolishing the ‘long’—at least as at present understood—in particular, the dons rose in arms against the idea. No thought of their own curtailed holidays and diminished freedom seems to have swayed their minds; but with a generous and frank acknowledgment of the faults of the sys-

tem upon which they themselves had long been acting, they exclaimed with one voice that to abolish the ‘long’ was to abolish work. Oxford itself, the centre of English education, is no place for work; in term—that is the period set aside for instruction—there is no time for study: abolish holidays, and you abolish the only time when work is possible. The Oxford work is not, cannot be, done at Oxford; it is done in country parsonages, in Highland lodging-houses, in some out-of-the-way corner of Wales or Devonshire; in fact, anywhere, anywhere, out of—the university. The state of affairs in the university is perhaps more fitly and tersely described in a remark made to us the other day than it could be otherwise done. The speaker was a Chancellor’s prizeman, and his description was—‘Here at Oxford one’s time is lectured away to nothing.’”

These curious expedients to make up the deficiencies of a faulty system, and an organisation not calculated, as it ought to be, on the most careful principles, to economise the scholar’s time and secure his attention and respect—are, at least, truly English, whatever else may be said for them.

The discipline of the college is generally intrusted to one of the senior tutors, who is called the dean, and the head of the college in most cases only takes cognisance of matters reported to him by this functionary, though in some colleges one or two special offences, such as being out of college after twelve o’clock at night, are immediately subject to the head. But in this, as in so many other points, the practice of the different colleges varies so much, that no account can be given of college discipline which would be universally true. The chief points held in common by all are the necessity, under different

penalties, of attending a certain stated number of morning chapels or "roll-calls" every week, and of undergoing an examination of some sort at the end of every term to prove that the time has not been entirely wasted. With the exception of these rules, and that which exacts that all the members of a college must be indoors by midnight, the discipline of the different colleges varies as much as the different degrees of strictness with which it is enforced. Besides the purely college offences which are implied in the breaking of these rules, and in the inattention to work and neglect of college duties, which the stricter societies take equal notice of, there is, of course, the whole round of youthful offences against manners and morals which have to be guarded against. But to keep in restraint the world of unruly youth which rages around them, it must be admitted that the college authorities have very little in their power. If a young man is at all determined in his rebelliousness, it is difficult to see what can be done with him except that violent measure of "sending down," which Dr Bradley has for the moment made somewhat ridiculous, and which at the best is but a sort of confession of incompetency, and transference of the task, to which all these dignitaries should surely be equal, to other hands. The lighter penalties, the solemn interviews with the superiors, the warnings administered by an awful master, or rector, or principal, are generally, we fear, after the terrible moment is over, regarded in the same light as those other interviews in which angry or grieved parents unbosom a world of emotion, which the impenitent and light-hearted offender describes easily as a "pious jaw," or by some other equally graphic and graceless title. He is "sworn

at" to the supposed satisfaction of the operator, and all goes on as before. After these preliminary addresses, the college has the resource of "gating" the offender—a penalty in which there may be sometimes a certain hardship, but which otherwise is light enough, since the culprit under sentence may see his friends freely, entertain them, or within the college be entertained by them, and even spend all the day out of doors if he will, though bound to re-enter by a certain early hour in the evening. But when this resource is exhausted, there is nothing more that the dons can do except to "send down" the offender, which, as we have said, is a kind of confession of incapacity. If he "breaks his gate," and goes out, or stays out after the stipulated hour, it is flat rebellion, and they have scarcely an alternative; and even if he submits meekly enough to the punishment, but does not reform in other respects, it becomes monotonous to go on "gating" him, and the college authorities are tempted to believe that the culprit is laughing in his sleeve at their impotent pretences at punishment. And then is the moment when the young man is "sent down." It is not always the climax of a series of punishments. Sometimes it comes summarily upon a young unfortunate, whose case seems naturally to call rather for fatherly remonstrance and persuasion than punishment. Sometimes an offender, who is no worse or perhaps not so bad as his neighbours, is caught in a trap and sent off *pour encourager les autres*. Sometimes mere failure in work, without any moral or social delinquency, is the cause, and the period of exile may be for half a term or a whole term, or even more, according to the degree of guilt. But it has ceased to be the serious business, overcloud-

ing a young man's entire career, that it once was. Of course, in such a case as that of the recent proceedings at Oxford University it is no sort of punishment at all, but only a colossal frolic—a very bad joke, so far as the unfortunate parents are concerned, who have to pay in all cases; but to the young men themselves not at all bad fun, and a pleasant variety upon the routine of college life.

It will be seen by this, however, that in the way of discipline the colleges have very little in their power. In old days, according to most of the accounts which are left to us, the authorities winked hard at irregularities which they had no real power to restrain. But Oxford has advanced like everything else, and in some of her corporations, at least, shows an anxious desire to keep up to the moving tide of popular opinion outside of her retired and safe enclosure. But while much more is required from her—much more instruction and discipline, a great deal more sternness than of old—her powers, in respect at least to the latter point, are not increased. She has more teaching power, and that of a much more lively and energetic kind, than of old, the instruction of the young men being greatly in the hands of other young men not very much superior to themselves in years or experience, and consequently possessing a vivacity and activity, as well as a readiness to adopt untried methods—to be rash and to be timid, as older men would have less excuse for being—such as did not exist in former days. But her powers of discipline are not increased. More is required—a supervision unthought of in the easy days of old—an amount of control unknown in other university systems; but the means of keeping up that control have not increased, and we

think are scarcely equal to the task in hand. The schoolmaster has the power, and his subjects are boys, against whom a great variety of restrictions may be brought to bear. But the dons have to deal with men, or at least with something still more difficult,—“not yet old enough for a man, nor young enough for a boy; as a squash is before 'tis a peascod, or a codling when 'tis almost an apple,”—youths who have all the pretensions of men without the experience which stands in the place of sense with many, and teaches even a fool that certain things are impossible, and not to be attempted. The discipline enforced by the university authorities, as apart from the college, presents two chief points for consideration—the method in which it is managed, and the character of the penalties by which it is supported. Everybody knows, at least by name, the proctorial system of Oxford government. Two principal and four subordinate proctors are appointed every year, whose chief duty is the maintenance of proper discipline outside the colleges—as the proctorial authority expires as soon as the college gates are entered. In pursuance of this object, one or more of the proctors has to parade the streets of Oxford every night, attended by two or three servants, arresting every luckless undergraduate who appears without academical costume, or who is indulging in the forbidden pleasures of tobacco—searching the hotels and billiard-rooms, and otherwise keeping watch against any misdemeanours on the part of members of the university. This can hardly be considered dignified pursuit for gentlemen and scholars; nor is the not unfrequent spectacle of a flying undergraduate, pursued through the streets by two or three men of the

lowest class, while a reverend gentleman in gown and bands pants after them some little distance behind, exactly calculated to increase our respect for one of the highest officials of the university.

But there is another evil inherent in the system which is of a more positive description: the proctors naturally conclude their rounds long before the hour of midnight, at which all undergraduates have to be in college, so that from about 10 to 12 o'clock their duties are performed by the servants mentioned above, who rejoice in the title of "Bull-dogs,"—men distinguished in no way from the ordinary run of persons hanging about the streets, but with a keen eye to mark any disorderly or reckless behaviour, and with full authority to track any offender to his college or lodgings, there to find out his name, and to report him forthwith to the proctor. Such a system, it is evident, is not far removed from regular methodical *espionage*, the thing of all others most odious to the youthful mind; while tales are spread abroad resting more or less upon a foundation of fact, to the effect that now and then the hateful idea is carried out to its fullest extent, and that men in no way officially connected with the proctors, roam about in the streets and suburbs of Oxford—men to whom most of the more conspicuous members of the university are well known by sight, and who are invited by prospects of reward to give as much information as they can to the authorities. These are, of course, but the rumours which fly about the university; but there are so many independent stories told on the subject, that one is reminded of the old proverb, "Where there is smoke," &c., and cannot help concluding that there must be some foundation for so many complaints.

The delinquents thus detected, the proctor can punish in various ways, the most usual of which are the infliction of fines of various magnitudes—from five shillings to as many pounds,—application to the college authorities to "gate" the offender, or "sending down" for a stated time or altogether. We have already commented upon the last two penalties, and called attention to the absurdity of the present system of "sending down," and we may here remark that heavy fines, like it, come upon the parents of the delinquents rather than themselves. But the point which is chiefly to be noticed in connection with the proctors is the immense irresponsible power which is given to them by the university statutes. These, which are acknowledged to be obsolete even by the staunchest conservatives, are yet appealed to in support of any arbitrary or exceptional act on the part of the authorities; for, after prescribing and limiting the penalties which may be inflicted for various offences, they conclude by giving the Vice-Chancellor and proctors power to inflict any penalty at their own discretion in any case which is not specially provided for by the previous statutes, and which they may consider worthy of punishment. This really amounts to the same thing as giving absolute irresponsible power to the proctors; for the Vice-Chancellor, on the occasions upon which his consent is necessary, can only act upon the report of the case given to him by the proctors, and must, if the system is to be kept up at all, be very chary of reversing a proctor's decision.

Nor is the man to whom these powers are intrusted chosen in any especial manner for his fitness for the post. The various colleges are obliged, each in their turn, to

elect a proctor from among their fellows, and it seldom occurs that more than one or two of these are willing to accept an office so disagreeable in its nature, and which occupies so much of their time. It may thus happen that the chosen proctor may be elected, not for any fitness, real or supposed, for his post, but because there was nobody else to choose. The results which may be expected, and are too frequently found to follow this system of election, are evident; for, though Oxford contains good store of excellent and learned men, the number of those who are capable of successfully wielding unlimited power is no larger there than in the rest of the world. It results naturally from this system that there is no real principle upon which proctorial jurisdiction is exercised. That one proctor should differ in severity from another is not of much consequence, for even in judicial cases the same difference occurs, and a criminal may have a pronounced desire to be tried before one judge rather than another. But the judge has but limited powers; he is tied down by precedent, and, above all, he gives sentence after the verdict of a jury. The proctor is at once prosecutor, jury, and judge; while he may laugh to scorn any appeal to a judgment delivered before by a previous proctor, or even by himself. We remember a current rumour in Oxford about a proctor who, previously clemency itself, suddenly began, towards the end of his term of office, to be exceedingly strict, and to exact in every case the highest possible penalties. The undergraduate mind was naturally highly exercised by this transformation, and explanation after explanation was offered, until at last one ingenious youth suggested that, on looking down his accounts, the proctor had been struck by the

paltry dimensions of the sum which he had obtained for the university chest, and promptly set about collecting as much as he could pick up. Whether this explanation was the true one or not can hardly be known; but the method, which allows of the possibility either of the theory or the course of action which called it forth, can hardly be deemed worthy in either justice or dignity of such a great national institution as our university system.

We have spoken of the youth of a great many of the instructors of this immense youthful community. This is a fault that, according to the popular saying, is always mending, and it is already less evident than it was a few years ago—perhaps in consequence of the restraint imposed upon the filling up of fellowships by the uncertainty at present existing about those institutions. A young don is, according to all ancient notions, a kind of contradiction in terms. College rulers used to mean—conventionally always, and in most instances really—a body of respectable, not to say antiquated functionaries, full of learning it might be, and often of port wine, with no sympathy with youth, yet a general desire to ignore it as much as possible, shut their eyes when they could, and disturb their own learned quiet as little as might be compatible with a creditable existence. It is a great change to find the grave tribunal of the Common room—once middle-aged, to say the least, and callous to the errors of boyhood, by reason of having shuffled through so many generations of them—turned into a party of highly cultivated and worthy æsthetical young men,—the authors of delicate commentaries upon China, disquisitions on Italian art, and researches into the history, scandalous and

otherwise, of the Renaissance,—all shaped in the most modern fashion, and babbling the jargon of the advanced. That they should take the trouble to withdraw themselves from these elegant subjects, in order to shape the morals or influence the taste of the horde of schoolboys who pour upon them year after year, would be scarcely credible, were it not for the conscientiousness, which is a marked characteristic of their minds, and to which it would be a mistake not to do full justice. They are anxiously conscientious. More dear than Greek, more delightful than Italian art, and the fine questions of social philosophy, would it be to them to acquire “influence,” and to lead other young spirits like themselves into the love of Botticelli and old Nankin, as well as of Sophocles and Theocritus. And with the increasing number of young men who take kindly to this development, who are fond of *bric-a-brac*, and devoted to art manufactures and upholstery, they are in a certain sympathy—though these tastes are not necessarily combined with much Latin or more Greek. But with the ruder mass these delicate souls are timid. They understand to a certain degree the athlete, and tolerate him—if he is not much good in literature, he may yet help to keep the college high up on the river, or get it a good reputation in the cricket-field. But in respect to those fluctuating spirits whose assistance and establishment in the good way are the great problem of humanity, as well as of education, they are powerless. Most likely they have never themselves felt the sting of the grosser temptations; they have been studious from their boyhood, winners of school distinctions and university prizes from the time they were breeched.

Many of them may be said to have lived a semi-professional life of intellectual emulation since the period when they won their first scholarship at twelve or fourteen. They have been happily delivered from the struggles of existence, swept into the quiet bay of their fellowships, established in the limited yet complete and finished sphere of the university, while other young men are still uneasily afloat, not knowing where wind or tide may carry them.

These young tutors, we repeat, are timid when they come in face of the real difficulties of their profession. They are anxious to do well, but they cannot tell what to do. They would be glad, like St Paul, that the motley crowd around them should be almost or altogether such as they are, if a wish could make them so; but they do not know how to approach the unruly or the careless, the youths for whom a Greek chorus or an Italian picture may have no charm; or even those, though full of intellectual aptitude, with whom the passing temptations of the moment are too strong for better things. No problem within the horizon of knowledge is so hard to such men as are the other human creatures about them, whom they long to influence, but do not know how to get hold of. They complain with as much plaintive incompetency as ignorance of the world, and the air of *savoir faire*, lamenting in such words as those we have already quoted, over their limited successes. The reader may remember a recent example in the letter of a “College Don” to the ‘Times’ newspaper, shortly after the recent affray at University College, in which a certain bitterness mingled with the despair of impotency. This sense of powerlessness lowers even the intellectual level.

Sometimes the consultations and decisions of a Common room thus constituted, sitting upon a young offender, are for all the world like the babble of a nunnery (as it appears in its conventional aspect in imaginative literature; for few of us know really what the sisters would say) on a novice who has been caught tripping. Great laxness in orthodoxy does not make any difference in this particular—for that is, fortunately, at the present day, combined in many cases with the most fastidious code of morals. We have heard a mythical story of a gentle professor who took to his bed on hearing that one of his pupils had on some occasion taken too much wine. Happy pupils, it may be said, with so spotless a guardian over them! Happy professor, so little learned in wickedness! But there is another side to the picture. The discipline becomes womanish instead of manly which is thus exercised; and no one can be surprised that there should be more and more frequent recurrence to the expedient of "sending down." The authorities of a college become thus like a collection of landsmen upon a dangerous coast, looking wistfully at the struggling craft in the offing. The harbour may be hard to make, the boats in danger, the women and children wild with anxiety upon the shore: but what can the helpless spectators do? They have never learned to handle a lifeboat, to manage sail or oar. They can but stand by and look on, wishing mournfully for a good deliverance, and ready to shake hands and make friends in cordial thankfulness with every crew that is able to get itself safely to shore.

It is perhaps a natural consequence that there is very little social intercourse between these gentlemen and their pupils. The under-

graduates who are visible at their tables occasionally, are mostly those to whom their position has given a certain social prominence—young noblemen, or the sons of the very wealthy or great; not, let us do the tutors justice to say, because of lordolatry—though that unquestionably exists in no small degree—but because it is easier to distinguish a youth with a title, or some other equally unmistakable sign of social importance, whose recommendations lie on the surface, and cannot be gainsaid. Some important members of Oxford society are said, indeed, to cultivate the young nobility on principle, as being more likely to spread "a good influence" than their more lowly neighbours; but it may be fairly allowed that the same intellectual timidity which makes them "successful in cases where there is no merit in succeeding," dictates this choice of the favourites of fortune so easily identified among the crowd.

Other influences of this large infusion of youth into the venerable institutions and governing classes in Oxford might be easily found if it suited our subject. The young dons are an excellent and most highly cultivated body, and they are conscientious and anxious to do their duty. The doubt is whether they are not too fine for their office, too highly cultivated to exercise much sway over the crowd. The periods in which Greek was finest, and Art highest, have not been those which have affected men in general to the noblest issues. And perhaps the system of perpetual competition is that which has fostered most the severance between intellectual culture and the practical capabilities. But this system—of which it is the highest use to cultivate prize-winners and gain scholarships, is too large and too doubtful to be entered upon at the end of an article. It

is, for its proper ends, a good system enough, and it is very effectual with its predestined subjects, born to follow the scholastic course, and with all their tendencies already taking that direction; but whether it acts as well upon others it would be difficult to pronounce. There is just as much likelihood, we fear, of pushing a youth into more wilful ways by exposing him to the perpetual high pressure of a so-called "reading" college, as there is of letting him fall back into lethargy in the quietude of a passive one. The competition of the schools, and the perpetual bribery of prize examinations, will influence one kind of mind into exorbitant activity, while almost repelling and certainly damaging others. These are individual peculiarities which are too little taken into consideration. We are all ready to imagine at the outset that we or our children will carry off the prizes and cover ourselves with distinction. But as the disenchanting process of the years goes on, and we find our clever

schoolboys dropping into ordinary young men, "finding their level" in point of talent, or losing their advantages in point of industry, this conviction has a wonderfully sobering effect upon our judgment. All distinctions are wise and good so long as we gain them; otherwise, there is a great deal to be said against the determined race for honours in which some young heads are confused rather than stimulated, and many young tempers embittered. In this point of view, a "reading" college has its disadvantages. The nervous eagerness of its tutors and heads for honours, the indifference with which those students who are not likely to add to the fame of the society are treated, and the kind of moral hotbed in which those are placed who are likely to distinguish—themselves, no doubt, but in the first place their college,—does a great deal, we fear, to lower the ideal of university life, which almost all intelligent youths have in their hearts before they go to the university.

THE LASCAR CREW.

ADMIRAL GORE JONES, Naval Commander-in-Chief of the East India Station, when presiding recently over a meeting at the Bombay Sailors' Home, commented on the practice of the steamship companies manning their ships with Lascar crews, and he predicted that this practice would some day lead to great disaster.

1874-1880.

I.

The ship *Britannia* sailed away
 One stormy winter, to cross the Bay,
 With a skipper bold and a gallant crew,
 And the flag at her mast of the old True Blue.
 Her sails were stout, and her spars were strong,
 And she seemed to feel, as she bowled along,
 That she feared not the worst that winter could do,
 For her decks were manned by a British crew.

II.

The winds blew free and the waves rose high,
 And the lightning shivered across the sky,
 And the good ship plunged in the foaming deep,
 Then reared like a horse ere he takes his leap.
 Oh, well for her that the man at the wheel
 Had an iron hand and a heart of steel !
 Oh, well for her that her skipper true
 Would have none on board but a British crew !

III.

She rode the waves and she weathered the blast,
 Till she sailed into summer seas at last,
 And her flag aloft was yet proudly borne,
 Though her spars were strained and her sails were torn.
 Then those who knew what the storm had been,
 And all that the skipper had suffered and seen,
 Said, " Ah, there's nothing that ship can't do,
 As long as she's manned by a British crew ! "

1880—?

I.

'Tis winter again, and the ship must sail
 Across the Bay in a furious gale :
 Her sails are stout, and her spars are strong,
 And why should she fear as she bowls along ?
 With her gallant crew, and her skipper bold,
 And her flag that waves where it waved of old,
 Oh why should she fear what the gale can do,
 While she carries on board her British crew ?

II.

Alas for the ship, and alas for the flag !
 The old True Blue is a pitiful rag—
 All ravelled and sodden with mud and dirt
 By the hands that should guard it from stain or hurt.
 Alas for the ship, and the gallant men
 Who could save her now as they saved her then—
 Oh, well may she fear what the gale can do,
 For her decks are manned by a *Lascar crew* !

III.

Alas for the ship, that her pilot's hand
 Is shifting and weak as a rope of sand !
 And alas for her, that her captain's eye
 Is wicked and wild as the stormy sky !
 He sees not the breakers which foam ahead,
 He hears not the thunder-clouds' gathering tread,
 And little he recks what the gale can do—
 But oh for one hour of her British crew !

IV.

The waves will rise, and the winds will blow,
 And the Lascars will cower like rats below;
 With nerveless fingers and craven heart,
 Under battened hatches they shiver and start:
 The skipper is mad, and the rudder gone,
 And the ship rushes on to her doom alone—
 And we know too well what the gale will do
 To a ship that is manned by a Lascar crew!

C.

May 1880.

THE LEWS: ITS SALMON AND HERRING.

WE had shaken off the dust of the south. We had bidden "good-bye," for a time at least, to the toil of London life. Once again Inverness, with all its charms of association, had welcomed us with its ever-refreshing memories of happy days when railways were yet unknown. We had tubbed,—breakfasted on those succulent salmon-steaks, rolls and butter, unequalled in our minds. We had not forgotten to "visit MacDougall's;" neither had we omitted the yet more important duty of looking in at Snowie's and Macleay's for fresh tackle. As the afternoon train for the Skye line moved slowly out,—it was heavily laden with a large contingent of the Ross-shire militia returning to the west coast,—we sank back in the comfortable front *coupé*, which the Highland Railway Directors so thoughtfully provide for the enthusiastic travelling public, with that ineffable sense of rest, comfort, and tranquillity that pervades the minds of well-conditioned men, who, bound for a short spell of leave which they believe they have fully earned, have made all possible preparations for its thorough enjoyment.

Donuil, our head-keeper, had thoughtfully sent us a telegram, done into English, from Stornoway: "She is full, and there will be grand sport." If he had written a bookful he could not have said more to send our spirits up to effervescing-point. We anxiously watched the "carry" as we hastened round the Beaully Firth. The clouds were moving to the north, with that look in their ever-varying and beautiful masses which told us, not unused to read their signs, that there was no fear, for the present at all events, of that *bête noire* to the angler, an easterly wind. With the feelings of boys, young and old, who handle their guns on the eve of "the Twelfth," their hunting-crops at the end of October, we had kept out our fly-books, and tenderly handled the innocent-looking means by which we hoped to wile the handsomest fish there is into our panniers, one of which occupied the farther side of the carriage, full to the brim with all that Morel, combined with experience and anticipation of hunger and thirst, could suggest. When the Hampshire basket-maker was told to make a pair, each to hold twelve salmon of 15 lb. weight, he

stared, as well he might ; yet they both were more than filled one day by one rod alone.

As we slowly climbed the steep ascent, and looked up Strathpeffer and down upon Leod Castle, we felt as does the lover of the art when, settling in his stall at Covent Garden, he knows that Patti is the heroine of the evening. Scraping, as it were, through the rocky gateway which seems to bar the entrance to the west, and which reminds one how Dame Nature deigns at times to copy her own handiwork—for this, on an infinitely smaller scale of course, is not unlike the Bolan Pass—we seem to glide with easier respiration along the banks of Garve. Lochluichart, Achanalt, Auchna-shellach, where wealth and taste combine with nature—are they not names to call up visions of scenery not easily surpassed in Bonnie Scotland? As we sweep along the shores of the sea-loch Carron, we catch from the receding tide the bracing, powerful ozonic odours of the fresh sea-weed, and simultaneously we confess to hunger we had not known for months. Anxiously we looked to seaward, as the rays of the setting sun poured out their wealth of gold on weather-beaten mountain-tops, the heathered sides, the wooded glens, and white-sailed fishing-boats darting here and there on the crisply-curling wavelets ; for the sun was sinking fast, and we knew that if we were to escape the loss of a day, we must get out into the Minch before night fell, as the entrance into Strome is most tortuous and dangerous. Yes ; there was the little yacht-like Glencoe, which the ever-obliging station-master of Inverness had assured us would wait for our train until the last possible moment.

Bundling our traps on board, we rushed to the telegraph-office to

announce our departure for the outer world. Can you conceive anything more apparently hopeless than the attempt to penetrate four hundred hungry men, filling, brimming over, and clustering round a "shop" some ten feet square, which held their hopes of food for four-and-twenty hours? At the farther corner of this den lies the telegraphic battery ; yet, thanks to the innate courtesy of these kindly Highlanders, who, in all their apparent rough and eager jostling, never lost their tempers or uttered an unseemly word, we quickly wrote our messages, and were, most thankfully, back again in fresher air before the warning sounds of the steamer's second bell had bid us hasten. As we steamed away, the falling shades on the glass-like waters, the still glowing tops of the higher hills of Ross behind us, the dark-rising masses of the mountain-ranges out in Skye, combined to form such pictures that even the steward's welcome summons was for a time unnoticed. Have you ever been so hungry that the prospect of going foodless to bed made the little heart you had left sink into your boots? We found that it was quite by accident there was anything to eat on board. But, ye gods, how good that was! Such herrings!—not thirty minutes gone since they had said farewell to all their kin—smoking hot—as fresh ; deftly opened down the back ; laid by an artist's hand upon the gridiron, with a dash of oatmeal, black and red pepper, and a pinch of salt,—their like is not yet known in the land of the Sassenach. Top those with chops, which look like cutlets, of small West Highland mutton, and we think that even the announcement that there was no milk for tea could be received with equanimity. Our Russian experience had taught us that a squeeze of lemon is no mean

substitute; and as we sat in the glass-encased saloon, and watched the phosphorescent waves between us and the rising shores of Raasay, we felt that our trip had indeed begun to run in pleasant lines.

With a steady, even beat, the *Glencoe* cleft her way; and ere we well had slept, we found ourselves running up the landlocked bay of Stornoway. Filled with herring-boats of various builds and rigs, from the carvel craft of Banff to the clinker lugger of the west, there were on board them as many types of hardy seamen. The dark, flashing-eyed, impetuous Celt of Hebridean origin loves not the more phlegmatic, less attractive eastern Scot—and he shows it, too, at times; but that is only when the devil, in the shape of poisonous fire-water, subverts his native courteous, peaceful instincts. It was cold,—the coldest hour of all, that just before the dawn. But tired, sleepy, shivering, as we stood upon the quay, we determined to face at once the twenty-mile drive across the Lews, rather than endure the horrors of a bed in worse than doubtful quarters. That drive! We had tasted the delights of a telega for a four days' scamper over the Steppes; but we had not known such agonies of sleep as those which mocked us with blissful rest, as when we toiled along that weary, dreary road to Garrynahine, behind the wretched pony that was harnessed to a double dog-cart, in which a pair of spanking hunters might well have earned their summer oats. Five mortal hours were taken from the day ere our eyes were gladdened by the distant whitened walls of Roag Lodge. With what joy we slipped between the daisy-smelling sheets, and kissed the fresh, white pillows! and in another minute slept as do indeed

the weary—but only for two hours. The General was inexorable. Breakfast at eleven, at noon we started for the lower waters. To each of us were attached two gillies—men who had lived their lives with fish, until they knew their every phase of mind or habit.

One of them, Donuil Dubh, had been some years a trapper for the Hudson's Bay Company; and as his intelligent dark face lit up while he told us tales of the "great lone land," he read us a practical lesson on the possibility and benefit of travelling with a small purse and a large mind. His pay had only been one shilling a-day, which seemed munificent in comparison with the then local rate of sixpence. "Ah!" he said; "in those days, when there were so many mouths for the little meal we had, it would have been a mercy if there had been a war like the long one, when men went by the hundred and few came back." Now, out of a population in the Lews of little more than 25,000, there are nearly 1000 in the Naval Reserve, 500 in the Militia, and 100 are well-drilled Artillery Volunteers; besides, a certain number yearly join the regular services. If the right chord be touched, they are men who will follow the flag, and be proud to die for it.

As we made for the head of the river, our faces were turned towards the south, and the hills of Harris rose before us in striking contrast to the dwarfed contour of the Lews country. Peaks and buttresses, sharp outlines and rugged crests, throwing themselves against the fleece-covered sky to the height of nearly three thousand feet, they proudly asserted themselves in all the beauty of their form and colouring, tinted by the varied hues of heather, grass, and lichen-covered rocks, until, as our

rapid steps brought us to a long sheet of water, whose Scandinavian name betrays its ancient source, we were fain to halt and gaze upon the beauty of the scene, so little like what we had been taught to think could be looked for in the Lews. True it is that the grandeur of the landscape belongs to the southern part, Harris; but her northern sister, like many a dangerous siren, gains in attractiveness the more your accustomed eye wanders over her features, and finds with each growing hour that there is a fresh and not less potent charm than in the last. At least we found it so; and when we left the Lews, we looked long and wistfully in her face, and felt that, without doubt, she need not fear the closest scrutiny, if it last but long enough.

And then we fished Lang Val—Scandinavian to the letter, and full of salmon to the smallest bay, thanks to the absence of a net from spawning-bed to sea. Bordered on the south by the Harris hills, to the north it empties itself by a series of smaller lochs and short streams into the arm of the sea from which its wealth of salmon comes. To each rod is assigned a certain well-defined and most liberal extent of loch and stream; the latter fished from the bank,—the former by fair casting from a Norwegian skiff, light, and easily handled in the strongest breeze—and it can blow great guns on those stretches of water—by the two expert gillies, who, as they say themselves, enjoy the sport almost as much as you.

Quickly the rod is put together by the lissom-fingered Donuil, who, as he hands it back, remarks that its eighteen feet of seasoned stuff makes just the thing that's wanted. Much against our prejudices, he is allowed to have his way and put on a "bob," "a silver squire," a

smaller fly than the "butcher," which goes upon the tail. Quickly, silently, as if of a boat's crew bent on cutting out a prize from under a battery, the gillies bring the skiff to, just below the stream as it enters the loch; and, with a Gaelic benediction from them both, out flies the line across the stream, and we fish upwards. "Ah!" is the united expression of keen delight as with a rush a fresh-run salmon flashes his silver side well out of the water ere he sinks with the deceptive morsel. A click of the reel, a whirr as the line goes out, and we know that a good fish is fast. In an instant the rod is bent as he gets the butt and the line—taut, as it may safely be—cuts the hissing water like a knife as he rushes down the loch, and takes out forty yards of line. Turning like a flash, he comes back yet faster, hard at us; and ere the line can well be reeled again, he springs three feet straight into the air. For a second the horrid thought arises that he has played a well-known trick, and won the game of life once more; but as he sinks and rushes off, our hearts beat freely again as the tell-tale wheel pays out his needs. It was a strategic movement worthy of success; but, as in other warfare, failing, it involved a quicker probability of defeat—for while the tackle held, we felt that now the chances were against him. But a fresh, strong salmon of his weight is not to be trifled with; and it was only after several determined rushes and saltatory efforts, which made us tremble for his capture, that he began to tire, and foot by foot he and the boat were cautiously brought together. At last, with a sigh of mingled pleasure, relief, and regret, our first salmon of the Lews was in the meshes of Donuil's landing-net; but not one

second too soon, for as he took the hook away, it fell in two. "17 lb. if he is an ounce," is the verdict, proved by the scales at the Lodge. Small in head, thick in girth, the very pink of condition, his glistening scales gave off such hues of purple, grey, black, green, and silver, that he well deserved John M'Iver's hearty compliment—"A verry bonnie fesh." A "John Scott" was now tried, and with equal luck. "This is indeed the happy fishing-ground of one's youthful dreams," we think, as the afternoon rolls on with varying but most sporting success, resulting in a total of seven splendid fish—the four remaining days of that week yielding five-and-forty more to the single rod.

Sunday was a day of welcome rest to all, and in the afternoon we floated quietly with the tide to pay a visit to the far-famed Druidical remains near Callernish—perhaps the most perfect in our Islands. It was impossible to look at them in their gaunt grim shapes, erecting their solemn and impressive heads with an air of impenetrable silence, and yet repress the futile wish that they could speak and tell some of the dread tales they might unfold; or to control the shudder with which one looked down into the pit, round which the circle runs, and thought of all the human blood poured out, and crying still aloud in the expressive name of the adjacent mound, from which the sorrowing relatives had gazed in piteous, hopeless, helpless grief,—“the hill of mourning.” From this point, in many directions, are seen other Druidical stones, but none of such imposing appearance or size as these, some of which are said to weigh from eight to ten tons, and stand from 15 to 20 feet out of the ground.

Leave, to be enjoyed, should never be quaffed to the dregs; and on the return, we found ourselves with some hours to spare at Stornoway. This time our drive was at a normal hour, and we scanned the country from the road with a wakeful and more lenient eye, as the morning breeze, hailing straight from Iceland, swept across the heather, and tempered with its crisp freshness to a delightful warmth the ardent sun-rays, which were fast filling with hope the hearts of the peasant farmers, who, by means of giant beds, like those on which asparagus is grown, manage to raise good crops of oats, barley, and potatoes, in spite of almost constant wet. Topping the last hill, some four miles from the end of our journey, we pulled up to take a last fond look of the loch-covered, brown-visaged land we had so quickly learned to love; and then, turning to the east, we drank in, with the silence that comes with feeling deeply, the wondrous beauty of the scene before us. The foreground, grey massive rocks, low tumbling hills of heather, and glistening sheets of water; in the middle distance the Minch, studded with fair islands and flecked with countless herring-boats; while far beyond rose the fantastic shapes and imposing purple masses of Suilbheinn, Ben Mohr, Ben Hee, and others, with here and there a gleaming patch or ridge of snow.

Driving on, at length we pass the model farm and entrance-gates of the late owner of the island, whose wise and kindly liberal expenditure saved much misery, in the famine some thirty years ago, and brought him well-deserved honour. We saw, too, what he had done to foster the growth of trees; but the stunted, weather-beaten aspect of the outer ones shows how hard the struggle

of life has been for them, the only wood in all the length and breadth of the Lews. Yet the peat-mosses show on every side the traces of a once grand forest, which the natives say was destroyed by fire.

Thanks to the courtesy of one of the fish-curers, we were able to learn some details of the herring-fishery, now in full swing. As the day wears on, the multitude of boats make sail, and leave the harbour in magnificent and picturesque confusion; and the evening glow of the setting sun lights up and gilds the dark-sailed luggers of the west, and the yellow, white-canvased, half-decked boats from the east coast, as, guided by the signs they watch for, they gain the herring-ground, and shoot their miles on miles of nets. With early morning comes their harvest; and then, sometimes gunwale-deep, they crowd all sail, and hasten back, like swarms of homing pigeons, to the curers, who, ready at all points, wait to turn the work of nature and of other men to food and profit. Measured by the cran—a circular tub holding from eight to fifteen hundred herring, according to their bulk—the fresh-caught fish are sold at prices which vary like the other barometers of wealth and weather. In the beginning of the season £6 a cran were paid. The day before we came, half-a-crown per cran was taken. And one poor man with sixty crans, coming in too late for market, was told they were not worth a shilling. But, nothing daunted, he bought some casks and salt, and vowed he would not throw away his fish or labour. Let us hope his self-reliance would be rewarded. On the other hand, by means of bounty and other arrangements, each curer secures the services of certain boats, whose catch

he takes. A proportion is despatched at once, quite fresh, in boxes, by one of the small squadron of steamers waiting for hire. Some are cured in brine, and casked; while the rest are gutted, smoked, packed in box or basket containing fifty, and find their way quickly to our breakfast-tables, under the deliciously suggestive name of “kip-pers.” The curers of late have erected a number of buildings, where companies of women wait with sharpened knives the coming herrings. With a slit down the back, and a turn of the wrist, the fish is spread open and ready for the man who hooks it on a stick containing perhaps a score. These sticks are ranged one above the other in the smoking-chambers, until their walls are covered with the fish, heads up and insides exposed to the fumes of pungent smoke produced by fragrant chips and sawdust. For ten hours or so they are thus enclosed, and then are packed and despatched at once to market. The Russian and North German eat their herrings raw, and, being dainty in that matter, take them only when they are in their prime. But competition has its evils as well as its merits; and it is feared, by those who look more ahead than the old established custom, that the new system will result in greater harm than is yet foreseen by many. The herring are easily frightened; and if they are met too far from the haunts to which they come in countless shoals, the Loch Fyne experience may be renewed on an infinitely greater scale, to the ruin, if not starvation, of thousands who depend upon them. Besides, the Continental markets get glutted by cheap, inferior early fish; for the herring of May is to that of June and later months as is the stripling to the alderman. And we

all know how difficult it is to raise the price of a depreciated article. It would be well if the Fishery Commissioners were to look to this and kindred matters in the herring-fishery, which should have a regular close-time, say from January to the middle of May.

If you have an impressionable heart, venture not within a curing-house. The work and the weather are warm, the clothing is light, and the beauty of the *artistes* is renowned. We heard it was so, and proved it with our eyes. With what grace that tall, dark, Spanish-looking girl has thrown her yellow kerchief across her raven locks! With what a coquettish smile she reminds you that you must pay your footing! and as her eyes flash responsively to your admiring glance, you wonder whence this damsel came to do such work. And yet, on turning round, you see the Scandinavian hair, eyes, and features, forming studies quite as bewitching to the lover of the beautiful, whatever form it takes. The lads of the Lews are not unworthy of such mates, who come from many parts, and by their industry add not a little to the "tocher" which helps to furnish boat and gear.

Next morning, with the rising sun, the well-named steamer the

Express started with the mails for Ullapool, and we gladly seized the chance to see yet more of the west coast. Truly, Fortune favoured us. Such a sky, and sea, and outline we had not thought to look upon on this side of the Levant. Something similar we had gazed at with heart-filling emotion from the extinct crater above Aloupka, across the blue waters of the Black Sea, to the gigantic mountains of the Caucasus. But in truth neither Alps nor Himalayas ever stirred our souls as did that morning run across the Minch. From the northern headland of Cape Wrath to the Argyleshire hills, there lay before us, in every line and shape of mountain grandeur, with all their purple glory pencilled by the softest gold and silver lights, the homes of men the history of whose race is one of war and romance well fitting.

If you would know the crowding feelings which make us thank the Creator of all things for giving us such soul-uplifting pleasure as from that glorious panorama, go to the Hebrides, and pray that, as you pass the Summer Isles, steam up Loch Broom, and cast your anchor, you may be favoured with such weather as helped to make our trip one long-continued song of praise.

BUSH-LIFE IN QUEENSLAND.—PART VIII.

XXIV.—EVIL COUNSEL AND EVIL DEEDS—M'DUFF'S DEATH.

THE next day saw Yering deserted of its visitors. Almost all the station people wended their ways homeward, and only a few of the labouring classes remained to spend the small remnant of money which remained to them.

How Cane and Ralf staved off the most pressing of their creditors' demands, they themselves only knew. The horse had been seized at the instance of the hotel-keeper with whom they boarded, and they had apparently nothing to go upon except the position of Ralf's father, which procured for them some credit in the way of food and drink. This morning, they sat together over a bottle of brandy, to which both, especially Cane, had frequent recourse.

"Well," said Ralf, sulkily, "you have managed to get us into a nice mess."

"Shut up, you growling —. You're the biggest sneak hi hever comed hacross. You halways turns round hon yer mates when things don't go just right," returned his amiable friend.

"No wonder!" answered the latter; "you make yourself out so — knowing, and you let a — bush-horse quietly walk off with stakes big enough to put us on our legs again, without bets. I wouldn't have cared so much if it hadn't belonged to that — stuck-up Fitzgerald."

"D— him!" echoed the other. "Hi'd sooner hit 'ad been 'im than that hother cussed pup wot hi saw a-lookin' hafter 'im. Hi'll settle that —'s 'ash yet, hif hi gets 'alf a slant,—hi will, s'elp me, for the sake hof this business."

"Bosh!—your always skyting about what you'll do. What can you do now, when we want some good advice? That's more to the purpose——"

"Can't you get that ere — hold M'Duff to lend you some cash?" asked Cane.

"He'd sooner give me his blood," returned Ralf; "besides, this forgergy business is blown all over the country by this time, and people will be shy of taking his cheques."

"Didn't yo say has 'ow a diggin's butcher wos a comin' there to buy sheep?"

"By Jove," uttered Ralf, a new light breaking in upon him, "we might get any amount of gold, if we could lay our hands on it! Those fellows nearly always pay in pure metal."

"You sed has 'ow the hold boy was agoin' down to Sydney habout them ere forged flimsies. Hif we could get 'old of 'is valise, we might put that little business to rights too; burn them, hand square hourselves with the gold for a fresh start hin Sydney."

"Right you are," returned Ralf, admiringly; "you have got a brain. I believe it's easy enough done."

"Hof course hit is. We'll cut away there. Hi'll camp hin the bush. You stay hup hat the 'ouse, —find hout 'is plans, and get 'old of the valise, 'and it hover to me, hand hi'll stow hit away hall serene."

Accordingly, they both started for Cambaranga. Ralf, who had an intimate knowledge of the country around the station, pointed out a place to Cane, in close proximity to the head-station, where he might remain camped for some time in

secrecy, and then made his own way to the house.

It was dark when he arrived. Mr M'Duff was at home, as well as a young man who had been engaged to fill the position of overseer vacated by old Graham. M'Duff was by no means in a good humour. Whether he suspected Ralf as the thief who was preying on what he worked so hard for, and loved so much, or whether it was that he merely disliked and despised the character of the young man, was hard to say. His manner was more than usually stern and gruff. The news of old Graham's death did not seem to affect him much. He knew his worth, and appreciated his good qualities; but he had expected the catastrophe so long, that it was by no means a shock. His mind was much more disturbed about the forgeries which had interfered with the currency of his cheques; and he produced one after another, which had been sent up for his inspection, until Ralf saw all the evidences of his crime before him on the table. If he could only get possession of them!

In the course of the evening he learnt that M'Duff intended starting for Sydney next day, to give personal evidence in the affair, which he was determined to investigate thoroughly. The butcher from the gold-fields had come, and only left that morning; therefore his gold must still be in the house.

If Ralf could only lay his hand on that valise, he would never get into such a scrape again,—never, never!

He could not listen to what M'Duff said, so busy was he planning his measures. At last it was bed-time, and all retired to their rooms; but Ralf cannot sleep,—he sits and ponders. After a couple of hours' time, he slips off his boots, and makes his way over to the house in which M'Duff sleeps.

The superintendent's heavy, measured breathing is heard from the bed. Where can he have put his papers and the gold? He intends starting early; he has surely packed his valise. It is so dark he knocks against a chair slightly, and M'Duff's quick ear warns him. He opens his eyes. "Who is there?" he asks, in his stern, deep voice. Ralf is close to the door—he steps out, and hastening over to his room, jumps into bed, and draws the blankets over him as he is. Presently he notices a light; and M'Duff walks across the courtyard, comes straight to his room, and looks in through the open door. Ralf is breathing hard in apparently sound sleep, and the superintendent goes away satisfied to the other man's room, and then walks back to his own. Ralf dares not try it again. He lies for an hour or two revolving plans, and decides on consulting Cane. Accordingly, he made his way out to the spot where that worthy was camped. It was about half a mile distant, in a small patch of rocky, broken country, beside a little spring; and awakening him, he narrated what he had learnt.

"Hit's hall no — use," remarked Cane, on learning full particulars. "The hold fellow 'as got hevery-think stowed haway, so has yer can't lays yer 'ands hon it. I votes we stick 'im hup hon the road."

Ralf frightened. "Robbery!" he said.

"Robbery!" sneered the other, mimicking the tone. "Wot was yer about to-night, eh? Don't be a — fool now, and spile hall. Find hout which way he means to take, hand come 'ere immediately hafter, and we'll manage some'ow. Now get halong back before ye're missed."

With this they parted, and Ralf had a good hour in bed before day-

light broke. M'Duff was up early, and had his horse ready. Ralf, to blind him to the real state of affairs, pretended laziness, and came in late to breakfast, keeping his eyes and ears open all the time. M'Duff tells his last night's adventure, and persists in believing some one was in his room. The new overseer laughs loudly, much to M'Duff's disgust, for he is not given to creating false alarms. He informs them that he is going down the "mailman's old track," which will save him twenty miles in the journey. Ralf knows it well. It is a narrow bridle-path, leading partly through thick scrubby country, and partly over mountains. Here and there the track is very indistinct, and in some places there is none. It is only known to the older station hands, and is seldom traversed now, although formerly the mailman used it; but his route is now changed. M'Duff knows it well also. It would take him a day and a half by the main road to accomplish what he can do by this path in one. He brings out his valise. Ralf thinks it looks heavy. M'Duff straps it on, and mounting, nods a hasty good-bye, and is off. Ralf is on tenter-hooks to go to Cane, but the overseer is in the way. The man is polite to his employer's son, and would like to become acquainted with him, and therefore delays his business to indulge in a chat. But Ralf's gruff, uncivil answers drive him off; and catching his horse, the sociable young fellow goes away whistling.

Ralf now gets his horse also, and is soon detailing his knowledge to Cane, who, without a word, straps his few effects on the horse which he has already saddled.

"Come hon," he said. "Lead the way hon to the track, hand push halong, hif yer don't want to miss yer last chance."

A roundabout way brought them to the "mailman's track," and soon they were cantering along it in silence, glancing eagerly ahead of them for their prey. As they hurry on, Cane explains his plan to Ralf. They were both provided with revolvers, which many people in the Bush carry. These they slung in their belts, to give them the appearance of Bushrangers, while a red handkerchief apiece, in which holes had been cut for their eyes, was a sufficient disguise. Their clothes were in no wise different from those of fifty others, and they feared not being recognised. They hurried on faster,—they are now about eighteen miles from home, and expect to see the quarry every minute. At last they notice him about a couple of hundred yards ahead, as he leaves a small open space to enter some timber.

Cane now takes the lead; he hunts now by sight. Making a detour to get in front, and whispering fiercely to Ralf that, "should he fail to stick by him," he "will never see another day's light," he rushes out on the unsuspecting man. "Bail up! bail up!" shout the two red-veiled attackers, revolvers in hand. "Throw hup yer harms, or hi'll drop yer!" shouts Cane, intimidatingly.

But M'Duff is not to be got so easily; and hitting his horse with the spurs, he tears along shouting "Never!" and brandishing his stout hunting-crop. Both men gallop alongside, threatening his life once more; and perhaps the determination of the Super might have caused them to give up the attempt, had not Ralf's handkerchief fallen off. M'Duff turning at the time recognised him, and uttering his name in fierce tones, as he struck about him wildly with his whip, vowed that he should hang for the attempt on his life.

"Shoot him, Ralf!" cries Cane. "Shoot the hold —, or he'll 'ave yer blood."

Ralf's trembling fingers might have obeyed the fearful command, when a smashing blow from the hunting-crop knocked the revolver out of his hand, and saved him the commission of the dreadful crime. But in the same moment "crack" goes one of the chambers of Cane's six-shooter; and he has rivalled his great namesake and antitype, the first murderer.

The grim, money-loving old Super—so firm and fair in some things, so heartless and lax in others—falls from his saddle. His foot getting entangled in the stirrup-iron, the body is dragged along by the frantic horse, striking against stumps and roots, and being kicked at furiously by the animal, against whose hind-legs it is occasionally dashed with violence. The road is strewn with little articles belonging to the unfortunate man. His helmet lies at the spot where the shot was fired, his whip farther on, then his knife and matches, and then some plugs of tobacco; a little farther lies scattered some money, then clots of blood,—and a mark of the trailing body runs all along the road.

Cane and Ralf were at first seriously alarmed lest the animal should become maddened with fear and make its escape, valise and all; but the stirrup-leather comes off, and the body falls to the ground. Soon after, they succeed in catching the frightened steed, and lead him back snorting to where its master lies a pitiful sight, with his grizzly hair and beard, a thick mass of dust and blood, his face almost undistinguishable with bruises. Twenty minutes before, he was in full vigour, his mind occupied with plans for his earthly welfare; and now his spirit, that "wander-

ing fire," has joined old Graham's in pioneering the "dark, undiscovered shore" of that black river from which no explorer's report has ever been received.

With eager haste they tear off the valise and examine the contents. They pull out handkerchiefs and collars, a couple of shirts, and some other articles of clothing, a cheque-book, some papers (only accounts). What! no money! none of the hated forged cheques!

"Examine his pockets," says Cane.

Ralf shrinks from touching the fearful thing.

"Curse your white liver!" snarls the red-handed man, fit for any deed now,—and, bending down, he turns out pocket after pocket. Nothing! (Indeed, M'Duff had made up the post-bag before leaving, into which he had put the forged cheques, as well as the crossed cheque which he had received from the "diggings" butcher, and by this time the mailman was hastening with them along another road down to town.) In his rage he vents his resentment by kicking the helpless clay, saying, "You put me hout hall night in the Bush wonst—hit's your turn now."

Ralf is getting stupefied; he is only now waking up to what has occurred.

"Come halong, you fool!" shouts the chief villain; "let's get the carcass hout o' this some'ow, hand then we'll see wot's to be done."

A couple of deep round lagoons lay alongside of the track; and half carrying, half dragging the body between them, they threw it into the black water on the far side from the road. The water splashed and surged in widening circles, wetting their feet as they stood on the banks. What a relief to get rid of that evidence of guilt—mo-

tionless, inanimate, but more terrible than any living witness! The valise and saddle, weighted with stones, are likewise flung into the pool, and every evidence of the crime is carefully hidden from sight.

And now Cane, whose mind seems to have grown clearer and stronger with the emergency, gives instructions to the trembling wretch beside him as to what must be done. They had passed some miles back a small gonyah and yard temporarily occupied by a flock of "hospital" sheep, shepherded by an old black gin.

Cane, alive to the urgent necessity of obliterating all tracks, orders Ralf to go to the place and cause the old woman, who knows him, and is likely to obey his orders without hesitation, to drive her sheep out here for a night, and camp near the water-hole. He is aware that the tracks of the sheep on the road will hide the footprints of the galloping horses and the trailing of the body, and that as they crowd round the margin of the lagoon in their anxiety to drink, all marks there will be effaced. He impresses the necessity on Ralf of getting home quickly and unobservedly, and of examining all M'Duff's papers. He himself will cross the Bush and make for another station at some considerable distance off, so that he may establish an *alibi* if necessary; and in two or three days' time he will return to the camp where he spent the previous night. Ralf can meet him there.

Now that M'Duff is out of the road, Ralf will have charge, and can easily put matters right as regards business. But first of all, they must set this straight.

After undergoing much advising, threatening, imploring, and sneering, Ralf is ready to start. Cane then parted with him, taking the

murdered man's horse, which he has decided to shoot in the first thick scrub he comes to at a sufficient distance from the spot.

Ralf rode as one in a dream. He succeeded in finding the sheep, and, making some excuse, he started the half-crazed old woman with them to the lagoons. Then he galloped home half frenzied with fear, his mind dwelling on the tragedy he had so lately borne a part in. The young overseer had not returned, and Ralf breathes more freely as he turned his horse into the paddock and sought his room. There was something clinging to him which he could not shake off. Go where he would, something awful there was at his elbow—a fearful load on his soul! Outwardly he was the same as this morning, but inwardly—An indefinable terror haunted him. He threw himself on his bed. "O God! O God! O God!" He started as he uttered the holy name. What had he done? The whiteness of his soul had long, long ago been smudged with black dirt; and now, after years of absence, on the same ground he had changed its colour to a brighter hue, but a darker stain. The overseer rode up merrily. A happy, careless lad, he strode in with a cheery remark, but suddenly stopping, asked if Ralf was ill.

"Only a bad headache," he was answered. "I'm often like this." He could eat nothing. That night, when all was silent, he stole over to the dead man's chamber. How he abhorred the cursed money. Sooner a thousand times over would he have appeared before the world as a defaulter, or as a thief, than as he now was; yet it must be done. Each article put him in mind of his victim. Guiltily he glanced over his shoulder, fancying that he heard stealthy footsteps, or

that a voice whispered something in his ear. Nothing could he find. No money—no cheques; nothing of any value. And the deed had been done uselessly—uselessly. O God! what is that on the bed? An indistinct form shapes itself. He almost faints. Tush! it is only the washing, which the woman has laid out there. Back to his room, where, amid incoherent ravings and agonies of mind, he passed the rest of that awful night. He wished Cane would return. He wanted to look once more on the *spot*, to see that all was right; but he dared not. What if the old gin, with the sharp eyes her race is celebrated for, has detected the tracks? Her instinctive sagacity would enable her to follow up the clue. All the day succeeding, and the night which followed, and the day after, Ralf remained in a state of mind bordering on insanity. The overseer and woman in the kitchen, indeed, began to suspect that the brandy which he had procured from M'Duff's store, and which he drank in immense quantities, was about to produce a fit of horrors; but, strange to say, it had no effect whatever on his agitated system. The day was now at hand when Cane promised to return to the rendezvous, and Ralf counted every minute until his stronger-minded associate should assist him in bearing a share of the oppressing secret.

That evening a horseman was announced approaching; and Ralf, concluding that Cane had changed his intentions, and had decided upon staying at the house, ran out to meet him. It was not Cane, however, but Ralf's father, Mr Cos-

grove, sen. He had, in consequence of the unsatisfactory information which had reached him, started out from home very suddenly; and leaving Ruth in Sydney, where he had received further disquieting intelligence, he had continued his journey to Cambaranga, to confer with M'Duff about the very business which was taking the latter to New South Wales, unknown to his employer and partner.

The unexpected face fell cold upon the guilty heart; but there was something in old associations and blood which, notwithstanding all, gave to him some measure of comfort. He felt a desire to cling to his father; he felt that there stood the only one who would seek to palliate his wickedness, if possible. His subdued and quiet manner, so different to what his father had ever before noticed in him, struck the elder Cosgrove very much; and he felt that perhaps the young man had seen the folly of his doings, and was about to change.

He met him with a greater show of affection than he had bestowed on the prodigal for some years, and asked for M'Duff.

It was well for Ralf that the young overseer came out just then to answer the question, for he only kept himself from falling by clinging to the paddock-fence. Cosgrove's annoyance at having missed the Super was expressed rather loudly, and the bustle of unsaddling the horse served to divert attention from Ralf, who managed to get inside the house, where he fortified himself by drinking a large quantity of brandy.

XXV.—A FEARFUL JOURNEY—HIDING GUILT.

The activity and excitement consequent on the arrival of Mr Cosgrove relieved Ralf from much observation, and to a certain extent relaxed the strain on his mind. His father's conversation, however, was full of poignant bitterness; and the arrows of remorse fell fast upon him as the elder Cosgrove seemed willing to forget all the old grievances and errors of the past. He would possibly even have hushed up his son's forging transactions, and paid his debts once more, had he made an open confession, and determined to lead a new life; but now there was an impassable gulf fixed between him and ordinary men.

The past life *was* over. A new life had begun. Never again would men take him by the hand and welcome him to their homes. Henceforth he was worse than a pariah—he was a wild beast. As these thoughts kept crossing his mind, a groan, occasioned by his mental distress, would now and then burst from him; and at last, excusing himself on the plea of illness, he again sought his room, to pass another wretched night.

At breakfast next morning he received a still greater shock, for Mr Cosgrove, speaking of his journey, incidentally remarked, "By the way, I came along the mailman's track yesterday. They wanted to dissuade me doing so at the other end, for they feared I could not find my way after my long absence; and as I passed the Lilly Lagoon, I fancied I saw something in the water like a dead body."

"A dead body!" laughed the overseer.

"Yes," said Mr Cosgrove. "I did not go close to it. It was something dead, I am sure."

Ralf said nothing; he was pale and rigid, his fingers stiff and cold, his hair rising on his head, his heart beating violently.

"It might have been a sheep, or a kangaroo, or perhaps a calf," suggested the overseer.

"Ah, yes," joined in Ralf—"a calf, no doubt; there are plenty of wild cattle in the scrubs there."

The conversation changed; but his nerves were wrung worse than ever.

Twice he went to the rendezvous, but it was vacant. How he longed for Cane! He even prayed that he might come. His father, noticing his careworn, haggard look, felt alarmed, and proposed sending for a doctor. To this, however, Ralf vehemently objected.

On going the third time, about sundown, to the meeting-place, he saw his brother-in-blood dismounting. He was much relieved. He rushed up, surprising Cane with the fervency of his welcome, and made him acquainted with the fact of his father's sudden arrival, and his having noticed the body. These were two pieces of intelligence which entirely took Cane by surprise; but, equal to the occasion, he spoke after a few minutes' reflection.

"Now, look 'ere: we want to get rid of that carcass—that is the first thing to be done; hand hafter that you can gammon penitent, tell hall to the governor, and get round 'im, hand you'll be, has right has hever. Ten to one 'e'll give you charge 'ere, and cut 'ome; hand, my word, we'll commence then hon a new lay. Hour luck his honly just a-turning."

"But what shall we do about—about—I mean—that thing over there?" asked Ralf, his voice sink-

ing to a whisper as he pointed in the direction of the lagoons on the mailman's track.

"Hit's nigh full moon to-night," returned Cane. "'Ave yer got hany quiet 'osses in the paddock?"

"Yes," returned the other. "Why?"

"When they hall goes to bed, we'll get hup the 'osses, saddle a couple, hand lead hout hanother with a pack-saddle, fish the stiff un hout o' the water, hand hump 'im hoff the road somewhere, and make hashes hof 'im. There's plenty hof time to get back hafore morning. Now, cut haway back, and hi'll be hup hat the 'ouse by the time I thinks the rest 'as turned hin. You come hout when you 'ears me a-whistling, hand we'll set to work."

Ralf did as he was bid; but he thought his father and the overseer would never leave off talking, so anxious did he feel to get away out to destroy the evidence of his crime. He could not understand Cane's coolness and indifference.

Just as the rest were rising to retire, he distinguished a long low whistle, not far off. No one noticed it but himself. He gave his stained hand in friendly clasp to the others, and wished them "good night."

Again the whistle. This time he slipped out and spoke a few words to Cane, begging him to wait a few minutes longer, until all should have time to get asleep. About the buildings a quantity of couch-grass grew, which, although short from constant grazing, still afforded very sweet picking to the horses, who were accustomed to come up each night for a short time and feed on it. A number of these were now engaged cropping the short feed. After about a quarter of an hour's waiting, they selected three suitable ones, bridled, saddled, and led them out of the

paddock at some distance from the house, through a gap in the fence, which a couple of loose rails afforded. Then mounting, they made the best of their way along the track.

Cane lit his pipe, and leading the pack-horse, followed the shivering leader as if he had been engaged in the most ordinary occupation in life. Ralf could not speak. He made his way, as if under a mesmeric spell, towards the object which fascinated his mind. He felt that he must look upon it once more, although he hated and feared it. They push along, cantering when they can, for Cane perpetually urges haste. Here it was where they saw him leave the plain and enter the timber.

This is the *spot*. As they turn off the road and approach the banks, a turtle drops off a branch of a tree into the water with a splash, and a mob of ducks fly up with an alarming quacking noise and hurried flapping. It startles Ralf, and even Cane loses his equanimity for a little. Now they look for what they know only too well is there. Where is it? They walk side by side round the black pool, for Ralf will not leave his companion's side for one instant.

It is not there. "Can you see the — thing?" inquires Cane.

Ralf shakes his head; but the next minute he stands glaring fixedly at something on the dark water half covered by the broad leaves of the lotus.

"What yonder floats on the rueful floor?" Ah, they need no one to tell them that!

"Don't be a — fool now," fiercely grinds out Cane between his teeth. "Here, give us a 'old o' that 'ere long stick, till I fish 'im hout." They had "good luck to their fishing;" and scarcely knowing what he did, Ralf assists in dragging the stiffened form out on

the bank and lifting it on to the pack-saddle, where they, or rather Cane, who alone seems to have his wits about him, fastened it as best he could.

A small range of hills not far away rose on their left hand, and Cane directed Ralf to lead the way across them. It was a terrible journey. Ralf feared to ride on, and feared to stay. The curlew's mournful cry chilled his blood, and the branches of the trees he passed seemed to clutch at him with avenging hands.

"'Old 'ard a bit," utters the man of blood behind; "the — thing's a-slippin' hoff the 'oss. Get hoff and shove hit hover a bit." Ralf did as he was bid; but in the act of lifting the cold wet burden, his face comes in contact with the weed-entangled, dripping hair. Not for worlds would he touch it again, and Cane is obliged to dismount and readjust matters.

The dead man is lying on his back across the pack-saddle, the moonlight falling full on the pale mangled features, one stiff right arm pointing upward to the sky, as if accusing his murderers before Him who set that silent light above them in the midnight heaven. The pack-horse is a bad leader, and drags behind, compelling them to adopt a funeral pace. As they cross the mountain-ridge, the moon reveals to them a stretch of broken, mountainous, dark-looking country, through which winds a tortuous line of silver water. This place is seldom traversed, on account of the rocky soil and poor pasturage. They descend, and after travelling a mile or two into the heart of it, they come upon a large fallen tree, whose limbs afford abundance of fuel.

"It will do," says Cane. "Get hoff and gather some wood."

Ralf sets to work like a madman.

Cane undoes the straps, and giving the ghastly pack a push, upsets it on the ground, where it falls on all-fours,—being supported by the drawn and stiffened limbs. They now cover it with limbs and logs of wood. Hide it from light; shut it out from view. They draw the horses away; and Cane at last, striking a match, sets fire to a pile of dead leaves. There it burns; now it seizes the small stuff, and soon it roars up in a great blaze. He fires the pile in several places. The heat is so great that they are forced to retire for some time, during which the flames rise higher and fiercer. They sit together at the foot of a large tree. Ralf's head is buried in his hands, which are resting on his knees; while his companion draws out a short black pipe, which he proceeds to light, as he watches the fire, from which fitful gleams fall, sometimes upon his dogged bullet-head and heavy jowl, and sometimes upon the three horses, as they stand tied up close at hand.

At last the flames sink lower—the small stuff is evidently consumed—and rudely pushing Ralf, he orders him to "stick on some more."

As in a dream, his nostrils filled with the sickening odour of the roasting flesh, the wretched man approached the fire, a bundle of fuel in his arms; but, powers of mercy, what a sight met his gaze! The body had been turned by the falling wood; the sinews had contracted, and altered its position.

It was on its knees. The hair and beard were burnt away, as well as the lips, revealing the grinning teeth. The head had fallen back, and the arm still remained pointing to heaven, as if the body, in the last moments of its existence, obeyed the latest desires of the immortal spirit it had clothed, and implored divine vengeance for blood spilt.

His nerves could stand the strain no longer, and the criminal fell to the ground in a fainting-fit before the dumb accuser.

Cane sprang up, and dragging Ralf a little on one side, muttered to himself—

“If it wasn’t that you might be useful some o’ them days, I’d shove you hon the coals halso—ten to

one hif you don’t let heverythink hout.”

In an hour or two it was all over. Charred bones alone remained; and making a huge fire above them, which would continue to burn for some hours, they once more retraced their steps through the dismal forest, arriving at Cambaranga about half an hour before daylight.

XXVI.—BESSIE’S MARRIAGE—MUSTERING FOR NEW COUNTRY—
THE HON. MR DESMARD.

On the return of the Bettyamo party from Yering, Bessie’s wedding took place without delay. The clergyman had accompanied them back, everything was in readiness, and the affair passed off quietly. There were many present; but most of them came the day before, and left immediately after the ceremony. Fitzgerald had returned just in time to be present, and rode over with John, who acted as groom’s-man. Stone looked very well, with his honest, manly countenance, and robust, athletic figure, beside merry-faced Bessie, whose eyes sparkled like an April day.

Phoebe was of course the principal bride’s-maid, and felt much at parting from her only sister,—the playmate of her childish days, and companion of her more advanced years. Mr Gray, with his kind, motherly wife, went about cheerily, as usual, and seemed to realise the fact that a son had at last been given to them; and Mrs Gray especially appeared not a little pleased as she contemplated her daughter’s bearded protector.

It was, however, over at last. Mr and Mrs Stone took their seats on the buggy—for the ceremony had taken place in the morning early—and bidding good-bye to all, started on their wedding-trip to

New South Wales, amid a shower of old boots and slippers.

Most of the guests left after lunch, among them Fitzgerald and John, the latter of whom now had some busy work before him. The scene they have just witnessed has struck a chord which kept vibrating in Fitzgerald’s breast; and as they ride home, he made a confession of his adventure in Sydney, and of his having at last fallen in love, in the most unexpected way.

“Most romantic,” replied John. “I was not aware that so much sentiment existed in your nature.”

“I daresay not,” returned his friend. “I was not aware of it myself. I cannot account for it. I know absolutely nothing of the lady. I only saw her for a few minutes, and yet I cannot forget her. You know how I used to laugh at spoony fellows. Well, I can understand that now.”

“But,” urged John, “you don’t know whether she is engaged or not. She may be unamiable—stupid.”

“It’s no use, West. You may be right, but I feel drawn to her. I believe in her. I can read a noble, constant faith in her high brow and steadfast eyes—truth and reverence in the Madonna-shaped head—sensibility in the delicate nostril—and child-like purity in

the beautifully-formed lips and dimpled chin; while her air, figure, and conversation bespeak the cultured woman."

"Ah! it is plain you are in a hopeless way. Is it not strange," he questioned, rather musingly, "that all the charms and virtues you describe with such enthusiasm have been before your eyes for many a year, and that you failed to notice them when displayed to you, and yet invest with them a perfect stranger whose looks may belie her? It is not an uncommon circumstance."

"Whom do you speak of?" demanded Fitzgerald.

"I mean Phœbe Gray."

"Phœbe Gray!" echoed the squatter.

"Yes," said West. "You have not mentioned a beauty, or charm of mind or manner, which Miss Gray does not possess in a large degree. But it is ever the same," he continued, speaking more to himself than the other. "We rarely appreciate sufficiently what we are familiar with; and as frequently as not, we go to the opposite extreme, and overestimate what we do not possess or know. You seem to have endowed this young lady with every virtue under the sun, after an hour's conversation."

"I am sure—that is, I think she has a gentle, charitable disposition."

"So has Phœbe Gray."

"She is refined in her tastes, sensible in her conversation, elegant in her manners."

"Phœbe Gray certainly has not had the advantage of mixing much with society; but as far as manners may be acquired without that, she is all you have described."

"She is witty and well read,—at least I think so, for she had me out of my depths before I knew where I was."

"My dear Fitz, go and talk to

Miss Gray; she will open your eyes. You are blind. She does not indeed make a parade of knowledge, but few of her years have read so much or thought so deeply, and is, besides, what your town beauty may not be—a clever, active little house-wife, with a bright interest in the everyday affairs of life, a good devoted daughter, and a loving sister."

"I say, West," said Fitzgerald, abruptly turning round on him,—

"I do believe you are struck."

"Yes, I am," replied John—"struck with admiration for her good, endearing qualities of mind and person; but not in love, if you mean that. I am not rich enough to allow myself to indulge in the luxury."

"Well, never mind, old fellow; who knows what the new country will do for you? You'll come down a rich squatter before long."

This conversation awakened Fitzgerald to a sense of the many excellences in Miss Gray's character, which he had never before perceived; and often afterwards he thought, as he reflected on the truth of what John had said, it would be well for him if he could love her; but that, he felt, was impossible. The face with the brown hair, and soft dark eyes with the long lashes, haunted him.

Next day mustering commenced for the new country. A mixed mob of cattle—cows, steers, and heifers—had to be collected, to the number of one thousand head; and before the ensuing evening, the usual sound of discontented, reproachful, remonstrating, or angry bellows, came from the yard in which the nucleus of the herd about to be sent away were confined.

The stocking of new country afforded Fitzgerald an opportunity of eliminating from the general

herd such members of it as were troublesome from one cause or another; and all cattle whose favourite feeding-grounds marched on the large scrubs, together with such as associated with the wild mobs, were condemned to recommence life under different auspices. All cattle, moreover, which, from their knowledge of the country, and their wild nature, made themselves leaders of the rest, were picked out and brought home to the yards. Thus his own herd became free of many animals which were an unceasing source of annoyance; while the long overland journey, and the daily supervision exercised over them in order to keep them upon their new pastures, together with the change in disposition which their constant contact with the men engaged in looking after them was sure to bring about, could not fail to be productive of the greatest good to the creatures so culled out. Many there were whose constitutions required change of pasture. Some were lean, and would never fatten upon the run to which they were accustomed. Others were so fat, that calves were not to be looked for from them; while a few were determined rovers on neighbouring stations.

Fitzgerald and John had ridden up to the house after yarding their first draft for the north, and were preparing to partake of their evening meal, when the former, who happened to glance out of the window looking up the road, said quickly, "Come here, West; look at this fellow riding up. Keep back a little; don't let him observe you."

The new-comer was indeed an object worthy of observation, and both the young men mentally ejaculated the words, "New chum."

He was an extremely nice-looking young fellow, with a high-bred, in-

telligent face, shaved, with the exception of a fair moustache. His dress and horse, however, attracted attention, owing to the singularity of both. The steed was one whose great age could only be equalled by his extreme leanness. It was, in fact, a mass of bones and long hair, but had doubtless, many years ago, been of indisputable gameness, which was evinced by the constant motion of the pointed ears surmounting the brave, wrinkled old head, and the undiminished fire of the bold eyes, above which were situated deep, cavernous hollows. A single tusk stuck out, wild-boar fashion, on one side of the withered upper lip, whose fallen-in appearance betrayed the want of teeth in the poor old gums. Still his step, as he bowled up to the slip-panel, was brisk and energetic, though slightly tottering; and the stump of his docked tail stood up fiercely erect, bristling with short hair.

The dress of his rider betrayed something of the romantic imagination which colours the actions of so many new arrivals from Europe. A scarlet shirt and Garibaldi jacket, together with white breeches and Napoleon boots, and a helmet from which depended the gay ends of a silken pugaree, formed his costume. His waist was confined by a snake-skin belt sustaining innumerable square skin pouches; a revolver in its pouch was slung on the left hip, while a formidable silver-mounted bowie-knife with ivory handle depended by silver chains from the other. In addition to this, he carried in his hand a very fine-looking fowling-piece.

"By Jove, old fellow," muttered Fitzgerald, "you'll never be taken alive!"

Presently one of the station black-boys, who happened to be loitering about, entered with what perhaps had never been seen on Ungah-

run before—viz., a visiting-card, on which was printed, “The Hon. Adolphus Maurice le Poer French Ffrench de la Chapelle Desmard.”

“Oh, hold me up!” groaned the squatter, handing John the paste-board, and going to the door, where, in spite of the grotesque attire, he could not help being favourably impressed with his visitor’s gentlemanly bearing.

The new-comer’s address was likewise good, although somewhat marred by a drawing form of speech.

“Ah—Mistah Fitzgeward—ah—I conclude.”

“That is my name,” said the squatter, bowing slightly.

“Ah—I—ah—heeah you are about—ah—sending some cattle northwards, and—ah—I came up—ah—to make some inquiries about them. The fact is—ah—I would—ah—very much like to—ah—accompany them.”

“I shall be most happy, Mr Desmard, to give you any information you require; but in the meantime, please to turn out your horse and come inside. We are just about sitting down to dinner.”

The young man managed to unsaddle his old horse, though with considerable awkwardness, and turned him into the paddock, stroking his hog-maned neck, and patting his lean sides—the hair on which, from its length (the result of great poverty), bore a strong resemblance to fur—remarking—

“Wonderful cweateah! Suh-pwisingly intelligent! But—ah—I am inclined to think him—ah—aged.”

“So am I,” returned his host, smiling.

“He—ah—requires no looking after whatever; nevah stways; always chooses the wivah-bed, or bed of a cweek—ah—to pasture in. He

—ah—is vewy deah to me. He—ah—in fact, saved my life.”

“Did he indeed!” said Fitzgerald, looking at the ancient one with more respect than he had at first exhibited. “Well, we’ll find some more tender grass for him to-morrow than the paddock affords; meantime, bring your things inside.”

This Mr Desmard did, having occasion to make two journeys in so doing. His valise was twice the size of an ordinary one, and many articles hung to his saddle, after the manner of his tribe. The old horse must indeed have been a game creature to struggle on under so heavy a burden.

In the course of dinner—which meal Mr Desmard sat down to in his accoutrements, considerably to the uneasiness of the other two, who were not at all fond of being in the neighbourhood of new chums’ revolvers—he gave them a short account of himself and his intentions.

“My—ah—father is Lord Martlett. Perhaps you know the name.”

Fitzgerald did not, but John recognised it as that of a popular, though by no means wealthy, peer in one of the adjoining counties to his own.

“Well—ah—when travelling by wail, my—ah—father met by accident a gentleman who—ah—described himself as—ah—Mistah Bosterre, of Blowaway Downs, in Queensland; and my—ah—father, who is not a wich man, and—ah—has a numbah of—ah—childwen (I am the third—ah—son), was delighted to heeah of an opening in—ah—this country for a young man. He—ah—made some in-qui-wies, and—ah—found that—ah—Mr Bosterre was—ah—weally the—ah—man he wepresented himself to be, and—ah—had him to Desmard Castle, wheah he was—ah—vewy kind indeed to him.

“The end of this—ah—was, that Mistah Bosterre agweed—ah—to give me—ah—an appointment on his estate; and—ah—my father agweed to—ah—pay him a pwemium of—ah—thwee hundwed pounds for—ah—the first yeah.

“I—ah—do not know much of—ah—business, but I thought it would—ah—look better were the—ah—money paid quarterly; and—ah—I pwoposed this to my—ah—father, who at once agweed, as did—ah—Mistah Bosterre, after some—ah—objections.

“Well, when I awived at Blow-away Downs, I—ah—weally did not see how I was to—ah—make any money.

“I had—ah—to sit all day with—ah—Mrs Bosterre in the—ah—parlour, and be introduced by her to—ah—her visitors as—ah—the son of her—ah—‘deah fwient Lord Martlett;’ or I had to wide into town with—ah—old Bosterre, and undergo the same.

“It was about this time that—ah—I became possessed of—ah—my horse. He is called Jacky-Jacky, after a celebwtated bushwanger who—ah—owned him about thirty—ah—years ago; and—ah—although I have been led to doubt some—ah—at least of the statements which—ah—have been made to me, I understand—ah—from various quarters, that—ah—such is weally the case.”

“I quite believe it also,” said Fitzgerald.

“Ah, glad you say so. Bosterre sold him to me. Well—ah—I found my first quarter’s pwemium was—ah—paid, and my second was begun; and—ah—I thought—ah—I would ask old Bosterre about—ah—my appointment, and—ah—he quite agweed with me about the—ah—necessity for work, and—ah—brought me down next morning to the ram-yard, and—ah—gave

the rams into my chage to—ah—look after. The cweateahs were engaged in—ah—knocking their heads together in—ah—the most painful way; and—ah—during my connection with them, which—ah—was only during one day, I may wemark, I—ah—found that—ah—they wesorted to it—ah—as a wecweation when not particularly engaged—ah—otherwise.

“On weturning to the house I—ah—awrdored the groom to—ah—saddle Jacky-Jacky, and I—ah—wode down and took my chage away to the—ah—woods. We—ah—soon lost sight of—ah—habitations, and the solitude was dwedful. I began to—ah—wemember those unfortunates of whom—ah—I had wead as lost—ah—for ever. I looked awound; there was—ah—no watah. I had—ah—nothing to eat. There was—ah—no game to be seen, except—ah—a few small birds in the tops of—ah—a vewy high tree; but—ah—except one I fired all my cahtwidges except one—ah—at them, I—ah—missed them. A wevolver is—ah—wather difficult to manage, when—ah—shooting at—ah—vewy small birds, I find.”

“It is indeed,” agreed the other two.

“I became alarmed. No—ah—watah; no—ah—food. Only one shot in my wevolver. I—ah—did not know where to turn. The sun was blazing—ah—hot. Was I—ah—going to pewish alone, with—ah—hungah and—ah—thirst? My thwoat got parched. I felt—ah—alweady the agonies of—ah—death. I determined to—ah—make one attempt to—ah—save my life. I wesolved to—ah—kill a ram, and—ah—dwink the blood of the cweateah. I—ah—dismounted and—ah—tied up Jacky-Jacky, and—ah—seeing one lying down not—ah—far off, which I

had noticed in the course of the—
 ah—morning, from the gweat size
 of his—ah—horns, and his vewy
 woolly body. I appwoached cautiously,
 for I—ah—expected evewy moment
 that—ah—he would wish to examine
 the—ah—stwength of my head; but—
 ah—he merely wrinkled his nose and—
 ah—showed his teeth. I—ah—kept my
 eye upon him, and—ah—I put the ball
 wight in the—ah—middle of his forehead,
 upon which he—ah—turned over and—
 ah—died. Vewy simply, I assuah you.
 The west of my chahge—ah—scampered
 away, but—ah—I could not follow them.
 I—ah—dwew my bowie-knife, and—
 ah—cutting off the hideous cweateah's—
 ah—head, I commenced drinking his
 blood; but—ah—stwange to say, I did
 not feel at all thirsty after the—ah—
 first mouthful. Indeed, I became—
 ah—quite ill, pwobably from the—
 ah—seveah mental stwain. I—ah—
 lay down for some time; and as it—
 ah—grew cooler, I wesolved to abandon
 myself to—ah—Jacky-Jacky's sagacity,
 who—ah—wonderful to relate, took me
 through—ah—paths known to himself,
 to—ah—the society of my fellow—
 ah—beings. But more singular still
 was—ah—the fact, that when I—ah—
 got home, the rams were—ah—home
 before me. And when—ah—I welayed
 the story of my—ah—pewil to Mistah
 Bosterre, he was—ah—most unfeeling.

“He wushed away down to the—
 ah—yard, and on returning he—
 ah—used the—ah—most fwightful
 language, and—ah—said that I—
 ah—had killed his imported Saxon
 ram—ah—Billy—who was—ah—
 worth two hundred—ah—pounds;
 and—ah—he indulged in—ah—so
 great an amount of—ah—critical
 licence, and—ah—depweciatory

general wemark in wewerence to all
 —ah—late awivals, that I felt my
 —ah—self-wespect would not admit
 of my—ah—continuing to—ah—
 weside at Blowaway Downs; and
 hearing of your—ah—intended
 journey, I thought I would—ah—
 call upon you.”

Bursts of laughter occasionally
 interrupted the speaker, and as his
 hearers looked at one another, again
 and again they exploded with mer-
 riment.

Neither liked Bosterre, who was
 a well-known character. Boastful,
 purse-proud, a toady, and a knave,
 he made a regular trade of en-
 trapping “new chums,” and get-
 ting premiums from them, to
 suffer them to waste their time
 in idleness, and their means in
 folly.

With regard to the overland trip,
 Fitzgerald referred Desmard to
 John, who, having taken rather a
 fancy to the lad, agreed to his
 forming one of the travellers, pro-
 mising him at the same time a
 remuneration equivalent to his
 services,—a proposal which much
 delighted the new hand, who had
 never known how to earn a shilling
 in his life.

Mustering now proceeded with
 steady vigour, and Desmard was
 allowed to gain experience in tail-
 ing* those already brought in,
 along with two old and experi-
 enced hands, who were much
 amused with their companion's
 eccentricities, and who never tired
 of relating his peculiar sayings.

A few evenings later, the news
 of old M'Duff's disappearance and
 rumoured murder struck astonish-
 ment and horror into the hearts of
 all in the district, which gradually
 increased as, step by step, suspicion
 fell, and eventually fixed itself

* Herding.

firmly, upon Ralf and Cane. Many there were who remained incredulous to the last; but on hearing the report of Cane's having been seen in the neighbourhood, John felt a steady conviction of his guilt, while Fitzgerald was no less sure of Ralf's complicity—a belief which was also strongly shared in by the stockman, Tommy, who calmly remarked that he knew "all along Ralf was born to be hanged."

On the morning of the day after the burning of the body a blackfellow came in from the Bush, and happening to see Ralf first, coolly addressed him with—

"I say, me been see-em two fellow whitefellow burn-em 'nother whitefellow lasnigh."*

"You see them?" utters Ralf, looking for nothing but immediate detection and arrest.

"Yohi, me see 'em; bail that fellow see me. Me sit down good way; me frighten; by-and-by me track 'em yarraman, that been come up here."†

"Look here," said Ralf, quickly, "bail you yabber 'nother whitefellow. Me want to man 'em that one two fellow whitefellow. By-and-by you and me look out."‡

Giving the nigger some rations and tobacco, and enjoining further secrecy, Ralf made for Cane's retreat, and informed him.

"You——fool, why didn't you bring the nigger 'ere; we might

'ave knocked 'im hover, hand made hall safe."

"No, no," said Ralf, decisively; "no more blood. By this time all his tribe know it. We can, perhaps, get away now if we start at once; but sooner than shed more blood, I'll stay and give myself up."

Cane could also see the futility of endeavouring to hold out longer against fate; and that night, after laying hands on whatever could be got of use to them in the house, the two disappeared, taking with them four of the best horses in the paddock.

A few days afterwards, police arrived from Yering, headed by Dowlan, who made himself very active in his investigations.

It was a simple matter to trace the horse-tracks from the lagoon to the fire. Blacks diving in the former brought up some of the dead man's effects, and the charred bones at the fire spoke for themselves.

This, with their flight, and the statement of one of the men, who swore that he saw Ralf and another returning to the station some days previously, just before dawn, and the testimony of the blackfellow, formed a chain of circumstantial evidence which left no doubt in any one's mind as to the perpetrators of the deed, and a pursuit after them was at once instituted.

* "I saw two white men burning another one last night."

† "Yes; I saw them. They did not see me; I was a long way off. I was frightened. Afterwards I tracked their horses; they came up here."

‡ "Look here, don't tell any other white man; I want to catch those two white men. By-and-by you and I will search for them."

WELLINGTON AND REFORM.

THERE are some subjects which popular opinion refuses to regard as open to discussion. They have become a part of the dogmatics of our politics, and a doubt cast upon their character or utility at once exposes the sceptic to a charge of heterodoxy which carries with it much more odium than even in its ecclesiastical application. The Parliamentary Reform of 1832 and Free Trade are the most notable of these questions. Perhaps from optimism, more probably from political bigotry, we have come to regard these measures as if it were foolish or wicked to give any recognition to that other side which all public questions must present. This fact is strikingly demonstrated by the attitude of England at the present time towards those nations which prefer a protective policy to the principles of free trade. We practically refuse to look at the subject as one open to controversy. Although the economists of Germany and America are in no wise behind our own in clear-headedness, and although their ideas of trade legislation meet with more general acceptance throughout the world than even those of England, we insist upon treating their views as fallacies which do not even require refutation. This position of political intolerance is so inconsistent with the liberty of thought which Britain professes to allow in every other question, that it can only be excused by an assumption that we have become the sole authority upon economical truth, and that any departure from the standard we have adopted must of necessity end in error. In short, our tone towards the rest of the world, with

regard to free trade, is identical with that employed by the Church of Rome in reference to religion towards all other ecclesiastical divisions of Christianity.

The Reform Bill of 1832 has likewise found a place among our political dogmas. We are required not only to accept it as a fact, but as the embodiment of a first principle in politics. It was offered to the nation as a panacea, and received in the spirit which prefers a nostrum to the regular prescription of the pharmacopœia. But we know that panaceas require to be repeatedly applied, less on account of the necessities of the patient, than of the exigencies of the quacksalver. Unquestioning belief is the first condition demanded in empirical treatment; and the promoters of Parliamentary Reform succeeded in instilling this spirit into the masses. Looking back to that measure in the light of the unmixed benefits which we assume to have flowed from it, we cannot bring ourselves to admit that Parliamentary Reform could ever have appeared in a questionable light to reasonable and honest statesmen. Historical retrospection can only applaud the foresight of the promoters of the Bill, and the narrowness, to use a very mild word, of its opponents. We refuse to acknowledge that the Reformers of 1830-32 took a leap in the dark for the sake of party popularity, or that the misgivings of danger to the Constitution entertained by the Tories had any more reasonable basis than mere party exclusiveness. No one in the present day would care to run the risk of being accounted singular or unsound, by casting doubts upon the

Reform measure of 1832. On the contrary, Tories as well as Whigs refer to the change only with expressions of approval, not caring to be banned by the political *anathema maranatha* which would inevitably be drawn down by a frank avowal of scepticism. In fact, upon Reform, as upon Free Trade, average British opinion, so liberal upon most other questions, is intolerant in the extreme. It has a fanatical horror of hearing the adverse side of the subject debated, and is ready to silence the objector with the *ex cathedra* denunciation, "He hath a devil."

Yet, every unprejudiced thinker knows that what we are in the habit of calling Parliamentary Reform, and which, more strictly speaking, is the extension of the franchise, is a subject about which reasonable doubts are perfectly permissible. Those who, like ourselves, opposed the Bill, and with good reason, in 1830-32, and who have since loyally accepted the changes in the Constitution, may still discriminate between what we are directly indebted to Parliamentary Reform for, and what we owe simply to the material and moral progress of the nation. We have been accustomed to see many of the advantages attendant upon recent legislation attributed to the abolition of rotten boroughs, the extension of the franchise, and the representation in Parliament of the great centres of commerce and manufacture, which simply sprang from ordinary progress, and which would have been not less attainable under the old system. At the same time, we readily recognise that benefits have accrued from the adaptation of parliamentary government to the expansion of the nation. But we frankly confess our opinion that the time has not yet arrived when a balance-sheet can be made up of the good and evil arising

from the relaxation of our parliamentary system in 1832. Half a century is too short a time on which to base a judgment of so important a change, especially as the innovations are still pronounced incomplete, and as no constitutional question of the first importance has come to the surface during that time. The evidence is still imperfect. It will be for posterity more or less remote to deliver the verdict.

The interest in the great struggle that resulted in the Act of 1832 revives afresh whenever a further inroad upon the Constitution, in the shape of an extension of the franchise, becomes imminent. Both parties draw their precedents and their arguments mainly from the proceedings of that epoch; and the solemn warnings of the conservative Opposition of that day are always cited as an instance of the groundlessness of all apprehension of revolutionary feelings obtaining an ascendancy in consequence of conferring electoral power on the masses. But have these apprehensions been groundless? As we have already said, time only can show. The conservative opposition to the first Reform Bill has generally suffered much from misrepresentation. The dangers which it foresaw did not lie in the immediate present. It did not dread that a Reformed Parliament would at once proclaim a republic, or that members from Birmingham and Manchester would, as soon as they got seats, move in the Commons for the abolition of the House of Lords. Its doubts rather turned upon the certainty that, if the Constitution were once tampered with, the franchise must find its final goal in universal suffrage; and that democracy, once given the rein, must prove dangerous to the Crown, to the Church, to property, and to every institution whose exclusive character might make it an object of

popular envy. The Reformers of 1830-32 stoutly denied the possibility of such a danger. We have seen, however, that we are further than ever from finality in respect to the franchise—that the Church has been assailed, and the Crown encroached upon; and the end is not yet. The apprehensions of the Conservatives may turn out to have been vain in the future; the assurances of the Reformers have already been proved to be utterly fallacious.

The new volume of the *Wellington Despatches*,* together with its predecessor, brings vividly back to us the struggle over the first instalment of Reform. The Duke himself was the central figure of the Opposition; and we do not exaggerate his position when we say that on him personally rested the hopes of those who wished to maintain the Constitution unchanged. His position was one of the utmost difficulty; but difficulties were what he had been accustomed all his life to encounter and overcome. His duty to the King, and the loyalty which he conceived himself to owe to the Constitution, were at direct variance with the course which prudence would have prescribed to him as a statesman. He was placed in opposition to at once the majority of the nation and the professed wishes of the Crown. The situation presented every temptation to have recourse to the expedient, but the Duke avoided even the semblance of expedient tactics. His letters show how gravely he was impressed by the importance of the crisis through which the nation was passing—how deeply he realised his responsibility to the large and influential party, whose trust in seeing the Constitution come safely through the ordeal was grounded solely in himself. Yet

he had many advantages which were denied to his opponents. To him the lines of duty were clearly written out, while the Reformers were swayed hither and thither by the breath of the populace,—invoking the aid of democracy when out of office, and striving again to lay it when they came into power; pressing upon Parliament measures which they themselves dreaded to see carried into execution; and all the while thinking how little they might concede, and still satisfy the people. Such, if we analyse the convictions of Earl Grey and his friends, we find to be the feelings pervading the headquarters camp of the Reformers. The sentiments and policy of the Duke we shall endeavour to describe from the new volumes of his *Despatches*. His views regain their original interest at all times when we are brought face to face with projects of further Parliamentary Reform; his example is always one of the safest landmarks that conservative statesmen can steer by in critical seasons.

The death of George IV. left the *Wellington Ministry* much weakened. The personal will of the sovereign no longer counterbalanced the outcry for Parliamentary Reform. The ultra-Tories, irritated by the Duke's concession of Catholic Emancipation, were openly rebellious, and disposed to follow the policy which in latter days has obtained notoriety under the name of Obstruction. The Whigs in the Upper House, knowing that their accession to power would entail upon them the necessity of introducing a Reform Bill, were inclined to shirk office, and took a great deal more credit for their unselfishness in supporting the Duke's Government than can now be attributed to

* *Despatches, Correspondence, &c.*, of Field Marshal Arthur Duke of Wellington, K. G. Edited by his Son, the Duke of Wellington, K. G. Vol. VIII. John Murray, London.

them. They had hopes also of a coalition, which the new King, from his friendship for Lord Holland, was known to favour. Such an arrangement would have been more satisfactory to the leaders of the Opposition than a complete change of Government, as it would have admitted them to the sweets of office without entailing a direct responsibility for dealing with Reform. This support of the Whigs was, as the Duke knew, entirely capricious, and liable, whenever opportunity suited, to be turned into opposition. The Duke, however, was directly averse to including Lord Grey in his Government, believing that they "should lose in respectability of character what they might gain in talent." He was aware of the strength of Earl Grey as an opponent, and that he could change the character of the Opposition in the Lords, which at the King's death was mainly personal to the Duke, into a political one. He might have hazarded a fusion with the liberals in the Upper House had he been prepared to coalesce with the Whig leaders in the Commons; but the Duke declared that he did not think that he "personally would or ought to sit in a Cabinet again as the First Lord of the Treasury with Mr Huskisson, Lord Palmerston, or Mr Charles Grant." The Duke determined to trust to an early dissolution—a course which necessarily inflamed the energies of the Opposition, who wished to have fresh displays of zeal to parade before the constituencies. Lord Althorp divided the Lower House twice on the Royal Message, and his "watchmen" in the Commons were very unwilling to exercise the forbearance shown to the Ministry in the Lords. The Duke, knowing how much of the hostility of the Opposition and of the ultra-Tories was directed against himself

personally, would have resigned the Premiership in favour of Sir Robert Peel, and thus allow of the latter forming a new Government, which might have included Earl Grey and other members of the Whig party; but to this Peel would not consent.

Parliament was dissolved on July 24th, and next day an event took place which speedily kindled the smouldering Radicalism of the manufacturing towns into a blaze. Charles X. signed the unfortunate ordinances of St Cloud, and on the following day the Revolution commenced which drove the Bourbons into final exile. Such an event occurring on the very eve of a general election, could not but exercise a powerful influence upon English Radicalism, begotten, as it originally had been, of the ideas of the first French Revolution. The liberal leaders at once caught up the cry of Reform that now was raised with redoubled force. The temper of the constituencies was then in a gloomy mood. The country was going through a general depression of industry and commerce; and as the popular mind seldom penetrates to the real cause of such a misfortune, the pent-up discontent fastened upon Parliamentary Reform as the expression for its grievances most ready to hand. The success of the French Revolution made the Reformers all the more determined in their persistence, and sweeping in their demands; and the ease with which they had seen military power put under by the mob, encouraged them to look to violence as a means of enforcing their wishes, and to form associations which, if not strictly illegal, were at least dangerous to the peace of the country. But for the headstrong folly of Charles X. occurring between the dissolution and the elections, English Parliamentary Reform might have been staved off until a riper and more intelligent conception of

the question had been arrived at, and the matter could have been treated with some approach to finality, instead of leaving it in a half-settled condition as capital for any party disposed to purchase the popular vote by a further extension of the franchise.

The Duke's views regarding Reform were very decided at the time when he dissolved Parliament. He considered that, if carried, "it must occasion a total change in the whole system of that society called the British empire;" but owned that in meeting the question he felt no strength excepting in his character for plain manly dealing. The resistance to be anticipated from him on the assembly of Parliament, directed towards him the abuse of all the mob-orators who were then stumping the country; and wherever violence was openly threatened, the Duke was invariably pointed to as the first object of vengeance for the rabble. In November, a week or two after the meeting of Parliament, incendiarism was running riot over all the south-eastern counties; and committees, formed upon the Jacobin model, were sitting in the metropolis and all the great towns, consulting how the demands of the Radicals could be enforced. We find the Duke drafting a memorandum for the defence of Apsley House with the precision and deliberation which he always carried into the minutest details of business. There is a touch of dry humour in the order that, "as soon as there is the appearance of a mob collecting there, somebody should say that preparations are made for the defence of the house, *and that the mob had better go somewhere else.*" That these precautions were by no means unnecessary, events shortly afterwards demonstrated.

The immediate cause of this outburst of sedition and violence was the Duke's reply to Earl Grey's declaration in favour of Reform on the opening of the new Parliament. The Whig leader, in demanding a moderate concession of Parliamentary Reform, as a means of averting calamities such as had overtaken France and the Netherlands, took occasion to describe himself as having been "a reformer all his life," forgetting, perhaps, the poor opinion of parliamentary government he had expressed to Prince Metternich after the peace of Paris.* The Duke in his reply not only declared that no measure of Parliamentary Reform would come from his Government, but that the extant system was the most perfect that could be devised in the circumstances. "Nay, I will go yet further," he said, "and say that if, at this moment, I had to form a Legislature for any country, particularly for one like this, in the possession of great property of various descriptions, although, perhaps, I should not form one precisely such as we have, I would endeavour to produce something which should give the same result—viz., a representation of the people containing a large body of the property of the country, and in which the great landed proprietors should have a preponderating influence." It was no wonder though, after this speech, the Radical indignation boiled over, for it hated the influence of the landlords much more than it cared for the possession of the franchise. Probably no Premier's speech in modern times has excited more general and warm hostility. Except the Ministerialists and the Whigs themselves, there was scarcely a section of politicians in the kingdom who did not desire Reform, not perhaps for Reform itself, but with some ulterior view—

* See Metternich's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 325.

whether it was the ultra-Tories, who trusted to be restored by the extension of the franchise in the counties; or the Radicals, who hoped that an extended representation would open the way to a destruction of prerogative, privilege, and property. The Duke saw that his Cabinet must fall; and he accepted his defeat upon the question of the Civil List with comparative indifference, his only regret, as he writes to the Duke of Northumberland, the Viceroy of Ireland, being that he was under the necessity of quitting the King's Government in times of such difficulty abroad as well as at home.

The ultra-Tories shared for the moment in the triumph of the Opposition. They saw in the Duke's fall the merited punishment of his concessions to the Roman Catholics, and they did not hesitate to point to this political retribution. The Duke seems to have been stung out of his usual imperturbability to criticism on this occasion; for in writing to Mr Mossman, who had connected the two events, he makes what for him is a close approach to vindication of the course he had pursued towards the Catholics. We shall quote his words, as it will be well to remember them when we come to compare his yielding upon this question with his obduracy in the matter of Reform:—

"I cannot but think that I was placed in a situation to enable me to know more upon that subject than others did; and I decided upon the course which appeared to me at the time to be attended by the greatest benefit to the public. Many circumstances which I could not foresee, and upon which I ought not to have calculated, have tended to diminish the benefit which the public ought to have derived from the measure, and have deprived me of a fair judgment upon this case. But my opinion upon it has never altered; and recent events have tended to convince me, not only that what I did was right, but that if

the measure which I proposed had not been adopted, the country, divided in opinion upon an important Irish question, would, in addition to its other difficulties, have at this moment been involved in a civil contest in Ireland."

Earl Grey's Government did not occupy a much more enviable position than its predecessor. It had hoped for support from the ultra-Tories, but only one member of that party was found to accept office. It was pledged to a measure which Earl Grey knew well could not pass through Parliament without an attack upon the integrity of the House of Peers. At the same time, the executive government of the Ministry was much embarrassed by the fruit of its own tactics when in Opposition. The Whigs had encouraged the formation of political unions to press Reform upon the country. They had smiled blandly upon threats of violence, and had gently deprecated proposals to resort to arms. In addition to the discontent excited by the unions, the Duke, who certainly had better means of knowing than any of the Ministers, asserts that disaffection was actively fomented by French emissaries—"the gentlemen who go about in gigs." "I know," he wrote to Lord Malmesbury in December 1830, "that the Société Propagande at Paris had at its command very large means from its subscriptions all over Europe, but particularly from the revolutionary bankers in France. A part of these means is, I think, now applied to the purpose of corrupting and disturbing this country." Such measures as the Government were compelled to take they took unwillingly, and with an evident dread of the effect on their popularity. The Duke, although defeated, and enforcing moderation and forbearance towards the Ministry upon his colleagues, was yet the most powerful statesman in the kingdom. "I am still," he

writes to the Knight of Kerry, "at the head of the most numerous and powerful party in the State. In truth, they cannot govern as Ministers of a King of England, and redeem one hundred of their pledges."

The only power of the Whigs lay in the Commons, where there was a good working majority for Reform; but this advantage was more than neutralised by their weakness in the Upper House, and by the timidity of the chief liberal peers. The great hopes of Earl Grey and his friends rested upon the fears of the King, upon which they did not hesitate to work freely. And, in fact, the French Revolution, and the example of Charles X., at that time seeking an asylum under British protection, could not fail to make a deep impression upon King William IV. A patriotic Ministry desirous of effecting its object by honourable means, would have felt bound to set the Crown free from even the semblance of being coerced, and would have taken such adequate precautions for order in the country as would have made the King fully sensible of his independence. But Earl Grey unquestionably operated upon the King's fears of running counter to the outcry for Reform, as well as on his Majesty's vain love of popularity. The Duke's correspondence shows how deeply he felt for the position of the King; but it shows also how loyally he accepted the constitutional objection to private peers intruding themselves upon the counsels of the sovereign, although he well knew that his advice and sympathy would have been received at Court with the utmost gratitude.

Parliament reopened in the beginning of February 1831, and the Reform Bill was introduced by Lord John Russell on March 1st. The sweeping changes proposed in the constitution of the Commons, the unlooked-for concessions of the

franchise, the utter extinction of hereditary influence in the Lower House, do not seem to have struck the Duke with that consternation which for the moment paralysed his party. He must have been well aware that the circumstances of the Government would compel it to bid high. He knew the danger which the Ministry had itself called into existence, by its unofficial countenance of unionism, and that a moderate measure of Reform, such as would have satisfied the great mass of Whig members, would have ruined the Government with the mob. The general alarm at once directed all eyes towards the Duke as the only man who could possibly save the State from the impending revolution; and even those who, from personal motives, had either opposed or lent a lukewarm support to his Administration, now hastened to assure him of their warm co-operation.

His Grace's position was further strengthened by the return of many of the ultra-Tories to their natural allegiance. Through the Rev. Mr Gleig, the ex-Chaplain-General—who was then serving the cause of the Constitution as ably with his pen as he had fought for it bravely with his sword in the Peninsula and in America—overtures of reconciliation came from Sir Edward Kuatchbull, the ultra-Tory leader of the Lower House. The Duke of Cumberland, Lord Eldon, Lord Mansfield, and Sir Charles Wetherell, were now deeply anxious to join the Duke in whatever course he and Sir Robert Peel might see fit to adopt. The Duke on the 14th of March thus expressed his views to the Duke of Buckingham:—

"I am convinced, however, that the most parliamentary and the wisest mode of proceeding is to divide against the second reading of the Bill. It is certainly true that the terror in the country is very great. I don't know

of which people are most afraid—of passing the Bill or of opposing it. I confess that I cannot believe that we are not strong enough to maintain the laws and institutions of the country, whatever they may be. I am convinced that the system of government—or rather of no government—which the Bill would establish, will, by due course of law, destroy the country; and I am therefore for opposing the Bill in the House of Commons as well as in the House of Lords, without any compromise of any description.”

This was the Duke of Wellington's position; and from a conservative point of view, it was an unassailable one. He had, however, much to do to confirm the doubts and hesitation of many of his friends, and to repress the ill-advised forwardness of others. After the discussion in the Commons had resulted, on the 22d March, in a majority of 49 for the second reading, Lord Falmouth, alarmed at the imminence of the danger, suggested that an approach should be made to the King by the Tory Peers, in the exercise of their right to offer counsel to the sovereign; but the Duke in reply pointed out, from the circumstances of the King's situation, the inutility and inexpediency of such a course.

It is agreed by almost all authorities of the period, that had Sir Robert Peel made one of his great speeches at the first reading, and moved the rejection of the Bill, Lord John Russell's measures would have been thrown out at the start. Whether or not he was right in passing over the opportunity, is a question that may be fairly discussed. Be that as it may, the Ministerial protestations and explanations, together with the excited condition of the country, so far wrought upon members that the second reading was carried by the narrow majority of one. General Gascoigne's amendment against the diminution of seats for England

and Wales, however, wrecked the measure a few days afterwards, and compelled the Cabinet to dissolve. The excitement of the King, and his declaration that he would go to Westminster in a hackney-coach rather than not be present at the dissolution, was felt by the Duke to be a fatal blow to a united and vigorous opposition to Reform in the Upper House. Many of the Peers were divided between approaching the King and making terms with the Ministry for a less radical change in the representation; and nothing but the firmness of the Duke prevented them from compromising the consistency of the majority of the House. Lord Wharnccliffe had advocated an informal meeting of Peers to deliberate on the crisis, and on the means of influencing the Crown not to dissolve Parliament; but this step, too, the Duke had opposed, on the ground that more harm than good would be done to the Peers in the eyes of the public in thus “exposing the conduct of the King's servants, the breach of the privileges of the House of Lords and of law, and its mischievous consequences upon the public interests.” Though firm in his opposition to the Bill, the Duke gave his friends distinctly to understand that he could be “no party to any violent or factious opposition against any Government named by the King;” and indeed, in the critical condition of European affairs, the Duke did not scruple to place his experience freely at the service of Earl Grey's Administration.

There can be little question but that if the King had sent for the Duke of Wellington on the defeat of the Ministry, his Grace would have deemed it his duty to form a Government, and that the Reform agitation might for a time have been staved off until both Parliament and the nation was in a cooler

mood for discussing the measure. The Duke frankly declared that he did not believe "the King of England has taken a step so fatal to his monarchy since the day that Charles I. passed the Act to deprive himself of the power of proroguing or dissolving the Long Parliament, as King William did on the 22d of April last." From the elections, in the agitated and lawless temperament of the masses, the Opposition could entertain no hope, while the attitude of the King had damped the spirits of the Tory Peers in the Upper House. "We must make a noise in the House of Lords, I believe," says the Duke. "I don't think we shall be able to do more, as I understand the Government are about to create numerous Peers." A reaction of the popular mind was, of course, to be anticipated; but it seemed doubtful if it would come in time to be of any use. Meantime the Whigs had everything in their power at the hustings. The respectable classes were swayed by the fear of the mob and the revolutionary threats of the unionists. Prospective electors under the Bill naturally gave their warmest support. Many of the Tory strongholds in the counties were successfully stormed; and Mr Ellice, the Secretary for the Treasury, bought up pocket-boroughs wherever he could, for assured supporters of the Bill. In Kent the Duke declares that the elections were decided by terror; and the same might be said of most of the counties adjacent to the centres of Radical feeling. The result of the elections only increased the terror with which the influential section of the country regarded the impetus which was being given to democracy, and disgusted them with the free use which was made of the King's name by the Ministerial candidates.

Even a staunch Whig like Sir Dennis le Marchant confesses, in his 'Memoir of Earl Spencer,' that his party "sullied their victory by the extravagant use they made of the King's name—which was the more to be regretted, as without this illegitimate aid they were sure of a large majority." But the object of Earl Grey and his friends in dragging the King into the controversy was twofold—not only to influence the electors, but so to compromise the King as to make resiling upon the question of Reform absolutely impossible for the Crown.

When Parliament met, the Duke was very determined about the course which he and his followers were to follow. In spite of the result of the elections, he did not believe that the property and intelligence of the country had any real desire for seeing the Reform Bill passed; while the lawless upheaval of the masses more and more confirmed the worst anticipation which he had formed of intrusting them with power. He had no hope of doing any good in the Commons, and seems to have shared the cold indifference of Sir Robert Peel, so much complained of by conservatives, as to the discussions carried on there. In proportion to the desire of the Ministry to override all the constitutional safeguards, was the Duke's anxiety that his opposition should be in the strictest accordance with the established usages of Parliament. On the 22d September, the same day as the Bill passed the Commons, the Duke drafted a memorandum, setting forth his views at length upon the subject. In this he maintains that the proper course for the Lords to follow was to silently assent to the first reading, and on the second reading to throw out the Bill without entering into a discussion of its details. He repudiates the

idea that the Lords were not entitled to exercise their discretion upon the subject, because no persons in the country were more affected by the measure than its members. He then proceeds with great spirit to vindicate the opposition which he intended to offer.

"We are told that the people feel a peculiar interest in this measure. There may possibly be a difference of opinion respecting the degree of interest felt by the people at any particular time upon the subject of any particular measure. The people of this country, like others, change their minds; and when a new law is presented for consideration, which, to say the least of it, totally alters all the existing political interests of the country, annihilates one-fourth of them, creates one-fourth entirely new interests, and alters every existing interest in the country, and this at the most critical period of the history of the world, it does become the House of Lords to consider the question before they adopt a scheme so wide, and which may be attended by such consequences.

"But we are told of the consequences of rejecting this scheme. We are assured that there will be a revolution in the country. Produced by what? By force and violence. I defy those who would use such violence. History shows that a great change has never, since the wars of the Houses of York and Lancaster, been produced in England by any authority but Parliament. No individuals, however numerous or powerful, have ever been able successfully to resist the power of Parliament. We have instances, even lately, of resistance to the law of the largest masses of men who commenced their resistance under the most advantageous circumstances, but they soon found themselves powerless against the power of the Government and of the law united. The House of Lords may be assured, therefore, that they can freely deliberate upon this measure, and decide it according to the best of their judgment, even though the opinion of the country should be still more in favour of the measure than any man supposes it to be."

The Ministerial threat of creating Peers added to the Duke's diffi-

culties. The conservative Lords, in their indignation, were eager to devise schemes of remonstrating with the King, and of counselling him as to the injury which such a course would inflict upon the freedom of the Upper House; but the Duke, in Opposition, was as scrupulously jealous of the prerogative of the Crown, though exercised against his own party, as he could have been had he been William IV.'s responsible adviser. Writing to the Marquess of Londonderry, he earnestly recommends that the subject should not be touched upon. He admitted the King's right to create Peers, and he knew that it was a right that the House of Commons had always contended against; but although the Whigs were flying in the face of all the old traditions of their party in this instance, the Duke refused to drag the Crown into political controversy by seizing the opportunity which the inconsistency of his opponents presented. A passage in the same letter shows how correctly the Duke divined the character of the argument which Earl Grey and his friends were bringing to bear upon the King. "They would say to his Majesty," he writes with reference to the suggestion that the Lords should complain of the proposed addition to their body, "this oligarchy is too strong for you and your Government; they will not allow you to make an effort at least to relieve yourself from their tyranny. You must make an effort, or you will lose your character and your *popularity*. The people will not believe that you are in earnest." The Duke's italics show clearly that he had correctly fathomed the weakness in the King which the Ministry were working upon; and he adds—"Mind, I do not think that the Ministry will refrain from using this language, whether the motion be made or not."

The Duke's great care was to keep the House of Lords as quiet as possible until the Bill came up; and that was by no means an easy matter, for a considerable number of the Peers were disposed to yield to the panic, and thus play into the enemy's hands. Many of the Lords had their own ideas upon the proper course to be followed in opposing Reform, and were disposed to be restive under the calm unvarying temper which the Duke showed. Among others, Lord Wharncliffe was displaying a fussy nervousness which threatened once or twice to compromise the character of the Opposition. When the second reading was moved, Lord Wharncliffe was intrusted with the motion that the Bill should be read that day six months; and his amendment was carried by a majority of forty-one. The line which Lord Wharncliffe took differed materially from that on which the Duke's opposition ran, and to his correspondents he was careful to state that Lord Wharncliffe "spoke for himself." The Duke, however, was well satisfied with the debate and its result, and thought that the Bill would in consequence lose ground."

"It is doubtless true," he writes to the Knight of Kerry some days after the battle, "that many still continue to consider Reform necessary, and I confess that I don't see how we can escape Reform in some shape or other if the King should live. In this view of the case, and supposing that the moderate class can get the upper hand, the rejection of the Bill will have a good effect; it gives us time, at all events. But I must acknowledge that during this time we are governed by the mob."

The Duke, however, was too much of a statesman to imagine that the victory in the Lords would be a lasting triumph, and he seems to have valued it most as being an indubitable expression of the un-

fettered views of the Upper House. He foresaw that some measure of Reform would be wrested from the Legislature and the Crown, and his chief anxiety was that neither he nor his party should be compromised by it. He succeeded in restraining Lord Harrowby from moving a resolution pledging the House to consider next session some means for amending the representation; and he positively refused to be in any way implicated in the steps which Lord Wharncliffe, acting upon a private appeal from Lord Palmerston, was taking to obtain such modifications of the Reform scheme as would put an end to the dead-lock.

While the Reform question was being angrily debated, the countenance shown by the Whigs to the political associations and the teachings of the "gentlemen who went about the country in gigs" were producing their natural consequences. The houses of the Duke of Wellington and several of his friends were attacked by the mob; the Duke of Cumberland would have been killed in the Park but for the arrival of a police force. Riots broke out in Derby and Nottingham; and in the end of October the Bristol Radicals were only prevented from burning and sacking their town by a strong force of military. The Ministry were very reluctant to recognise the necessity for taking extraordinary precautions for the preservation of peace; and Lords Althorp and John Russell even went the length of returning a courteous answer to an address voted them at a meeting where threatening language to the House of Peers had been used. The exigencies of the situation compelled the Duke to break through his indisposition to obtrude himself upon the King's counsels. There was no one in the country who knew so well the imminence of revolution, if the mob were allowed

to organise themselves unchecked—or the proper steps to be taken for maintaining the authority of law. The unions were clamouring for the assumption of arms and the training of the populace after the manner of the National Guard in France, whose example in the late Revolution was so encouraging to their views. The Duke frankly pointed out the danger of tolerating such propositions; and the King was so much impressed by his views that he succeeded in getting the Ministry, by no means willingly, to issue a proclamation against the unions; and in his reply to the Duke his Majesty most heartily endorsed every opinion that his Grace had expressed. The Duke also informed the King of information he had received that a contract had been made for the supply of arms to the Birmingham union—a communication which drew forth from Lord Grey a somewhat uncourteous letter, requesting the Duke, “if it was in his power,” to furnish him with means of verifying the statement. The Duke mentioned Lord Stuart de Rothesay, and the names of several other creditable persons, as his authority for stating that a man of the name of Rivière, in Oxford Street, was in treaty with the Birmingham Union for the supply of six thousand stand of arms. Mr Rivière denied the commission to the chief of the metropolitan police; and the Government was glad enough to take his word, for they had begun to be seriously afraid of the Birmingham union. There is no question but that they should have proceeded against it under the royal proclamation; but they resorted, instead, to the less dignified course of treating with the leaders through Lord Althorp. “His lordship,” says Sir Dennis le Marchant, in his ‘Memoir,’ “sent for a young Birmingham solicitor named Parkes, of whose character for honesty he had

been assured, and asked him to represent to Mr Attwood as *from himself* the difficulties of the Government, and the certain ruin to the cause of Reform unless the meeting should be put off. Mr Parkes executed his mission successfully.”

While the Government was thus confessing itself at the mercy of the mob, the Duke and his friends were preparing for dealing with the Bill when it came back to the Lords, and weighing the probabilities which might arise out of its certain rejection. The decided majority against Reform in the Upper House was a patent fact. Equally patent was it that, except by the creation of Peers—that is, by infringing on the independence of a branch of the Legislature—the Whig measure never would be carried. Earl Grey, indeed, had something to hope for from the doubts of the waverers; something from the exercise of intimidation and cajolery upon individual Peers, to both of which he freely resorted. His conduct in compelling the King to dismiss Lord Howe from the post of Chamberlain to the Queen against the will of her Majesty, was conclusive evidence that he was prepared to follow the former course; while the private overtures, made to the doubts of Lords Harrowby, Wharncliffe, and others, showed that he had no scruples in resorting to the latter. But even Lord Grey hesitated to demand from the King the creation of a sufficient number of Peers to carry the measure, and nothing but the pressure exerted upon him by the members of the Cabinet in the Commons would have brought him to entertain such an idea. Indeed, his correspondence shows that if he could safely have done so he would rather have sacrificed the Bill than have brought himself to tamper with the independence of the Lords.

Lord Althorp, however, was of quite a different way of thinking. In a letter to Earl Grey, dated 23d Nov. 1831, he writes: "I must admit that if it was clearly proved to me that a revolution would be the consequence of not taking this step, and that not only the House of Lords, but every other thing of value in the country, would be overturned, it would be a very strong thing to say that it ought not to be faken." In fact, the Whigs had coquetted so much with revolutionary feelings, and had flaunted the danger of a popular rising so frequently in the faces of their opponents, that they had at last come to almost believe in the possibility of a revolution themselves. The Duke had carefully considered this subject, and his mind was quite at ease as to the power of the State to deal with such an emergency, provided only Ministers did their duty. The view taken by Wellington of the creation of Peers was a very temperate and judicial one. He never questioned the King's prerogative, nor would he allow its exercise to be impugned by his party. But he condemned the expediency of employing it on this occasion, and he protested against its being used to sap the independence of the House of Lords. What the Duke insisted upon was, that every branch of a free legislature should be at liberty to form its own judgment upon a question of such vital importance to the nation; but, as he pointed out to Lord Wharncliffe, King, Lords, and Commons were being coerced upon the question of Reform. The press, the political unions, and the mob were leading the House of Commons—that again was dictating to the House of Lords; and the responsible advisers of the Crown in the latter House were forcing the King, under the terror of popular commotions and the loss of all personal popularity,

to assent to the views of the Radical masses.

"Is it not necessary," the Duke asks, "for the Government to place the King and Parliament in a situation of safety and freedom to deliberate, before the latter is called upon to decide upon such serious matters as the reform of the Constitution? Ought not people to be informed that these unions, these voluntary organisations and arrays, these armaments for the pretended purpose of keeping the peace, but in reality to control the Government and Parliament, are illegal, and that his Majesty's Government have the will as well as the power of putting them down? That once done, the reform of Parliament might be considered with honour and safety, if not with advantage."

It ought to be noted that, after the first defeat of the Reform Bill in the Lords, the Duke found reason to slightly modify his views upon the subject of Reform. He did not, indeed, abate his hostility to all interference with the constitution of the Legislature, or his objection to seeing power transferred from the influential classes to the masses; but he seems to have become convinced that the desire of Reform had now a wider and deeper hold than he had previously thought, and that there was less chance than he had imagined of the property and intelligence of the country being able to exert an efficient reaction. He neither opposed nor condemned Lord Wharncliffe's negotiations with the Ministry, but he insisted that it should be clearly understood that he himself had nothing to do with them. His Grace, however, was so far from taking up a position of impracticability, that he informed Lord Wharncliffe of his approval of the steps he was taking, and encouraged him to obtain concessions from the Government, although he was aware that the tendency of such negotiations would be to weaken the stand which he felt

it to be his own duty to make up on the question. The only benefit which the Duke had hoped from an agreement or compromise between Lord Wharncliffe and the Government was, that it would help to withdraw the latter from the influence of the Radicals; but anxious as the Ministry was to escape from the Radical domination, it had not the courage to extricate itself; and it was soon obvious that Lord Wharncliffe's efforts would effect nothing. This all the more tended to make the Duke adhere to the course which he had originally intended to pursue. Sir Robert Peel fully shared his Grace's views, and replied to Lord Wharncliffe in the same terms as his Grace had already employed.

Before Parliament reassembled the Wharncliffe negotiations had virtually fallen through. The Duke's position was stronger than ever in the estimation of all opponents of the Bill, and the Government had added to its difficulties by its overtures of concession. As the Duke pointed out, they had deceived the King and the conservative public by pretending to put down the unions, while they were all the time quietly encouraging their agitation; and they had sought to deceive the Radicals by effecting an arrangement with Lords Wharncliffe and Harrowby. On the eve of the commencement of the winter session of 1831-32, the Duke wrote thus emphatically to the former Peer:—

“The question as it now stands is one of degree. I should not think so, I confess, if the King had not involved himself in it; for I really believe that if the Government could carry their Bill at present, it would be against the inclination of every man of property and education in the country. The King has, however, pronounced himself for Reform, and it would not be easy to govern in his name without Reform. But the more gentle and more gradual the reform, the better

for the country, and the more satisfactory will it prove to all those who know its interests and feel for its greatness and prosperity. You say that nobody has spoken one word in favour of the House of Lords. Did you ever go into a private room where anybody spoke otherwise? You forget that the King and his Government have been apparently in a combination with the mob for the destruction of property. Who will venture to state his sentiments in public under such circumstances? Look about you and observe the state of society. Will magistrates venture to do their duty? Will any man put himself forward upon any subject? Is not every man doubting whether the power of government, which he is called upon to exercise, may not be in contravention of the wishes of the King and his Ministers, and that he may be left unsupported? Under these circumstances, it cannot be expected that gentlemen will come forward to declare opinions which we all know that they entertain, but the avowal of which may expose them to the risk of being hunted even through their own parks and gardens. You say that the evils which I apprehend are remote and contingent: those which you fear are immediate. I positively deny the existence of the latter. The Government has the power of preventing them or of putting them down.”

All through the months of January and February 1832, while the Bill was being pushed through the Commons, the Peers, as individuals, were employed in hotly debating what steps they could take to save the swamping of their House by the creation of new members. Extreme nervousness was felt on both sides in expressing an open opinion upon the question. Earl Grey, knowing the dread which many of the Lords entertained of such an addition to their body, went so far in seeking to influence them by this threat to withdraw their opposition, that he found himself committed to the proposal in spite of his strong sense of its unconstitutional character. Lord Grey's difficulty was all the greater

that he held the King entirely in his own hands, and that it would have been impossible to have given William IV. credit for free action in such a matter. The King's demeanour towards those of the Lords who were admitted to an audience to present petitions from counties against Reform and the creation of Peers, left no doubt that the Ministry was unduly pressing him beyond his inclinations. To the Marquess of Salisbury, who presented a very moderate petition, his Majesty said he believed that "a reform, and a considerable reform, must take place, but *it was another thing whether it ought ever to have gone so far.*" The Marquess Camden, who had had an audience for the same purpose, reported to the Duke that "he could only guess that he will not make such creations if he can see his way to uphold others in government who would enable him to resist it." All the while that the Ministry was pressing the King's name into the promotion of their views, the Duke was doing his utmost to save the Crown from being dragged still deeper in the controversy by appeals from the Tory lords. The Duke was pressed by many of the Lords to approach the King in person, and to offer him the protection of a new Ministry against the unconstitutional demands of his advisers. This he positively declined to do. He was equally positive in dissuading all proposals for irregular appeals to the Crown by the Opposition. If he failed, as he saw every prospect of failure, he was resolved to fall at least upon constitutional ground. He pointed out to his correspondents that opposition to the proposed attempt to break down the independence of the House would be set down to the score of resistance to Reform.

Marquess of Exeter in January 1832, "that, injurious as I think that this supposed creation of Peers would be, I cannot think it will tend more immediately to the destruction of the House of Lords than carrying the Reform Bill. . . . I am inclined to believe, and I shall certainly so act, that it is better to resist the Reform Bill, and force the Government, if they think proper, to adopt this, or some other *coup-d'état*, to destroy the constitution of their country, than for us, the Peers of England, to vote for that which we must know will have that effect."

The manœuvring of Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe detracted from the constitutional attitude of the Tory Opposition, but it failed in any way to implicate its leaders. Their efforts were an irresolute attempt to adapt conservative politics to the crisis, and dictated by no higher principles than those of expediency. Their trimming was most ably exposed in a letter by Mr Gleig, printed in the new volume of the Despatches. After discussing *seriatim* all the points of Lord Harrowby's position, the ex-Chaplain-General thus wound up:—

"The real question is thus reduced within a very narrow compass. Your Lordship (Harrowby) says, and we are bound to believe you, that unless the Ministers be assured of a majority in your House to carry the second reading, they will create any number of Peers; of which the unavoidable consequence must be the destruction of the House of Lords. The Minister himself has repeatedly stated that he is determined to carry this Bill, let the consequences be what they may. But we have your own authority for saying that this Bill, if passed into a law, must inevitably destroy every institution in the country, the House of Lords among the rest. What follows? Why this: that the institutions of the country, including the influence and authority of the House of Lords, are doomed to destruction at all events. Whether is it better that the House should perish by the hand of the King's Minister or by its own?"

"I confess," writes Wellington to the

There were, however, not a few members of the Lords who favoured the old Roman idea of suicide being preferable to being put to death by a political opponent; and a good many shared Lord Howe's feeling, "that if it had pleased God to send us the Reform Bill, &c., through the medium of a Buonaparte, or some such other clever scoundrel, I should be almost inclined to kiss the rod, and bear the infliction patiently; but to be ruined and destroyed by such a set of imbeciles as these, is enough to break one's heart."

The Bill was read a second time in the House of Lords, and carried on April 14th, through the aid of the Harrowby and Wharnccliffe party, by a narrow majority of nine. The Ministry had counted upon more votes, and were much disheartened at the prospect before them in Committee. It was seen on all sides that they would be defeated, and the Court appears to have shown anxiety that Wellington should take the opportunity to return to power. The Earl of Munster wrote to the Duke a hurried note two nights after the division, praying him "for God's sake have Peel ready." The Duke, however, had mastered the situation. He saw that matters had gone too far to be retrieved. The waverers, by enabling the Ministry to carry the second reading, had entirely altered the position of the House of Lords with regard to the Bill, and taken away their chief ground for protesting against a creation of Peers; for, as the Duke argued, a creation to carry the Bill after its principle had been adopted by a majority would be a very different thing from a creation to force the principle upon the House. He protested against the Harrowby-Wharnccliffe section holding further communications with the Government, and resolved to strike at the foundations of the Bill on the first

opportunity in Committee. But he clearly saw that Reform was, one way or other, to be effected; and that although he might endeavour to form a Ministry on the defeat of the Government, he would not be able to stem the tide of popular excitement. Disappointment and a certainty that his worst anticipations were bound to be realised, were reducing his interest in the issue to a minimum. To Mr Gleig he writes, on 28th April, "I am out of the whole affair;" and to Croker, on the following day, he says, "I will not take the course of proposing alterations to make the system worse, in my sense, than it is. I will try to improve the Bill, in my sense, but still protesting against it, and intending to vote against it upon the third reading."

The crisis culminated in the defeat of the Government on Lord Lyndhurst's motion that enfranchisement should precede disfranchisement, and in the resignation of the Ministry. Through regard for the Crown, but with little hope that he could be of use, the Duke accepted a commission to form a Ministry. The abuse which was in consequence showered upon him in the Commons by Lord Ebrington and Macaulay on the supposition that he was about to take office to carry through a measure of reform was quite premature, even if it had not been groundless. But the debate is believed to have alarmed Peel, and thus to have had the effect of preventing the Duke from forming an efficient Cabinet. Earl Grey was again sent for, and the question of creating Peers was hotly debated. The Ministry pressed the measure upon his Majesty as a condition of their remaining with him. Driven into a corner from which he could devise no escape, the King threw himself in desperation upon the generosity of the Tory Peers. The idea was as bold as it was happy, and could hardly have

originated with his Majesty himself, but is rather to be attributed to Sir Herbert Taylor, who had discussed with the Duke the possibility of the Tories extricating the King by declaring their intention to forbear from further opposition to the Reform Bill. The Duke's valued correspondent, Mr Gleig, opposed as he was to the Bill in all its aspects, had already given his Grace the same counsel. Writing to the Duke on the 16th May, Mr Gleig said—

“I take for granted that you will not mix yourself up further, in any way, with the measure. I am convinced, at least, that the only hope for the country lies in this—that you, and all who think with you that the measure is ruinous, absent yourselves entirely from the House of Lords till it is carried. You will thus take away all pretext for a creation, and, being personally unembarrassed, you will be free to play any game you choose, even in the new order of things. What that order is to be, God alone can tell.”

Both the Duke and Lord Lyndhurst declared their intention as individual Peers to take no more part in the discussion of the Bill; others followed their example; the Ministry plucked up courage to announce their continuance in office; and the Bill was as good as carried. It was felt, however, that the general secession of the Tory Peers had shorn the proceedings in the Lords of all their dignity. Even the Whigs felt this deeply; and when, at the giving of the Royal assent, a paper was put into Mr Courtenay's hands, suggesting that instead of the usual formula, “*Le Roi le veult*,” he should proclaim “*La Canaille le veult*,” the taunt, indecent as it was, struck home.

The Duke's conduct in finally withdrawing from the Reform controversy naturally occasioned much criticism, and there were very few parties that could fully enter into the spirit in which he had done so.

Some of the “no-surrender” Tories condemned his policy as weak, and argued that the giving up of opposition on so vital a question merely out of consideration for the Crown, savoured of betraying one's trust as a Peer of Parliament. The Whigs, who alone benefited by the Duke's secession, but who would have preferred that the Tories should have stayed and wrangled, and have been defeated over the Bill in the Lords, denounced as unconscientious the Duke's continuance for so long in a policy from which he withdrew at last on pressure from the Court; and the protracting of the Reform struggle by an Opposition which, always untenable, had eventually to be abandoned. The Duke, however, had not been acting from either impulse or coercion. In this, as in all his other actions with regard to Reform, he was actuated by clear and unmistakable notions of principle. He did not forego the fears which he entertained of the effects which Reform would produce upon the British constitution when he yielded to the King's appeal. But he saw clearly that if he carried his opposition further, he would add to instead of decreasing the danger. Reform would be carried in spite of all he could do to prevent it. It depended upon him whether, in addition to the House of Commons being demoralised, the character of the Lords was also to be shaken by the introduction of some forty new Peers. The Duke's responsibility as the leader of the Tory party had also been materially diminished by the conduct of the waverers in aiding the Ministry to pass the second reading of the Bill. As he insists so often, in his correspondence, the creation of Peers to pass the Bill through the House after the Lords had once affirmed the principle, was a very different thing from a creation of Peers to carry the second

reading. Before the second reading we are justified in believing that no threat from the Ministry, no appeal from the Crown, would have made the Duke refrain from discharging his duty as leader of the Opposition. To the Earl of Eldon, who had made up his mind to attend the House and oppose the Bill to the end, the Duke made the following explanation of his motives, which also sums up with great clearness and justice the principles by which he had been swayed all through the Reform struggle.

“I have always considered the Reform Bill as fatal to the constitution of the country. It was a matter of indifference whether the House of Peers should be first destroyed by the creation of Peers to carry the Bill, or should fall with the other institutions of the country. I should have voted against the Bill, were the consequences what they might. But when I found that the King was conscientiously disposed to avoid creating Peers to carry the Bill, that he quarrelled with his Ministers, and was desirous to take into his service those who would aid him in protecting the established constitution of the country, I considered it my duty to aid him as far as was in my power, and to tell his Majesty that, as an individual, I would not attend the farther discussions of the Bill, when I found, upon making the endeavour, that I could not form a Government for the King capable of carrying on his affairs. I have taken this course alone and for myself. It is founded upon my knowledge of what had passed between the King and his Ministers; and of his Majesty's intentions, and of the difficulties of his position. I have influenced none. I have advised all who have conversed with me to take their own course. They must judge for themselves what they ought to do. It is my opinion that the threat to create Peers to carry a measure in Parliament is as effectual an interference with the privileges of the House of Peers as the creation of the Peers. The independence of the House of Peers no longer exists. Those who forced the Minister to bring in and

carry the Reform Bill to the point at which we have it at present, have the power to force him to create Peers to carry the Bill through the House of Lords. I did my best to enable the King to resist the exercise of this duress upon him. But having failed, and that transaction and my communications with the King having clearly proved to me that the King was sincerely desirous, if possible, to save the House of Peers and himself from the ignominy of destroying it, I have considered it my duty, as an individual Peer, to give the assistance in attaining his object which my absence from the House in the future discussions of the Bill can give him.”

We have said that the time has not yet come when the constitutional benefits and disadvantages of the Reform Bill can be fairly weighed against each other. It initiated a change in the character of Parliament which as yet is far from being completed. Nor can we yet venture to pronounce with authority which of the two leaders, Earl Grey or the Duke of Wellington, was the more correct in his anticipations of the results which the Reform Bill would bring about. We can, however, judge of the tendency of these results so far as they have gone. Earl Grey in the Lords, and Lord Althorp in the Commons, declared—the one, that the Reform Bill in its first and most objectionable form was “the most aristocratic measure that ever was proposed in Parliament;” the other, that “it was the most aristocratic measure ever offered to the nation.” The Duke, on the other hand, maintained that it would obliterate every landmark in the constitution as it then existed. Which of the two predictions has been more in course of fulfilment during the past half-century? Looking at Parliament at the present moment, with its brood of Bradlaughs and O'Donnells, we may ask whose anticipations were the better founded? We have seen in our day a states-

man placed solely by democracy at the head of affairs. The Duke dreaded that the Church would suffer in consequence of Reform. The Church of Ireland has already been cast away by the State; the other two are threatened in their turn; and at the head of the Government stands a Minister who owes his return to Parliament mainly to the hopes with which his antecedents have inspired the Scotch disestablishment party. The Duke feared that the independence of the House of Lords would be impaired by the Reform Bill. Can we venture to say that it possesses the same influence that it commanded before 1832, or that it presents the importance in the eyes of the nation which a free and separate branch of the Legislature should have? Is the Crown as great a "tower of strength" to the constitution as it was before the first Reform Bill? And if it should happily prove to be so, how much is due to its own abstinence from politics, and how much to the forbearance of the Commons from curtailing its prerogatives? The Duke predicted that there would be an end to property. Have we not of late years come dangerously near to realising his prediction? We have begun to set up a distinction between a man's right to control his acres and his right to dispose of the money in his pocket, although in the pre-Reform days it would have been counted dishonesty and tyranny to interfere with his freedom in respect to either. Have we not got the Ballot, which the Duke prophesied, and the Whigs denied, would be the result of Reform? And if the Duke's misgivings have not been accomplished in their fullest sense, we must remember that the period which has elapsed since the Reform Bill has been one of unusual tranquillity in politics and of national prosperity—results which are in no

way to be attributed to that measure. There has been no great constitutional crisis; no vital conflict between the estates of the realm; no deadly antagonism of orders or creeds; no dynastic difficulty; none of those great struggles which had helped to mould the old British constitution, to test the qualities of the system that has supplanted it. If the Duke made any mistake in his calculations, it was in anticipating that the Reform Act would bear fruit more quickly than it did. That it did not immediately do so, was owing chiefly to the temporary satisfaction of the masses with their victory. They knew the advantages which they had secured; and we may perhaps say that they used them with more moderation than they could have got credit for. Nevertheless there was a transference of power, and time only can show whether that power is or is not to be exercised for the welfare of the general liberties of the nation.

The new volumes of the Despatches go far to prove, at least, that the estimate which history had formed of the Duke's opposition to the Reform movement is crude where it has not been unjust. They establish conclusively that his policy was not one of arbitrary opposition, but based upon well-founded calculations. In judging of the Duke's conduct, we must also remember that we ourselves have become accustomed to look with tolerance upon ideas which his age unanimously branded with political opprobrium. Our generation returns avowed Republicans to Parliament when his would have taken the precaution to send them to the hulks. Much as we prize toleration, we prize principle more; and if judged by that standard, the Duke's course upon the Reform Bill may safely be submitted to the verdict of posterity.

THE FINANCIAL SITUATION IN INDIA.

BEYOND a general impression that the Indian Minister has made a tremendous blunder in his Budget, from under-estimating the cost of the war in Afghanistan, the public has probably no very clear understanding about a matter which nevertheless has engaged an unusual degree of interest. Nor has the press, to which the public naturally looks for enlightenment, done much, so far, to elucidate the case; while the utterances of Mr Laing—who puts himself as a professional expert—in the last number of a contemporary, serve only to mystify it.

That a great blunder has been made there is no question. The latest report of the Indian Government, as contained in the Blue-Book published at the beginning of last month, shows that, whereas the war expenditure of the current year was estimated in the Budget at two millions, provision must now be made for a sum of indefinite amount, which will certainly be three times as much, but may very probably be a great deal more. This discovery was made within a few weeks—we might almost say a few days—of the publication of a budget statement, wherein the financial prosperity of India was proclaimed in terms which might have appeared extravagant if applied to the most wealthy country of Europe. Not only were taxes to be repealed, and duties taken off, while great military operations were in progress; the remarkable feat was to be accomplished of paying for the war out of the revenues of the year. Sir John Strachey, speaking for India, declared that either to borrow for the war, or to obtain assistance from England,

was alike to be repudiated. The one course was unnecessary, the other unworthy of so prosperous a country. Hardly had these glowing phrases been uttered than the same Minister is found beseeching the Secretary of State in piteous accents to abate the monthly drawings for the home expenses, which he had just before announced his readiness to meet in full. The latter, astonished, as well he might be, presses for explanation; and at last the confession is wrung from the lately jubilant Minister that his estimates are all wrong. Not, however, that the discovery was made upon an examination of the estimates. The disclosure forced itself upon attention by the fact that the frontier treasuries were being swept bare of coin, and that they could not be replenished simultaneously with the payment of the Secretary of State's drafts.

A defence of the Indian Finance Minister's blunder has been given, in the same magazine which contains Mr Laing's attack, by his able and distinguished brother, General Richard Strachey, and as we may assume that it is the best that could be put forward, an opinion may be formed from it of the weakness of the case. According to General Strachey, it was no business of the finance department of the Indian Government to question the estimates for the war expenditure put forward by the military authorities: the former had merely to accept the figures placed before it by the military department. Certainly the Finance Minister, by putting forward, as he has done, the explanation of the military authorities for the mistake, thus virtually endeavours to shift the responsibility from himself to

them, which, to say the least, appears somewhat ungenerous; but indeed the paper of the Military Accountant-General, which is printed in the Blue-Book, furnishes the most complete condemnation of the Finance Minister's own action. It appears from this that the Accountant-General to the Indian Government frames the estimate for the War Department by making a compilation of the estimates rendered to him by the controllers of military accounts of the three Presidencies—altering them, however, before he passes them on, if, in his judgment, alteration is necessary. This procedure may be well enough for determining the ordinary charges of peacetime, for pay and so forth; but the notion of looking to the Controller at Madras to furnish an estimate of any part of the cost of the war in Afghanistan is sufficiently absurd: it is as if the traffic manager of a railway were to ask the auditor how many special trains would be needed for a race-meeting. This, however, is not the point which now particularly calls for notice. The real question at issue turns on the date at which these estimates were supplied to the Finance Department. Throughout Major Newmarch's Memorandum there is a mysterious abstention from specifying any dates, which is not a little singular. But in the absence of any statement to the contrary, it may be taken for granted that the military estimates were rendered about the usual time—that is, at the end of last year, before the remarkable military operations which ended in General Roberts being shut up for a time in Sherpur cantonments with his communications cut off, and when both in India and England there was a not-unfounded fear of some catastrophe to follow. What happened on this we can all remember. Troops were pushed up in haste from all

parts of India, and in a few weeks the army acting beyond the Indus, with its reserves, was nearly doubled in strength; while the country was swept of supplies of all sorts, and transport animals were purchased regardless of expense. All this happened during the period intervening between the submission of the military estimates to the Finance Department, and the publication of the Budget on the 24th of February. This view is borne out by the telegram, No. 26, printed at p. 69 of the Blue-Book: "Since estimate was framed, we have sent to form reserves, and to accumulate immediately six months' supplies for troops in field." Now these measures were certainly taken last December, so that the estimate must have been framed still earlier. Sir John Strachey, therefore, when he made his financial statement, had before him the fact that the army in Afghanistan had been raised from thirty thousand to nearly sixty thousand men, and that an enormous expenditure had been, and was still in course of being, incurred to keep it supplied, and to make good the tremendous loss in transport animals which had occurred during the previous campaign. And yet he puts forward the estimates which had been prepared, for a state of things entirely different from that which they contemplated, and when the compilers were in complete ignorance that all these measures were about to be taken; and endorses them with his own warrant as to their complete sufficiency.

This we take to be the real explanation of the matter. The estimates were prepared just at the time when General Roberts and his force were resting in false security after having occupied Cabul with trifling resistance; when it was thought that all fighting was over, and that the army would be back in India before the

hot weather set in. When Sir John Strachey made his statement, all these sanguine hopes had been frustrated, and the war had entered on a new and much more extended scale, while the expenditure was increasing in a vastly greater ratio, the country being exhausted of all supplies. Yet Sir John Strachey, with these facts confronting him, puts forward these now worthless estimates as if they had been carefully prepared to accord with the then existing facts, and to be absolutely relied on.

When the Budget statement reached England, great surprise was felt by all who took the trouble to examine the account, at the extraordinarily small amount set down for a war which was now demanding such extensive operations. It seemed inconceivable that the thing could be done for the sum named; but when Sir John said authoritatively that, on a careful review of the situation, the estimates would probably prove to be sufficient, incredulity was held for the time in suspense. Had it been known that when he said the military estimates had "been prepared with much care," and "that there is no reason to suppose that they err on the side of being too low," he was in reality speaking of estimates which he knew had been prepared before the events which they were supposed to deal with, and were based on data which had at the time of his speech altogether ceased to be applicable, and that he had sufficient information in his possession to tell him, if he had chosen to think about it, that the estimates were absolutely worthless for the purpose for which they had been drawn up, the public surprise would not have been diminished, although it would have been of a different sort.

It may perhaps be said that the military authorities, who must equally have known by the end of February the inadequacy of the estimates framed long before, should have themselves given a warning on the subject. No doubt they should, and perhaps they did. It would be interesting to know indeed what, passed on the subject, for the Accountant-General's Memorandum, with all its vagueness as to dates, reads very like an effort to screen his superiors; but with a Finance Minister so determined to regard the financial outlook under a rose-coloured aspect, a suggestion to reconsider his figures would probably not have been well received. Sir John Strachey was bent on self-deception, and to this strange infatuation we must ascribe the blunder. The assumption that the deception was intentional is too monstrous to be entertained. Not to say that it is wholly belied by the antecedents of an honourable and distinguished public career, no man in his senses would deliberately purchase the ephemeral credit of a prosperous Budget, with the knowledge that the bubble was about to burst immediately, and that the account would hardly reach England before the telegram announcing that it was all wrong.

One more remark must be made about these estimates. Sir John Strachey in his financial statement refers with satisfaction to the close agreement between the estimate for the year 1878-79, in which the first Cabul Afghan campaign occurred, and the recorded expenditure, as showing how carefully the estimate was framed. The estimate was for £670,000, and the "net cost of the war £676,381," which he is certainly entitled to call "a close approximation." But it appears from the Accountant-General's Memorandum, already referred

to, that of the net war expenditure during the year in question, no less a sum than £600,000 has been left outstanding, under the head of advances recoverable, unadjusted items, &c., "to be adjusted and charged against the accounts" of the following year. So that this "close approximation" has been arrived at by leaving out just one-half of the amount actually spent. Again, the cost of the war for the year which has just ended is set down as about three and a quarter millions. But the same Memorandum shows that no less than a million sterling of money actually spent in that year is to be carried forward as "unadjusted," and charged against the estimates of the current year. Of course, by this extraordinary method of accounting, all valid comparison between estimates and accounts becomes impossible. You have only to delay the final "adjustment" of items sufficiently to make the recorded expenditure what you please. It is not a little curious to find any class of officials gravely comparing estimates with expenditure dealt with in this fashion, as if money spent on a war or anything else was not the less spent because not "adjusted." This must surely be a barbarous relic of the old cumbersome mercantile book-keeping of the East India Company, of which we thought all the Indian public departments had long ago been purged. But it is plain that the Indian military accounts still stand in need of thorough reform.

This mistake, which has unfortunately brought discredit on the whole Indian administration as well as on the person primarily responsible, must probably be ascribed to the impulsive character of Sir John Strachey, whose financial career has been distinguished by a succession of alternating fits of

buoyancy and despondency, equally unjustified by the conditions of the case. In the Budget statement of 1878 the financial situation was depicted in rosy hues. The finances were thoroughly sound; public works could be pushed on merrily; there was money for everything; while to provide against the possible strain of famines in the future, a famine fund was to be created out of the proceeds of extra taxation, which would be applied to create an accumulating surplus specially applicable to this purpose. The question whether this fund had or had not any specific existence has been the subject of a good deal of controversy, but the matter is surely not open to doubt. A school-boy rattling his pocket-money in his trousers' pocket may say that this particular half-crown was given him by his aunt Susan, and that by his uncle Joe; but the notion that any particular part of the revenues of a country can be distinguished from the remainder, and set apart for a particular purpose, is from the nature of the case a pure delusion. If, by means of extra taxation, a surplus had been produced, it might no doubt have been applied in prosperous years to the extinction of debt, and so have left the Government in a stronger position to meet the drain of bad years; but to speak of such surpluses as constituting a fund in the ordinary acceptance of the term was surely quite inaccurate. However, the so-called fund had but a brief existence; for when the Budget of last year appeared, the Finance Minister had fallen into the depths of financial despondency. The state of the currency, and consequent loss by exchange, had completely deranged the finances. There was no money for anything. Public works must be cut down, and the engineers dismissed by hundreds; the action of

the famine fund was practically suspended, and no one could say when it would be set going again. A more lugubrious financial utterance was never made: it was not wonderful that considerable alarm should have been aroused in England when the responsible Minister thought so badly of things. But this year all was changed again. Never were the finances of any country so prosperous and all-sufficing. Although an expensive war was still in progress, this did not deter Sir John Strachey from sacrificing revenue to remove some export duties. Feats which the English Chancellor of the Exchequer pronounced impossible in dealing with the Zulu war, were quite possible for the Indian Financial Minister. He scornfully rejected the idea of allowing England to pay any part of the bill for the war, nor would he even consent to resort to the ordinary procedure of distributing the cost over a series of years. India could pay its war charges as they occurred out of the revenues of the year. Yet hardly is the ink dry which pens these glowing pictures, when the writer rushes to the telegraph wire to implore the Secretary of State to save the Indian treasury from insolvency by immediate reduction of his bills.

In all this Sir John Strachey has displayed an egregious want of ballast. Nor can he be acquitted of extreme carelessness in the matter of these military estimates. Yet we must not therefore lose sight of his distinguished past career in a variety of capacities; and, with all abatement made, we may still pronounce him to be the best Finance Minister India has had, excepting Mr Wilson, whose untimely death, however, occurred before he had time to do more than give promise of performance to come; while it

must be observed that Mr Wilson's crude action in levying crushing import duties would probably not have been tolerated at the present day. They proved, indeed, so destructive of trade, that a notable part of the business of his successors consisted in lowering them again to a reasonable figure. His income-tax scheme also was by no means successful. That part of it which dealt with the lower class of incomes was found to produce only £350,000, although levied from an enormous number of people with infinite trouble and vexation, while the cost of collection exceeded 30 per cent of the proceeds; and it was very properly repealed by his successor. Mr Laing's tenure of the Finance portfolio was mainly remarkable for his incapacity to understand his own figures. To him succeeded Sir Charles Trevelyan, who signalled himself by putting export duties on all the main staples of Indian trade—a measure which was naturally at once disallowed by the Home Government. Mr Massey, who came next, did not do anything, and did not profess to do anything, if we except the levy of a licence-tax,—which was, in fact, a revived income-tax under another name. He was followed by Sir Richard Temple, a Bengal civilian, whose financial administration is best summed up in a pamphlet, prepared by himself, of the so-called financial measures carried out in his time, which appear to have consisted mainly in certain administrative reorganisations resulting in everybody's pay being raised all round in several branches of the service, with a sensible increase of the public charges. Sir Richard Temple is an administrator of quite extraordinary energy; but no one would pretend to ascribe to him any aptitude for finance. Not one of these gentlemen, in their

handling of the Indian finances, exhibited the smallest originality, their attempts at new taxation being mainly limited to a mere slavish imitation of the English method of an income-tax,—an impost singularly inapplicable to the peculiar conditions of the people of India. Their measures, for the most part, were a mere seesaw of each other's proceedings. If one clapped on an income-tax, the next took it off; if one raised the customs tariff, the next lowered it again. The general result of the past twenty years of Indian financial administration, since the time when it was first placed in charge of a responsible officer, has been that, after various ups and downs, having necessarily a very pernicious effect on trade, the import duties on most articles, which before the Mutiny were five per cent *ad valorem*, now stand at seven and a half per cent; and that the income-tax, after being put on and taken off, and rechristened and put on again, now, under the guise of a licence-tax, produces a small revenue. It is needless to comment on the impropriety of financial vacillation of this sort, which violates one of the cardinal maxims on the subject. What we are now more concerned to point out is the fact that not one of these gentlemen attempted to deal with the standing opprobrium of Indian fiscal administration,—the abominable inland-customs line, with its monstrous hedge guarded by thousands of patrols, and reaching for hundreds of miles across India. It was reserved for Sir John Strachey to sweep this away, — a great measure, which, with the equalisation of the salt-duties throughout India, constitutes a financial reform of the first class, throwing into the shade all that had been done by his predecessors, and which must remain, in the view of all fair-minded men, a me-

morial of his originality and energy. And whatever our individual opinions may be of his action in regard to the cotton-duties, we must at least admit that, as part of a definitive policy, adopted with a specific aim, it should be placed in a very different category from the action of his predecessors in office, playing fast and loose with the trade of the country in their feeble efforts to pick up a little extra revenue. And when people talk so glibly about the incapacity of the Indian services for financial administration, and cite, as a proof of the assertion, that it has never yet produced a financier, how many financiers, it may be asked, has England and English political life produced? During the last hundred years there have not appeared more than three or four Ministers who have displayed any conspicuous talent for finance. If this be the case in the much larger field of English public life, how absurd to make it a reproach that no servant of the Indian Government has yet come to the front in this line, which has only assumed any importance during the last twenty years! The truth is, that a genius for finance is one of the rarest forms of genius; and it is no more surprising that India, any more than England, does not produce a great financier every twenty years, than that first-rate generals are rare. It must be remembered, too, that the best English financiers are not available for India. A statesman who has any pretensions to become a Chancellor of the Exchequer will not be tempted to go to India by any prize short of the very highest. As between the most distinguished men of the Indian service and the sort of men who are usually available from England, small officials or disappointed placemen who have to be provided for, the facts which

we have cited may at least go some way to gauging the relative merits of the two classes of candidates.

There remains to consider the result of this discovery of the failure of the Indian Budget. The public have jumped to the conclusion that because a mistake has been made in the estimates, and it is now known that the war will cost a great deal more than was at first stated, the Indian finances are in a very bad way. But such a conclusion is not really justified by the facts. The alarm has arisen from the way in which the matter has come under notice. If Sir John Strachey had proposed, in the first instance, what was the rational course, that the war should be paid for by a loan; and if he had further limited himself to taking a sum on account, without committing himself to an opinion as to the final cost of the war,—every one would have understood the proposal, and acquiesced in its reasonableness. The result would have been—as indeed the result must be in any case—a permanent addition to the charges on the revenues of India for interest on debt, an increase which, not improbably, may amount to as much as half a million a-year; but we think that no one who has watched the course of the Indian revenues, and their progressive improvement, can doubt their capacity under good management to meet it. The Mutiny involved a deficit of forty-two millions, the revenue being at that time only thirty-two millions a-year, while it has now risen to fifty-eight millions.* At that time so large a liability did indeed seem more than India could meet; but the truth is that, famines notwithstanding, India has been steadily advancing in prosperity, and the

finances are unquestionably in a sounder state now than they were before this great burden of the Mutiny debt arose. And although the state of things would no doubt be still better if this new debt for the Afghan war had not to be incurred, yet the condition of things is nothing like so serious now as it was twenty years ago, when the difficulty was successfully overcome, not by any skilful manipulation of the finances, but by the spontaneous improvement of revenue, resulting from the rapidly increasing prosperity of the country.

Of course there will be found just now plenty of people to take the more desponding view; and Mr Laing has come forward on these lines in the last number of the 'Nineteenth Century.' To those who recollect Mr Laing's career in India, and the amusement with which they read the published correspondence embodying Sir Charles Wood's scornful exposure of the mistakes in his estimates, sent back to India for revision—Mr Laing's confession of incapacity to see where the mistakes lay, and the Secretary of State's sarcastic rejoinder—the notion of Mr Laing posing as a financial guide is sufficiently absurd; and if further evidence were needed of his incompetence for the task, it would be furnished by the article in question. Mr Laing will have it that the money spent on the construction of railroads is to be deemed part of the current expenditure of the year, and included in the Budget, and that, if such expenditure is not covered by traffic receipts, there is to that extent a deficit. Twenty millions have been spent during the last five years on railroads and other productive works; and if this ex-

* This is after deducting the railway receipts, which are now shown as revenue, the charge for interest on the railway capital being exhibited in *gross per contra*. The gross revenue thus shown in the published accounts is sixty-five millions.

penditure be added to that exhibited in the annual estimates, then the equilibrium which the Indian Government claims to have established between expenditure and income during this period is converted into an average annual deficit of four millions. But if this view of the case be the correct one, then Mr Laing, by his own figures, is convicted of misrepresentation. He talks of the surplus which he managed to bring about during his tenure of office, omitting to take any account of the expenditure on railroads during that time. This amounted, during the two years he held office, to more than thirteen millions, which did not return a penny as revenue; so that, by his own showing, the surplus he takes credit for becomes an enormous deficit. It is true that the railway expenditure in his time was incurred through the agency of the guaranteed companies, whereas now it is disbursed directly by the Government; but even Mr Laing must be aware that the money was every bit of it as much money spent by the Government, and an addition to the Indian debt, in the one case as in the other. If, therefore, this is a correct way of looking at the matter, Mr Laing's comparison between a surplus in his time and a deficit in the present, is absolutely fallacious. But of course this way of regarding the case would be entirely inaccurate and misleading. If the accounts of an English railway were dealt with in this fashion, and capital outlay was mixed up with the revenue account, and shown as expenditure against the receipts of the year, inextricable confusion would result. Such a thing is never done; and the plan adopted by the Indian Government in separating its railroad capital expenditure from the revenue or finance accounts of the year, is not only in accord with

the universal practice in dealing with such undertakings, but is the only plan compatible with common-sense.

It may, however, be alleged that this only holds good provided that such capital outlay is likely to bring in a return which ultimately will extinguish the charge for interest on the capital sunk. This is what Mr Laing implies. An outlay of about fourteen millions on State railways, incurred during the past five years, gave a net return of only £88,000 a-year. "How then," says he, "is it possible to contend that an Indian budget is really balanced, while an expenditure of millions on works which give no return is treated as if it had never been spent, or had been spent on something which would reproduce the money?" The expenditure Mr Laing here refers to appears to have been incurred on a number of lines, many of which are still in course of construction, while others are only partially opened. While in this unfinished state, they do not, of course, reproduce the money. We may presume that the London and Brighton line did not furnish any earnings before the trains began to run on it. Judged by this standard, any railway might be pronounced to be hopelessly insolvent before it was opened for traffic. It is impossible, of course, to prove beforehand that these particular lines will pay; the only fair way of dealing with the matter is to consider the railway expenditure incurred by the Government of India as a whole, and its financial results as a whole. Now this expenditure, up to the end of 1878-79, amounted to about 118 millions; and although a considerable part of that expenditure is still in an unproductive form—the works on which it has been incurred being, as we have said, still more or less incomplete—the charge for interest upon it has

been steadily diminishing year by year. In 1878-79 it was only about £300,000; and it is expected that in the present year it will, for the first time, be covered by the earnings of the lines. The point, therefore, has now been reached when these works cease to be a burden on the finances. This great operation has been carried out—and the charge for interest on it having been defrayed year by year, India has now got its railways free; and from this time forward a handsome net return on the outlay—after paying the interest on the capital sunk—may be confidently looked for. Never has a great policy been more amply justified by the results than this, inaugurated by Lord Dalhousie, of a State railway system for India.

It may, however, be urged, that whereas the trunk lines of railroad first constructed are likely to pay, yet that the best ground has now been taken up, and that the same return cannot be expected from extensions and branch lines. But then, as every one knows, the working of branch lines must be considered under two heads: the direct return they give on their own working, and the increased traffic they bring to the main line. If the revenue account of every branch line, say, on the London and Brighton system, were considered as a separate account, most of them would show up very badly; but no sane person would propose such a criterion. Every railway system must be considered as a whole; and in India, particularly, the carrying powers of the main lines and the wants of the country can only be utilised to the fullest by the development of feeders. The extension of branch lines might, no doubt, be carried too far, but it might also not be carried far enough. Each case has to be dealt with on its merits; but certainly the point at which it would

be prudent to stop has not yet been reached; and it is worth noting that some of the branch lines, even while still quite isolated and independent, have already proved very remunerative. On the whole, the position of the Indian railway system is thoroughly sound and hopeful, and Mr Laing has succeeded in conveying a contrary impression only by making a muddle of what is really a simple matter. We cannot forbear from remarking on the disingenuous way in which he speaks of the increase of the salt-tax in Madras and Bombay, omitting to mention that if it has been raised for about 50 millions of people, it has been simultaneously lowered for 130 millions, and that it was only by thus increasing the tax for the minority that it became possible to carry out the great measure of abolishing the inland-customs line. Further, when Mr Laing puts himself forward as an army reformer, and claims to have converted a deficit of six millions into a surplus, by striking 150,000 men off the Indian army, it may be as well to point out that what really happened was the reduction and partial disbandment of the army which had been raised to put down the Mutiny. One might as well call the late Sir George Lewis an army reformer because he happened to be Chancellor of the Exchequer when the English army was brought back to a peace establishment on the termination of the Crimean war. The Indian army was reduced to a peace establishment in 1861, at which it has remained ever since. The reduction having been made once, there was no room for repeating the operation; and a just criticism which might be made on the recent military operations is, not that they were undertaken in excessive strength, but that the Indian Government plunged into

war with an army still on a peace establishment, and without making any adequate arrangements for the necessary augmentation of the rank and file, a deficiency in which has been throughout productive of great embarrassment. The real cause for the present costliness of the Indian army is not undue strength in numbers, but its extremely expensive organisation. This organisation, which replaced the economical system previously obtaining, was carried out in 1861, and the very important effect which it would involve on the cost of the army in the future might and should have been foreseen. Here, truly, was scope for the action of an intelligent financier. The Indian military estimates are becoming larger year by year, mainly in consequence of the enormous burden prospectively created by the measures of 1861, in the shape of non-effective charges due to the vicious system of promotion then introduced; but it does not appear that Mr Laing uttered a word of remonstrance. The grave difficulties which now await solution, arising out of the costly organisation of the Indian army, are a legacy bequeathed from the time when Mr Laing was a member of the Indian Government.

So much for Mr Laing. As for the general question at issue, we submit that, so far from there being reasonable ground for supposing that the condition of India is one of decay, all the evidence points the other way. The increasing railway traffic and foreign trade indicate that India is really in a flourishing condition, notwithstanding that the effects of the famine have not yet passed away, and that India, in common with all parts of

the world, has been suffering from the general depression of trade. A country may, however, be prosperous while yet the finances of its Government are in an unsound state. And although it may be absurd to indulge in fits of hysterics about the matter, it does not follow that there is no need for vigorous action. The Indian finances during the last few years have been subject to several violent strains: the successive famines; the depreciation of silver; and now a costly war. That they should have stood the shock so well; that all these demands (the famines alone involved a direct outlay of 14½ millions during the past six years, besides a great indirect expenditure) should have been met, up to the present time, out of current revenue without producing a deficit,*—is remarkable evidence of the inherent soundness of the financial situation. Still these difficulties, although they have so far been successfully overcome, have left their mark. Others of a similar kind may be expected to occur in the future; while the present war, if borne by India, will certainly involve a permanent burden in the form of interest for an increase of the public debt. Nor is it enough that the country should just pay its way. The principle which underlay the proposed Famine Insurance Fund—that a surplus should be provided in good years wherewith to meet bad ones—is undoubtedly one that ought to be followed up. To arrive at a mere equilibrium between income and expenditure is not sufficient. The needs of the case will not be satisfactorily met by less than a substantial surplus in ordinary years. This can be arrived at only by increased taxation, or a reduction of expenditure,

* During the last eleven years the revenues of India have amounted to 583½ millions and the expenditure to about a quarter of a million less. This expenditure includes all that incurred on public works which are not expected to prove remunerative, as well as all charges for interest on capital outlay.

or by a combination of both. In dealing with Indian expenditure there is abundant room for the exercise of financial ability and ingenuity. The cost of Indian administration is unquestionably susceptible of reduction. The army as now organised is on a most expensive footing, and it will need a strong and persistent effort to carry through the reforms recommended by the Commission appointed by the late Governor-General. The tendency manifested of late years to the employment of Europeans in excess of the real needs of the country, is another matter calling for early action. Unless the thing is checked now, a serious financial difficulty is being laid up for the future.

A reform of the kind here indicated, far from injuring the prospects and position of the European members of the Indian services, may by good management be made conducive to their best interests. The truth is, that the European services are now in course of undergoing serious deterioration as fields of employment, by the excessive additions made to their junior ranks, the effect of which is to retard unduly promotion to the higher posts. By an alteration of system, therefore, the European services may be improved, or rather restored to their old footing; while the impending liability may be got rid of for increased pensions or other

remedies for maintaining a proper current of promotion, which otherwise will inevitably have to be incurred. These are merely some among many points demanding attention. With respect to the other side of the account—the revenue, and the best way of increasing it—what seems to be needed is, not a feeble imitation of English methods applied to a country for which they may be quite unsuitable, but the power to grasp the peculiar conditions of India, and to wield them for the improvement of the finances. Sir John Strachey's method of dealing with the salt-duties and the inland-customs line is an instance in point; but there remains abundant room for the exercise of fiscal originality. As regards other matters, one great administrative reform, much called for, is the clear separation of the debt incurred for public works from the general debt of India, so that the former may be exhibited, like the capital of the guaranteed railways, altogether apart from other liabilities. The thing is quite possible, and if carried out would put an end to a great deal of foolish writing on the subject. Finally, the military and other accounts have to be reformed. Here, then, is abundant room for the exercise of financial and administrative ability, without assuming that the task to be performed is so grave and difficult as the salvation of India from impending bankruptcy.

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A REINDEER RIDE THROUGH LAPLAND.

THERE are few modes of locomotion novel to the literature of the present day. We have had "Walks" innumerable over many continents. "Rides" on all species of animals from the elephant to the donkey have recently become the rage. A volume is almost a necessary sequel to a yachting cruise; and even canoeing has provided us with a small library of its own. If reindeer travelling has been less fully described, it is because it has been less generally resorted to. But Lapland no longer lies outside the possibilities of the tourist; and we have no doubt that many readers, to whom the experiences which we are about to record will be fresh, may be tempted on their own account to essay a tour by reindeer within the Arctic Circle; while others, less ambitious to be thought venturesome, may be pleased to have an opportunity of acquiring some information at second hand upon the subject.

At seven o'clock on the morning of Sunday, 16th March 1879, we left Hammerfest, the most northerly town in the world, by the little steamer Robert, bound for the inner reaches of the beautiful Alten Fjord. Our party consisted of four: the *amtmand** of Finmarken and his son, the *forstmester*, and myself. Our immediate destination was Bosekop, where we expected to meet our Lapp guides with their reindeer, to take us over the fjeld to Vadsoe on the Varanger Fjord, fully three hundred miles away.

The weather was anything but propitious. Thick, lowering clouds were gathering in the south-east, and everything seemed to threaten that in a very short time a severe snowstorm would fall upon us. This in itself would have been of no consequence had it not been that it would, firstly, hinder us from seeing the splendid rock-formations of Alten, and secondly,

* The office of *amtmand* corresponds to that of high sheriff or lord-lieutenant in this country, though the functionary most nearly resembling him is the French *préfet*.

greatly impede our progress through the country later on.

For a considerable distance beyond Hammerfest the scenery is very uniform, and not at all striking. Black or grey cliffs rise precipitously from the sea, without a particle of visible vegetation upon them, and even the very wildness and desolation of the scene, though at first impressive, ceased to have novelty, and at length became positively depressing. No number of jagged peaks and curiously narrow sounds and fjords can compensate for the absence of colour and life in the landscape. Still there was much to attract one's attention. In particular, the different old shore-marks on the cliffs were very interesting. The highest of these was over 100 feet above the present water-level; and two or three other distinct lines just like terraces were visible almost the whole length of the fjord. It is still an open question among scientific men whether these ancient sea-margin marks have been caused by a sinking of the waters or by an upheaval of the land. To me the latter supposition seemed the more tenable, as the irregularity of the lines, now dipping ten feet, and then rising again, seem to point to the conclusion that such was their origin; for had they been caused by the sea-level falling, the lines would have been of equal height throughout.

All observation, however, speedily became impossible, as the long-threatened storm at last burst upon us, and in a short time even the coast, only a few yards off, became but a mere dim outline. The storm continued till four o'clock. At that hour we passed a headland on one side of which all was dark and gloomy, with snow falling rapidly, while on the other side the sun was shining in all its

splendour, and not a cloud was to be seen. Even behind, from where we had just come, there was not a cloud visible in the sky, but the snow lay like a fog-bank on the sea, forming a wall fifty or sixty yards high, above which the clear sky was visible. The scene before us was lovely. A calm expanse of sunlit water with a background of wooded hills was gradually succeeded in the distance by high, pure white mountains, still and serene. The sun was now sinking, and the ripples on the surface of the water shone like molten gold, while the white crests of the hills assumed a crimson glow, contrasting magnificently with their snowy drapery. In spite of the beauty of sun, mountains, and fjord, however, we could not help feeling the severe cold, which already, early in the afternoon, was about 20° to 25° of frost, though it is true that the calmness of the air caused it to be much less perceptible than might have been expected.

On the quay at Bosekop we found almost the whole population waiting to receive us, and among them were our Lapp drivers, who had come down from the fjeld the previous evening to meet us. They had left their reindeer in the wood close to the town, as these animals, being very timid, do not tolerate the presence or neighbourhood of strange men and beasts, and would consequently, if kept in the town itself, have become utterly unmanageable. It was impossible to escape a slight conversation with the Lapps; but this being got through, we found our way quickly to the hotel, or rather lodging-house, where we were to spend a few hours before starting for the interior. This hotel was a very bad specimen of its kind; the only commendable thing about it was the ventilation, which, how-

ever, was entirely uncontrolled, for it came chiefly through holes and fissures in the plank-walls of the building; and ventilation, be it ever so desirable and healthy generally, has decidedly its drawbacks at a temperature of 3° below zero of Fahr., as the thermometer this evening registered.

In order to provide the spare time before our departure, two of us procured snow-shoes, and set off for a walk to Bugten, lying on the other side of a pretty thickly wooded and high peninsula north of Bosekop. We covered the distance to Bugten in a very short time, and on our arrival were much struck by the wonderful size and beauty of the trees about the place. Some Scotch firs we computed to be fully sixty feet high; while we were told that the birch in some few cases attains a height of fifty feet in this neighbourhood. Returning by another road, we passed the place of execution of three Lapps, who, with others, had been found guilty of the murder of several people in Kautokino some years ago,—in an outbreak of religious fanaticism, it is said; but this, I think, must have been but a pretext. The real object must have been plunder, as every Lapp I saw was utterly indifferent to religion. One of the criminals pretended that his head could not be taken off; and, strangely enough, the executioner failed twice to make any impression on the neck of the condemned man, until the priest, who was present, reminded him of the ancient Norwegian law which decrees that, if an executioner fail three times, he himself shall be placed in the stead of the felon. This remark nerving the man, he made a desperate effort, and succeeded. On the priest telling another of the fellows that he had the “brand of Cain” upon him, he cleverly retorted in the

words of the text, “Ah, the Lord set a mark upon Cain lest any finding him should kill him!”

Twice a-year a great fair is held in Bosekop, at which the Lapps obtain a good and ready market for their produce, consisting chiefly of reindeer articles and ptarmigan. This market or fair is largely attended by the traders of the neighbouring towns, and even Thronhjelm firms send their representatives to make purchases, and to dispose of articles of finery to the nomads. The chief staple is, however, brandy, and the method of dealing generally barter. The nomads are wonderfully sharp at a bargain, and are quite capable of taking charge of their own interests. But of them more hereafter.

It being our last evening in a civilised place for some days to come, we spent it at the hotel, retiring to rest early, in order to be able to rise in good time on the morrow, when our interesting journey was to commence. Our Lapps did not fail to pay us a visit, and were not at all backward in suggesting that a “tram” of *jugasta* (brandy) would be very agreeable in such cold weather.

At the appointed hour our *wapooses* (as the Lapp guides are called) arrived with their reindeer, and after getting Kari (the good-wife) to stuff our reindeer-skin boots well with a sort of dried grass, called *senne*, we donned our travelling costumes, which I must describe. You keep on your ordinary habit, and over that you generally put a thick woollen jersey or Shetland jacket. You next put on a pair of small skin-boots, and cover these again with huge wellingtons, also of reindeer-skin, reaching far above the knee. These being properly tied and fastened, you attire yourself in the chief garment of the whole, which is

the blouse or *pesk*. This is open only at the foot and neck, and has a very high collar. On getting into it you must of course creep from below, which is decidedly an uncomfortable and difficult operation when you are not accustomed to it; and I, for my part, would never have succeeded in getting through, had not some one come to my assistance, and discovered that the neck was as yet tied, thus effectually hindering all my desperate attempts to emerge into the open air again. On escaping from my temporary confinement, I had next to allow a curious-shaped bonnet or hat of cloth, filled with eider-down, to be put upon my head; and after this it only wanted the huge reindeer-skin gauntlets to completely transform me into an aborigine of the country. As a reserve we also were provided with a tippet or collar of bear-skin, which, however, would only be of service in case a storm or snow-fog should arise. Nor did we omit to take with us a good-sized flask of cognac, and also a pair of blue-spectacles,—these latter for the purpose of preserving our eyes from the glare of the snow. As may be imagined, it is exceedingly difficult to move about freely in this voluminous costume; and it was with a feeling of relief that we heard the *wapooses* give the word to take our places in our boat-shaped sleighs, called *poolks*. To a stranger these *poolks* at first sight seem awkward conveyances. They are constructed without runners, and have a keel from 3 to 5 inches wide, and about 1½ inch high. Made entirely of wood, pointed in front, and gradually becoming broader behind, they are very light and easily drawn. For one who has never sat in them before, it is almost impossible to preserve equilibrium; and the arms have constant employment to keep

one from upsetting. M. Regnard, who travelled in Lapland towards the end of the seventeenth century, says:—

“A Lapp sledge is called a *poolk*, and is elevated in front to keep out the snow. The prow consists of one plank, and the body is composed of several pieces sewed together with strong reindeer-sinews, and without a single nail. This is joined to another piece about four fingers broad, which goes beyond the rest of the structure, and is exactly like the keel of a ship. It is on this that the sledge runs, and from its narrowness constantly rolls from side to side. The traveller sits inside as in a coffin, with the lower part of his body covered, and being firmly tied there, with only his hands free in order to hold the rein. He must balance himself very carefully lest he should be killed, as the sledge descends the steepest hills with horrible swiftness.”

Though the traveller makes some mistake with regard to being tied up in the sledge, he is quite correct in the latter part of the quotation, as I soon found before I had proceeded many miles.

With the exception of one of the party, we were all greenhorns, and were therefore not permitted to drive alone, but were put in “leading-strings.” Our reindeer was tied to the *poolks* in front, while another animal tied behind us acted as a kind of stop, and served also to assist in keeping a fair balance. It was, therefore, not exactly with *éclat* that our cavalcade of fifteen deer left Bosekop, setting off at a hard gallop towards the wilds we were to traverse. Even with our balancing reindeer, it was desperately difficult to keep from capsizing; and as, from the number of trees and stones in the way at the beginning, it was dangerous to put out the arm, the *poolk* was as often uppermost as undermost. I, for my part, caught myself inwardly

cursing my folly in having suffered myself to be inveigled into taking part in such a journey; and I began to heartily wish myself back in my old quarters at Bosekop. Some consolation, however, there was in the fact that I would be sure to find a surgeon only 150 miles further on, which was a guarantee that mortification of any possible wounds would *not* have had time to set in before obtaining medical aid.

After having driven pretty evenly for about seven miles, we came to the limits of civilisation in the shape of the last hut between Bosekop and Karasjok. Here several of us received the information from our *wapoos* that henceforth we were to drive alone; and before we were able to protest, the single rein was cast round and round our hand, and we were left to our fate. Being entirely ignorant what to do, I trusted wholly to Providence and my deer, and without daring to tighten the rein, allowed the animal to take its own way, which it did very properly and calmly.

The *forstmester* was not so fortunate. He had received a fast and very hot-headed brute, which, immediately on discovering that it had an extra load to drag, commenced to gallop round and round in a small circle, very soon upsetting the *poolk*, and leaving its occupant ignominiously sprawling on the snow. After a good deal of struggling and hard work he regained his seat; and as the rest of us had by this time fairly started off, the deer set out to rejoin his fellows, and was soon trotting quietly enough in the rear of us all, only, however, to repeat its cantrips several times later on.

With the exception of this little *contretemps*, the start was successfully accomplished, and now we had time to examine the country.

Hitherto, we had driven through a beautifully wooded valley, evidently a former riparian lake, as the shore-marks on the neighbouring heights seemed to indicate. Gradually, however, trees became fewer and fewer, and soon in front of us and on both sides we saw nothing but a wild waste of snow, stretching many miles away to the south-east, in which direction our course lay. Here the glare of the sun on the snow rendered it necessary for us to put on our coloured spectacles. Strangely enough, though the heat of the sun seemed to be considerable, it did not in the slightest degree affect the snow.

Up to this time the weather had been delightful, and even warm—at least so it seemed to us; while our faces were tanned by the sun much more than would have been the case in a southern latitude during the same space of time. But now, snow-clouds began to gather on the western horizon, and as we accidentally came upon a patch of ground where reindeer-moss (the only food of these animals in winter) abounded, the *wapooses* thought it best to rest and feed a little before the threatening storm commenced. The deer were then cast loose and allowed to follow their inclinations. One would think it rather a risky proceeding to set half-tamed animals at liberty in the midst of such a large tract of ground as that we now were on; but it is very seldom that any attempt to escape; for their instinct would seem to tell them, that without man to assist and protect them, they would speedily fall a prey to the numerous wolves which infest Finmarken. When the time came to resume our journey, I felt curious to see how our Lapps would recapture the deer, which had now strayed to a considerable distance. The three *wapooses* walked in a most non-

chalant manner slowly forward at an angle to where the deer were quietly browsing, and then gradually working their way round so as to get behind them, they gently take hold of any rein trailing on the ground, and having caught one, the capture of the rest is easily accomplished. Each *wapoos* had under his or her charge five deer; and except on these five animals they did not bestow a thought, leaving the others to each capture his own individual five as best he could. Even the old *wapoos*, Nilas by name, did not offer to assist his better half, nor did she seem to expect such help. The animals having been speedily got in order, the next thing was to harness them, which is done in this fashion: The deer has a skin-collar round its shoulders, to which is fastened a long strap, also of untanned skin, which going between the legs of the animal, is tied to a ring at the prow of the *poolk*. The single rein with which we drive is made fast to the left side of the head, and is held in the right hand. In steering, you must, if you wish to turn to the right, cast the rein over to the right shoulder of the animal, and pull or rather tug a little. If you wish to go faster, you can strike with the rein on the animal's sides and back; though if you have a wild brute this is rather dangerous, as it on being struck becomes utterly unmanageable, and therefore it is generally quite sufficient to raise the left hand as if for a blow, which will cause the deer to rush off smartly enough.

The moment the foremost deer starts all the others follow in a long line, winding in and out according as the leader's tracks go. All deer cannot be induced to lead the way; in fact very many are trained to follow only, as they then become much more easily managed as bag-

gage-deer. Over all Finmarken, and in fact all Lapland, one never sees two deer harnessed together or with proper gear. In this respect the Samoyedes are far more practical, and not only do they bring the animal to the same state of subjection as the horse with us, but they use entire bucks for domestic purposes,—an unheard-of thing in Lapland, where even does are considered as too spirited to be safely used.

But to come back from this digression to our journey. To avoid accidents it had been arranged that the baggage-drivers should keep the rear, and on no account pass those who, though driving alone, were entirely inexperienced, and who therefore, in case of bad weather, ran a certain amount of risk of losing themselves. By this time a raging snowstorm had commenced, and the cold was severe, the thermometer being only 5° or 6° above zero. The flakes of snow cut our faces as if they had been needles. Worst of all, our cheeks took on a coating of ice and perfectly blinded most of us, the hollows of our eyes being entirely filled with frozen snow. At first I attempted to pick this away, but soon found that that was impossible, as it would not come away without the skin or flesh coming to. In spite of all my endeavours to keep ahead, every one of the baggage-deer and *wapooses* had now passed me, and I at last found myself in the midst of a wild snowstorm, with daylight almost gone, alone and semi-blind in the centre of a wide desert. All sorts of disagreeable visions rose up before me: tales of the many who had disappeared for ever on the fjeld; of others whose glistening bones were discovered to view by returning spring; rumours of the large hordes of wolves at present in the neigh-

bourhood ; and lastly, fear of frost-bite, all combined to make me feel very uncomfortable. There was, however, "balm in Gilead," and noticing how contentedly my reindeer jogged along, following a track invisible to me, I felt somewhat reassured. Still, during the half-hour which followed, I often almost despaired of coming up with the others again. At last, however, the welcome sound of a dog's bark fell on my ear, my deer quickened its steps, and in a short time I was in the midst of my friends at the first fjeld-station, named Jotka Javre. My non-arrival had caused them some anxiety ; for, as I had conjectured, my absence, owing to the darkness and snow, had not been noticed until they all arrived at the station, and they consequently could not know how far behind I might be. Had we not been so near the *fjeld-stué* when the storm came on, the consequences to me might have been disastrous. Naturally, after such a long day's work, we were very hungry, and viewed with satisfaction the preparations made for our refreshment. Never do I remember having partaken of food which I relished so well as in that humble *stué*. And then, what more agreeable drink than hot steaming cognac-toddy to serve as a nightcap to the weary traveller before retiring to rest ? Owing to the cold the cognac seemed quite weak ; and enormous quantities were consumed that evening, and continued to be consumed every evening during the trip.

The station we now found ourselves in was a very agreeable and cosy little place. Everything was clean and nice ; our beds were simply shelves covered with dry birch-sprays, upon which were laid a reindeer-skin or two. This formed a comfortable, though very hard

couch, which was most assuredly very welcome after a day's exertions in a *poolk*, where the bones suffer so much from the continual jolting. Well, to these birch couches we retired after our snug supper, well tired-out by our drive, but not forgetting to first take a look at the weather outside, so as to have some idea of our next day's probable trials. Though the snow was not now falling so thickly, it was still with gloomy forebodings that we laid ourselves down, and were soon in the arms of "Nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep." While the others are sleeping, it may be interesting to tell a little of the *fjeld-stué* and its inhabitants.

Situated between two somewhat extensive lakes, separated only by a very narrow strip of ground, this station is exactly thirty miles from the nearest house on one side, and fifty-six to sixty miles on the other, the country between being untraversed by regular roads, so that the distance is much more formidable than the mileage would seem to indicate. Jotka Javre, in common with the other *fjeld-stués*, was erected by Government some years ago, and the keeper is salaried by the State. As it is very difficult to get the soil to yield anything so far north, the keepers of such places have much difficulty in making both ends meet, and they have often to endure great privations ; in fact, should ptarmigan any season fail to visit the neighbourhood, their existence becomes very precarious indeed. This year only six of these birds had been snared there, and the family had suffered in consequence.

The lakes on either side of the station are full of pike, causing, of course, a scarcity of other fish ; but as the people never eat pike (why, or for what reason, I could not make out), their fishery is of little value. The salary of the keeper was 320

kroners, or about £18 sterling; and this, added to the payments from strangers or visitors on stray occasions, made up the *ffjeld-stué* keeper's annual receipts, out of which he had to provide for a family of a wife and six small children. With tears in his eyes he begged for a rise of salary; and the *amtmand* promising to recommend an increase to Government, made the poor fellow very happy. I had a little conversation with the man, and heard from him, with what truth I know not, that the climate is annually becoming more severe. He showed me patches of ground on which he alleged he formerly had grown barley with considerable success; but even potatoes would hardly grow on it now. From other sources I later on heard the same opinion expressed; and, in fact, from my own observations, I have almost come to the same conclusion.

At Jotka Javre there was no reindeer-moss, and it was therefore necessary, in order properly to prepare the deer for the long distance on the morrow, to take them some way off where moss was plentiful; but as it was impossible, owing to the number of wolves in the district, to leave the animals unguarded all night, the *waposes* went out and slept on the snow-covered ground beside them. That the wolves were in great force was evident from the fact that a large pack had remained outside the house for a long time the evening before our arrival. They never venture so near except when in great numbers, and when half mad with hunger. Of course the Lapps had to get a good strengthener in the shape of *jugasta*, or brandy, before leaving, and another to recruit their benumbed bodies on returning. With regard to the brandy they consume the quantity

is absolutely incredible. A quart daily is the common amount, and even this large *quantum* is often exceeded under trying circumstances. However, if we take into account the severe cold and the consequent weakness of the spirits, this is by no means so astonishing as it would seem at first sight.

We were awakened in the morning by our *waposes* presenting themselves for their usual morning dram, at the same time hinting that an early start would be agreeable. Accordingly, after swallowing an extempore and hasty breakfast, and donning our garments of martyrdom, we set out in the best of spirits. Contrary to the most sanguine expectations, the weather was delightful. The sun, just above the horizon, already at that early hour gladdened us by his warmth; while the stillness of the clear and pure air was exceedingly pleasant. Just as we were about to step into our *poolks*, one of our party gave vent to an exclamation, and pointed to the snow-clad lake before us. Yes, there far-off was a dark moving line which, soon coming nearer, proved to be, as of course anticipated, another *raydn*, or train of *poolks*. We were all impatient to find out whether this *raydn* came from Kautokino or Karasjok, and were much disappointed to hear that it had started from the former place. Had it come from Karasjok we would have had a road or track (*spoor*) to follow the whole way, which would greatly have lightened our labour. Even as it was, we had cause to be grateful to the Lapp in charge of the *cortège* for setting out so soon, as by following his *spoor* which lay in our direction for more than seven miles, we would be saved much time and trouble.

The Kautokino Lapp differs from him of Karasjok considerably. For

instance, the former drives his reindeer with the help of a long stick, which is never done by one from Karasjok; the latter also never takes a dog with him when on business excursions, while the former is never without one.

But to return to ourselves. After allowing the other *raydn* to pass, we also started. Our deer having had a good night's rest and plenty of food, kept up a good pace, and as the state of the snow was just all that could be desired, we were sure of a quick and pleasant day's journey. Our way lay through a long and continuous chain of lakes, and was decidedly monotonous; not a tree, not a bush, not a living thing in sight to relieve the dreariness and dulness of that endless waste. Far, far away in the distance, rose a low ridge of hills, stretching completely across the horizon; this range formed the watershed of the district, and we had, consequently, until reaching it, almost entirely uphill work, but had, of course, the satisfaction of knowing that we should go quickly enough downhill after we had once attained the summit. Still, before coming to the real ascent, we had many miles of lake to traverse. The road across these large waters is marked out by branches of birch placed on the ice at regular intervals. The labour of setting up these way-marks every winter falls on the occupants of the *ffjeld-stué*, and is by no means without its risks. For example, as the largest lake is seven or eight miles long and about the same breadth, it is no small matter to be in the middle of this large tract in a snow-storm or a fog.

As before mentioned, the deer I had was a staid and sensible animal, but withal too slow for my taste; and so, noticing that I was gradually falling behind as usual, I insisted on a change at the next stoppage.

My *wapoos* did not like this, but he put on an innocent look and agreed to my wishes. He selected from out of his group of five deer the most quiet-looking and solemn, and harnessing it delivered the reins to me. Hardly had I seated myself before the beast began dancing about, now on his fore-legs, now on his hind-legs, sometimes even rolling over and over in the snow. I took in the situation. In order to "pay me off" for occasioning him some trouble in changing my deer, the *wapoos* had given me a wild, or at least only a partly trained animal. However, I would not be beaten, and accordingly kept my seat, allowing the brute to race round and round with me in its wake. I held on as if "for dear life." At last an unexpected thing happened to me. My deer, suddenly leaving off galloping in a circle, made a dash for the centre of our cavalcade, jumping over the packing *poolks*, and finally over the unfortunate *amtmand*, who, with arms and legs outstretched, gasped for breath on coming from under the panting deer. After this escape it was useless to attempt managing it alone; and so, in spite of my protestations, I was tied fast to the other *poolks* and was in this ignominious fashion dragged several miles, decidedly thankful when I was again allowed to get back my old steady-going jog-trot beast.

After six hours we came to the ruins of what had formerly been a *ffjeld-stué*, having accomplished half our day's distance, though by far the tougher part was that before us. This *ffjeld-stué* Malasjok, was supposed to be uninhabited, but we found a Lapp there who had passed the whole winter snaring ptarmigan, of which he had about 120. How any mortal could exist in such a place without a single companion, not even a dog, throughout the long

and dark winter months, is extraordinary. Without any intellectual pursuit to occupy him indoors, and subsisting entirely on ptarmigan, without even a morsel of bread the whole time, his life must have been frightful; but so little was the man removed from the brute beast, that he showed not the slightest sign of pleasure at seeing a human face again.

Quickly getting ready a cold lunch and swallowing a cup of hot coffee, we were soon equal to attempting the remaining thirty miles before us. Strangely enough there was a stream of running water close to the hut, and we were informed that it never froze, even in the coldest weather, though the lake from which it flows is frozen seven months of the year. As there was no rapid fall, this circumstance was inexplicable to us, the more so as the water was not perceptibly warmer than the snow and ice around it.

The man who had lived there during the winter begged to be allowed to tie his *poolk* to one of our spare deer (he having none), while he himself accompanied us on snow-shoes; and as he seemed to be very anxious to leave Malasjok, we consented, stipulating, however, for a payment of twelve ptarmigan. Being uncommonly thick-headed even for a Lapp, he took this proposal seriously, and was evidently very much annoyed at what he considered our stinginess. Still there was nothing for him but to agree to this bargain, which he did with a very bad grace.

Though still early in the day the cold was very severe, and it was with some misgiving that I occasionally touched my nose and chin to find out if these were yet intact, or if, as sometimes happens, they had, unknown to me, dropped

off by the way. However, as yet no such calamity occurred. With the sun shining in cloudless splendour behind us, we now faced the hills, and after several hours of very rough work reached the summit. It was now afternoon, and the sun cast a glorious red glow over the whole fjeld, causing it to appear as if dyed with blood.

One disagreeable and curious result of the clear weather and strong sunshine was the absolute disappearance, if I may call it, of perspective. Looking before you, you would perhaps see what seemed to be a very high hill looming a great distance in front of you, which, however, in a very short time, turned out to be a small hillock a few yards away. It was on this line of march that we encountered our first sharp descent, which I shall here describe. We had been going slowly uphill, when suddenly I noticed the leading deer and *poolk* disappear as if into a hole, the same occurred to all the others before me, and, on my turn coming, I held fast to my place expecting a pit or something of that sort. However, it was only a momentary movement; for before I could realise the situation, I found myself flying downhill, at the heels of my deer, at a tremendous rate; and not being accustomed to such rapid motion, I soon flew out of the *poolk*, and was dragged on my face down the remainder of the declivity, with the *poolk* sometimes lying on me, and sometimes entangled about the deer's legs, and without doubt both *poolk* and deer entirely out of my control. On reaching the foot of the hill I found the others waiting for me, and ascertained that I was not the only one who had preferred to change his mode of travelling in order to relieve the back a little. The others praised me for having

kept a hold of my brute, and for not slipping the rein. I cannot, however, say that this praise was exactly deserved, as it certainly was not my fault that the knot by which I had fastened the rein to my hand refused to undo itself.

After several such episodes (for we were now, as before mentioned, on the downhill track) we, at eight o'clock, arrived at our resting-place, having travelled about sixty miles that day, the way being chiefly uphill. Including stoppages and dinner-time, this distance took us about thirteen hours, which must be considered pretty fair, if we take into consideration the travelling already accomplished by the animals.

The country during the last mile or two had entirely changed its aspect, and we were now in the midst of a well-wooded tract, which was a welcome change after the desert we had just passed through. Shortly before arriving at the station I felt a curious numb sensation on my chin, and on mentioning this, it was found, after examination, to be frost-bitten. Though but slight it was very disagreeable, itching fearfully the whole night. I am informed—and I up till now experience the truth of the statement—that the effects will continue for many years, especially showing themselves during every extreme of heat or cold. Half an hour after our arrival, the Lapp who had set out from Malasjok on snow-shoes along with us, arrived, seemingly not at all fatigued by his thirty-mile walk.

Ravna-stuen, the station, was kept by a poor widow, with a large young family, and only 200 *kroners*, about £11, a-year of salary. She did not possess that virtue of virtues—cleanliness; in fact, the dirt and squalor of her family and her house were such that we could not bring ourselves to allow her to cook

anything for us: and so we contented ourselves with our tinned foods and a steaming glass of the "cratur." The warmth within effectually kept away the cold without, though that was not insignificant, for that evening there was 30½° Reaumur of frost, equal to from 34° to 36° below the zero of Fahrenheit; but a few degrees more and the mercury in the glass would have been frozen.

As a number of Lapps were at the time staying at Ravna, we took the opportunity of inspecting the apartment where they all "herded" together. In a large but rather low room, with walls and roof of rough-hewn planks, and with beams stretching from wall to wall in every direction, were assembled at least twenty-five persons of all ages and both sexes. Most of them had taken off their skin blouses, and hung them on the rafters near a huge wood-fire fit to roast an ox at. The half-stewed garments and the steam from the dirty persons of those in front of the fire, caused a most unsavoury odour, which tempted us to make our stay as short as possible. All round the apartment, except near the door, were ranged the sleeping-shelves, the major part of which were already occupied,—men, women, and children, all indiscriminately mingled together, not distinguishable to the unpractised eye the one from the other, and appearing like nothing else than mere animated bundles of fur. From the group congregated round the fire no cheerful laugh, no buzz of conversation, no noisy merriment, emanated—all were silent and still; perhaps they did not wish to disturb the sleepers; but judging from their solemn and lugubrious countenances, their gloominess seemed but too natural, and very far from assumed or constrained. Well, in the joyless and

monotonous life those poor people lead, it is not surprising that all innate merriment about them is soon stifled.

The close and disagreeable atmosphere soon drove us from the room, but it took some time to dispel the unconquerable feeling of melancholy which the visit had engendered.

On our reindeer-skin couches, and covered with rugs and furs, it was not long before we were utterly oblivious of all around us, though the dead silence outside was occasionally broken by the stamp or bleat of the deer, or the shrill cry of their watchers, which, under ordinary circumstances, could not fail to have aroused us. Thus passed gradually our second night on the fjeld.

Refreshed by our healthful sleep, we walked out into the beautiful morning. Heedless of the cold, we watched the sparkling ice-crystals as they floated like gossamer on the rarefied air, slowly covering us with a thin layer like sparkling brilliants. In spite, however, of the poetry of our surroundings, the lower nature, strong in all of us, began to assert itself, and the welcome smell of coffee led us into the hut, where it and hot rolls formed, to our hungry palates, an unsurpassable breakfast.

We had now only about thirty miles between us and the fjeld town we were to visit, and as the road lay chiefly downhill, we anticipated covering the distance in about four hours. There is little to relate of this day's journey. The weather was cold but delightful. The *före* (that is, the state of the way) was all that could be desired. A few miles from the station we passed our friend the Lapp from Malasjok, who, in company with the widow from Ravna, continued his journey to Karasjok on snow-shoes.

The country about us was thickly covered with trees, and seemed likely to afford good pasturage in summer. The *forstmester*, however, was much alarmed to observe that a great number of the best trees were dead or in a state of decay. The reason probably was, as he stated, the excessive heat of the previous summer, accompanied by a long-continued drought; on the other hand, the Lapps maintained that this general destruction of timber arose from the very low temperature of the winter, which here, as over the rest of Europe, was unusually severe in 1878-79. But the *forstmester* held that the effects of this year's cold could not already be visible, and therefore adhered to his former opinion. As the district over which he presides contains about 200 square miles of forest, besides many square miles of scattered woods, it can easily be imagined that the damage done is not inconsiderable.

But to continue. We now came to the worst part of the whole route—viz., the last few miles to Karasjok. The road ran through a thick wood and had evidently been pretty much used lately, for it was furrowed up into deep holes here and there, and for the whole way there was at least a *poolk* track visible. We were, of course, going downhill, and downhill we did go at a terrific pace; "full gallop" does not adequately express the speed! The deer literally flew, and it was no easy job to keep inside the *poolk*, it being dangerous to use the arms as balancers owing to the number of tree-stumps lying in the path. We were now nearing the long and very steep descent called the "Karasjok bakken," which was the climax of difficulty on the whole route. After reaching the foot of any declivity more than usually abrupt, I asked my friend, "Was that the

Karasjok hill?" and always got the answer, "No;" and the next question of course was an anxious inquiry, "Is the Karasjok hill worse than the one we have just come down?" When I was told that the dreaded place was come at last; when I observed the *amt-mand* and his son leave their *poolks* and prepare to walk down; and when, lastly, the *vapooses* made extraordinary precautions with the harness and accoutrements of their beasts,—I felt a somewhat sinking sensation at my heart. I must admit that I had a sort of faint hope that the *vapoos* would advise me also to get out and walk, which, with seeming reluctance, and with many protestations, I would have done with secret joy. But no. They had eventually overlooked me entirely, or, as I fondly flattered myself, thought me already so good at reindeer-driving as to be quite capable of managing the descent.

Holloa! The *cortège* already now begins to move; the foremost deer disappears over the brow of the hill, quickly followed by all the rest, their speed enhanced by seeing the figures of those who had got out standing at the side of the road. My turn comes, and with tremendous velocity we sweep down the hill. Here is no talk of trying to regulate the speed. No. Speaking vulgarly, you must simply "go for it." The worst bit comes. The road bends at a sharp angle. The occupant of the *poolk* before me is thrown out, and a like fate seems to threaten me. I hold on to the *poolk* with grim determination, and am hurled right forward, *poolk* and all, as the deer turns the corner; then, for an instant, the *poolk* stops, only immediately to continue its mad race downhill at the heels of the deer. Thus was passed the, in Finmarken, celebrated "Karasjok bakken." Though keeping up a

hard pace, all danger is now past, as the declivity leads straight down to the river's bed; and soon, without accident, we are drawn up on the frozen river a mile from Karasjok, which place, all beflagged and adorned in honour of the *amt-mand's* visit, we see directly in front of us. When our less adventurous companions come up to us, the word to start is given, and in a short time we find ourselves in the midst of a Lapp crowd, "the cynosure of twice a hundred eyes," in front of the principal house in the place—viz., that of the resident trader. That worthy is of course there to bid us welcome, which he does with an evident sincerity which promises well for our intercourse with him during our sojourn in Karasjok. Assembled also are the *foged* of the district, the *lensmand* (doctor), *retstolk* or official interpreter, and the sexton, who, with their families and that of the clergyman, form the civilised portion of Karasjok society.

Hastening to disencumber ourselves of our heavy garments, we are soon inside the comfortable house, and have our bedrooms assigned to us. It can be easily imagined that one of the first things we did was to have a right good wash, after which only we felt ourselves fit to sit at a civilised board, and discuss a civilised dinner.

Karasjok, on the river Kara, is a collection of wooden huts, in the midst of which a small church raises its by no means lofty spire. The population is about 400 or 500, and consists almost exclusively of Lapps, the exceptions being the persons before mentioned. At this time of the year the usual half-yearly court is held (the other taking place about midsummer), and the criminal cases that have arisen in the interval are disposed of. Thus it was we found collect-

ed in the hamlet many (comparatively speaking) civilised beings. Here was the district doctor, whose *clientèle* hardly equals the number of square miles under his jurisdiction! The *foged* of Tana (the office of *foged* resembles closely that of a *sous-préfet*), and his satellite the interpreter, also for the moment gladdened the place by their presence. Both officials, doctor and lawyer, appear to thrive among the populace. The former has a very profitable practice, selling, as he does, extremely large quantities of "*pediculæ* destroyer," the fabrication of which can cost him but little. *Pediculæ* is a common everyday thing with the good Lapps, the majority of whom quietly permit its molestations without hindrance. The *foged* administers justice to the community, and acts on the principle that it must be done in small quantities. The only recognised crime here is reindeer-stealing; almost every other departure from the usual moral code—excepting, of course, murder—is quietly overlooked. Let a pair of Lapps half demolish one another: why, the law maintains, and correctly too, that they probably only both get a very salutary thrashing, and consequently no further action is necessary. Let words be uttered which in *this* country would bring the perpetrator within the grasp of the libel laws, *there* they are passed over without notice; for, knowing that they are all equally and alike rascals, what does it signify, if, for once, this knowledge is put into words and proclaimed abroad? But let an unfortunate Lapp for one moment forget the difference between *meum* and *tuum* as regards reindeer, and the crime is visited upon him with the utmost rigour of the law.

One, however, can hardly wonder at the enormous amount of deer-

stealing that goes on, considering that the brutes are in a more than semi-wild state, and have often but slight marks to distinguish them by. In fact the reiving of deer can be but looked upon in the same light as smuggling was regarded in the old days, and as poaching now is. The ingenuity expended in the abduction of a deer is often worthy of a better cause, and sometimes borders on the incredible. The quantity of reindeer owned in Karasjok amounts to about 20,000; and in Kautokino about 30,000 is the figure given. Not many years ago the number was nearly double. One old apoplectic toper in Karasjok owned at least 5000 deer, which represents a capital of over £2000 sterling; yet there seemed to be but little attention paid to him—"toadyism" having probably not yet found its way into these regions.

It seemed at first strange to us that several of the natives could speak a little English, but I found out that these had been in London in 1870. These English-speakers were for ever bothering me to give them something or other; the art of begging evidently having been taught them all too well in the London "Zoo" where they had been exhibited.

The present church in Karasjok was erected in 1807; but even before 1750 a church had existed in the place. It is seated for about 200 persons, and is even pretty inside. The best seats are railed off from the body of the church, and are reserved for the Norsk portion of the congregation, while the poor Lapps must worship at a respectful distance.

On the second day of our stay in Karasjok I started, in company with my *wapoos*, to visit a reindeer *by* or town, situated about five or six miles from Karasjok. The journey had to be accomplished on

snow-shoes. The *by* lay up on the brow of a hill rising steeply from the river, and was made up of about 600 to 700 reindeer. The place was somewhat difficult of access owing to the depth of the snow; but after an hour's hard work we found ourselves suddenly in the midst of the deer, who lay in holes in the snow, with nothing but the tips of their antlers visible. The deer that had drawn me from Bosekop lay there among the rest, apparently not a whit the worse for our long trip. There were also several entire deer, that seemed to look twice as majestic as the others; and the *wapoos* cautioned me against disturbing or irritating these, for were a fit of rage to come over them they would not hesitate an instant to attack us. Altogether the *by* was a curious and interesting sight, from which I found it difficult to tear myself away.

Of all the bodily exercises I know of, there is none in my opinion that can come up to snow-shoeing, as it is done in Norway. Skating is nothing compared to this sport. What can equal the splendid sensation of flying across the deep snow at the rate of many miles an hour, without hardly moving a muscle? And then, going downhill, staff in hand, no exertion necessary, other than to keep the balance, while gliding softly but swiftly onward. Unlike the Canadian snow-shoes, these *ski* (pronounced *shēē*) of the Norwegians are often fully twelve feet long, curving upwards at the prow, and are not broader than three to four inches. Throughout their whole length they are provided with a groove for the purpose of keeping them from slipping when going at an angle downhill. Although by no means

slow when used across level ground, it is yet downhill that they are most effective, for their long length and their polished under-surface on the frozen snow cause a speed more like flying than any other motion I know of. The inhabitants of Telemarken, in the south of Norway, are the most efficient *ski* runners; and at the annual competitions at Christiania, generally bear off the prizes. At the competition there in 1879, one of these men leaped, according to a local newspaper, a distance of thirty Norwegian *alen*, or fully sixty feet! Into this country it will not be possible to introduce them, as of course there would be little or no opportunity for using them—the snow never lying long enough, or becoming sufficiently deep.*

Karasjok, among other things, also contains a prison, which when I visited it was tenanted by two poor deer-stealers, whose extradition had been demanded by the Swedish authorities. Though nominally prisoners, they seemed to do pretty much as they liked, as they left the prison whenever they had occasion to do so. On my inquiring how this state of affairs was permitted, I was informed that these men could not possibly get away from the place even if they tried, which was unlikely; as, being Swedish Lapps, and without friends to procure reindeer and *poolk* for them, they would have been entirely helpless had they even succeeded in getting out into the waste. I further learned that these two gentlemen were to be our travelling companions on the following day, accompanied by their keepers, who were to deliver them to the authorities further down the river.

It was with great regret that I left Karasjok, as I had met with

* Since the above was written I have worn my pair several times in Britain, and found them to do very well, although the snow was only about two or three inches deep.

much kindness from its inhabitants. Any information I had desired had always been readily accorded me; and on leaving the house of good Mr Fandrem, the trader, he refused all remuneration for my board and lodging. Mr Fandrem was a very interesting old man, and had been presented by the king with a gold medal "pour le mérite civile." His time is divided between his establishment at Karasjok and his summer residence at Komag Fjord, a minor inlet in the great Alten Fjord. At the latter place Mr Chambers, of the well-known journal of that name, had once spent some time with him, and he still looked back to that time with pleasure.

From him I got much information about the social and moral condition of the people, who, it seems, must be placed very low indeed in the human scale. They have no recognised headman or chief; and their priests have also but little influence over them. This, however, is not at all strange, for these priests are of a different race, and all feel more or less the habitual Norwegian contempt for the Lapps. The clergy in these regions always live in hope that their ministrations may speedily be rewarded by a living in the south of Norway. They consequently regard their stay in Finmarken merely as a *temporary* hardship, but in reality they exist in thought and sympathy far away from the poor Lapps. Of course there are exceptions, but these are few and far between. As a rule, the clergy are represented in Finmarken by young inexperienced men, who—perhaps from pecuniary considerations, perhaps with a view to serving their apprenticeship in their profession among a people whose powers of criticism are of the lowest,—consent to be, what they consider, buried alive, until the end they have in view be ac-

complished. Under these circumstances the relations between priest and people are very slender and precarious; and between want of trust and faith on one side, caused by want of sympathy on the other, the Gospel is preached to unwilling ears; and thus, except in name and outwardly, the natives are as far from Christianity as ever.

The moral condition of the Lapps is, as before stated, very low. Conjugal faithfulness is known, but left unpractised; and intercourse between the sexes is on the freest footing. This is, of course, prejudicial to the long continuance of the Lapp race, which, already now dwindling, will, it is feared, before many years have rolled on, be a thing of the past. Another reason favouring the supposition that the Lapps are doomed to early extinction—the usual fate of nomads, or those who try to stem the great tide of civilisation—is, that the Quæns, or natives of Russian Finland, are now already supplanting them everywhere. The Quæns, who mainly compose the population of the towns on the east and north coasts of Norway, are hard-working and more intelligent, and also much better adapted for the higher branches of manual labour than their Lapp neighbours, who never will, and never can, be anything else than nomads. By no means unconnected with the decline of the race, is the failure, or rather difficulty, of obtaining sufficient reindeer-moss during the winter (Lapp and reindeer are so identified that it is impossible to separate the two). Formerly the deer were marched into Russian territory, and there suffered to feed at will; but the Russian nomads, thinking their rights violated, obtained a law forbidding the crossing of the frontier, under pain of destruction of the herds transgressing. And one of the

first results of this was, that a sort of reign of terror was established on the frontier, with mutual recrimination and slaughtering of herds. One poor Norsk Lapp had strayed inside the frontier a few hundred yards, and was then surprised and forced to witness the slaughter of 500 deer—his all; and he was thus reduced by one fell stroke from comparative affluence to poverty. Many such instances occur; and though it may be apparently reasonable and even lawful to take such stringent measures, yet, taking into account the extreme length and unguardedness of the frontier, and the consequent temptation to transgress which must come to a man whose moral sense, on account of his training, is not of the highest, and who knows that one thin imaginary line is all that divides him and his hungry herds from the

richest pastures,—taking all this into account, one cannot help sympathising with the Norwegians, and feeling that the Russian lawgivers might have made some regulation more suitable to the race and country for which it was intended.

Thus it is but too certain that the Lapps are doomed. Without religion, without art, without a single higher or noble attribute, living merely for the day, and not looking beyond it, how can they long continue to block the way for more able workers in this earthly beehive? Further to the north they cannot get, and, therefore, silently and slowly they will disappear, and vanish for ever from among the peoples of the earth, leaving no mark behind them, and no sign to show that they have been.

II.

On a lovely morning, the 22d of March, we started in excellent spirits and with light hearts on our expedition down the river to Vadsoe, or rather to the last stopping-place before leaving the river, and going overland to Vadsoe.

Our cavalcade was comprised of twenty-two reindeer, each drawing his man; and twenty more deer had left early in the morning with our luggage. The twenty-two *poolks* made a goodly show; and it was thus with great *éclat* that we set forth, each and all madly striving to be first. Our deer were not the same as those that had conveyed us from Bosekop; and those we now had had not been used for many months, so that they were as "fresh as paint." We all rushed madly down the river, whose broad bosom formed a splendid road for us. Being as yet by no

means proficient at deer-driving, I urged my beast forward far too strongly at the outset, with the natural result of rendering it slow and spiritless long before any of the others showed even the slightest symptom of fatigue.

I forgot to mention that the *beau élite* of Karasjok had accompanied us one Norsk mile (seven English) on our way down-stream, and before leaving us we had, of course, a stirrup-cup from them. The provider of this (the deputy *lensmand*, and a Lapp) produced a bottle, marked "fine old port," with an almost antediluvian date, and proceeded forthwith to distribute the nectar unsparingly among us travellers. Never shall I forget that awful mixture. Thinking to escape a second supply, I urged him to fill the *glass*—there was only one—up to the brim every

time,—but no! He was not going to act as a common peasant, but would do what Norwegian etiquette demands—viz., only fill it half full; so there was nothing left but to swallow the medicinal decoction with as good a grace as possible, and to pray for no evil results. To have refused to take the wine would have been deemed as great an affront to the Lapp as to refuse bread and salt from a Russian, or betel from a Burmese.

After the departure of the good Karasjokians, we made for *terra firma*, and pushed rapidly on, every one exhilarated by the glorious sunshine and the magnificent scenery around. At Karasjok itself, and for a considerable distance down the river, the *terrain* rises in terraces, very regularly and singularly formed, rather abruptly from the water's edge, and the whole formation seems indubitably to indicate that the surface-level of the river had, on two or three occasions, suddenly been lowered. Not being a geologist, I was unable to determine the nature or period of these revolutions; but I feel convinced that a scientific man would find a boundless field for his researches in that district in the north of Norway lying between Alten Fjord and the Tana river inclusive.

The clean-cut terraces were covered with trees, chiefly Coniferæ. These had now taken the place of the birch which almost entirely predominates on the other side of Karasjok; and though as yet leafless and melancholy-looking, the pines produced a highly picturesque effect, with their sprays and branches crested with pure white snow—such white snow as is never seen elsewhere than in the arctic regions. But, holloa! What's the matter? The foremost Lapp suddenly stops, jumps up and puts his face close to the ground, examining something

very carefully. He calls the others towards him, and a short conversation ensues, the result of which is given us by the *firstmester*, who had also joined in the "confab." It seemed that the marks just discovered proved that not ten minutes before our arrival a deer had passed by hotly pursued by a wolf. That the chase was in its last stages was evident from the fact that the deer's strides were so short that the wolf had made use of them to follow in the same footsteps; it was consequently calculated that by following the track for half an hour or so we would be sure to come up to the scene of slaughter. Some eager souls still hoped to be able to save the poor deer, and were for starting at once; but the majority decided that, as we had a pretty long road to travel before reaching our night-quarters, it would be necessary to leave it to its fate, which was accordingly done.

As formerly mentioned, the wolves are the great scourge of Finmarken, and great depredations are annually committed by them, so much so that a premium of 20 *kroners* (or £1, 2s. 3d.) is set on their head.

Their usual method of procuring, or rather killing, deer, is to make a rush into the midst of a *by*, and to select an individual from out of the crowd in the rush or stampede that follows. This poor animal, once singled out, rarely if ever escapes, as the relentless pursuer never swerves, be he left ever so far behind at the outset; and at last, tired and hungry, the poor creature sinks panting on the snow, which very shortly after is dyed by its life's blood. Sometimes a wolf, out of mere wantonness, will destroy half a herd without eating a single one. This, however, I suppose, is common to all animals of the canine race,—as witness the amount of sheep-worrying in our

own country. The premium of 20 *kroners* is, in the opinion of the people, hardly commensurate to the risk and trouble of killing such an animal. The prevailing wish is that the premiums paid for the killing of other beasts and birds of prey should be lowered, and that for wolves at least doubled, in which case it would pay to import weapons, &c., to engage in the common cause against *lupus*, when, it is confidently expected, its depredations would soon be reduced to a bearable figure.

Well, leaving the spot where a tragedy *en miniature* was being enacted, we continued on our way; and after making a short stop for the purpose of feeding the deer and of taking a snack ourselves, we started again for the river, passing now and again a few huts which were wretched in the extreme. The inhabitants of these mud-pies looked at us in an apathetic sort of way as we passed, and even the dogs barked at us in a solemn, half-hearted sort of style, sometimes not even taking the least notice of our presence.

The river was reached after a rather stiff hill, and the impetus given us in the descent took us a good bit out on its surface; and shortly we reached the spot where we were to pass the night,—viz., Seilnæs. There was but one bed in the house, and much as we would have liked to have slept in one, it was thus left without a tenant all night, as each of us, with extreme politeness, and I may say unselfishness, insisted that the others were more entitled to the honour of—being done to death by fleas. During the night a change took place in the weather, which, though still fine, became suddenly disagreeably mild. The frost, of course, still held, but there was more of the English element in it,—i.e., the

thermometer standing at 15° to 20° Fahr., or something like 12° to 17° of frost—a considerable difference from the 66° we had so lately experienced. This comparative warmth told upon our reindeer in two ways: firstly, they stopped more frequently to lap the snow; and secondly, the snow being softer, did not support them well, and also retarded the progress of the *poolk* by adhering more easily to its sides.

At this place the first accident occurred. As usual, we all stood each by the side of his conveyance, and then, when the leader gave the signal, stepped back, and as soon as the deer began to run, flung ourselves into the *poolk*. This performance is always attended with some difficulty, not to say danger, as the animals being fresh and lively, rush off the moment one or other makes the faintest move; they generally, also, first indulge in some antics before they can be brought to go quietly.

On this occasion we had all started pretty fairly, and had observed nothing particular, when our attention was drawn to a reindeer, with its empty *poolk*, going full speed up the river, while at the same time the *forstmester* was noticed trying to support himself against a wooden post, and evidently greatly hurt. He stated that, having lost all control over his brute, he had been smashed up against the post while going past it at full gallop. He received the full force of the blow upon his chest; in consequence he expectorated a great quantity of blood, and was unable to move for several hours. As for the deer it was now long out of sight, closely followed by a *wapoos*, who confidently expected to overtake it in a very short time and bring it back uninjured; but after waiting an hour or so, and neither *wapoos* nor deer

appearing, I lost patience and set out alone, having fifteen miles to travel to dinner. Travelling alone being rather tedious, and as nothing of interest occurred, I shall pass that day over altogether. With regard to the *forstmester*, he arrived late at night. His deer had been captured fourteen miles from the spot from where it started: it was found in the forest, where the *poolk* had entangled itself between two trees, thus effectually making it a prisoner. Had it got away altogether, both the *forstmester* and I would have been in a nice dilemma, as all our cash was placed in a small compartment of his *poolk*. As for the deer it was utterly spoiled, not on account of its forty-three-mile run, but because of the speed kept up the whole time.

We were now on Russian territory, and spent the worst night since our arrival on the fjeld. Imagine six grown-up persons in a small room not more than ten feet by twelve, in which a bed, a large chest of drawers, and other articles of furniture, necessarily occupied most of the space. Well, there was nothing for it! Two of us occupied the bed, while the others took up a position and jostled each other on the floor. Cramped and chilled, we were all only too glad to leave Sirma, as the place is called, as early as possible next morning.

We now had a long drive through Russian territory (without passports), and noted the hang-dog look of every one with whom we came in contact, as well as the obsequious manner in which they saluted us, and at the same time asked for a glass of *vodka*.

The falls of Tana are on this day's route; but we decided to save the corner, and cut straight across the tongue of land which juts out into the river, or rather round which the river makes a

bend, just at the falls. However, these are not of much consequence, but are the rendezvous of large quantities of the salmon with which the river abounds. Our way took us down an extremely steep hill—the worst we had as yet encountered—as there were two very large stones right in the centre of the descent. Just as we had anticipated, the deer, taking fright at the large black rocks sticking out of the snow, suddenly swerved to the side with the result of capsizing almost all of us, and jumbling us up in a terrible muddle. Deer and *wapoos*, men and *poolk*,—all were wildly mingled together. Here a rein entangled round some one's leg; there a *poolk* lying on the top of another poor individual, who, his hands not being free, could not possibly extricate himself without assistance. Add to this the darkness, the strange guttural oaths of the Lapps, and the grunt or bleat of the deer, with now and then an execration in blunt Norwegian, and you can form a faint idea of the scene. As for me, never before was I in such danger, the rein having wound itself round and round my neck, and threatening every moment to strangle me if the deer should try to break away. Move I did not dare to, as I well knew that the slightest tug at the "ribbon" would cause the animal to rush wildly away, in which case I would have been dragged down the rest of the hill by the neck with a result easily imagined. How we got clear I never to this day can determine; but somehow or other down that hill we did get, and after half an hour's driving, found ourselves safe and sound in the hospitable shelter of Polmak.

Polmak is the abode of the river *opsynsmand* or superintendent, and lies on the right bank of the river Tana, which is here joined by

the smaller Polmak river. At this place we exchanged our deer for small Finmarken horses, the road further on being badly suited for reindeer. The *opsynsmand* was one of the most curious fellows I ever fell in with. Popularly supposed to have "a bee in his bonnet," his conduct on this occasion by no means belied that accusation. On the contrary, he seemed a much fitter inmate for an asylum than the occupant of a government situation. As an example of his stupidity or madness, I know not which, it will suffice to say that he solemnly declared that the water of Polmak contained more strength (*sic*) than that of Tana, as he found he did not require to put so much spirit in it when brewing his usual glass of toddy. No amount of reasoning, or cajoling, or threatening—ay, nor of ridicule, that strongest shaft of all—could drive this idea out of him.

The *opsynsmand* had, however, at this time committed a very serious mistake. He had openly declared his intention, by fair means or foul, to promote and further the scheme of delivering over the whole of Tana river to the Russians! This, of course, amounted to high treason, and as such could not be allowed to go unpunished. The *amtmand*, the *foged*, and the *forstmester* determined, therefore, to make an example of him, which they allowed me to witness. After retiring into a room by themselves, the trio sent for the unfortunate delinquent, and on coming in he was politely requested to sit down on a chair that stood facing the semicircle, which the three self-appointed judges formed. His terror was extreme; and when, after an examination of some length, during which he by turns denied and admitted the allegations, the *forstmester* proposed *concilium*

abiunde, the poor fellow almost fainted. He was then dismissed from his appointment, but was re-constituted *pro tem.* until another official could be appointed in his stead. From these instances it will be seen how utterly devoid he was of that common-sense and tact so requisite to every frontier official.

With regard to the idea of Russianising the whole of the Tana river, which would have the effect of depriving Norway of Vardoe and Vadsoe, as well as of the best coast for the great cod-fisheries, it is by no means a new one. Russia has always had an eye on those districts, which would give her an *open port all the year round* in these regions. It is, of course, useless to credit mere hearsay in such affairs; but even the *amtmand*, who was well versed in such matters, and who from his high position was in constant communication with his Government, declared his belief that the time was not far distant when the whole of the district mentioned would be Russian. The acquisition of this territory would be of great value to Russia, who has not a single open or useful naval station in all its dominions; while Vardoe, or even Vadsoe, though now but insignificant fishing towns, could easily be metamorphosed into valuable ports, from which, at all times and seasons, fleets and armies might be freely directed to any quarter. Besides the political reasons, there are also powerful economical grounds to show that the district might be—and with reason—coveted by Russia. With the northern subjects of the Czar fish is a staple article of food, especially during the long winter months. The fisheries commence about the end of March, and last all through April and May into June, and during these three months at least ten millions of cod-fish are taken and

dried. To these fisheries swarms of Russians flock from Kola, some even from Onega, and are hired at nominal prices to assist in cutting up and assorting the fish. They obtain a wage of about 20s. a-month with free lodging, and as much fish as they like to eat. Of this wage they spend nothing during their sojourn in Norway, and yet are able to take home one or more barrels of fish with them to their homes; and on this and on their accumulated savings they and their families drag through the winter. Without doubt it would be decidedly beneficial to Russia to get these fisheries into her own hands; and, judging from the usual Muscovite perseverance and unscrupulousness, I fear that before long that event will be a *fait accompli*.

We left Polmak early in the morning, having paid off our Lapps and reindeer, and chartered a sleigh with two ponies for each of us. We had only half an hour's drive to the residence of the Polmak *lensmand*, where we were to breakfast, and on arriving we were magnificently received. And what a breakfast!

The host was the most cringing sycophant I ever saw, and his set smile and ready bow quite disgusted me. Perhaps he was only the exact counterpart of most society people at home, but my long association with natural beings (I mean Norwegians in general, not those most *natural* of beings the Lapps) had probably caused me to see all the more readily the difference. The breakfast was really sumptuous; in fact, I do not think a better service of plate or a greater variety of dishes could be met with even in central Europe among people of his or even of higher station.

We finished up with a dozen of champagne, and in consequence of

this left the house in a sadly muddled state. Indeed I must here confess that the joint effects of the champagne and of the easy, rocking motion of the sleigh, was to send me into a tranquil sleep, from which I did not emerge till we came in sight of the sea, as represented by the arm of the Varanger Fjord which runs past Vadsoe and Nyborg. Its inmost part was frozen over for an extent of several miles; and as the road was bad, we preferred travelling on the ice, over which we went at a rattling pace. Very shortly after, we turned in at the township of Nyborg, having now completely left the wilds behind us. One of our party, who had travelled with a reindeer, had arrived half an hour before us.

The road to Vadsoe leads along the shore of Varanger Fjord, and at some places dangerously skirts the precipitous rocks which form the shore. At such places great caution is necessary, as one false step would without doubt send men and horses literally *ad undas*. At Clubben, one of the most dangerous spots on the route, the way runs along a narrow platform, from which the rocks above and below are almost perpendicular. Here we sometimes felt ticklish about the possibility of getting on; but in spite of the difficulties which beset us, we managed without accident to arrive at Vadsoe, passing on the way several villages of the sea Lapps. These sea Lapps are extremely miserable-looking creatures. When a nomad Lapp, or, as they call him, "fjeld Lapp," loses all his reindeer, or from other causes is debarred from following his usual mode of life, he generally, but only as a last resource, settles down by the sea-shore and endeavours there to eke out a miserable existence on the spoils of the ocean. Once a sea Lapp he very seldom, if ever,

regains his former free life; and his children having no other path open to them, are forced to follow in his footsteps. Living in houses more like pigsties than human habitations, and on a diet of fish and nothing else, their *physique* is horrid. I saw several full-grown men whose legs were as thin as those of children in other countries, and very few attain even middle height. Their physiognomy is extremely ugly, and skin diseases seem very prevalent among them. Hardly a single individual, too, but was affected by some eye complaint. Of late years the fishing in the inner reaches of the Varanger Fjord has been very unproductive, in fact almost entirely at a standstill, and the misery of those beings whose whole means of sustenance depend on the fishing has been extreme. The dress of these people is the same as that of the "fjeld Lapps," though here and there garments made of sheepskins after the Russian fashion may be seen. One or two individuals who were fortunate enough to own a few sheep were evidently considered by the others as very wealthy, though to me they appeared not a whit less poor or wretched than the rest of them.

The sheep and other domestic animals roam in and out of the dwellings at pleasure, and on the whole lead as miserable a life as their owners. They are left to shift for their food, and as a natural consequence they eat everything,—they are omnivorous! Nothing is out of their line. Many a time I caught myself inwardly wondering whether any amount of starvation would cause me to partake of mutton in that neighbourhood, and I invariably answered my own question in the negative. The look of the animals was enough to send all thoughts of dinner to the winds.

We arrived in Vadsoe late in

the afternoon, and found ourselves again within the pale of civilisation. It is a small town of about 1800 inhabitants, these consisting chiefly of Quæns, but at the time of my visit it was computed that at least 1000 strangers were in the town for the purpose of participating in the fishing. It was therefore very lively and noisy. Vadsoe is built of wood, and in rather a straggling fashion. Its chief trade is in fish and the products of fish, such as fish guano and cod oil. Within the last few years an industry hitherto unknown has sprung up in the little place—viz., whale-fishing. This fishing is carried on by means of small steamers armed with a curious weapon of destruction called a harpoon-gun. With this gun the whales are shot at from the steamers, and by some mechanism or other the harpoon explodes on entering the body of the cetacean, thereby causing instantaneous death. The carcass is then towed into port, there to be cut up and converted into oil, guano, &c. How immensely profitable this undertaking must be is shown from the fact that the Norwegian Income-tax Commissioners in 1878 assessed the profits of the whale factory at £15,000, being the net gain accruing from the capture of ninety-four whales only. With results like these, it is very curious that only one company should have engaged as yet in the undertaking, along the whole extent of that barren but yet rich coast.

After leaving Vadsoe the interest of the trip ceases, and we fairly enter into the beaten track of tourists and commercial travellers.

Vardoe, though but a little town of 1200 inhabitants, can boast of being the most northerly fortress in the world. It is defended by about twenty pretty modern cannon, and has a garrison of one lieutenant,

one sergeant, a corporal, and ten men. Being the centre of the great fisheries, just then in full swing, the place swarmed with Russians, who protruded their ugly visages everywhere, jostled everybody in the streets, and, in short, made themselves as disagreeable as they possible could.

Our progress from Vardoe onwards was but slow. Every fjord, every creek, every inhabited islet, demanded a call, which, though extremely tiresome to through passengers, is a great blessing to the poor fishers, who would otherwise be entirely cut off from communication with the outer world. Some of the scenery is very grand, especially at the mouth of the Tana Fjord, where the Tana Horn, a high cone-shaped mountain, rises majestically from the sea.

Precisely at midnight we doubled Nord Kyn—the most northerly point on the mainland of Europe. It was not quite dark, but only gloomy enough to make us feel more intensely the solemnity of the place and hour. At the base of the great rock, which from the steamer seemed to erect itself perpendicularly from the waves, twinkled a few lights. Even to this barren and dreary place, where not a leaflet, not a blade of grass, ever shows itself—human beings find it worth their while to come, to wrest, with great danger and many privations,

a miserable livelihood from the ocean.

On the rocks which form the cape, a colony of sea-birds have taken up their abode; but even these, usually so shrill and discordant, seemed to have sunk into sleep, and did not break the stillness which prevailed.

I was sorry not to obtain a view of the North Cape, though on arriving at Gjøsvær, a fishing-station about half an hour's sail from it, a hill-top was pointed out to me as the summit of the land-side of the cape,—and with this I was forced to be satisfied.

From Gjøsvær we steered through innumerable straits and passed countless islands, all more or less wild and rugged, and arrived in the evening at Hammerfest, pretty well pleased to be so near home.

And here my narrative ends. A few hours from Hammerfest will bring me to Tromsø—my temporary home. We steam out into the open sea, and then,—past Loppen, that wave-beat isle; past Fugleö (Bird island), on whose lofty snow-capped summit the rude fishermen affirm that the entire skeleton of a mighty whale lies bleaching in the sun;* past Quänangen and Lyng Fjord, where hundreds of the living leviathans may be seen disporting themselves—into the still clear waters of Tromsø Sound;—my journey is over.

* The belief that the skeletons of whales are to be found on the summits of even the highest mountains is very general among the common people in the north of Norway, and is shared by many who ought to be better informed; it is of course utterly unfounded and ridiculous. Near Vardoe a place was pointed out to me where such a skeleton was said to be, but on ascending to the spot not a vestige of such a thing was to be seen.

A TALK ABOUT SONNETS.

Basil. What were we to discuss this evening, Geoffrey?

Geoffrey. I am half inclined to say, Nothing. Let us instead breathe the sweet scents of the roses on your terrace, listen to the ripple of the lake which washes against it (scarcely audible, though, in this profound calm), search out the dim forms of the mountains opposite amid the folded mists which are their covering for to-night; and disturb neither the Spirit of the Flood nor the Spirit of the Fell, by any "rude invoking voice," from the deep sleep into which they seem to have fallen. But that is too lazy a proposition to make to your unconquerable activity, which cannot be charmed into idleness, even by the unwonted warmth of this sultry summer's evening. And I do remember what we promised to talk over—though the air was brisker and the outline clearer than now, when you moved, and I seconded, the resolution. We were to try to settle by our joint wisdom, helped by the fresher perceptions of our young friend here, which are the six grandest sonnets in the English language.

Henry. You must not look for much help from me, I fear. In the first place, I am not sure that I know exactly what a sonnet is. It is a short poem, is it not?

Geof. Yes. But every short poem is not a sonnet; though I have heard people who ought to know better, call lyrics like the "Coronach" in the 'Lady of the Lake,' sonnets, — perhaps misled by the circumstance that song and sonnet both begin with an S.

Bas. Most men who have no special taste for poetry are content with such notions of it as they

gained at college; and, as you and I know, there are no specimens of the sonnet to be met with in the poets of antiquity. The late invention of the troubadours, it is a wholly modern style of composition.

Geof. I will tell you a case in point. When I was a boy I wrote a somewhat irregular lyric, the thoughts expressed in which seemed to me fine; and I ventured, though with some trepidation, to show it to our worthy rector, who was a First Class man at Oxford. He suggested some alterations; made me feel, though very kindly, that my work was not quite so perfect as I had been tempted to believe; and then, quite unexpectedly, set up again the self-conceit which he had been knocking down, by showing me that at least there was one department of literature about which I knew more than he did. "With a little pains and polish, Jeff, you may make quite a striking *sonnet* of it," was the good man's kind conclusion. So you see, Henry, that if you confess yourself ignorant of the nature of a sonnet, you are ignorant in learned company. Had my rector given a tithe of the time to Petrarch or Milton which he had bestowed on Virgil and Horace, he would have seen that my juvenile poem was as like a sonnet as that carnation is like a rose.

Hen. His reverence's esteemed memory encourages me to ask you, without too great a shame at needing to put the question, What *is* a sonnet, then, exactly?

Bas. "Teach thy tongue to say, 'I do not know,'" is one of the best sentences in the Talmud. Tell him, Geoffrey.

Geof. A sonnet consists of fourteen lines of iambs, the first two

quatrains of which would be just like two stanzas of "In Memoriam," provided that the second of these stanzas repeated the rhymes of the first, and in exactly the same order. Thus, you see, the first eight lines of a sonnet can have only two rhymes, each four times repeated; and that is one of the chief mechanical difficulties in its composition. In the remaining six, more liberty is allowed: they may either have two rhymes, each three times repeated—or three, each employed twice; only they must be interlaced in a manner satisfactory to the ear. One method, and the simplest, is to dispose the first four in a quatrain of alternate rhymes, and the last two as a couplet; but the other plan is the more usual. Such is the sonnet's outward shape.

Hen. Thank you; I think I understand. If only I had one to look at, the whole thing would be clear to me. Shall I find one in this book?

Bas. No. Besides, if you did, it is growing so dusk that it would try even your young eyes to read it. Suppose I say you one instead.

Geof. Do not recite one of the great masters', which we shall want later on. Say us one by some forgotten author, which is technically correct; and which will exemplify the rules I have been giving without distracting our attention from them by any extraordinary beauty.

Bas. Do you think I should have wasted my time by learning sonnets of that sort? And yet, stay—I have exactly what you want. Here is one by a quite unknown author, cut to what you call the simplest pattern, for it closes with a rhymed couplet—

"The casket rude, that held the spirit
kind,
Despised on earth, shall turn again to
clay,
And all its former features pass away,
The while the spirit soareth unconfined :

But, when the Archangel's blast shall stir
the wind,
It too shall rise, and seek the heavenly
day,
Joined to its kindred soul to rest for aye,
Fashioned as lovely as its inward mind.
But the fair form whose habitant was sin,
And proud esteem of its own loveliness,
Shall be transformed like to the heart
within,
As far from beauty as from holiness.
Then, since thy soul at last shall mould
its dwelling,
See that in all things good it be excel-
ling."

Hen. Thanks, many. I like the idea expressed in those words; though I see that this sonnet shows something of a 'prentice hand. "Loveliness" and "holiness" ought not to have been used as rhymes to each other, as their last syllables are the same. And it seems a little bold to talk of the *features* of a casket.

Bas. I only repeated it to help out Geoffrey's explanation. It was the work of a child of fourteen.

Geof. Did your Mary write it?

Bas. Yes. Now she peacefully awaits the fulfilment of its promise beside the little church in the bay. She was taken from me when she was eighteen. Dear child! how she loved Spenser and all our great poets! Had she lived, she might have written something of her own worth remembering. A happy matron, with children of hers playing round her, she might have been sitting now beside me, and helping us in our poetic researches. *Deo aliter visum est.*

Geof. She listens to the angels now; and their discourse is better than ours.

Bas. You remember something, I see, of her unfulfilled promise.

Geof. (aside). Remember her? I could sooner forget myself. (*Aloud.*) Let me recall to your recollection that I spent a long vacation here the summer before she died. With you and Mary I climbed many a fell,

explored many a waterfall, had many a delicious moonlight row on the lake. If there is any one in the world, besides yourself, who knows what you lost in her, I am the man.

Bas. (*Murmurs half to himself*)—

“In the great cloister’s stillness and seclusion,
By guardian angels led,
Safe from all evil, safe from sin’s pollution,
She lives whom *we* call dead.”

(*After a pause.*) We must return to our subject. I will give you a second example of the outward structure of a sonnet, in which the concluding six lines rhyme after a more usual pattern than those in my dear daughter’s. This second one is my own, yet I can fearlessly bid you praise the thought which it strives to embody, since I have borrowed it from St Augustine; who, in his great treatise on the Trinity, describes the happy condition of the humble believer in Christ, as compared with the proud Platonic philosopher, in these words: “For what furthers it one, exalting himself, and so ashamed to embark on the Wood, to see from afar his home beyond the sea? Or what hinders it the humble, that at so great a distance he sees it not, while he is drawing nigh it on that Wood whereon the other disdains to be carried?” By the Wood, I need not tell you, he meant the Cross.

Geof. Happy Augustine! His opponents, then, only differed with him as to the method of reaching the “home beyond the sea.” They did not, as ours do, deny that that home existed anywhere. But let us hear how you versified the thought—a poem in prose as it stands.

Bas. Thus:—

“Brother! my seat is on the mountain high;

The wind which bends thy mast but fans my brow.

Clear from my watch-tower lies to view what thou

Dost strain thy gaze ’mid swelling seas to spy,—

The goodly land,—the land of liberty
And peace, and joy—land sought with prayer and vow

Of old by many a voyager, who now
Feeds on its beauty his unsated eye.

Yet does thy seeming fragile bark prove strong

To buffet with the waves, and day by day
Hold on its course right forward to the shore:

What now thou seest not thou shalt see ere long;

Whilst I, ah me! see yet, but never more
May hope to tread that good land far away.”

Hen. Praise from me would be an impertinence, whether directed to yourself or to St Augustine; otherwise I should say that we have here a noble thought very nobly expressed.

Bas. I must ascribe the latter half of your remark to the generous enthusiasm of youth; but with the former I entirely agree. The difference between barren contemplation and fruitful action, the hopeless chasm (not to be spanned for man without divine aid) that separates *knowing* from *doing*, has seldom been illuminated by a brighter poetic flash than in Augustine’s saying.

Geof. I wonder that poets do not oftener glean in the rich field of that great Father’s writings. He, like Plato, was of the brotherhood, although he wrote in prose.

Hen. Do you ascribe to his poetic temperament those wonderful statements on natural history which occasionally enliven his sermons?

Geof. Give me an instance.

Hen. Surely you remember his explanation of the deaf adder in the Psalm, which, he says, stops one ear with its tail, and the other by laying it against the ground; and thus disables itself from hearing the

voice of the charmer. Is not that an ingenious notion? But then, you know, unfortunately, an adder has no ears.

Bas. They hear quick enough somehow; but I allow the explanation in question to be as improbable as it is needless.

Geof. Come, Henry, confess. Your reading has been extensive, I know, for your age; but I doubt your having had time or inclination yet to read St Augustine's long commentary on the Psalms. Who gave you that precious piece of information out of it?

Hen. My tutor. He was pointing out to us one day the superiority of the modern expositors of Scripture to the ancient, and he adduced this as an example of the faults of the latter. I remember thinking at the time that it did not prove much, because a man who had had no opportunity of getting up the facts of natural history correctly, might be great, nevertheless, at logic.

Bas. Give my compliments to your tutor, and tell him that you will do him credit some day. No thanks to him, though—unless his usual method of instruction is different from the sample with which you have favoured us. A man who keeps a sharp look-out for the weak points of his intellectual superiors, and who feels no pleasure in surveying and exhibiting their excellences, is not a teacher to whom I should like to intrust a grandson of my own.

But we are not getting on very fast with our supposed subject. The next thing in order should have been an account of the true idea of a sonnet,—the reason why its peculiar structure is the appropriate one.

Geof. That I take to be the following: A sonnet should consist of a thought and its consequence,—a syllogism, in fact, but one more of

the heart than of the head. The main proposition should be the subject of the first eight lines. The difficulty raised by it in the mind should be disentangled, or the consequences naturally flowing from it majestically and skilfully drawn out, in the concluding six; so that the last line should satisfy mind and ear alike with a sense of a completed harmony at once of ideas and sounds. Sometimes, however, the first four lines will hold what I may call the main proposition, which may be followed by correlative statements extending to the sonnet's close.

Bas. That is the sonnet which answers best to the fable of the sonnet's origin.

Geof. What is that?

Bas. Upon a day Apollo met the Muses and the Graces in sweet sport mixed with earnest. Memory, the grave and noble mother of the Muses, was present likewise. Each of the fourteen spoke a line of verse. Apollo began; then each of the nine Muses sang her part; then the three Graces warbled each in turn; and finally, a low, sweet strain from Memory made a harmonious close. This was the first sonnet; and, mindful of its origin, all true poets take care to bid Apollo strike the key-note for them when they compose one, and to let Memory compress the pith and marrow of the sonnet into its last line.

Geof. That is a capital allegory: I never heard it before. Have you extemporised it for our instruction?

Bas. No; yet I forget where I found it. It sounds like an invention of an Italian of the Renaissance. But you had more to say about the sonnet.

Geof. Not much. I was merely going to add that at other times the sonnet seems to fall into three divisions,—a major, a minor, and

a conclusion. This is the case in which it is best ended by a couplet.

Bas. My little girl's sonnet comes under that definition. Instinct, or good examples, taught the child to circumscribe her picture of the death and resurrection of the just within the first eight lines, to give the next four to the resurrection of the wicked, and to sum up her simple moral lesson in her closing couplet. A grand sonnet, by Blanco White, cut out on a similar pattern, comes into my mind. But we shall want it later on.

Geof. Your own poem is a specimen of the sonnet in two divisions. Its first eight lines set out the apparent superiority of the contemplative philosopher to the practical Christian; while its last six skillfully reverse the statement, closing with a wail over the sight that is never to become fruition.

I think my definition is sufficiently exact for our purpose, and explains why, especially in sonnets moulded like yours, the first eight lines are to be so intimately connected by rhyme. At their close there is a sort of natural halting-place, from whence the mind surveys the ground already traversed, and then turns to the steps which remain to be taken, either by way of natural consequence, or in unexpected contravention of what has gone before.

Bas. One thing strikes me though, and I hasten to mention it. Your correct definition, with which I have no quarrel otherwise, carries with it one most serious inconvenience. It is a fatally exclusive one. If we maintain it absolutely, we must deny the name of sonnets to some of Wordsworth's, to all Spenser's, to Drummond's—

Geof. Drummond, if I remember right, employs only two rhymes in his first eight lines, which is the essential thing, though he varies their position.

Bas. But what do you say to Shakespeare's? If yours is the description of the only receipt for a sonnet, then the name is a misnomer for any of his. They all consist, I think, of three quatrains like those in Gray's "Elegy" (and with no more connection as to rhyme than they have), loosely bound up at the end by a single couplet. Can you possibly maintain a definition of the sonnet which shall refuse that name to Shakespeare's, and deny Wordsworth's assertion that

"With this key
Shakespeare unlocked his heart"?

Geof. I see the difficulty, and I will make all the concessions that I can. I am ready to allow that had Petrarch written in English, our penury of rhymes, as compared with the Italian plenty, might—nay, probably would—have led him to modify his strict system; and that thus the deviations of Spenser and Shakespeare from their model are very excusable. I am willing, if you like, to make two classes of the English sonnet; the more loosely organised, at the head of which must stand Shakespeare's—and the more closely coherent, the type for which are Milton's: but I cannot possibly consider the first class, whatever its merits may be, as fulfilling the requirements of the sonnet in the way in which Petrarch conceived them, and Milton and Wordsworth (in his happiest efforts) accomplished them.

Bas. Then you will give your vote, when we come to select our six, against even one of Shakespeare's best?

Geof. Decidedly. They none of them impress my mind as do Milton's; they lack his stately grandeur, and fail to give the same satisfactory sense of perfect finish. They may be perfect in their own

line; but it is a line, in point of art, laid on a lower level than Milton's.

Bas. That may be true; but yet—but yet—what profound thoughts lurk in single lines of Shakespeare's sonnets! what a mysterious charm many of them possess! Who, that has seen as many years as I have, can read the one which begins, "Tired with all these, for restful death I cry," and not own sorrowfully how true is its indictment against "the world we live in"?

Geof. Hamlet, in his far-famed soliloquy, says the same things better.

Bas. Yes; but without the inimitable touch of tenderness at the end. What generous love, too, though extravagant and unjust in its generosity, breathes in the sonnet which begins, "No longer mourn for me when I am dead"! What a powerful enchanter's wand is waved (though for what a sorrowful purpose!) in the sonnet that opens with, "When to the sessions of sweet silent thought"! Before its sweet alliterative spell, grave after grave opens, and spectre after spectre of cares and losses long ago laid to sleep, comes forth to torment the mind; till, at its end—oh, splendid tribute to friendship!—the beloved name, spoken in the heart, not pronounced by the lips, puts them all to flight. Think, too, of that noble sonnet which tells us that love which can alter is not love at all, but something else; for that real love

"Is an ever-fixèd mark,
That looks on tempests, and is never
shaken;
It is a star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his
height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips
and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass
come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and
weeks,
But bears it out e'en to the edge of doom."

Hen. That is very fine.

Geof. And perfectly true.

Bas. Then, how well the diffidence of genius in its hours of despondency is expressed in the sonnet commencing, "If thou survive my well-contented day"! and how well its just self-confidence in another which I will repeat to you, for I happen to remember it!—

"Like as the waves make towards the
pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end;
Each changing place with that which
goes before,
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.

Nativity once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being
crowned,
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
And Time that gave, doth now his gift
confound.

Time doth transfix the flourish set on
youth,
And delves the parallels in beauty's brow;
Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,
And nothing stands but for his scythe to
mow.

And yet, to times in hope, my verse shall
stand,
Praising thy worth, despite his cruel
hand."

Geof. I wonder whether Browning had the first four lines of that sonnet in mind when penning the speech in "The Ring and the Book," in which the criminal on the point of execution consoles himself by the reflection that all men are like waves hastening to break on the shore of death; that the privilege of the more fortunate is but to arrive a little slower, of the gayest only to dance a little more wildly in the sunshine, than the rest. It is a fine passage; but, I think, scarcely in place in the mouth of the base man to whom its writer has given it.

Bas. I do not read Browning. He speaks a language which I have never learned. The taste for his

poems is an acquired taste, and to me they have remained unsavoury delicacies.

Geof. You have missed something, then. Is Browning in favour at your university, Henry?

Hen. One of our tutors often quotes him; but any of our men who read poetry talk of Swinburne or Morris.

Bas. They should be ashamed to talk of Swinburne. If I catch you listening to him I shall feel inclined to scold you as Virgil did Dante, when he caught him hearkening to the ignoble discourse of Sinon and Master Adam, and to give his reason: "Chè voler ciò udire è bassa voglia."

Geof. I advise you to stick to Morris. I am fond of him myself. He tells a story something in Chaucer's way.

Bas. Has he written any sonnets?

Geof. I understand your rebuke. To show that the fine one which you last repeated was not wholly new to me, I will make one remark upon it, which is this: Being differently organised to one of Petrarch's sonnets, it does not present the same ebb of thought, after the flood-tide, that they often do. Its main idea, that of the ravages of time, flows on uninterrupted through twelve lines, to dash itself, as against a rock, impregnable by the assaults of ocean, in the closing couplet, which so proudly declares the prerogatives of imperishable genius. Now by this an effect at once grand and simple is produced. Nevertheless, the more complex harmonies of the Petrarchan sonnet, as developed by our great English masters, are grander still.

Bas. I say not nay. Yet let us linger with Shakespeare a while longer. Which of us can remember another sonnet by him?

Hen. I think I can. I learned

one at home many years ago. It is this one:—

"That time of year thou may'st in me
behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do
hang
Upon those boughs which shake against
the cold,
Bare, ruined choirs, where late the sweet
birds sang.

In me thou seest the twilight of such day,
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by-and-by black night doth take
away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in
rest.

In me thou seest the glowing of such fire,
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the deathbed whereon it must expire,
Consumed with that which it was nour-
ished by.

This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy
love more strong,
To love that well which thou must leave
ere long."

What makes you smile?

Geof. I could not help thinking how very appropriate those lines were to the state of the reciter. They must have been even more so, if possible, when you first learned them, as you say, *many* years ago. You repeated them, too, with such feeling. But seriously, it is well, I think, to hear them from young lips, sitting, as we do, with all the flush of summer around us. Under some circumstances they might be too sad.

Bas. I cannot walk under our lime-tree avenue in November without thinking of them. It is anything but a "bare, ruined choir" at present—in a week or two its incense will breathe more fragrance than any diffused by Eastern spices; but when its green has turned to gold, and that gold paves the floor instead of enriching its roof, I see in it what Shakespeare saw—the image of a desolated temple.

Hen. The new-made ruins of his day must have been a sorry

sight. We see them mellowed by the hand of time.

Bas. There are sadder ruins (if people only had eyes to see them with) than even fallen church-walls, —ruins, for which those who will have to answer should strive to place themselves in a moral attitude corresponding to Shakespeare's penitent, dying on his bed of ashes.

Hen. I wonder when Shakespeare wrote that sonnet? One would think at the very end of his life.

Geof. Men feel old at very various periods. Look at Coleridge, writing his pathetic "Youth and Age" before he was forty.

Hen. Did he really? Why, you would say its writer must have been aged seventy.

Geof. Look at Charles V., resigning the empire, worn out with age and infirmities, under sixty; while our statesmen now fight hard to gain, or retain, the command of a much larger empire at seventy and upwards; and not long ago our Premier was over eighty.

But to return to the sonnet which you so well recited. You there see, as in the former one, a single idea prevailing up to the final couplet, which contains its consequence. The close of life is painted in three beautiful images, one for each quatrain, and then comes the moral which the friend is to draw from it.

Bas. Do you notice how the light fades away through the sonnet, answerably to the fading of life which it represents? In the first four lines you have daylight, although only that of an autumn afternoon; in the next four you have twilight, dying away into the night which prevails in the last four, only relieved by the red glow of embers, the fire in which will shortly be extinct.

Geof. That, perhaps, is the reason

of the perfect satisfaction this sonnet gives one. Its sombre tints are in such complete harmony.

Bas. Can either of you repeat the sonnet which begins, "Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth"?

Hen. I never even heard of it: my acquaintance with Shakespeare's sonnets is of the slightest.

Geof. I only remember its last line, "And death once dead, there's no more dying then," accurately; but I know that it is one of the finest of Shakespeare's sonnets, viewed from the spiritual side.

Bas. Yes. It gives one good hope—especially when taken in connection with the undesigned and compendious confessions of faith in several of the plays—that our greatest poet's "ruined choir" was not unvisited by the seraphim. I wish I could recall its words. As I cannot, I will say you the only other of Shakespeare's sonnets that I remember just now. It is the pendant to one I mentioned before, and contains four yet more beautiful lines than it does. In that sonnet love chases away sad memories; in this he consoles for present sorrows:—

"When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,

I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,

And look upon myself, and curse my fate,

Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possest,

Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,

With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,

Haply I think on thee—and then my state,

Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate:

For thy sweet love remembered, such wealth brings,

That then I scorn to change my state with kings."

Geof. Truly a glorious sunrise of the soul. But oh the weakness of human nature in its best estate ! Fancy *Shakespeare* desiring another man's art, and discontented with his own vast possessions !

Bas. Should we not rather say, Great is the modesty, marvellous the unconsciousness, of the highest genius ?

But you have indulged me long enough in wandering among what you have seen fit to call the more loosely organised sonnets. Let us now proceed to select our six best from those which present the higher type. I imagine that they will all be found in one volume, with "John Milton" on the title-page.

Geof. Possibly ; but I propose, if only for variety's sake, that we should first choose three of his, and then find our remaining three elsewhere.

Bas. Agreed, since you wish it. Now, Henry, which are your two favourites of Milton's sonnets ?

Hen. The one on his blindness, and that on the massacre of the Waldenses. But then I know them by heart : some of the others I only know slightly, if at all.

Geof. Further knowledge will scarcely lead to an altered choice. They are two of Milton's very best. What concentrated power there is in that on the Piedmontese martyrs ! With what few vigorous strokes it paints to us the ancient faith, the simple life, the mountain habitation, the undeserved sufferings, of those hapless confessors whose

"moans

The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven" !

Bas. Do you notice the added force given by alliteration to the lines immediately preceding, which tell us how the bloody persecutors

"rolled

Mother with infant down the rocks" ?

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and the way in which that verse seems to make us hear the fall of the victims ; and to hold our breath with horror as we watch them reach their sad resting - place, and lie motionless, shattered and dead, at the foot of the precipice ?

Geof. If the expression in that sonnet is the more perfect, the thought expressed in the sonnet on Milton's blindness is the nobler.

Bas. Both the sonnets on that theme are very noble. The second to Cyriac Skinner has in it a strain of manly courage, which it does one's heart good to read after the unmanly complainings of some poets ; and the one Henry mentioned is better than a sermon in the clear insight which it shows into what serving God really means. We owe much to Milton's blindness. I suppose it was to some extent the cause, instead of being the effect, of those grand visions to which Gray ascribes it. You well know, too, the pathos to which it has given rise in "Samson Agonistes" and in "Paradise Lost." Also, did you ever reflect that it is a blind man who speaks in the beautiful sonnet on Milton's dead wife ?

"Methought I saw my late espoused saint
Brought to me, like Alcestis, from the
grave,

Whom Jove's great son to her glad
husband gave,

Rescued from Death by force, though
pale and faint.

Mine, as whom, washed from spot of child-
bed taint,

Purification in the Old Law did save,
And such, as yet once more I trust to
have

Full sight of her in heaven without
restraint,

Came vested all in white, pure as her
mind :

Her face was veiled ; yet, to my fancied
sight,

Love, sweetness, goodness, in her per-
son shined

So clear, as in no face with more delight.

But oh ! as to embrace me she inclined,
I waked, she fled, and day brought
back my night."

You observe he cannot even dream of his second wife's face. He was blind when he married her; and therefore, when she visits his slumbers, her face is veiled.

Geof. But so is that of Alcestis, to whom he compares her, in Euripides.

Bas. For a different reason. There, on the one hand, Admetus is not to be startled by the too sudden revelation of his wife rescued from death; on the other, there is yet to hang about the restored Alcestis a shadow of the dark and sacred place whence she has come—hence her total silence, hence the veil which shrouds her face. But Milton, not guilty of his wife's death like the selfish Admetus, looks forward in his fearless innocence to a "full sight of her in heaven without" the "restraint" which his blindness interposed on earth, and which her veil perpetuates in his dream. So, when his Catherine vanishes, like Laura from his master Petrarch's gaze, borne away on the pinions of departing sleep, it is a double night that day, by a strange contradiction, brings back to him—the loss of the bright vision and the sense of his own sightless state.

Hen. I am glad that Milton loved the "Alcestis:" it is a very favourite play of mine. I hope you have seen Leighton's picture of her as she lies dead by the blue Ægean, among her beautiful living handmaids.

Geof. With Hercules grappling with Death in the background. It is the most charming English picture I know from a classic subject, and deserves all that Browning has said of it.

Bas. I should like to see it. Not "Alcestis" only, but all the extant dramas of Euripides were dear to Milton. How often we find him imitating him! He even dares,

with both Æschylus and Sophocles claiming the title by better right, to style him "sad Electra's poet." By the way, we must have the sonnet in which that expression occurs. Geoffrey, will you say it to us? and mind you give "Colonel" his three syllables in full in the opening line.

Geof. I will be French for the nonce. Why we English ever got to pronounce it in our present absurd way, I know not. You see that in Milton's day we knew better:—

"Captain, or colonel, or knight in arms,
Whose chance on these defenceless
doors may seize,
If deed of honour did thee ever please,
Guard them, and him within protect
from harms.
He can requite thee; for he knows the
charms
That call fame on such gentle acts as
these,
And he can spread thy name o'er lands
and seas,
Whatever clime the sun's bright circle
warms.
Lift not thy spear against the Muse's
bower:
The great Emathian conqueror bid
spare
The house of Pindarus, when temple
and tower
Went to the ground; and the repeated
air
Of sad Electra's poet had the power
To save the Athenian walls from ruin
bare."

That seems to me an absolutely perfect sonnet. How well sense and sound correspond throughout it! The poet's right to be protected, the duty and the profit of guarding him, fill the first eight lines; while the two great examples of warriors who had acknowledged the claim, even allowing it to extend to inanimate things, echo through the two rhymes, thrice repeated, of the last six. The underthought is the imperishable quality of genius; typified by the standing of Pindar's house erect in the desolation, when the temples and tow-

ers of Thebes went down before the fierce assault of the Macedonian king.

Bas. You seem to hear the crash with which they came down, in Milton's lines; and the dead stillness after, in the pause which the most careless reciter must make after telling us how they "went to the ground."

Hen. Lysander must have been superior in poetic sensibility to most of the Spartans if he really spared the walls of Athens after listening to a Chorus of Euripides.

Bas. It is an example of the power of what Plato meant by music to bring men's minds into a justly tempered state. Notice also that it was Euripides, a poet who died somewhat out of favour with the Athenian people, to whom they owed this great service; and mark the inference that the benefits conferred by true genius survive all discords of political parties or religious sects. How notably this is exemplified by Milton himself! Both his creeds, religious and political, differ widely from my own; yet it is my own fault if I ever read him without being the better for it.

But it is growing late; we must come to some conclusion about the four sonnets that we have been talking of. Which one shall we leave out? for we were only to choose three. Shall we omit that of the vision, on the ground of its imitation of the Italian school?

Geof. Certainly not; for here the pupil has surpassed his master.

Bas. Then, shall we give up the pleading on behalf of the poet's house, as on a less high theme than that on the Vaudois, and as on a less touching subject than that on the poet's own affliction? For my own part, I think the subject represented ought to count for something in art; and that though a

mean one, artistically treated, should be preferred to a noble one not done justice to, yet that a grand theme, really well handled, should (in spite of inevitable defects) be held to surpass a low one, even if wrought to all the perfection of which it is capable. I have no doubt that Teniers accomplished all he undertook more completely than Raphael what he aimed at; but I would far rather possess a masterpiece by the latter than by the former.

Geof. True; but scarcely relevant here. Milton's danger and his blindness were both personal concerns—neither, in themselves, grand subjects; and I can no more refuse my admiration to the poetic fervour which, treating of the one, calls the old Greek warriors to admonish the furious cavalier, and the old Greek poets to defend the sacred head of their worthy successor, than I can to the holier ardour which, reflecting on the other, unveils the order of the universe to us—the ministering angels, the obedient saints waiting patiently, with folded arms, till their own time for active service shall arrive.

Hen. What you have just said helps me out of a difficulty. I always thought it a little insincere in Milton to speak of himself in that sonnet as the man of the one talent in the parable—knowing that, at least in our modern sense of the word, his talents were so many. But may he not have taken "talents" more in what I believe to be their Scriptural sense—as opportunities for serving God? Those might well be few to a blind man.

Bas. I think he took talent in the usual sense—genius is very humble: reconsider the context, and you will see.

Speaking of our Lord's parables, the reference to that of the Talents

has a fine effect in the sonnet on the Blindness; but there is one much finer in another sonnet to the Parable of the Ten Virgins.

Geof. Yes; I know it. If the first eight lines of that sonnet had equalled its last six, it would have been one of Milton's very best. These lines,—it is addressed to a virtuous young lady, Henry,—are as follows:—

“Thy care is fixed, and zealously
attends
To fill thy odorous lamp with deeds of
light
And hope that reaps not shame. There-
fore be sure
Thou, when the Bridegroom with His
feastful friends
Passes to bliss at the mid-hour of
night,
Hast gained thy entrance, virgin wise
and pure.”

Bas. Can anything be finer?

Geof. Am I too fanciful in saying that Milton felt, not thought, that the orderly sequence of those three rhymes, each responded to in its turn without variation of place by the three succeeding, was the fittest to help us to image to ourselves the stately advance of that grand bridal procession which he here calls up before our minds?

Bas. I think you are right—especially in using the word *felt*. Those sort of correspondences are a matter of instinct, as I believe, to true poets.

Geof. But to your question, Can anything be finer? Perhaps the sonnet in memory of a departed Christian friend. Will you say it to us, and let us judge?

Bas. Willingly:—

“When Faith and Love, which parted
from thee never,
Had ripened thy just soul to dwell
with God,
Meekly thou didst resign this earthly
load
Of death, called life, which us from
life doth sever.

Thy works, and alms, and all thy good
endeavour,
Stayed not behind, nor in the grave
were trod;
But, as Faith pointed with her golden
rod,
Followed thee up to joy and bliss for
ever.
Love led them on; and Faith, who knew
them best
Thy handmaids, clad them o'er with
purple beams
And azure wings, that up they flew so
drest,
And spake the truth of thee on glorious
themes
Before the Judge; who thenceforth bid
thee rest,
And drink thy fill of pure immortal
streams.”

Geof. That sonnet always seems to me one of Milton's most perfect. How well his more usual interlaced arrangement of his last six lines suits his meaning here! And then you will not find a single weak place in all the fourteen, search them as you may. Thought and expression are alike elevated, and flow equally in one roll of majestic harmony from the beginning to the close. Then, too, it is so clear. You can take it in at one hearing. Indeed, so you can the Martyrs, the Alcestis sonnet, the sonnet where Ruth rhymes to ruth (a tiny blemish, I suppose), and that on the assault on the city. Now the long parenthesis in the sonnet on the Blindness makes it need a second hearing.

Bas. It is well worth one. Was I far wrong when I said that we should find the six best sonnets in the English language to be Milton's? for the worst of the half-dozen which we have been talking about will be hard to match, let alone to surpass, by a specimen culled from any of our other poets' pages.

Geof. That may well be; and as to settling which are the three best of these six of Milton's, I think we might discuss the subject till midnight, and yet remain uncertain. I incline, myself, to choose the one

you have last said to us, the one on the assault of the city, and the one on the slain Waldenses, as the three most absolutely perfect; but a very little arguing might unsettle me.

I must ask you to leave the question about Milton undetermined, for this is nearly the hour at which my nephew and his friend were to call and row me home across the lake. Till their signal-whistle sounds through the darkness, let us try and settle our last three great sonnets. We must give Wordsworth a fair chance.

Bas. Yes; his sonnets are good, very good, but only a few of them great enough to set by Milton's.

Geof. How pretty his two sonnets on Sonnets are!

Bas. Yes; one of them a little irregular, though, according to your strict canons.

Geof. Those two fine sonnets of his on London asleep, and on our too great separation from nature by our artificial modern life—I mean that which begins, "The world is too much with us"—are perfectly regular. So is that good sonnet on Milton, which has in it these two perfect lines—

"Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart:
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea."

Bas. Ditto the companion—less fine, but oftener quoted—sonnet about "Plain Living and High Thinking."

Geof. Chiefly known for those few words, as is the case with so many of Wordsworth's poems.

Bas. Often with better reason. They sometimes contain one gem, and a good deal of twaddle. A sensible reader treasures the gem, and forbears to treasure its *entourage*. Now Wordsworth's sonnets on the fall of Venice and the enslavement of Switzerland are

both good throughout; but their structure is defective, by the Petrarchan standard, especially the latter.

Geof. I wonder why Wordsworth, who altered so many things in his poems, maintained that anticipation of the final "heard by thee" in his eighth line of the last-named. No doubt, for some reason that seemed satisfactory to himself.

Bas. I cannot say that I think it would satisfy me if I knew it. I always, too, disapproved of "holy glee." It is an obvious make-shift for a rhyme. But, as you say, time presses. Give me therefore, reserving more minute discussion for some future day, your own favourite sonnet of Wordsworth, and then I will give you mine—incomparably his grandest, as I think.

Geof. My two favourites, on what I may call personal grounds though, are that written in the Trossachs, the autumn colouring of which is so very perfect—and that by the sea. They have each a slight imperfection of form, which I readily pardon; but which, if we were formally weighing Wordsworth's merits, would have to be considered. I will repeat to you the latter.

Bas. Say us both, please. I do not know the sonnet on the Trossachs so well as the other: I think it is not in my edition of the poet.

Geof. Here it is:—

"There's not a nook within this solemn
Pass
But were an apt confessional for one
Taught by his summer spent, his autumn
gone,
That life is but a tale of morning grass,
Withered at eve. From scenes of art
which chase
That thought away, turn, and with
watchful eyes
Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities,
Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more
clear than glass

Untouched, unbreathed upon. Thrice
 happy guest,
 If from a golden perch of aspen spray
 (October's workmanship to rival May)
 The pensive warbler of the ruddy
 breast
 That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught
 lay,
 Lulling the year, with all its cares, to
 rest."

Bas. Yes, that is lovely. It would be a pity to strike out "Nature's old felicities," for the sake of more largely completing your rhymes, would it not? Our lake looked like the three within the poet's reach, this evening, clearer "than glass untouched, unbreathed upon." Now carry us to the sunset on the sea.

Geof. Willingly:—

"It is a beauteous evening, calm and free;
 The holy time is quiet as a nun
 Breathless with adoration; the broad
 sun
 Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
 The gentleness of heaven is on the sea:
 Listen! the mighty being is awake,
 And doth with his eternal motion
 make
 A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
 Dear child! dear girl! that walkest
 with me here,
 If thou appear untouched by solemn
 thought,
 Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
 Thou liest 'in Abraham's bosom' all
 the year;
 And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner
 shrine,
 God being with thee when we know it
 not."

Henry. Do you like "not" rhyming with "thought"?

Geof. I cannot say that I do. But then one cannot stop to think about such things after having heard one of the greatest of God's works—the sea—interpreted, sight, sound, and all, in so splendid a manner. It leaves one "breathless with" admiration.

Bas. How beautiful, too, is the interpretation of the sweet unconsciousness of childhood! I wonder, however, at Wordsworth's use of

"Abraham's bosom" as a synonym for God's presence with His little ones. It is an expression consecrated in Scripture to describe the end, not the beginning—the rest of the faithful departed.

Hen. As far as I understand you, sonnet four in your list is either to be one of the two last said, or one of several mentioned before, but not minutely discussed. I cannot congratulate you on the exactness of the results attained by your criticism.

Geof. It is all the fault of this sultry, hazy evening. What clearness of idea can one attain at such times? To-morrow, if the wind changes, or the first day that the west wind blows away the vapour, and the rocks and peaks stand out sharp against the blue sky, we three will scale our highest fell and make up our minds about everything.

Bas. I told you that I had made up my mind about Wordsworth's grandest sonnet—No. 5, as Henry may write it down on the minutes of this important and most conclusive conference. It is not one of the sonnets thus far referred to. Its structure is, I think, the same as the "Trossachs." It is the last of the ecclesiastical sonnets—that on Monte Rosa.

Geof. I am ashamed to say that I do not possess that little volume, and so have not read it for years. Do you know the Monte Rosa sonnet by heart?

Bas. Yes; and I have had to repeat it oftener than any of the others, because most people say what you say. Nearly always, too, I have had to repeat it twice, because the abundance of thought in it cannot be taken in at one hearing. The Monte Rosa, with its pure virgin snows, lit up by the heavenly glory, is taken as the symbol of the Incarnation in the first eight lines; then in the last

six it becomes the emblem of the Christian's progressive holiness and hope in death. The transition from one to the other is abrupt, and would constitute a defect in the sonnet, if we did not remember that the poet trusted his readers to supply the suppressed connection between the two parts, — this, namely, that the member depends on the Head, that man's life can be transfigured by a light from heaven only because God Himself has become man. Fine throughout, this sonnet's last three lines appear to me truly magnificent. But judge for yourselves. It is as follows :—

“Glory to God! and to that Power who
 came
 In filial duty, clothed with love divine,
 Which made His earthly tabernacle
 shine
 Like ocean, burning with purpleal
 flame :
 Or like that Alpine mount which takes
 its name
 From roseate hues; far kenne'd at morn
 and even,
 In quiet times, and when the storm is
 driven
 Across its nether region's stalwart
 frame.
 Earth prompts, heaven urges—let us
 seek the light,
 Mindful of that pure intercourse begun
 When first our infant brows their lus-
 tre won.
 So, like the mountain, may we glow more
 bright,
 Through unimpeded commerce with
 the sun,
 At the approach of all-involving night.”

Hen. What a splendid idea! The glories of heaven caught and reflected more clearly as death approaches.

Bas. Yes; here the poet shows himself what a poet ought always to be—a divine interpreter of the parables of nature. The Alps are among the most splendid of natural objects; and are fit symbols, therefore, for the most ennobling truth revealed to man.

Geof. I remember reading that

sonnet in bygone years to my dear father. I recollect, too, his exclamation, “I like it all but the last word. ‘Night’ is not like death to a Christian. He goes by it from night to day.”

Bas. That objection could not be maintained. There is a sense in which death is called night to all alike in Scripture: “The night cometh when no man can work.” It is the cessation of all our present activities, and our rest after labour. Of death, considered in those aspects, even such a night as is now settling down upon us may make a good emblem,—warm, still, and peaceful. But depend upon it, Wordsworth's “all-involving night” was of another sort. It was a fit image of death, considered as the revealer as well as the concealer,—as taking from us for a time the material world, in order to give us in exchange the higher world of ideas,—as veiling from us of a truth the works of creation, but only that it may unveil to us their Creator. It was of the kind which indeed hides the sun, but shows the stars. It was such a night as that of which poor Blanco White wrote in what I have heard called the finest sonnet in the English language—a sonnet which, at all events, is among the first, and which I fearlessly propose to you to stand by the Monte Rosa one, which I see you have admitted to be fifth, as the sixth among the six greatest.

Geof. I hear my comrades' signal from the bay, so my words must be brief; for this is not going to prove one of those privileged nights on which you can see millions of miles farther than you can by day. But you and I, dear friend, who have seen what we loved best on earth pass into that sacred twilight which those better nights image to us, have an especial interest in a sonnet which all must own to be

first-rate alike in thought and in expression. Wish me good-night by saying it to me, and take in advance my assent to your proposition.

Bas.—

“ Mysterious Night! when our first parent knew
Thee from report alone, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,

Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus, with the host of heaven, came,
And lo! Creation widened in man's view.
Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed,
Within thy beams, O sun! or who could find,
Whilst fly, and leaf, and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind?
Why do we, then, shun death with anxious strife?
If light can thus deceive, wherefore not life?”

THE BLACKBIRD.

UPON the cherry-bough the blackbird sings
His careless, happy song,
As 'mid the rubied fruit he tilting swings,
Heedless of Right or Wrong.

No Future taunts him with its fears or hopes,
No cares his Present fret;
The Past for him no dismal vista opes
Of useless, dark regret.

Ah! how I envy him, as there he sings
His glad unthinking strain,
Untroubled by the sad imaginings
That haunt man's plotting brain!

All orchards are his home; no work or care
Compels him here to stay;
His is the world—the breathing, open air—
The glorious summer day.

Below, Earth blossoms for him; and above
Heaven smiles in boundless blue;
Joy is in all things, and the song of Love
Thrills his whole being through.

From bough to bough its gay and transient guest
Is free to come and go
Where'er the whim invites, where'er the best
Of juicy blackhearts grow.

His are these sunny sides, that through and through
He stabs with his black bill ;
And his the happiness man never knew,
That comes without our will.

Ah ! we who boast we are the crown of things,
Like him are never glad ;
By doubts and dreams and dark self-questionings
We stand besieged and sad.

What know we of that rare felicity
The unconscious blackbird knows,
That no misgiving spoils ; that frank and free
From merely living grows ?

Haggard Repentance ever dogs our path ;
The foul fiend Discontent
Harries the spirit, and the joys it hath
Are but a moment lent.

The riddle of our Life we cannot guess ;
From toil to toil we haste,
And in our sweetest joy some bitterness
Of secret pain we taste.

Ah ! for an hour at least, when bold and free
In being's pure delight,
Loosed from the cares that clog humanity,
The soul might wing its flight.

Then, blackbird, we might sing the perfect song
Of Life and Love with thee,
Where no regret nor toil, nor fear of Wrong,
Nor doubt of Right should be.

W. W. S.

HANS PRELLER: A LEGEND OF THE RHINE FALLS.

FROM THE GERMAN OF WILIBALD ALEXIS.

LONG ago, in those dark and distant ages before Switzerland had become a republic or been invaded by the British tourist, there dwelt, just at the spot where the Rhine turns a corner for the last time, a knight, Hans Preller of Lauffen—as honest a knight as ever lived within four walls. But he was as poor as he was honest. He had a true heart and upright mind, with nothing to live upon. His domain was all rock or wood; there were barely oats enough for his horses; the wine of the country was even sourer than it is now; and the river was as unnavigable, having chosen, as early as the times we speak of, to make a fall of many fathoms exactly in front of the castle of our knight.

Hence it had come to pass that a rhyme had been made upon him, in the rude language of that unpolished century, which I blush to repeat, and which I only give to my readers lest I should be accused of keeping back from them a monument of thought and national poetry. This is the couplet which the street Arabs of that epoch used to sing after him,—

“Hans Preller of Lauffen, knight,
Has nothing whatever to sup or bite;”

which was not strictly true; for the Rhine flowed by his castle, and there was nothing to hinder his quaffing as many goblets of it as he chose. He lived chiefly on his own thoughts, and trout, for which he would fish for days together. Unfortunately, however pleasant both might be, they were hardly nourishing, and all admirers of manly knighthood and old German honesty had the sorrow of beholding one of the order lank, lean, and haggard.

Many a time would Hans stand upon his battlements, looking down the Rhine, with the heavily-laden vessels on its distant waters, and the waggons of merchandise on its highroads, and knights and horsemen lurking under lofty portals, ready to pounce down upon their prey. Then a sharp stab of pain would shoot through him; he would bite his nails; and the Evil One would whisper in his ear, “Why doest thou not likewise, Hans?”

Had not his still leaner cousin been appointed a governor of one of those new Rhine castles by the fat Bishop of Trèves? And what had that worthy prelate rejoined when asked touching the salary appertaining to the governorship? “My loyal vassal, to your left flows the Rhine; to your right lies the road to Frankfort!” Since then the lean cousin had grown nearly as fat as his liege of Trèves, and had huge joints daily turning on the spit in his kitchen, and wine flowing faster into his cellar than the coopers could provide vats for.

“Look what they do in Germany,” the Evil One kept murmuring; “wilt thou not learn wisdom from them?”

But Hans was an honest Swiss, and shook his head. A truth-telling chronicler is compelled to add, it would have been somewhat difficult for our knight to do as they did in Germany; because, though fat bishops, castles, horsemen, and cellars were to be found in Switzerland, as was also the Rhine, yet of rich travellers there were but few. And though those times were more prodigal of miracles than ours, such a miracle as a richly-laden vessel attempting to pass the Falls of

Lauffen,* or merchandise for the fairs taking the route of Lauffen Castle, could hardly be looked for.

Thus matters came to a sad pass with Hans Preller. Year by year his thoughts grew more bitter; year by year the trout (so at least his stomach thought) grew smaller; and in the *ranz des vaches* he seemed to hear each morning and evening the doleful refrain:—

“Hans Preller of Lauffen, knight,
Has nothing whatever to sup or bite.”

When, one night, as the moon was shining full on his solitary bed, he caught sight of his shadow—now the mere ghost of a shadow—reflected on the wall, and thinking of what his shadow had once been, he was quite overcome with emotion, and wiping away a tear, he exclaimed, “Verily, 'tis the life of a dog that I lead!”

Then stepping on to his balcony, which looked over the Falls, he began to meditate for the last time. His thoughts, put into the language of the nineteenth century, were somewhat as follows:—

“What boots it that I am of noble family, a knight, and a free Swiss? What boots it that I am a landed proprietor, with hereditary right to hang, spit, and roast what I please, if I have nothing in the larder, and cannot roast what I have, because it is all water or stone? What use is my wood? Every neighbour has as much as I. And my stone? No one paves the roads. And my water? We are not in an African desert. What good is the daylight to me? The sun only reveals my poverty. Or night? I cannot sleep away my wants, because of the bellowing waterfall which dins them in my ears. And finally, what is the use of my honesty, of never having robbed a soul, if nobody is any the

wiser, and it does not procure me even an Order, let alone a dish of lentils?”

And having thus meditated for the last time, he determined to precipitate himself into the Rhine. One foot was already over the balustrade, the other was following, and in another moment the cataract would have seized him, and it would have been all over with Hans Preller, when suddenly it seemed as if Nature had made a dead pause. The clouds stood still, the tops of the fir-trees ceased to wave, the moonbeams no longer trembled on the surface of the water, the Rhine stopped as if frozen; and Hans Preller, arrested in the act of springing down, remained sitting on the extreme edge of the balustrade, holding on by his hands. Just in the same posture as himself, there appeared suddenly a curious being on the brink of the waterfall, dangling his legs down as he balanced himself with his hands on the crest of the waves. The machinery of Nature had only to be set in motion again, and he would be shot down quicker than thought into the gulf into which the knight had been about to precipitate himself. It would be an insult to Hans Preller's understanding to suppose that he did not at once know who the old man was, with the snow-white beard and the little red eyes. It was not the Nymph of the Rhine, or the Genius of River Navigation; but was no other than the Spirit or Cobold of the Falls.

In this there was nothing remarkable; for Cobolds appearing to brave knights was quite the order of the day. What was remarkable in the phenomenon was, that the Rhine should cease to flow, the water to fall, and the wind to blow; and that it should

* Now more commonly known as the Falls of Schaffhausen.

be so silent round about that the knight at Castle Lauffen, where at other times you could only hear the thunder of the waters, could have heard the mayor sneeze across from Schaffhausen. This was remarkable, and pointed to some reversal of the order of Nature.

That the Spirit must have been a malicious one is to be inferred from his red eyes; and that he had a design upon the soul of our knight, we know from the compact which, before the French Revolution, was still to be read in the original in the archives of Lauffen. The learned Swiss Doctors now deny the obligation Hans Preller entered into, though they do not deny the compact. But even assuming there was no design on his soul, Hans must certainly have promised something to the demon in return for such extreme exertions on his behalf. This point, however, is involved in great obscurity; and all we know with certainty is, that a scene followed fearful to witness, and fraught with great consequences for Hans Preller.

The clouds moved once more; the pine-trees waved; the Rhine flowed on; the waterfall roared; and a flock of rooks cawed over the towers where Hans Preller stood trembling, as before him appeared in gigantic form the Spectre of the Rhine. And what increased the fearfulness of the apparition was, that this spectre now rose high as a mountain, now shrank small as a dwarf; now stood close behind him, now swam on the water and let himself be hurled down the waterfall, now cowered on a stone in the farthest thicket: but everywhere Hans Preller plainly saw his red eyes, his broad mouth, and the smiling wrinkles round it, and heard the hoarse voice saying—"This will I do for thee: I will turn thy stone into bread, and thy river into wine. I will turn thy beetles and chafers into horned cattle, thy

midges into snipe and pheasants, thy nettles and thistles into cabbages; the salmon and trout shall swim up the waterfall to thee, so that thou shalt need but to stretch out thy hand; the moss on thy roof shall become spinach, and thy cellar and larder shall be always full; and thou shalt have roast joints always turning on the spit."

"But for how long?" the knight ventured to inquire, retaining in that fearful moment sufficient presence of mind to sound the Spirit on the quality of his gift, to be sure that he had got hold of no ordinary devil's gift of glittering gold which would speedily turn into chaff.

"So long as the Rhine falls over these rocks; so long as the snow on the Jungfrau sparkles in the sunlight; until the ice of the glaciers all melts away," the Spirit solemnly replied.

"And what do you want in exchange?"

"Nothing that can be of any value to thee."

"My *soul*?" cried Hans Preller, anxiously.

"Only the Innocence of thy Posterity," was the answer.

To such extremely fair conditions our knight could offer no objections, and any pricks of conscience he might have had were fully set at rest by the assurance of the Spirit that his posterity should, nevertheless, remain honest Swiss.

It was now only a question of "How?" Hans Preller seemed to think that as soon as the compact was made, the stone on which he stood ought forthwith to turn into bread, the waterfall into Burgundy, the brushwood on the face of the rocks into asparagus, and the whole air be filled with the aroma of roasted meats and wine. But it was not so. The stone remained stone; the water, water; and nature, nature. Even the rooks above the tower did not become pheasants.

The Spirit, who had read his thoughts, smiled.

"A true miracle," said he, "never violates the laws of nature; and all that a Spirit who is beyond his time can do is to advance or retard that time. A Spirit quartered in flesh and blood can do this for some ten years at the outside; whereas we who live in the water and air can do it for a couple of centuries. Besides, consider how foolish it would be if everything thou possessest were all at once to be changed into what I have promised thee. For apart from the fact that I do not know even what thou wouldst do with all the snipes and cabbages, the value of gold—if all thy stone were straightway converted into it—would suddenly be depreciated. Nor will I dwell upon the certainty that thy benighted fellow-citizens would burn thee as a sorcerer. I will only remind thee how sweet it is to owe that which we possess to our own industry, although thou wilt not understand in all its fulness the pride which swells the bosom of the man who gains his own livelihood, until I have revealed my secret to thee. This consists in inoculating thee, Hans Preller, a Knight of the Early Middle Ages, with the views and ideas of later centuries. In thy blindness, thou hast as yet no suspicion, my good knight, of what it is I am giving to thee, nor how lightly it is paid by the innocence of thy descendants—a quality, moreover, that, in the ages when they will live, will be quite a superfluity. But when thou art inoculated, thou wilt wonder at my generosity, and wilt acknowledge that all the ordinary devil's gifts of gold, silver, and jewels, and worldly pleasures, are a mere *bagatelle*—or, to use the language of our own time, mere chaff and straw—compared to it. For even that story of King Midas is noth-

ing to it. It is true he turned everything he touched into gold; but was it money? Had it any value as currency? And it is still a doubtful point whether he could change air and water into gold, a power which my secret will give you; and it will be gold that is current in every land. For a time will come when the gold of currency will have much more value than even the pure gold of King Midas."

Thus spoke the Spirit; but what further took place is unknown, for here the Chronicles of Castle Lauffen are silent. Those of Schaffhausen only announce parenthetically, under date of that year, that in the following night the Rhine made a rumbling and thundering as if the world were coming to an end. Strange lights and fearful forms were seen hovering over the castle; and from out of the depths of the deepest dungeon issued groans of pain as of a world in travail. The main tower fell in with a great crash; and it is supposed that the philanthropic Spirit performed the operation of inoculating Hans Preller with modern ideas that night—an operation which it may be supposed would be somewhat more difficult and painful than the analogous operation on an infant in arms.

The Swiss Chronicles forsake us utterly at this point. It looks as if many pages had been purposely torn out, and what now follows is taken from an old Nuremburg Chronicle.

Dreadful reports had spread far and wide of Castle Lauffen and its knight; and what enhanced the fearfulness of these reports was, that no one could make out exactly what they were.

It was about that time that a rich trader of Nuremburg, one Peter the Sabot-maker—so called because his business consisted in selling Ger-

man wooden shoes to the Italians— was returning from Italy. Nobody crossed the Alps for pleasure in those days. Besides snow and avalanches, hunger and want, the traveller was exposed to wolves, bears, and robbers, who fell upon him in the mountain-gorges, and against whom he had to defend himself as best he could, for rate-paying had not then been invented in Switzerland. And honest Father Sabot-maker was right glad when he at last reached the opener country and more hospitable shores of the Rhine with a tolerably well-filled purse. He was a stout, florid-complexioned man; and he was just about to settle himself down in a shady spot and enjoy the cool breeze, which blew from across the Lake of Constance lying at his feet, when he became aware that there stood close beside him, under the nut-tree, an elderly gentleman of a goodly presence, and with a bald head.

The latter slowly wiped his forehead, drew a deep breath, and said, "I see, sir, you cannot sufficiently devour this ravishing prospect."

"Thank you; but for my part I am not hungry," replied Peter. "But if I can serve you with a bit of roast kid and goat's cheese, they are at your service."

"Who can think of eating with such a spectacle before his eyes?" said Hans Preller, the elderly gentleman with the bald head.

"I pray your pardon, good sir; what spectacle is there before our eyes to hinder us from eating if we were hungry? There's no Constance clown here, nor holy fathers to act us a play out of the Holy Books."

The knight smiled.

"Is that not a grand spectacle down below you?" he asked.

"In Nuremberg we should call that a lake."

Again the knight smiled.

"I mean," he pursued, "the great

whole— Nature—the landscape—the harmony in the brilliant colouring—the perspective."

Peter stared at him with wide-open eyes.

"Pray excuse me; but you speak a language I don't pretend to understand. I am quite content if I can muster enough Milanese to settle accounts with my customers."

"The language I speak ought to be intelligible all over the world, even if you have not the words at your command. Does not a certain indescribable feeling take possession of you when the air comes gently sighing over the blossoming woods, and the waters of the lake reflect the deep blue of the heavens, and the distant shores float away in the soft misty heat?"

"When it is hot," returned the trader, "it's very pleasant to feel the wind blowing over the water."

"Well—and what did you think when you passed between the snow-capped mountains, by the huge glaciers, and heard the avalanches thundering down the mountain-sides?"

"Thinking again!" muttered Peter. "But if you absolutely wish to know, I thought if all the snow were flour, and the glaciers sugar, what a happy land it would be!"

"Hm, hm!" said Hans Preller, not altogether displeased. "The idea is not so bad—taken in its right sense. But did not the tears start to your eyes, were you not awed, and did it not seem impossible to find words wherein to clothe the grandeur of your thoughts?"

"Why, no! As I knew the snow wasn't to be turned by wishing into flour or sugar, I made the best of my way onwards."

"You must see the Falls of the Rhine at Schaffhausen now. That is a sight to make you pause—to astound you. There you will find the words you lack."

“But that would be terribly out of my road. Besides, it always vexed me, whenever I pass that way, to hear the river making such a noise for no use on earth. To think—not, however, that it concerns me,—but to think that ships could sail the whole way from Cologne to Constance and Lindau, and further, if it were not for that foolish fall the river makes.”

Fire and fury blazed in the knight's face at these words. He looked at the trader as if he would devour him, and cried—

“What, you barbarian! would you ruin my waterfall?” But quickly recollecting himself, he added, “Every one must serve an apprenticeship to wisdom; nobody was ever born wise. But I perceive in you a real, earnest desire to learn to appreciate the beautiful in Nature. I beg you, therefore, to come and see me at my castle, and I can promise you sightseeing to your heart's content.”

Peter politely declined the invitation; but he might as well have spoken to the winds, for Hans Preller took the refusal as a mere matter of form, which it was quite impossible to believe could be seriously meant. When, however, they both rose at last, and Hans Preller found that the other really meant to continue his own road, a dark look came over his face, and he said—

“Nobody whom I have asked has ever refused to admire my waterfall; and, as true as my name is Hans Preller, nobody ever shall. So do not persist in your refusal, which would only prove to me how uncultivated you are, and would put me in the embarrassing position of being obliged to force you to do what every man of proper feeling does of his own accord.”

In vain the sabot-maker protested that he was not a man of feeling. Hans snapped his fingers: love for his fellow-beings forbade his be-

lieving such a thing. But when Peter actually began to make preparations for his departure, in full confidence that his own fists and those of his two Nuremberg servants would suffice to ward off any too eager desire to instil a feeling for Nature into him, he learned, unfortunately, how weak is all strength that proceeds only from ourselves. Hans Preller gave a whistle, and from bush and thicket there started forth a host of sturdy Swiss, whose fists would have instilled feeling for everything imaginable into beings of a far different order from our three Nurembergers.

Peter was a stout but irascible man. He struck out right and left; but this availed him little, and in a short time he, with his two servants, was transported in a waggon to Castle Lauffen.

Hans Preller rode beside him; and having vented his anger in some round oaths, which Peter, in spite of his sad plight, paid back with interest, he exclaimed—

“Is it not a sin and a shame that it should be necessary to constrain a man of your position and education after this fashion?”

Peter, though violent, was shrewd. He thought he should get off on the cheapest terms by letting the fellow have his way. So he lay quite still, and held his tongue until they reached the castle; and then, when Hans Preller politely invited him to alight from the waggon, he asked what he was now expected to do.

“To see my waterfall. Or if agreeable to you, we will first restore our forces with some light refreshment.”

Peter declined “the light refreshment,” as a vague feeling told him that he would have to pay for it, and he wanted to despatch the business which there was no getting out of as speedily as possible. “Water,” he said to himself, “costs

nothing ;” and consoling himself with this reflection, he advanced towards the entrance.

“I had almost forgotten,” said Hans Preller, smiling, as he proceeded to open the door, “to demand the trifle from you which, according to established custom, is always paid in advance. You must pay seven batzen,* and then you can see as much, and look as long as you like.”

“Seven batzen ! What for ?” cried the Nuremberger.

“For seeing the waterfall,” replied the knight.

“Seven batzen for water ?”

“Yes, my dear sir ; the water is Nature’s gift, but I have made the steps and galleries. And do you suppose it costs me nothing to keep them up ? not to speak of the interest on the capital.”

“I won’t pay a copper penny,” exclaimed Peter.

“But you will pay seven batzen,” replied Hans in a friendly tone, and with a smile. “You surely will not refuse ; you, a rich merchant of the rich city of Nuremberg, when two poor starving wretches—tailor-apprentices of your city—have just paid their batzen for the magnificent spectacle with the greatest pleasure. I was really sorry to take the poor devils’ miserable savings ; still it was a pleasure to see the real hearty delight with which they gave them.”

“Holy St Siebald !” cried the sabot-maker. “In Nuremberg I can see everything I like—pumps and fountains—and need not pay a doit. And here, to see a common waterfall, I am to pay as much as would keep me in wine for a week. Holy St Siebald ! you lighted frozen water as if it were wood-chips, that the poor people might warm themselves by the fire, and demanded nothing in return but a ‘God bless

you.’ And here I am asked to pay seven batzen for natural water !”

“O you incorrigible shopkeeper-soul ! you Nuremberg gingerbread-maker ! you wooden puppet ! what do you mean by comparing my great natural wonder with such toy wonders as your turner-saint, a mere tyro and bungler in the sphere of the marvellous, fabricated for your poor understandings ? If St Siebald had taken a penny for his burning ice-chips, I ought to demand a ton of gold for my waterfall. Strictly speaking, you are not worthy to see it ; but it is not for my sake, but for your own, that you shall see it, and pay the seven batzen.”

Peter’s face became the colour of a morella cherry. He rolled his eyes, clenched his fists, and ground his teeth till his mouth foamed. He could not speak for rage.

“Will you ?” asked the knight, curtly.

The sabot-maker shook his head. He was prepared for everything, even for being bound hand and foot and dragged to the falls. He knew what he should do in that case. But no.

“Far be it from me,” said the knight, calmly, “to compel any one by the use of brute force to do that which he has no inclination to do. You must see the waterfall voluntarily ; and till you are ready, my castle shall afford you shelter and protection, and time for meditation.”

No sooner said than done. The heavy form of the Nuremberg sabot-dealer was packed as well as it would go into a small basket, a string was placed in his hand, a windlass whirred, the daylight turned into darkness, and a sudden violent blow on the part of his body that first reached the ground told him that he had arrived at the place appointed for his meditations.

* Equivalent to about a shilling.

As soon as he had unpacked himself, the basket was drawn up again, the trap shut, and Peter was alone with his thoughts in the dungeon of Castle Lauffen. Damp straw, chains, spiders, lizards, and salamanders—in short, everything that romance requires of a good castle-dungeon was to be found here. On the other hand, a hero of romance would not have thought first of his own fate, but of that of his companions in misfortune. Peter, however, I am obliged to confess, gave no thought to his followers, but was only exasperated that such a fate should have befallen himself. He bit his nails, struck the walls with his fists till the tears started to his eyes, and swore death and vengeance. Such an injury must be punished by king and parliament. Cost what it might, he was determined to sue the knight before the imperial or the secret tribunal—which ever then existed.

He was not a little disappointed at finding that he still had his purse. If that had been taken, he should at any rate have known that he had to deal with an ordinary, straightforward robber-knight, instead of with a soul-destroyer, who demanded things from a decent German citizen that made one's hair stand on end. Nay, he made a solemn vow that he would remain here for the rest of his natural life, and moulder away alive, rather than do what the knight wanted. He did not, however, begin to starve straightway, but prolonged his life till the following morning with a piece of rye-bread. The water-jug he left untouched, presumably because he thought it had been filled from the abominated waterfall.

He found that it is possible, if not agreeable, to sleep on damp straw and cold stone when anger

has worn one out; and the *ranz des vaches* next morning awakened him out of a sound and refreshing slumber. The trap-door above opened, and Hans Preller's face appeared.

"Good morning, Sir Sabot-maker; how are your feelings for nature this morning?"

No reply.

"Well, well! I am in no hurry; your mind will open in time, as many others' have done."

The trap closed. Night returned. The toads and lizards hopped and crawled once more around his bed. The same ideas and thoughts visited the worthy man, and he spent this day like the last, except that he found his bread drier, and did not disdain a draught of water from the jug. He reflected that the poor water could not help tumbling over the rock. Nature had shown it the way, and it simply obeyed.

But Peter the Sabot-maker down below little imagined what was passing in the knight's bosom up above—little imagined that Hans Preller, at liberty, was suffering as much as he himself, immured in the castle-keep. For Hans Preller sat constantly for hours together in his leathern chair, his face between his hands, groaning—

"Why, why has Nature endowed me with æsthetic feelings which she has denied to so many millions, or has reserved for their posterity? Why can I not at once live in that enlightened age, when the English will flock here of their own free will; when Russian princes and German students and rich Americans will come to admire; when the whole of Switzerland will be what the Waterfall of Lauffen is now?"

Peter had now heard the morning Alpine horn seven times in his dark retreat; and, upon his host opening the trap-door for the seventh time, and for the seventh time put-

ting the original question to him, he answered, without further hesitation, "Yes."

Down whirred the basket, and the cords creaked as he was hoisted up again; but the sabot-maker remarked that he was a full fourth lighter than he had been seven days before. Quite touched, the host embraced his guest. He would not hear of his going in such a condition to witness the spectacle. He must first strengthen himself; he must prepare himself for it with some breakfast — almonds from Italy, raisins, gingerbread, and *dragées*, and Schaffhausen Rhine wine to boot. Peter had not tasted such delicacies for a long while — namely, for seven whole days; and the honest knight was so moved that this time he opened the door at once, and left the payment till afterwards.

It is asserted by the Swiss that the sabot-maker now stood by the waterfall with his eyes shut fast. He heard the roar of the water, and even let himself be splashed by it; but he refused to see it. Upon this point, however, implicit reliance cannot be placed on the Swiss. For though, on the one hand, Peter was still in a very exasperated state of mind, yet, on the other — at least so the Germans contend — it is difficult to believe that a Nuremburg trader would have given seven batzen without seeing what he got for it.

On leaving, Peter opened his purse, and produced seven batzen. Hans Preller took the money, weighed it smilingly in his open palm, and said —

"That is quite right, my friend, so far as you yourself are concerned; but as a good master, you will of course also pay for your people?"

"What! The fellows have presumed to see the waterfall? What need had they to see it?"

"Why, my good friend, my hon-

est merchant," replied the knight, "you would not be so proud as to esteem your servants unworthy to enjoy that which you have just been enjoying? Nature is a great possession, belonging to the whole world. Rich and poor, high and low, have an equal right to it, — whence the term 'natural rights,' which, as the learned will inform you, are the same amongst all peoples, under all skies; and as I, a free knight, have admitted you, a mere burgher, without charge, surely you, as a good Christian, will not grudge your servants the same pleasure."

Peter dived down into his pocket, but growled out that he thought servants ought to pay only half-price. The knight smiled. "That is only the case," he rejoined, "where persons of rank give what they like. But here, in Switzerland, all men are equal — in paying."

But what was the astonishment of the sabot-maker when he found that he was not to get off with twice seven batzen! For not only had his ungrateful varlets been seized with the unaccountable desire to see the waterfall every day, but they had gone to see it many times each day; and for the amount chalked up against them on the door, the rogues might have drunk half the wine in his cellar at Nuremburg.

The tears stood in his eyes; but he was quite merry, and laughed, and now wanted to enjoy everything.

He let himself be led down under the falls, and then let himself be ferried across to see them from the other side. A man was so good as to hold a couple of pieces of coloured glass before his eyes, and he saw the Rhine turn green, and blue, and yellow; and he gave the man as many batzen as he asked for, and the same to the boatman, and to the fellow who

handed him in. Then a poor-box was held out to him, and he gracefully offered up what Hans Preller told him. The cowherd pulled off his cap, and reminded him of the great service he had performed for him every morning; and as he did not immediately seem to understand, the knight explained—

“That is the happy child of nature who announced the sunrise to you every morning with his horn. You must have slept through it.”

“But I did not see the sun,” the Nuremberger indignantly burst forth, “and I did not tell him to wake me when I was asleep.”

“But was it the poor man’s fault,” said the knight, “that you did not see the sun? He wished to soften your heart by his touching rural strains, and to direct your attention to a wonder, which the unforewarned mind is apt to overlook, or set down as commonplace. Besides, it is a custom I have established, that all travellers should be moved to give some trifle to the good-natured, disinterested fellow for his obligingness, which springs from no paltry desire for reward; and I will not have so ancient and honourable a custom fall into disuse.”

Having, with a moved heart, paid the required batzen for the sun which he had not seen, the Nuremberger thought he had at last discharged every obligation; but imagine his surprise when Hans Preller produced a small bill for food and lodging, where it was no longer a question of batzen, but of silver dollars and gold crown-pieces.

“What conveyance is this?” cried he. “I know nothing about it. So high a fare would not be demanded from the King of Bohemia!”

“The conveyance, my friend,” said Hans Preller, presently, “is

the one I had to hire to conduct you hither, as, if you remember, you were not in a state to walk. And bear in mind, too, that Switzerland is not Bohemia; that in Bohemia you have plains, whilst here you have mountains. It follows as a natural consequence that carriage-hire is more expensive; and you may be thankful that I was able to get a conveyance at all. Moreover, I see that my clerk has not even put down the back-fare, for it is only just that you should compensate the man for the time during which he could make nothing. The rule is to pay a second fare, but from you we will be content with half, which I beg you will add to the bill.”

At last everything was settled in the castle, and Peter the Sabot-maker’s heart began to beat more freely when he heard the creaking of the drawbridge as it was raised behind him, although he foresaw that he would be expected to pay escort-money to the knight for his kindness in accompanying him, and guide-hire to the runner who preceded them to show the way—as well, of course, as return-money.

But Hans Preller was in capital spirits, jesting away in that free, outspoken fashion peculiar to the child of nature, which can offend no one, since it comes merely from a frank, open-hearted disposition.

“If you would not mind making a slight detour,” he said at length, as they came to a place where the roads divided, “I can show you something eminently remarkable. An old fellow-countryman of mine lives there. Many years ago he was in the service of a gentleman of rank in the vicinity, acting as hall-porter; and one night, when robbers were breaking into the house, he fought so bravely for his master, that the whole world rang with praises of Swiss fidelity. He has now, in remembrance of

that night, had a wounded lion cut in the rock to represent himself,—for he came off a cripple,—and he has built a hut hard by, and is so good as to show the lion—that is, himself—to every stranger who cares to see it; and, at the same time, he explains how splendidly he fought that night. For this courtesy it is the custom to give him a small fee.”

Peter was now in a frame of mind to believe and admire everything that was demanded of him, and he hastily plunged his hand into his pocket without having seen the lion or the veteran. Hans Preller smiled, and accepted the money for him.

They arrived at length at the point where they were to separate. The accounts were all settled; they had shaken hands,—when suddenly the Nuremberger remembered that he had not paid anything for the almonds and raisins, and the pint of Schaffhausen wine.

“Tell me, I pray you,” said he, “what do I owe you for them? I could never forgive myself if I were to remain in your debt.”

At this the knight became quite wroth.

“If you were not a dear friend, I should answer your question in a different fashion. I am a plain man and an honourable Swiss, and I never desire to be anything else; for the Swiss are celebrated throughout the whole world for their fidelity, honesty, and hospitality. Shame upon me if I were to let a guest pay for what I had set before him! Of what you have partaken let nothing more be said. If I should ever come to Nuremberg you will do as much for me. Farewell!”

“If I could but have the chance!” groaned Peter, as soon as he was sure the knight was out of earshot.

He clutched his purse, and pressed it closer to him—not for fear of its being stolen, but because it was empty—and he set off on his road homewards.

“It is at any rate a good thing, master,” said one of his servants, endeavouring to cheer him up, “that it was no robber-knight, as I had at first imagined, but a good, honourable gentleman; and one has the comfort of knowing what one has spent one’s money for.”

We have no record that Peter the Sabot-maker’s accounts of what had befallen him near Schaffhausen in any way increased the popular superstitions regarding Castle Lauffen. What is certain is, that he recommended the very same road to other rich merchants, who, in turn, frightened no one away by the reports they brought back. We may assume, therefore, that each was anxious the other should experience what had befallen himself; and those who reaped the benefit were Hans Preller and his descendants.

Times gradually improved, and in his old age Hans Preller had the satisfaction of witnessing the free advent of travellers eager to see the famed Falls of Lauffen. On his deathbed, in a voice of prophetic emotion, he spoke to his children these words—

“Keep what Nature has given you, and in spite of all revolutions you will be rich and happy.”

His family prospered visibly. The Hans Prellers* spread like locusts over the whole country, and having dropped their title of nobility, which is hardly compatible with republican institutions, their descendants are to be traced to this day in the guides and hotel-keepers of Switzerland.

* The name “Preller” comes from “prellen,” which signifies to “do” or “fleece.”

BUSH-LIFE IN QUEENSLAND.—PART IX.

XXVII.—OVERLAND WITH CATTLE—THE START—THE STAMPEDE.

At last the mustering was completed. The stores and rations necessary for the requirements of the journey, and the supplies for the new station during the first six months, were all packed upon a great bullock-dray, to be drawn by twelve huge oxen. The men had been hired. They were six in number, of whom one was a bullock-driver and another a cook. Two blackboys were also to be attached to the expedition, thus making the total number ten. They were,—John, in charge; Desnard; four drovers; a bullock-driver; a cook, and two blackboys.

As it was highly necessary to watch the cattle at night, the party were told off into regular watches, with the exception of the bullock-driver and cook, whose duties exempted them from this part of the work, and of the two natives, on whom little or no reliance could be placed, the temptation to sleep proving sometimes too strong for them. The night was thus divided into three watches of four hours each, each watch consisting of two men. Twenty-two horses had been shod, and were divided amongst the party, in the proportion of one each to the bullock-driver and cook, two night-horses, and two to each of the other members, with two spare ones.

Of the two native boys who were anxious to follow John's fortunes for a time, one was about fifteen years of age, the other about fourteen. The eldest, "Blucher," was rather an uncivilised lad, not having been much in contact with whites, but of an energetic disposition. The other, whose appellation was

"Gunpowder," was a gentle, quiet boy, with a mild face, large soft eyes, and curly hair. Blucher, indeed, had only made up his mind to go with the cattle a day or two before they started, owing to an altercation which had taken place between him and the Ungahrun cook. Native boys employed on a station are almost always fed by their master's hand, or from the kitchen. The employer cuts off a large slice of bread and beef, and pours out a liberal supply of tea; and the boy seats himself outside on the ground, very much more contented with this meal than if he had had the trouble of cooking it himself. This is often done to protect him from the rapacity of his friends, with whom he is bound by his tribal laws to divide his food, and partly to save the time they invariably waste in cooking.

The blackboys are quick at appreciating differences in the social scale, and a single look enables them to distinguish between a master and a mere whitefellow. It pleases them to have their food from their master's table, or cooked in the kitchen; and as they are throughout their lives mere children, they are much humoured, and their presence tolerated about the head-station buildings.

The kitchen-woman on Ungahrun had but a short temper, and the boys having been brought rather much forward during the mustering, through which they had been of the greatest service, got into the habit of walking into the kitchen for the purpose of lighting their pipes at the stove, notwith-

standing that a large fire burnt under a boiler outside. To their minds, the fire inside the house gave a much sweeter taste to the pipe they loved.

Blucher, as usual, had marched into the room on the morning in question, coolly ignoring the remonstrances of the irritated woman, when her passion getting the better of her, she made a rush at him with the poker, which, perhaps, she had heated on purpose, and touched him on the bare leg—for, like all his race, when not on horseback he doffed his trousers and boots, and wore nothing but a Crimean shirt. The pain of the wound was as nothing to the indignity. With a bound he rushed into the "Cawbawn Humpy," his eyes flashing, with insulted pride exclaiming, "Missa Fitzgell, White Mary cook'em me," pointing to his leg.* nor could Fitzgerald's remonstrances or condolences avail anything; Blucher tendered his services to John, who, finding that Fitzgerald did not object, exchanged him for another boy whom he had purposed taking.

Blacks are excitable to the last degree, extremely fond of change and adventure, and, in their own way, brave enough. Blucher and Gunpowder, on the eve of their departure for a new country, where they would be certain to come in contact with *myalls*,† were looked upon as embryo heroes, and entertained their admiring tribal brethren with much boastful promise of future daring—indeed, so much enthusiasm sprang up in the tribe, that even the grey-headed old men assailed John to be allowed to accompany him.

The day of departure came, the gates of the herding-yard were

thrown open, and Fitzgerald sitting on his horse on one side, with John opposite, counted out the squeezing, roaring, many-coloured crowd; and the number being ascertained, a start was effected. The men mounted, and the overland journey to the new home, nearly 600 miles away, commenced.

During his stay on Ungahrun, John had made two or three short trips with cattle, and the experience thus gained gave him much confidence. His measures were carefully weighed beforehand; and his knowing exactly how to meet any difficulty which might arise, assisted greatly in making matters smooth and pleasant for all parties. The bullock-dray with the cook had started very early, and the driver was ordered to halt at a certain spot about 13 miles distant, where John intended making his first camp. The usual travelling distance for cattle is from 7 miles to 9 miles per day; but being fresh, and not inclined to eat, they could have gone considerably farther. They march along evidently very much displeased with having their long-accustomed habits broken into.

On the run, when left to themselves, they feed the greater part of the night; now they have to learn to sleep during the cool dewy darkness, when the grass is sweetest, and march, march, march during the hot dusty day, picking up a scanty meal by the roadside, off what has probably been walked over by half-a-dozen mobs of sheep and cattle within the last fortnight. They dislike exceedingly feeding on ground over which sheep have grazed: they cannot bear the smell left behind them by those animals; it disgusts them; besides which, the sheep crowd together in great

* All white women are termed "White Maries" by the natives.

† Wild, uncivilised aboriginals—*jangalis*.

numbers, and tread down and destroy more than they eat. Now and then a roar breaks from one of the exiles, who remembers an old mate left behind, or perhaps two or three grown-up members of her family; or some hobbledehoy of a steer cannot forget his mother, or they think in concert of the sweet wattle-shaded gullies and rich pastures of Ungahrun, and bellow disconsolately a bovine version of "Home, sweet home." The men are disposed in a half-circle behind the cattle, at some distance from one another. The pace is very slow; and although for the first day or two they cannot well do their work on foot owing to the unsteadiness of the cattle, they allow full rein to their horses, who graze contentedly as they walk behind the mob, managing to chew the grass almost as well with the bit in their mouths as without it.

The cattle will not camp in the middle of the day yet; and the men, who are old drovers, have taken care to provide some food with which they satisfy themselves, washing it down with cold water from the nearest water-hole. About four or five o'clock in the evening, they come in sight of the camp chosen for the night's resting-place. It is a pretty timbered ridge, covered with green grass. The bullock-dray is drawn up at a convenient spot, near which a large fire burns, its smoke curling away up among the dark-leaved trees. The bullock-driver and cook are busily engaged in erecting a couple of tents, the smaller of which is to be occupied by John and Desmard. The men are to share the other, and the immense tarpaulin which covers the bullock-dray with its load, and extends on each side of it propped up by forks, between them.

The deep-sounding bullock-bells jangle down in the creek, and the

spare horses have been hobbled out, and feed all round. It is too early as yet to get into camp, for the cattle have walked unceasingly. In a few days they will be glad to graze, and then the arrival at camp can be timed properly. The feed here is good, but they will not look at it. They turn and march homewards in a body, on being left to themselves for a moment, and are continually brought back. A cooey from the cook announces supper, and half the men start for the camp to make a quiet meal before dark. This will probably be the worst night during the whole journey. The second half of the party are afterwards relieved by the first; and as they discuss the evening meal, they discuss also the likelihood of a quiet camp or a rush off it.

Cattle are very liable to be frightened off their camp during the first few nights on the road; and when this occurs, a tremendous stampede, with serious consequences sometimes, takes place, and ever afterwards the cattle are on the watch to make a similar rush. This is more particularly the case with a mob of strong, rowdy bullocks; and some breeds of cattle are naturally wilder than others, and therefore more inclined to start.

The Ungahrun herd had a considerable strain of Hereford blood running through it, as any one might discover by the numerous red bodies and white faces; and the cattle, although very fine and large-framed, were characterised by the rather uneasy nature of that celebrated breed; besides which, the presence in the mob of the wildest animals on the run and a number of scrubbers might lead to a stampede at any moment, and on this account great precaution and vigilance were maintained.

Fires had been lighted at stated distances, in a circle large enough to

permit the travelling herd to move about easily within it. Horses ridden during the day were exchanged for fresh ones, and the cattle were slowly driven into the centre of the fire-enclosed ring. Night comes on, but they think not of lying down. Incessantly moving, they keep up one continuous roar, and endeavour to walk off in every direction. All hands are busy keeping them back. The night is very dark, but one can see the forms moving out between the fires. When one goes another follows, and so on in a string. It takes the men all their time to keep them in.

West had just made his way from one fire to another, meeting Fitzgerald there, who had come from his sentry-duty between it and the fire beyond, and they have driven in the cattle as they came; but looking back again, they each see the determined brutes stringing out as fast as ever. They turn their horses, and with suppressed shouts, force them back, and returning, meet once more to repeat the same over again. Between almost every fire the same thing is going on.

The night is quite dark; the uproar is tremendous. One or two men have already mistaken their comrades' horses for stray cattle, and have called forth a volley of curses by using their whips.

"Way!" "Look back!" "Head on there!" "Come out o' that!" "Way woh!" "Look up!" are heard in all directions.

"I'll tell you what, West," says Fitzgerald, "you'll have to ring them. Pass the word round for all hands to follow one another in a circle, at a little distance apart."

This plan succeeded admirably. No sooner does a cunning beast try to make its way out after the sentry has passed, than another

sentry, moving up in the circle, observes it, and is immediately followed by a third and fourth, and so on continually. The cattle ring also. They at last get tired of the continual motion and bellowing, and some lie down, but not for long. They are up again, and the same thing occurs once more. After about four hours they become a little quieter, and half the men are despatched to the camp to get some sleep, leaving the other half on duty. The watch who have turned in still keep their horses tied up in case of accident, and their comrades on duty are obliged to be very active; but a number of cattle are now lying down. About half-past two in the morning the first watch is called, and the rest obtain a short repose until a little before daybreak, when they are roused by the cook, who has been preparing breakfast during the last half-hour.

After the morning meal, they proceed to catch their respective nags from among the horses which have been brought up by Gunpowder, whose turn it is for that duty, and follow the cattle, which have been making the most vigorous efforts to leave the camp since the rising of the morning star. They head them northwards, and once more the creatures are lining each side of the road in a long string. The rest of the men having finished their meal and changed their horses, follow them, leaving the bullock-driver and cook to bring up the rear with the baggage, and one of the blackboys to follow with the spare horses. The cattle are inclined to feed this morning; and about eleven o'clock the dray and horses come up and pass on ahead about a mile. The cook makes a fire, and has dinner ready by the time the cattle come up. Each one fills the quart he car-

ries at his saddle-dee, and helps himself to bread and beef; and the dray starts on ahead for the appointed camping-place, arriving there about half-past two or three, when the preparations for the evening meal are again commenced. The cattle camp very much better the second night, and half of the men turn in immediately after supper. In a night or two the ordinary watch of two men will be quite sufficient. Fitzgerald takes leave of the party next morning, and returns, after shaking hands with John and cordially wishing him prosperity. Desmard is also made happy with an assurance that Jacky-Jacky shall be shifted on to the tenderest feed on the whole run.

And now John is in sole charge. Upon him depends the responsibility of the whole undertaking. Desmard's society is a great boon to him; for although he mixes freely and converses familiarly with his men to a certain extent, the maintenance of authority demands that he shall live apart from them; and without the young new chum he would have been very lonely in his camp. The weather is gloriously fine as usual, and the travelling is quite a pleasure-trip. John rides on ahead, selects a suitable spot for a camp, examines the watering-places, and the cattle graze leisurely along.

Some of the men walk, leading their horses, in order to spare them as much as possible, the loosened bits enabling them to browse as they follow behind the mob. Here a drover sits side-saddle fashion for the sake of ease, idly flicking at the grass tussocks with his long whip; there one snatches a few moments to read a page in a yellow-bound volume, lifting his head now

and then to observe how his charge are getting on. The blackboy with the cattle has fastened his horse's rein to the stirrup-iron, and allows him to feed about, while he moves from tree to tree, his hand shading his upturned eyes as he scrutinises each branch in his search for the tiny bee which manufactures his adored *chewgah-bag*;* or with catlike stealthiness, waddy in hand, cautiously stalks the unsuspecting kangaroo-rat or bandicoot.

The cattle have quietly selected their respective places in the line of march; a certain lot keep in front as leaders, and the wings, body, and tail are each made up of animals who will continue to occupy the same position all the way, unless compelled by sickness to change it. The sharp-sighted experienced drivers already know many of them by sight so accurately, as to be able to detect the absence from the herd of any portion of it. At sundown they draw quietly on to the camp, and are soon lying down peacefully, and the two men appointed for the first watch mount the night-horses, and allow all hands to get to supper. At ten o'clock they call West and Desmard.

John has taken the young man into the same watch with himself, partly to guard him against any practical joking which his simplicity may give rise to, and partly to supply any want of precaution, or remedy any inadvertent neglect occasioned by his inexperience.

They come out of the tent. All is dark night. The fire burns brightly, and throws a ruddy glow on the white tent. The dim outline of the bullock-dray, with its tarpaulin-covered load, looms against the dark background a little way off. The two blackboys, stripped

* Sugar-bag—the native pigeon-English word for honey.

naked, lie almost in the ashes of the fire; their clothes are scattered about; their new blankets, already spotted with grease, dirt, and ashes, are made use of by a couple of dogs who belong to the bullock-driver. Buckets, pots, and camp-ovens stand together in a cluster. Everything is hushed and quiet. As West and Desmard stand at the fire filling their pipes, they can detect dimly the extent of the great cattle-camp by the reflection of the various fires on the tops of the trees. How quiet the cattle are! not a breath is heard. The sound of the large variously-toned bullock-bells comes melodiously from where the workers are feeding half a mile away.

Now a horse's tread is heard, and the figure of a horse and his rider issues from the darkness into the bright firelight. The man dismounts. "All quiet?" asks John. "Yes," answers the watch; "not a stir out of them yet." Another watchman now rides up on the other side, his horse shying slightly as he nears the tent, and makes a similar report. John and Desmard mount, and make their way round the mob from fire to fire, until they meet on the other side. Some of the cattle are lying down, almost in the path, and they nearly stumble over them in the darkness.

"How—ah—vewy intewesting this is!" remarks Desmard; "quite—ah—womantic, keeping midnight watch. The—ah—deah cweateahs seem to have—ah—made up their minds to—ah—behave themselves."

"Yes," said John, "for a little; but in about half an hour's time you will find that it will take you all your time to keep them in the camp, and perhaps they may trouble us for nearly an hour, but will then settle down and (unless disturbed) remain perfectly quiet until morn-

ing. I chose this watch on that very account. About eleven o'clock every night they will rise, and move in the same manner all through the journey."

"How—ah—vewy singulah!"

It happened exactly as John had said. One by one the cattle rose and stretched themselves, until the whole camp became alive with a moving, bellowing, dusky crowd, incessantly endeavouring to straggle away. It required much vigilance and activity on the part of both West and Desmard to keep them together, and the latter proved himself a very efficient assistant.

At last the cattle began to settle once more. One by one they selected new sleeping-places, and, dropping first on their knees, they lazily sank down on the ground with a flop, emitting a loud sigh of content as they did so.

John had stationed himself on the side of the cattle nearest home, leaving the most easily guarded side to Desmard, and was congratulating himself at hearing the welcome sigh heaved all around him when—a sudden rush—a whirr—a tearing, crashing, roaring, thundering noise was heard; a confused whirl of dark forms swept before him, and the camp, so full of life a minute ago, is desolate. It was "a rush," a stampede.

Desperately he struck his horse with the spurs, and tore through the darkness after the flying mob, guided by the smashing roar ahead of him. Several times he came violently into collision with saplings and branches, and at last, in crossing a creek, he fell headlong with his horse in a water-worn gully, out of which he managed to extricate himself, happily without having sustained any injury. But not so with the horse—the creature groaned and struggled, but could not rise.

Undoing the bridle, John climbs out again and listens. The noise of the retreating mob can still be heard in the distance, and he thinks he can also distinguish shouts. Horses are grazing near; and hastily catching the first he came to, he jumped on its back, and had proceeded nearly a hundred yards before he recollected that he had forgotten to remove the hobbles.

In remedying his mistake, he now observes that the animal which he has chosen is the most noted buck-jumper in the mob—one that few would venture to ride saddled, but not one barebacked. He does not

give it a second thought, however, so intent is he on pursuing the cattle. He flies along, urging the creature with the hobbles in his hand. He does not know where he is going, but keeps straight ahead on chance, and at last has the satisfaction of hearing the bellowing once more in the distance. He gallops up and finds that one of the men, mounted on Desmard's horse, has managed to stop the break-aways. Presently another man and Blucher ride up. They watch the cattle together until morning, for the animals are terrified, and ready to stampede again.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—ON THE ROAD—ABORIGINAL INNOCENTS—A WET NIGHT ON WATCH—DODGING COWS.

By daylight the rest of the men came up, and the cattle were driven back, and once more started along the road. As they returned to camp broken saplings and branches attest the force of last night's flight, and some of the cattle appear more or less disabled. It had been most fortunate that they were stopped so quickly, for in a short time they would have split up in many directions, and the mustering of them afresh would have caused much delay.

At breakfast John asked Desmard if anything had occurred on his side of the camp to start the mob.

"Well—ah—no," said he. "I weally am ignorant of any cause. Just—ah—before they went all was—ah—quiet. One—ah—pooch cweatah neah me lay down and—ah—uttered a most heart-wending sigh. She—ah—seemed most—ah—unhappy, so I—ah—dismounted, and—ah—walked up to her, and—ah—she weally was most ungwateful, she—ah—actually wushed at me, and—ah—vewy neahly caught me,

and then—ah—something fwightened the rest, and—ah—some one took my horse."

The men roared while John explained to the well-meaning cause of the trouble, that the cattle being totally unused to the sight of a man on foot at night, his near approach to them had caused the alarm; and, indeed, quieter cattle might have objected to his richly-coloured garments.

West's horse lay where he fell. His neck was broken.

They are now on the direct track of travelling mobs of cattle and sheep, on their way to stock new country. They camp each night where some other mob have rested the night before them. The stations they pass are mostly worked by bachelors. The roughness of their surroundings indicate the want of feminine influence.

Blacks are being allowed in for the first time at one station they pass, and some of the young men employed on it amuse themselves in a good-humoured way with the unsophisticated aboriginals, to whom

everything is perfectly new and strange. The natives especially admire the short-cropped hair of the white man, and make signs expressive of the ardent desire they possess to wear their own in a similar fashion. They have never seen a pair of shears, and shriek with childish joy on noting the rapidity with which an amateur barber, holding his patient at arm's-length, crops his long curly hair to the bone, tastefully leaving a high ridge from the forehead to the neck, after the fashion of a cock's-comb. All must be shorn in turn, and ingenuity is taxed to multiply new and startling fashions. Another begs to be allowed to fire off a gun, and receives an overloaded one, the result being a sudden upset, and an increased reverence for the white man's strength. A bottle of scent is held to the nose of a wild-looking fellow, who has just been christened by the name of "Bloody-bones," of which he is immensely proud. He cannot endure the smell, and turns away, expressing his disgust by holding his nose and imitating sickness. One pertinacious blackfellow insists upon being permitted to smoke, and is handed a pipe, in which has been artfully concealed below the tobacco a thimbleful of gunpowder, occasioning of course an explosion as soon as the fire reaches it, to the surprise of the savage, who thinks himself shot.

Horse-exercise is also greatly sought after, and one powerful middle-aged man entreats so persistently in his own language, and by signs, that the favour is granted. An old race-horse with a peculiarly hard mouth and spirited action is tied up hard by. A brilliant idea enters the head of a genius who is plagued beyond endurance by the would-be cavalier. He unsaddles "old Chorister," and undoes the throat-lash, so that

should the horse get away the bridle may be easily rubbed off by him. The grizzly warrior is assisted to mount. The reins are put in his hands, but he prefers clutching the mane. One—two—three—off! The old hurdle-horse receives a cut across the rump, and perhaps remembering past triumphs on the turf, he makes a start which would have done credit to his most youthful days. Unguided, he gets in among some broken gullies, and clears each in gallant style, the black man sitting like a bronze statue. In an instant he is out of sight, leaving the tribe in a whirl of admiration at his rapid disappearance, and the whites convulsed with laughter at the old fellow's surprise, and monkey-like seat. By-and-by the rider comes back on foot, bridle in hand, shaking his head, and saying, "Tumbel down." He is offered another mount, but declines for the present.

Day after day the routine of work was unchanged. Sometimes the pasture over which they travelled was very bare, and the water bad and scarce. Dead animals were passed every mile or two. Most of the ordinary operations of life had to be got over under difficulties. When the beef ran short, a beast had to be shot on the camp, and salted on the ground, its own hide doing duty as the salting-table.

Every alternate Sunday, when the state of grass and water permitted, the cattle were halted, and clothes were washed. All hands had got thoroughly into the work, and the change for the better in Desmond, who had discarded his gorgeous apparel after the night of the rush, became very marked. He grew more useful and practical every day.

Sometimes men from the camps ahead or behind stayed all night at West's, when looking for stray cattle or horses.

One evening a blackfellow rode up. He wore neither hat nor boots, and his wild look, and inability to speak English, denoted that he was a *myall* of one of the tribes lately let in at the stations they had just passed, who had been induced to accompany some travelling mob, the owner of which had not been able to procure a boy when further south.

Desmard happened to be alone at the camp, the rest being all engaged elsewhere. The grotesque-looking savage jogged up, all legs and wings, and dismounting pointed to his horse with the words—

“Gobble-Gobble——”

“Gobble—ah—Gobble?” interrogated Desmard.

The nigger nodded his head with its shock of tangled curls, and grinned, showing a set of strong white teeth, like a dog’s.

“You are—ah—hungwy, I suppose?” said the white man, producing a large plate full of bread and beef, which the sable stockman soon disposed of, and rising, once more uttered the words—

“Gobble — Gobble, Gobble — Gobble——”

“Gobble — ah — Gobble?” repeated Desmard, with surprise.

The blackfellow nodded.

Desmard returned to the dray, and produced an additional supply, which was also despatched.

Once more the savage grinned and pointed to his horse.

“Gobble, Gobble.”

“Gobble — ah — Gobble,” again repeated Desmard reflectively, offering more food, which the blackfellow lovingly looked at but rejected, pointing to his distended stomach.

“Gobble — ah — Gobble — singulah—but vewy—ah—suggestive. I—ah—rejoice Jacky-Jacky is not heah.”

The blackfellow now put his feet

together, and jumped about imitating the action of a hobbled horse, upon which light at once dawned on the Englishman, who provided the delighted *myall* with the articles in question. He had, it turned out, been sent by his master to look for a stray horse, and had been ordered to borrow hobbles at every camp he stayed at, they being scarce at his own.

Desmard began to acquire habits of observation about this time, and among other things, by watching the cook, he discovered the art of making a damper. This interested him greatly, and he confessed to the “doctor” the ill success of his own first attempt in the baking line, the night before he arrived at Ungahrun.

“I—ah—had camped out for—ah—the first time, in order to—ah—inuah myself to—ah—hardship, and—ah—wished to make a damper—which I—ah—heard was most—ah—delicious. I—ah—made a large fire, and—ah—mixed up the—ah—flour with some—ah—watah in a quart-pot, and—ah—after stirring it, I—ah—made a hole in the—ah—ashes, and I—ah—poured in the mixture, but—ah—though I was nearly blinded, I—ah—covered it up, and—ah—waited, and—ah—waited,—but vewy singulah to say, when I—ah—looked for the damper, it was—ah—not there; but I see now that I—ah—went the wrong way to—ah—work.”

Shortly after this the travellers experienced a change in the weather. Frequent thunderstorms came on, and lasted all night, occasionally continuing during the day also. It was a most miserable time. The wretched cattle kept moving about on the puddled-up, muddy camp, bellowing out their discontent, and desire for higher and drier quarters, their unhappiness being only

exceeded by that of the drovers. The watch, clothed in oilskins, or with blankets tied round their necks, splashed and bagged their way around the restless brutes, who constantly endeavoured to steal away on the dark nights, the broad lightning glare alone revealing the fact to the much harassed sentries. Unceasingly, unmercilessly, down poured the heavy rain. The men on watch get wet through almost at once, and sit shivering on their shivering horses. Every five minutes they bend their legs to allow the water to run out of their long boots.

How they long for the slow hours to pass, so that they may get under the shelter of the friendly tarpaulin! At last the hour arrives, but there is no time to stand at the fire as usual this night. Indeed there is none to stand by. It went out long ago. One of them shouts out to the next men for duty, and hurries back to assist in looking after the barely manageable crowd.

The relief now turn out of their blankets and look outside. Everything black, a steady down-pour of rain. Everything dripping,—the very ground under their feet oozes out water. They light their pipes hastily, and fasten their blankets around their necks. Splash,—splash,—splash,—a horse comes up, and one of the watch dismounts.

“How are they behaving?”

“Bad. You’ve got your work before you,” answers the other.

“Whereabout is the camp? they seem to be roaring everywhere. I’m blowed if I can see a yard in front of me.”

“As soon as you get clear of the dray, stop a moment, and the lightning will show you.”

No. 2 rides off, cursing the day he took to cattle-droving, and No. 1 turns in, dripping wet,

boots and all, like a trooper’s horse (his other clothes were soaked the day before). Still he is under cover, which he feels to be a mercy. His comrade is relieved in like manner, and follows his example, and before long they are both sound asleep.

Daylight breaks upon an equally wretched state of affairs. The blackboys have indeed managed to light a fire in a neighbouring hollow tree, and the cook has with difficulty boiled doughboys, which, although tough and indigestible, are nevertheless hot, and are washed down with pannikins of steaming tea.

There is, however, no time to dry the soaking clothes. The blankets, wet and muddy, are rolled up in a hasty bundle and tossed on the dray. By-and-by, when the sun comes out, the blow-flies will deposit their disgusting eggs upon them, which the heat will hatch. The trembling horses, whose hanging heads and drooping under-lips and ears bespeak their abject misery, are saddled. Many of them suffer from bad saddle-galls, which are rendered excruciatingly tender by the constant wet, and in spite of every care they bend in acute agony under the weight of their riders as they are mounted.

A few cows have calved since they started, but the number increases as the calving season approaches, and causes much trouble, labour, and loss.

As it is impossible for the young things to follow their mothers, they are knocked on the head as soon as observed, but the mothers insist upon returning to their dead offspring. They are sent for each day, and are driven after the advancing mob, merely to steal back again on the first opportunity. Many of them make back, and are recovered two or three times before they cease

to think of their young ones. Various expedients are adopted to obviate this, but all fail. An old hand, however, whose life has been spent on the road, has recourse to a plan which he confidently affirms he never knew to fail, if properly carried out. He watches until a calf is dropped, and after allowing the mother to lick it for a short time, causes her to be driven away. Then killing the little creature, he skins it carefully; and turning the skin inside out, so as to prevent it coming in contact with anything which can alter its smell, he ties it behind his saddle.

On coming into camp at night, the skin is stuffed hastily, and laid at the foot of a tree. The mother is brought up quietly. She is thinking of her little one. She sees the dummy. She stops, and gazes. "Moo-oo-oo." She advances: it is like her own. She smells it: it is the smell. She licks it: it is her very own. She utters a tender "moo-oo-oo," and contentedly stands guard over the stuffed hide, to the intense satisfaction and joy of Blucher and Gunpowder, upon whom most of the trouble of tracking and recovering the mothers of former calves has fallen.

"My word," says Blucher, in an ecstasy of sly merriment to the old drover, as he watches the fond and deceived parent lick the semblance of her young one—"cawbawn you and me gammon old woman."* And indeed it is a blessing that she stays, for the constant fetching back of the straying cows is telling severely upon the jaded horses.

The plan is adopted, and succeeds in every case, saving a world of trouble; and every night two or three cows may be seen watching as many calfskins, while the drowsy watchman sits nodding on a log by the fire.

Day by day they continue their weary pilgrimage. Sometimes they follow the banks of a clear running stream, in whose limpid waters the travel-worn animals stand drinking, as if they would drain its fountains dry. Sometimes they wend their toiling path over rugged ranges, grinding down the shell of their tired hoofs on the sharp-cornered pebbles and granite grit. At times they feed on the luscious herbage and luxuriant blue-grasses of a limestone country, and anon they make the most of the kangaroo-grasses of the poorer sandy lands; but onward still they march for their new home in the "never, never" country.

CHAPTER XXIX.—FORMING A STATION—TRIALS AND TROUBLES OF A PIONEER.

About this time John received a batch of letters from the south, by a gentleman who was travelling out to a station lately taken up by him, and who had kindly undertaken the duty of mailman *en passant*, no postal arrangement having been as yet made for this unsettled part of the country.

Among others is one from Fitzgerald, detailing various items of local news, intermixed with business matters. Nothing further had been heard of Ralph or his fellow-criminal Cane, and the pursuit had apparently been given up. It was conjectured that they would endeavour to make their way down

* "You and I deceived the old cow beautifully."

to New South Wales, and perhaps join some of the various bushrangers who were infesting the gold-fields of that colony.

Cosgrove senior had taken the matter very much to heart, and had gone to Sydney, after appointing a new superintendent to manage Cambaranga, and it was supposed that he would return to England. Stone and his father-in-law, Mr Gray, had changed their minds about sending out stock to the new country at present, and would in all probability wait until after the wet season had passed by. Stone and Bessie were enjoying the delights of Sydney. All were well at Ungahrun and at Betyammo.

In a postscript Fitzgerald added that his endeavours to find out further particulars about Miss Bouverie had proved unavailing: all he could learn was that she had accompanied Mr and Mrs Berkeley to Melbourne, and no one knew when they purposed returning.

One letter, from the smallness of its size, escaped his notice until he had finished with the others. To his surprise it was addressed in the handwriting of a lady; and hastily tearing it open to learn the signature, he was no less surprised than enchanted to read the words, "Your affectionate friend, Ruth."

She still remembered him, then; and with affection! He was so much pleased with the thought, that some time elapsed before he read his much-longed-for letter. It was dated Sydney, and commenced as follows:—

"MY DEAR MR JOHN,—You will no doubt be surprised at receiving a letter from me dated as above. We arrived here about a month ago, and I only discovered your address within the last few days from Mr Cosgrove's Sydney agent,

Mr Bond, a very nice man. I do hope you will answer this letter. I am afraid you did not receive the letters which I continued to write to you for some time after your departure, because I never received any in return."

[Indeed Ralph took care that she should not do so; for, hating the intimacy which he saw existing between John and his half-sister, as he called her—an intimacy which his mind and habits rendered him utterly incapable of participating in—he made it his business to intercept and destroy the few letters which John had written, managing, at the same time, to possess himself of Ruth's correspondence, which suffered a similar fate.]

The letter went on to say how sorry she had been to learn that he had left Mr Cosgrove's station, for her step-father spoke of his ingratitude with much bitterness; and although she could not believe him ungrateful, perhaps, if he made her aware of the circumstances, she might mediate, and put things once more in proper train.

She recalled the days of their past lives with much affectionate remembrance; and the whole letter breathed a warm sympathy which, considering the length of time that had elapsed since they last saw each other, awoke many a cherished feeling in John's breast, and he read and re-read it until he could have repeated it word for word; and on the very first opportunity he wrote a long letter in return, detailing all that had happened to him,—how his letters had remained unanswered, and how his memory of her was as fresh this day as when he last saw her. He could not bear to mention Ralf's name, however; for he knew that by this time she must have learnt the dreadful story, which would have

the effect of publishing his crime throughout the land.

Desmard had also a numerous batch of letters, both colonial and English—one of the former containing an advantageous proposal to join, in taking up “new country,” a squatter who was under an obligation to the young man’s father, and who had only lately learnt of his being in the colony.

The country about them now presented daily evidences of its unsettled state. The travellers pass camps of sheep and cattle spelling on patches of good grass to recruit, or waiting for supplies to proceed further. Every one carried a revolver or carbine. Stories of attacks by blacks—many of them greatly exaggerated—are rife; and the talk is all of taking up and securing country. Rumours fly about fine tracts of hitherto unknown land, of immense areas of downs, and splendid rivers still further out, and so on. Empty drays pass downwards on the road to port for supplies. Occasionally a yellow, fever-stricken individual pursues his way south to recruit, or is seen doing his “shivers” under some bullock-dray camped beside the road. At length they come to the commencement of the fine country discovered by Stone and his companions, and arrive at the camp of Mr Byng, the gentleman who sold to Fitzgerald the tract of land they intend settling on. Byng himself has brought out stock, and has settled on a portion which became his by lot. It is the very farthest spot of ground occupied by white men.

The cattle are now halted, and left nominally under the charge of Desmard; while Byng rides ahead with John to point out to him the country, and the best road to it. Blucher accompanies them, and much amuses his master by the

excessive sanguinariness of his disposition. They cross the fresh tracks of blacks frequently, and each time Blucher begs that they may be attacked. John, who is by no means of a bloodthirsty nature, and rather shudders at the idea of a possible encounter with the savages, endeavours to explain that, when no aggression has taken place, the natives must be left alone; but Blucher cannot see things in that light.

“That fellow—rogue, cawbawn no good,” he urges.

“What for you yabber (talk) like it that?” asked John. “Bail (not) that fellow been try to kill you and me.”

“Nebber mind,” returned the savage youth, his eyes nearly starting out of his head. “Come on; me want to chewt (shoot) him cawbawn (much).”

This amiable desire not being gratified, Blucher would fall back sulkily, evidently setting down John’s refusal to a dread of the aboriginals.

They pushed their way over the lovely country which Stone had undergone so much to discover, passing through part of the run about to be stocked by him and Mr Gray; and in about seventy miles they “made” a mountain, from the top of which Byng pointed out, in a general way, the boundaries of that portion of the wilderness which they had come so far to subdue. It was by no means as fine a country as that which they had lately passed over, but seemed well grassed and watered, and was darkly clothed with heavy masses of timber.

John’s heart beat high as he silently gazed on the vast territory over which he was to rule as absolute monarch. The future lay wrapped in impenetrable mystery; but whether success or misfortune should be the ultimate result of his labours,

of one thing he was determined—no efforts on his part should be wanting to promote a favourable termination to the undertaking.

On returning to camp the march was once more resumed; and at last our hero had the satisfaction of knowing that his nomadic life was at an end for a period. The cattle, although poor and weary, had on the whole made an excellent journey, and the deaths were by no means numerous. John's troubles, however, had only begun. He had calculated on securing the services of some of the men who had driven up the cattle in putting up huts, making a small yard, and in looking after the stock. This he found them ready enough to do, but at such an exorbitant price, that no arrangement could be come to. They organised a small trades-union of their own, and united in making demands which West felt, in justice to his partner, he could not accede to. He offered higher wages than were given by any one of the squatters whose stations they had passed. No; they would accept nothing less than what they demanded.

They were well aware that he was alone with his two blackboys—for Desnard had announced his intention of going south. The two boys were not to be depended on, and might bolt home to their tribe the moment the thought entered their heads. Upwards of a thousand head of cattle had to be looked after on a new run in a country infested by wild blacks, the very smell of whom crossing the animals' feeding-ground might stampede them. The wet season was almost at hand, and a hundred little things had to be attended to, the neglect of which might result in serious loss, and danger to life. But they stuck to their decision, and rode off in a body,—for John

had resolved to perish rather than to submit to their extortionate demands.

In this strait Desnard's manly generous disposition showed itself. He flew from one to another, arguing, persuading, and upbraiding by turns, but in vain; and finally, relinquishing his own intended journey, he made known to John his intention of sticking to him until the end of the wet season should bring fresh men in search of employment. It was useless that the departing drovers reminded him that a long stretch of unoccupied country lay between him and the nearest habitation, and that in their company he might traverse it in safety: he merely turned his back contemptuously on the speakers, muttering to himself—

“I—ah—would not be seen in—ah—the company of—ah—such a set of native dogs.”

So they went away, and John grasped, with gratitude in his heart, the hand of the brave young fellow, whose faithful honest help was, notwithstanding his inexperience, invaluable at such a time.

Not a moment could now be lost. Everything depended on themselves, for a large river and several wide creeks, which, in a short time, would be flowing deep and rapid, intervened between them and Byng's station. The cattle were turned loose on some fine grass in the space formed by the junction of two large creeks, and all hands set to work to build a bark-hut. This had to be done during the hours which could be spared from looking after the cattle. Each morning, by daylight, the horses were brought up, and all hands went round the farthest tracks made by the scattered herd.

Desnard was on these occasions always accompanied by one of the boys, for John feared that he

might get bushed; but he himself, and the other boy, went separately.

The creatures were inclined, on the whole, to stay, and chose out two or three shady camps to which they nearly all resorted, as the sun became strong. On these camps it was their custom to lie until about four in the afternoon, when they would gradually draw off in all directions, feeding through the entire night. Many calved about this time, and such as did so usually "took" to the vicinity of the place where the calves were dropped. Some of the leaders, however, caused much anxiety and trouble, owing to their determination to make back to Cambaranga, and a strict look-out had to be kept that they did not get away unobserved. Day by day the cattle on the camps were gone through, and absent ones noted and searched for until found. In this duty the blackboys were simply invaluable; and their interest in the work, and untiring skill in tracking, contributed chiefly to the success which attended the pioneers in keeping the herd together. No sooner did a mob of cattle make a start, than some one in going round the "outside tracks" was sure to discover the fact, and instant pursuit never failed to result in the return of the deserters. The horses gave less trouble, and contentedly stuck to a well-grassed flat near the camp.

The departure of his men gave John no time to seek a suitable situation for a head-station, and the approaching wet weather warned him to make hasty preparations against it. His tents had been destroyed by a fire which took place some time before, during his absence from the camp, owing to the carelessness of the cook in not burning the grass around his galley.

The tarpaulin was needed for the stores, and he was therefore under the necessity of building a hut. Setting to work with Desnard, he soon had the frame up, while the boys endeavoured to cut bark. This latter proved to be a peculiarly difficult job, owing to the season of the year. When the ground is full of moisture, the trees are also full of sap, and most kinds of bark come off easily; but in dry or frosty weather, when the sap is in the ground, the very opposite is the case. The method of stripping bark is as follows: A straight-barrelled trunk is selected, and a ring cut round it near the ground, and another about six feet higher up. A long cut is then made perpendicularly, joining the two rings, and the edge of it is prised up with the tomahawk, until a grasp of the bark can be got with the hand. If inclined to come off, the whole sheet strips with a pleasant tearing sound, and is laid flat on the ground to dry, with a log as a weight above it. In two or three days the sheet becomes somewhat contracted in size, but lighter and tougher, and thoroughly impervious to moisture. It is used in many ways. It makes a capital roof, and for temporary walls of huts it is excellent. Bunks to sleep on, tables, &c., are improvised from it, and, on a new station, nothing is more useful.

Owing to the long dry season, the boys found bark-stripping exceedingly arduous work, and after exhausting all the artifices used by natives in the task, barely enough was secured to cover in the roof of the little hut. One gable-end was shut up by a portion of a partly-destroyed tent, the other by a couple of raw hides tied up across it. The walls were of saplings, stuck into the ground side by side, and confined against the wall-plate by an-

other long straight sapling. When finished, the little hut was certainly not much to look at, but the builders congratulated each other on having a roof of some sort over their heads; and in the not improbable event of an attack by blacks, it would prove a shelter in some degree. With this object in view, and to prevent their movements inside being detected through the interstices of the saplings by the sharp eyes of the prowling savages, all the spare bags and pieces of old blanketing which could be procured were fastened around the walls.

They had barely completed this apology for a dwelling when the tropical rain commenced, apparently timing its arrival to a day. Down it poured, in one continuous deluge, for hours. It was almost invariably heralded by thunderstorms, and beginning in the afternoon, lasted till evening. This permitted them for a couple of weeks to make their usual grand tour around the cattle, but as the rains extended their period of duration, the ground became exceedingly boggy, and the cattle were, perforce, obliged to remain about the sound sandy country on which their instinct led them to select their camps.

During the short intervals of hot, steaming, fine weather, the pioneers would endeavour to go through the herd, but the undertaking was toilsome and severe. Plodding on foot through the heavy black soil, or soft boggy country, from one hard sandy tract to another,—for in such places riding was out of the question,—they would lead the plunging, sweating horses along a few steps at a time. Water lay in great lagoons over the surface of the country, covered with flocks of duck and ibis. The grass grew rank and long, and sore-

ly impeded their movements. It was, moreover, by no means a pleasant reflection that, should they, when thus singly toiling through these swampy bogs, drop across a party of aborigines (than which nothing was more likely), certain death would ensue, bringing with it disaster upon the rest of the little party.

As it was utterly impossible to muster and make a count of the cattle, John was obliged to content himself with paying occasional visits to them; but notwithstanding that a marked improvement was visible in the condition of those he saw, the anxiety told heavily upon him.

Apart from the miseries of mosquitoes, sand-flies, and blight-flies, the little community passed their spare time pleasantly together; and Desmard manufactured a chessboard of a piece of bark, marking its squares with charcoal, and he and John fought many a good fight on it with their primitive-looking men. John also took much pains to instruct his friend in the art of cutting out and plaiting stock-whips from the salted hides,—an accomplishment which the latter picked up rapidly, besides acquiring much other practical knowledge; and he was afterwards accustomed to say, that the necessity for exertion brought about during his pioneering with John, and the self-reliance thus gained, had made a different man of him.

Game was on the whole scarce. Plain turkeys and ducks were numerous, but the kangaroos, &c., had been kept under by the aborigines, whose old camps lay thick around the hut. It certainly surprised the white men that the natives never made their appearance openly. Sometimes Blucher or Gunpowder would detect their tracks in the neighbourhood of the

hut, but as yet they probably entertained a superstitious awe towards the owners of so many huge horned animals.

The rain continued to deluge the flat country about the little head-station, and the creeks began to overflow their banks. The wet soaked up through the floor of their abode. The walls were covered with a green slimy fur. Even the inside of the gun-barrels, cleaned the night before, took on this kind of rust. Percussion-caps and priming had to be renewed every day. Minor trials and discomforts were also not wanting. The close, damp weather, causing the flour to heat, bred in it innumerable weevils; and the supply of tea and sugar failing (much having been destroyed by wet), the party had to depend chiefly upon the everlasting salt junk, eked out with what they could shoot. At last fever began to make its unwelcome presence, and John, whose mind was most harassed, became the first victim. No proper medicine being to hand or procurable, he accordingly suffered much.

It was miserable at this time to look out of doors at night. Far and wide nothing could be seen in the bleak clouded moonlight but water, through which the grass stalks reared their dismal heads in the most melancholy manner, and a dark mass of trees occupied the background. The croak, croak of the frogs was sometimes broken by the distant bellow of a beast as it called to its fellows.

The occupants of this little outpost of civilisation were indeed isolated from all others. For countless miles to the north none of their race intervened between them and the Indian Ocean. To the west a still more dreary and still wider expanse of unknown territory ran. To the east, a *bêche-*

de-mer station or two along the coast alone broke the otherwise inhospitable character of the shore. Southwards, for nearly three hundred miles, the blacks were still kept out like wild beasts; and their nearest neighbours, seventy miles away, were not in a much more enviable plight than themselves.

The incessant rains now caused the floods to increase, and gradually the backwater approached the little dwelling. The bullock-dray had sunk so deep in the soft soil that there was no hope of shifting it until fine weather came, and in any case the working bullocks could not have been mustered. Nearer and nearer rose the water. The country behind them for several miles was perfectly level. Rations were stowed away on the rafters, and preparations made to strengthen the little hut, when fortunately the waters subsided.

Day by day John's fever increased, and matters began to look very gloomy, when a change in the weather took place. It became possible to move about, and the cattle were found to be all right. One or two men pushed their way out in search of employment, and were at once engaged. Medicine was procured, and John speedily improved as his spirits rose. The blackboys, who had undergone suffering and privation in the most cheerful manner during the wet season, now revelled in sunshine, and their camp-fire at night resounded with hilarious laughter or never-ending *corroborrees*. The horses had grown fat, notwithstanding the attacks of their enemies the flies, and now kicked like Jeshurun when ridden. Numbers of young calves could also be seen in every mob of cattle, necessitating the erection of a branding-yard. Rations were borrowed, pending the arrival of supplies ordered previously, and soon

neighbours began to settle around, and a travelling mob or two passed by. Desmard took his leave of John with much regret on both sides, their acquaintance having ripened into firm friendship, and started on his southern journey. A proper site for a head-station was decided on, and before long a small though comfortable little cottage sheltered our hero, while a small stock-yard and paddock afforded convenience in working the run.

About three months after the close of the wet weather, Stone arrived on his country, bringing with him upwards of 10,000 sheep. He was accompanied by Bessie, who could not be prevailed upon to stay behind. They travelled much in the same manner as did John with his cattle, but not having the same necessity for economy, they were provided with many little luxuries and conveniences, which rendered the journey more endurable.

The sheep camped in a body at night, and at daylight were divided roughly into mobs of about 1500, which were driven along the road by the shepherds. Much annoyance was sometimes caused by the unaccountable stupidity of a few of the drovers, who never failed to take the wrong road when such an opportunity presented itself. Others distinguished themselves by dropping mobs of sheep in the long grass, many animals being thus irretrievably lost. On the whole, however, the quietness which characterised the camp at night compensated for the labours of the day. Bessie's light-hearted gaiety and continual good-humour made all around her happy, and she bore the hardships of the first few months in her new home most uncomplainingly. Much had to be effected. Yards

and huts had to be built for the sheep and shepherds. A head-station had to be erected. Supplies were wanted, and had to be brought up, and a paddock was also necessary. Preparations for the various lambings were urgent, and arrangements for shearing had to be considered. It was no easy time. A scarcity of labour was constantly followed by a demand for increased wages. The positions of master and servant became often inverted, and the latter sometimes gratified his malice by taking his departure when his services were most required.

John had a busy time likewise. The facility of moving about offered to them by the fine weather induced his cattle to stray. Hunting-parties of aboriginals crossed their feeding-grounds, causing some of the mobs to start and leave the run, and occasionally a few spears were thrown at the frightened animals.

John would willingly have paid several beasts yearly to the original possessors of his country, were it possible by such means to purchase their goodwill, for the damage done by a few blacks walking across their pasture can scarcely be appreciated by those who are unacquainted with the natural habits of cattle. Negotiations, however, would have been fruitless, and watchfulness was his only remedy. A single start sufficed to make the creatures alarmed and suspicious for weeks. Continually on the look-out for their enemies, they took fright and rushed for miles without stopping, on the occurrence of the slightest unaccustomed noise; and even the smell of Gunpowder or Blucher, when passing on horseback, was sufficient to cause a mob to raise their heads inquiringly.

CENTRAL ASIA: THE MEETING-PLACE OF EMPIRES.

CENTRAL ASIA is almost as little known to the external world as Central Africa is, while we want to know much more about it. The features, too, and commingled races of the former region, are in many respects much stranger and more difficult to comprehend than those of the latter. It is easier to form a picture to the mind's eye of the heart of the "Dark Continent," with its wide savannahs and marshes, its dense forests and broad rivers, and its unorganised population, than of the extraordinary commingling of lofty mountain-ranges, vast sandy deserts, and scattered oases of fertility, with a separate State and population in each, which are to be found in the secluded region which lies in the heart of the continent of Asia and Europe.

This central quadrangle of the Old World, which has so long lain beyond the pale of general interest or of civilised empire—a No Man's Land, save in part from the overflow of Chinese power—is now becoming the meeting-place of the three greatest empires of the world—greatest, at least, in population and territory. Within the last ten years Russia has been advancing rapidly into that secluded region; she now fills nearly the whole western half of it, coming in contact with Chinese power in the eastern half; and ere long her legions will have crossed the Oxus and come within sight of the snow-clad summits of the Hindoo Koosh—possibly by that time sentinelled by the red-coats of England. Public attention is turning to this little-known part of the world in anxious expectancy; and we believe it will not be unseasonable if we here sketch broadly the features of the region, and

the important events which are there in progress.

Central Asia—the region extending eastwards from the Caspian sea to the Wall-topped mountain-range which forms the frontier of China Proper—has for ages been going from good to bad, alike physically and in the condition of its people. Looking at the present aspect of the region—a vast expanse of barren deserts interspersed by isolated oases,—it seems well-nigh incredible that *there* was the early home of all the leading nations of the world; of the Semitic and Aryan races—of Celt, Teuton, and Slav, of Persians and Hindoos, of the Hebrews and Assyrians. The story of the primeval migrations from that home in Upper Asia is only told by glimpses in the Book of Genesis, in isolated allusions in ancient Hindoo literature, and also, it appears, in some of the recovered tablets of long-buried Nineveh. In Semitic tradition the region figures as the site of Paradise; while the ancient Hindoos looked back to it as the land of the Sages, and where the Brahmanical tongue was spoken in its greatest purity. In the second, but still very remote and dim stage of history, we see Balkh, the chief town of the region and the capital of an Aryan people, where the flag of the new Zoroastrian religion first waved, before the Persians came down by Herat into the Zagros mountains, and became the neighbours of the Semitic lords of the Mesopotamian valley. Again, a thousand years or more, and Alexander the Great led the Greeks back to the earliest home of their race, and at that time the region north of Persia and Affghanistan

was full of walled towns, and was still peopled by the Aryans. Even the Scyths to the north of the Jaxartes (ruled at times by a queen), who battled with the Persian monarchs, and who overran south-western Asia seven centuries before Christ, were neither Tartars nor Turcomans, but ancestors of some of the populations of modern Europe.

When Upper Asia again became visible to European eye, a great change had occurred in the population. Sixteen centuries had elapsed since the conquests of Alexander (which temporarily established European sway in that region to the banks of the Jaxartes), when the marvellous journey of Marco Polo once more revealed Upper Asia, and first brought into light the grand Mongolian empire of China. In the long interval, the Arabian conquests had extinguished the Fire-temples of Zoroaster, and established Semitic influence; and then, first the Turks and next the Tartars had swept down upon the scene from the north-east. The old Aryan peoples had disappeared,—some of them having migrated into Europe, swelling the barbarian rush which finally broke down the grand empire of Rome; and the rule of the Great Khan of the Tartars extended from the frontiers of Poland to the Sea of China. Despite the desolating invasion of Chengis Khan and the ruined condition of once-royal Balkh, flourishing cities still abounded; and Samarkand, Bokhara, Balkh, and other towns, joined in overland trade with the still more wealthy cities of China, which empire was then at the height of its material prosperity. If we look at the same region now—if we follow the narrative of travellers across the great plains through which the Oxus and Jaxartes flow, reaching from the Caspian to the mountains—

we see a land of desolation, where ruins are far more numerous than the living towns.

It has been truly said that the great destroyer of man's works is not Time, but the ruthless hand of man himself. The wrathful passage of a Hoolagoo or a Chenghis, consigning to destruction every city that offered opposition,—even the ceaseless internal feuds of that region, where deserts and oases are intermingled, so that wealth was ever in contiguity to warlike and covetous barbarism, have undoubtedly done much to destroy this ancient prosperity. But manifestly, physical changes have been disastrously at work. Geology tells the startling truth, undreamt of a lifetime ago, that the greater part of what is now land was water,—that what are now uplands or mountain-tops, once lay at the bottom of the ocean,—and that volcanic action has effected mighty changes upon the earth's surface. We know that the Mediterranean was at one time a true inland sea, severed alike from the Euxine and the Atlantic, before the rupture of the Straits of Gibraltar and the Bosphorus; while, on the other hand, as the line of the natron lakes indicates, the Mediterranean may have been united with the Red Sea, making Africa an island-continent. We now know, also, that the stony wastes of the Sahara are the bottom of an ancient sea, which made a peninsula of northern Africa, the country of the Berbers,—which old sea, together with the other of which we shall speak presently, wellnigh realised the "ocean-stream" of Homer and other early Greek poets. But we are too prone to believe that such physical changes were confined to long ago, and have played no appreciable part within the verge of human history or veritable tradition. We

forget that, before our own eyes, Greenland is rising, and within no great time has become utterly barren in consequence of this upheaval; that the old "Green Land" of the early settlers is now covered with perpetual snow, and the icy glaciers come down to the cliffs on the sea. We forget that Norway, too, is undergoing an upheaval, noticeable for several centuries,—a fact which seems to show that that country was able to maintain a larger population in the days of the sea-kings than at present. Nay, more, the change, gradual though it doubtless was, probably contributed to the ceaseless efflux of Scandinavian rovers, who for several centuries poured not only into Britain and France, but founded Norman settlements in Italy and Sicily, and sent fleets of the dragon-headed galleys into the sunny waters of the Mediterranean.

Physical changes on a great scale have been at work in Central Asia. An old legend in the Brahmanical books tells that the parents of the Hindoos were forced to migrate from Upper Asia by a fiery serpent and snow (of which some writers may find a twin allegory in the flaming sword of the archangel that drove our first parents out of Paradise)—indicating that there was volcanic outburst and diminished temperature, consequent upon upheaval; that the now empty craters of the region then burst into action—either for the first time, or, like Vesuvius in A.D. 79, after an immemorial slumber—with the natural effect of an upheaval of the region. Geology, too, shows that in ancient times the North Sea projected southwards into the very heart of the Old World, extending along the flanks of the Ural chain to the Caucasus and the Persian mountain-range. The subsequent receding of

its waters could only have been owing to a rising, slow or sudden, of the land, such as would be produced by the agencies mentioned in the old legends. The Northern Ocean has ebbed back some two thousand miles, leaving only its deepest pools in the Caspian and Ural Lake. Deprived of this inland ocean, the region would quickly lose temperateness of climate, and also the moisture requisite for fertility. The climate, like that of all inland countries, would become given to extremes,—very cold in winter and intensely hot in summer—as it now is. The grassy or wooded plains of old times would become the waterless steppes of to-day. The cold, too, would lead to the cutting down of the forests for fuel—now so eagerly sought after—thereby still further desiccating the country by no longer attracting either the dews or the rain, still less preserving by umbrageous shade the moisture when it happened to fall.

An eminent writer on physical science has remarked that the formation of the great deltas of the world—those of the Nile and Mississippi—may be seen perfectly illustrated in miniature if one watches the effects of a heavy shower upon the sides of our macadamised roads, where the sandy *débris* is carried down to the gutters in tiny deltas. In like manner, but upon a much larger scale, the vast changes which have occurred in the water-system of Central Asia may be illustrated by what daily meets the eye of thousands of travellers at home, who look at leisure on the face of our country from a railway-train. As the traveller thus traverses the length or breadth of England, numerous small flats or plains may be seen, many of them level as a bowling-green, varying in length from a

few hundred yards to several miles; and in each and all of them a water-course—it may be a river, or merely a ditch—will be seen to traverse the flat; while at the lower end there is always an eminence—it may be hill or mountain, or merely a hardly-noticeable rising of the ground—through which the water-course finds an outlet. Each of those flats or plains has been the bed of a lake, where the soil brought down by the stream has gradually raised the bottom to its present level; and thereafter the stream has worn or burst a passage for its waters through the obstructing heights. Many of our existing lakes are evidently doomed similarly to disappear. Look at the upper end of each of the Cumberland lakes,—indeed of almost all our lakes,—and there will be seen a green flat which has already been silted up, and then a marshy fringe steadily encroaching upon the waters of the lake. Or look at Glencoe, and see the process wellnigh complete. In that lone valley among the Scottish mountains there is still a small lake, which manifestly used to be very much larger; but the stream which passes through it is gradually silting it up with descending *débris*, and in little more than another generation the lakelet will have disappeared, leaving only the streamlet cutting through a green flat of alluvial soil.

It is this drying-up process, and consequent desiccation of the climate, which has produced the adverse physical changes in Central Asia. That region as here defined—viz., reaching from the Caspian to the mountain-frontier of China Proper—is severed into an eastern and western part by the “Roof of the World,”—the broad and lofty mountain-chain running northward from the Hindoo Koosh, and which forms the watershed of Upper

Asia; from whence the Oxus and Jaxartes flow westward into the Aral Lake, while the far vaster rivers of China go eastward on their long and unexplored courses, and after traversing the Flowery Land, fall by many and shifting mouths into the Pacific. Beyond, or eastward of this lofty dividing mountain-chain—called in its southern part the Bolor-tag or plateau of Pamir, and in its north-eastern range the Tien Shan, or the “Heaven-seeking Mountains”—lie the fertile plains of Kashgar and Yarkand, while Kuldja is enfolded at the north-eastern part of the Tien Shan,—countries where Russia and China now meet as neighbours, and in hardly disguised feud.

For the present let us confine our view to the western half of Central Asia—commonly called “Turkestan” or “Independent Tartary”—lying between the Roof of the World and the frontier of Europe. Here we behold a vast expanse of deserts, interspersed with oases, and with two great rivers flowing in nearly parallel north-westerly courses through the region, until they both fall into the Aral Lake. These two great rivers, the Oxus and Jaxartes (calling them by their classical names, which we believe are more familiar to the public than their modern titles,—viz., the Amu Darya and the Sir Darya), have their sources in the central chain of mountains—the Oxus in the plateau of Pamir, and the Jaxartes in the Tien Shan range. In the first part of their course, as they leave the mountains, the adjoining country is well watered, and has many fertile valleys and little plains, wherein, on the Jaxartes, stand Chimkent, Tashkent, and Khodjent; while on the plains of the Oxus—chiefly to the south, between the river and the Hindoo Koosh—stand Kunduz, Balkh, and other towns—

once the site of flourishing settlements and ancient civilisation. Beyond this upper part of their course the two rivers flow in nearly parallel courses through arid deserts,—the great Kizzil Kum desert, about 250 miles broad, covering the whole land between the two rivers; another equally vast desert, the Kara Kum, extends southwards from the Oxus; while the whole region west of the delta of the Oxus, and between the Aral and Caspian, is likewise desert. But there is a third river of note in the region,—namely, the Zarafshan, which descends from a glacier in the mountains only a little to the south of where the Jaxartes enters the plains. The Zarafshan flows due westward for some 200 miles, meandering in many branches, and forming the oasis of Samarkand and Bokhara,—until its waters are at length swallowed up, just as they make a turn southward at Bokhara, as if to fall into the Oxus. This central river-course is the most extensive fertile part of the whole region—surpassing the plains around Balkh, and equalling the fertility of the oasis of Khiva, where the Oxus scatters wide its waters before it falls by numerous courses into the Aral Lake. The oasis of the Zarafshan constitutes the chief portion of the State of Bokhara (which also extends to the north bank of the Oxus), and the famous old city of Samarkand stands in the upper or eastern part of this fertile river-course.

The readiest way to understand the geography of this western half of Central Asia, lying between the Roof of the World and the European frontier, is to bear in mind that originally the great inland sea (of which the Aral and the Caspian are the relics), extended over the whole region up to the base of the broad and lofty mass of mountains which bound it on the east. Thus

the Oxus, Jaxartes, and Zarafshan fell into the sea as soon as they left the mountain-region; and now that the sea has dried up, these rivers have their present course along the sandy, stony bottom of the old sea,—wandering alone and without tributaries through the desert till the two former reach the Aral Lake. The Zarafshan splits up into many branches as soon as it leaves the mountains, disappearing in the sands after turning a portion of the old sea-bottom into the fertile oasis of Samarkand and Bokhara; but the Oxus and Jaxartes each flows in a single stream—the latter until it falls into the Aral Lake, and the former till within some 200 miles of its mouth, at which point it spreads into many streams, creating the oasis of Khiva.

In ancient times, a narrow zone of fertility extended westwards from Khiva to the Caspian, following the course of the Oxus, which then carried its waters to the Caspian Sea. But some centuries ago the Khivans built a great dam across the river at a part where the country is so flat that the waters may travel either way, so that the Oxus was made to take a bend due northwards for a hundred miles, to the Aral Lake; and its old course westwards into the Caspian, still traceable, is marked by ruins, the remains of an extinguished fertility and deserted population.

The Aral lies parallel with the northern part of the Caspian, and to the south of the Aral lies the oasis of Khiva. The whole country west of the lake and the oasis, and between them and the Caspian, is an almost impassable desert; which also extends in unbroken course far eastward from the lower end of the Caspian, sweeping round by the south of Khiva and up the southern bank of the Oxus almost as far as Balkh—and forming the true geo-

graphical boundary between Central Asia and Persia. In the eastern apex of this desert stands the tiny oasis of Merv,—a place now becoming familiar to English newspaper readers as the goal to which Russia is working her way—a coveted outpost on the Affghan frontier.

Such, then, in its broad physical aspects, is Central Asia. Before treating of the new Powers that are breaking into and operating in that vast region, let us pause for a moment to consider what have been the strange vicissitudes and fortunes of the peoples who in succession have occupied this heart of the Old World. First, as to the eventful effects of one part of the physical changes above referred to, on the colonising of Europe with its present race of nations—a matter hitherto unnoticed either by historians or geographers. Consider the western boundaries of the region, while it was still the motherland both of the Semitic race and of the now diverse sections of the far-spread Aryans. Europe, which geographically is merely a peninsula of Asia, was not only the Dark Continent, but was almost, if not entirely, insulated from Asia. The peoples in the old home were girdled in on the west by a great gulf of the Northern Ocean stretching southwards to the Persian mountains,—with, in the north, the lofty Ural chain rising beyond the sea in the dim land of the setting sun. When the physical cataclysm occurred—by a sudden convulsion, according to the ancient legends, and we may still say “comparatively suddenly”—when the North Sea ebbed back, and the Urals rose out of dry land,—even then Europe was accessible only at a few points. Nevertheless, for the first time the Dark Continent of the west was opened; and rounding the shores of the Sea of Azoff, or crossing in

coracles the Bosphorus, Greek and Roman, Celt, Teuton, and Slav began their migrations from the old home into Europe,—not as races, but rather as families or small migrating bodies, which grew into nations with the lapse of centuries. So slow, scattered, and interrupted was this westward migration, that a portion of the great Gothic family still lingered in the Crimea in the days of Marco Polo. In the time of Alexander the Great, Central Asia, westward of the Roof of the World (perhaps even as far as the Desert of Gobi), was occupied by an Aryan population. The Macedonian conqueror came in contact with no strange races south of the Jaxartes, and the Scythians who lived to the north of that river were, as expressly recorded, of the same race as the European Scyths in the valley of the Danube. Thereafter the population of Central Asia underwent great changes. The Turkish race from the Altai Mountains, in the north-east, began to appear on the scene, with the White Huns as their vanguard. The Mongolian power of China then became a martial and conquering empire, and in the sixth and seventh centuries after Christ extended its arms and sovereignty across Asia almost to the shores of the Caspian; and we have books of travel written by Chinamen who about that time journeyed over the whole breadth of Central Asia, traversing its numerous deserts and surmounting the Roof of the World and the Hindoo Koosh, and finally visiting India, and returning in safety to their own country. Such a journey would make the fame of any man at the present day. But the Turkish race gradually increased in the region, and in the eleventh century the Seljooks overran even south-western Asia. Lastly came the Mongols, crossing to

the Altai mountain-chain from their original home in eastern Siberia, on the plains of the Amoor river,—conquering Russia in the west and China in the east, and establishing a gigantic dominion, extending from the frontiers of Poland to the Pacific, and also southwards to the Levant and the Persian Gulf. So complete was the sovereignty of the “Great Khan,” and so orderly the condition of Central Asia, that the golden tablet given by Kublai at Peking “franked” Marco Polo throughout his whole journey from China to the Levant. Even in the time of the Polos, the old Aryan population of Central Asia existed to a larger extent than at present,—the Tajiks, a remnant of the old Persian race, sparsely scattered throughout the country in the upper Oxus and in some of the trading towns, being now the only remnant of the original population.

Not only in Asia Minor, which of old was peopled by the “Yavans,” or Hellenic tribes, but throughout a still larger region in Central Asia, the Aryan race, who in Europe have become the leaders of the world, have been vanquished in their old homes and expelled by Turks and Tartars belonging to that Mongolian race whom it is now the fashion of Europe to despise. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that Europe, the western peninsula of Asia, became settled by its Aryan peoples in much the same way as the “ancient Britons” and the remnants of the earlier prehistoric tribes are now found in Wales, Cornwall, Brittany, and such outlying corners of our continent. Indeed, for several centuries one entire half of Europe, lying eastward of a line drawn from the Baltic through Warsaw and Vienna to the head of the Adriatic Sea, was occupied by the Mongolian Tartars

and Turks; while the other Asiatic race, the Semites, ruled supreme over Spain and the islands of the Mediterranean, besides occupying the whole of northern Africa.

The tide of conquest has now wholly turned. The Aryan races of Europe are making their way back into the old continent of Asia; and while England has occupied India, and fringed southern Asia with her settlements, Russia is rapidly extending her dominion over the northern and central parts of that continent. For many generations past the Czars have claimed dominion over Siberia,—the vast semi-arctic and thinly-peopled region which extends across the north of Asia, from the Frozen Ocean to the Altai Mountains, which chain, with its eastern and western prolongations, separates Siberia from Central Asia. But to the south of that boundary—that is, in Central Asia—the progress of Russia has been quite recent; indeed, almost the whole of it has been made during the last sixteen years.

The Ural Mountains form the boundary of Siberia on the side of Europe; and the great highway from Russia, following the natural configuration of the country, on leaving the Volga at Samara (anciently the seat of the “Golden Horde”), crosses the great plains to Uralsk, and thence eastwards along the Ural river to Orenburg, which is situated at the southern extremity of the Ural chain, and from which town the routes branch northward into Siberia, and south-westwards into Central Asia. Orenburg was for long the most easterly post of Russia; and, as will be shown by-and-by, it was from this quarter that Russia has made her great military advance in recent years. Orenburg stands on the Ural river, which thence runs due westward for 200 miles to Uralsk,

at which town, turning at right angles, it runs due south for some 300 miles to the head of the Caspian Sea, at Guriëff. Thus the Ural river—from Orenburg to Uralsk, and thence to the Caspian—bounds the north-western corner of Central Asia; and the remainder and larger part of the western frontier of Central Asia is formed by the Caspian Sea, which (some 750 miles in length) extends southwards to the Persian mountains.

On its western or European front Central Asia is covered by a bulwark of almost impassable steppe and desert. Its north-western corner—an almost quadrangular space 300 miles square, extending from the latitude of Uralsk, Orenburg, and Ormsk, in the north, to the head of the Caspian and Aral seas—consists of a waterless steppe, wholly unfit for settled habitation, but which in the spring and early summer, moistened by the melting of the snow, furnishes rich pasturage for the roving Khirgiz tribes. But to the south of this steppe a vast sandy desert spreads eastward from the shores of the Caspian. At its narrowest point—between the Caspian and the Aral seas—this desert averages nearly 200 miles in breadth; while eastward of the Aral, the desert begins again, and extends for some 600 miles up to the lowlands at the foot of the Roof of the World. To the south of the Aral, between the Caspian and the oasis of Khiva, the desert is about 350 miles in breadth; and to the south of Khiva again, the Caspian desert unites with the Kara Kum (lying to the south of the Oxus), extending inland in an unbroken waste of sand beyond Merv, which is distant from the Caspian nearly 500 miles. Thus the oasis of Khiva, although the nearest or most westerly of all the fertile and settled districts of Cen-

tral Asia, is separated from the Caspian by fully 350 miles of pure desert—a physical obstacle which might appal even a daring conqueror.

Thus shrouded, as well as protected, by deserts, Central Asia was for long a *terra incognita* to its European neighbours. The first tidings of Khiva was obtained by the Cossack tribes, who, in one of their plundering forays, captured some Persians, who told them of a very rich and fertile state beyond the deserts. Allured by the prospect of rich booty, the Cossack horsemen on two or three occasions made a long and rapid march across the deserts from the Caspian,—and with some success at the outset; but on each occasion they were overtaken, when recrossing the deserts with their plunder, by the Khivan cavalry, and were cut to pieces.

Peter the Great was the first Russian monarch who cast a covetous eye upon Khiva. Inspired by a far-reaching ambition, and possessed of extraordinary political genius, Peter gave his whole thoughts to freeing Russia from the physical fetters by which, in his day, it was isolated from the rest of the civilised world. He forced it forward to the Baltic at St Petersburg; he conquered a southern outlet for his dominions on the Sea of Azoff and Euxine, with Constantinople as the goal; and in like spirit he resolved to open Asia to his people and his power. A Khivan merchant who came to his court told him all about Khiva—that fertile state beyond the deserts,—how the sands of the region yielded gold,—and of the mighty stream of the Oxus, which now flowed into the Aral Sea, but formerly had traversed the western desert, and carried its broad stream to the Caspian. Strange as it may

seem, the dominating thought that arose in the mind of Peter was, "By this route I shall be able to reach India!" India was then, as long before, fabled for its stores of gold and silver and gems, for splendid fertility and vast accumulated wealth. And to Peter—as to every Russian of the present day—Central Asia was coveted, not for itself, but as a highway to the golden world of India. Peter with his own hand drew up orders for establishing a military post at Krasnovodski, on the eastern shore of the Caspian, at the point nearest to Khiva, and close to the ancient mouth of the river Oxus. He then despatched a military expedition to Khiva under Prince Bekovitch Tcherkassky,—professedly on a pacific mission, but really to conquer that state. The desert was successfully traversed; but, owing to incompetent generalship, the Russian troops were ultimately massacred by the Khivans, who employed the same treachery which had been designed against themselves.*

This was in 1717. Peter then saw that the physical obstacles to an advance upon Khiva in this quarter could not be successfully made until the Turcoman tribes of the desert were brought under Rus-

sian influence, so as to facilitate the long march through that waterless and desolate region. A long pause ensued. Although the Emperor Paul arranged with Napoleon for an expedition to India from the southern shores of the Caspian, no renewal of the advance upon Khiva was made until our own times.

When the Russian Government resumed its activity on its eastern borders, attention was turned to the northern part of the Caspian, with the view of traversing the desert to the shores of the Aral Sea; for if this could be accomplished, it would be thereafter easy to reach Khiva, by marching southward along the shores of the Aral Sea to the mouth of the Oxus, and thence through the delta of that river to Khiva. This part of the desert—namely, lying between the Caspian and the Aral seas, and even somewhat further southward—is known as the Urst-Urt steppe or plateau. It must have been an island in those primeval times when the Caspian and Aral seas were part of the Northern Ocean. It is bordered all round by what in India would be called Ghauts—a scarped cliff (known by the name of "the Tchink"), very steep, and rising to the height of some 400 feet.

* The orders given to Prince Tcherkassky, in the Czar's own handwriting, were as follows:—

- "1. To construct a fort for 1000 men at the former mouth of the Oxus.
- "2. To ascend the old bed of the river in the character of ambassador to the Khan of Khiva, and to ascertain whether the mouths opening into the Aral Lake can be closed, and if so, by what means, and with what amount of labour.
- "3. To examine the ground near the existing dam, and to take measures for erecting a fort there, and for building a town.
- "4, 5, and 6. To incline the Khan of Khiva to fidelity and submission, promising him hereditary possession and a guard for his services."

The seventh clause of the Czar's order directed Prince Bekovitch to ask the Khan for vessels, "and to send a merchant in them to India by the Amu-Daria (Oxus), ordering the same to ascend the river as far as vessels can go, and from thence to proceed to India, remarking the rivers and lakes, and describing the way by land and water, but particularly the water-way to India by lake or river, returning from India the same way; or, should the merchant hear in India of a still better way to the Caspian Sea, to come back by that, and to describe it in writing." The merchant was to be provided with letters to the Khans of Khiva and Bokhara, and to the Mogul. Besides the veritable merchant, a naval officer, Lieutenant Kojur, with five or more "navigators," was to be sent to India in merchant's attire.

Count Borkh and other Russian officers have at various times made expeditions across the plateau; a line of wells has been sunk, but as these are nearly 200 feet in depth, they are difficult to work; and this part of the desert, as well as the more southerly portion between the Caspian and Khiva, has proved insuperable as a line of military advance, except to one of the small columns despatched from the Caspian to co-operate against Khiva in 1873.

This western or Caspian front of Central Asia having been found impenetrable, owing to the broad zone of deserts by which it is covered, the Russian Government and generals have made their great advance from the north (from their Siberian frontier), and mainly from the north-western corner of Central Asia at Orenburg. The prospect which lay before them was not tempting. From Orenburg eastwards, along the northern front of Central Asia, bordering on Siberia, there was nothing but an expanse of sandy wastes and sterile mountain-ranges (to this day mostly unexplored). The advance must proceed south-eastward by the Jaxartes river, along a diagonal line through the region from Orenburg to Tashkent and Khokan—the latter place being in the heart of the great mountains, adjoining the sources of the Jaxartes. And nearly a thousand miles must be traversed from Orenburg before the region of towns and fertility could be reached, lying among the well-watered valleys and little plains at the western base of the central mountain region. From Orenburg, at a distance of 600 miles, the first point to be reached was the north end of the Aral Sea, —the intervening country being an inhospitable steppe only fit for nomadic pastoral life. For miles around this northern end of the

Aral, the soil is impregnated with salt,—as indeed is the case generally around the shores of this gradually-drying-up sea. Since the Oxus was turned into it three centuries ago, the southern end of the Aral has been silted up for fifty or sixty miles, forming the marshy delta of that river; while the Jaxartes has been doing a similar but less extensive work at its north-eastern corner, and also covers the land far and wide with its autumnal inundations, which become sheets of ice during the winter months.

It was here, at the point where the Jaxartes river debouches into the Aral Sea, that the Russians built their military station of Kazalinsk (commonly called Fort Number 1); but, although the whole trade of the country beyond passes this way to Orenburg, there is only a mere village, consisting chiefly of the *kibitkas* or tents of the Turcomans. Arrived at this first halting-place, what was the prospect which lay before the Muscovite invaders? To the south, covering the whole region between the course of the Jaxartes and that of the Oxus, lies the great Kizzil Kum, or Red Desert,—from 300 to 400 miles in breadth, and spreading eastwards from the Aral Sea for some 600 miles, up to the watered district adjoining the foot of the great mountains. From Kazalinsk, as the crow flies, 300 miles of desert have to be crossed before reaching the north bank of the Oxus opposite to Khiva, which lies on the south bank of the Oxus; so that Khiva was still as inaccessible from the north as it was from the Caspian. But the Russians had reached the Jaxartes river, which is navigable by steamers; and although deserts lie both to the north and to the south of that river, along its course the Russian legions could advance, secure of that main desideratum in those regions, a supply of water.

Kazalinsk, in fact, was a mere stepping-stone. Of itself it was worth nothing. To the 600 miles of advance from Orenburg, the Russians must add other 400 miles before they could reach even the frontiers of any settled or fertile country.

Let us now look at the steppes and deserts which, alike to the east and to the west of the Roof of the World, cover nearly nine-tenths of the non-mountainous regions of Central Asia. The Steppes—like the district lying between the north ends of the Caspian and Aral and the latitude of Uralsk and Orenburg (which may be called the Siberian frontier)—are covered by some depth of vegetative soil, which in spring, being moistened by the melting snows of winter, produce very rich pasturage; but which, from want of water, cannot be the seats of a settled population. But the Deserts, which are the predominant feature of Central Asia, are not only waterless, but expanses of arid sand, usually impregnated with salt; in fact, as already said, they are the bottom of ancient dried-up seas. Not a tree is to be seen; and even the brushwood, invaluable as supplying fuel for the passing traveller, in some places wholly disappears. In summer the heat is terrific; shade is nowhere; and the sun's rays are reflected upon the traveller from a glowing mass of sand, which is lifted in suffocating clouds by every breath of wind. It is only at rare spots that wells are to be found, and these, although sufficient for the travelling party of the merchant and for small caravans, are of but little use for a military expedition of any size. In winter, the whole region is covered with snow for several months as far south as Khiva and the line of the Oxus, and to some extent all the way down to northern Persia and Aff-

ghanistan. And the cold is as intense and unendurable as is the sun-heat of summer—the least exposure of the body being attended with frost-bite; and to touch metal with the bare hand is to be burnt as with fire.

Accordingly, the obstacles to military expeditions across these deserts are tremendous. As yet the Kara Kum, lying south of Khiva and of the Oxus, has not been explored or even penetrated by the Russians; but to cross either the Kizzil Kum between the Jaxartes and Oxus, or the western deserts between the Caspian and Khiva, occupies about a month. No wonder, then, that 5000 fighting men is about the largest force which ever undertakes the passage of any of those deserts. The whole food-supply for this long period has to be carried, besides the munitions of war; and for this freighting 10,000 camels are not thought more than enough for a fighting force of 5000 men. Thus, not to speak of the large body of non-combatants, the conveyance of forage for the camels and horses of the expedition is a serious encumbrance of itself. As both the steppes and the deserts are waterless, the Russians have generally preferred to make their larger expeditions across the deserts in winter, when the whole face of the country is covered with snow, from which a supply of water is obtained. If in any day's march the snowy covering is likely to be deficient, the snow is crushed into bags; or blocks of ice are hung upon the camels' backs, and conveyed for the supply either of the caravan or military expedition. The cold is so intense even at mid-day that there is no fear of the ice or snow melting by the way.

It is only, or best, by particular instances that travelling under

such strange conditions can be made readily intelligible to the general reader. So let us refer to the graphic pages of Colonel Burnaby, who made his "Ride to Khiva" in the winter-time. First, as to the extraordinary amount of clothing indispensably required to maintain the natural warmth of the body. At Samara, on the Volga (where the railway, now carried to Orenburg, then ended), he prepared himself for his journey by sledge. In addition to the dress which he had been wearing, and which included some extra-thick drawers and a pair of trousers which, in the estimation of the London tailor, "no cold could get through anyhow," he first put on three pairs of the thickest stockings drawn up high above the knee; over them a pair of furlined low shoes, which in turn were inserted into leather goloshes; and finally his limbs were encased in a pair of enormous cloth boots, reaching up to the thigh. A heavy flannel under-shirt, and a shirt covered by a thick wadded waistcoat, together with a coat of the same kind, encased his body, which finally was enveloped in a huge fur pelisse reaching to his feet. His head was protected with a fur cap, and a *bashlik*, or cloth head-piece of a conical shape made to cover the cap, and having two long ends which tie round the throat. "I thought that I should have a good laugh at the wind, no matter how cutting it might be," he says; "but Æolus had the laugh on his side before the journey was over." No wonder that when he had to take to horseback, in his ride across the desert, he found he could hardly mount. And this enormous mass of clothing he had to wear both day and night for a fortnight as he traversed at express speed the Kizzil Kum. To take off any part of the dress

would have been to risk frost-bite in its severest form. Once when he fell asleep in his sledge, his hands dropped out of their warm covering, and in a few minutes he awoke in intense pain: "it seemed as if my extremities had been plunged into some corrosive fluid which was gradually eating the flesh from my bones." The ordinary rubbing with snow was of no avail; the fire continued to spread upwards, but the lower portions of his arms became void of sensation; and his arms, deprived of circulation, hung as if paralysed; and it was only by roughest rubbing with spirits, till the skin was broken and peeled under the horny hands of some friendly Cossacks, that he escaped the fate of seeing his arms drop off under the frost-bite.

The load that has to be carried for each traveller through these deserts is of the most formidable amount. Although Colonel Burnaby's personal luggage consisted only of a change of clothes, a few instruments, and a gun, no fewer than three camels and two horses were needed to carry the supplies for himself and his Tartar servant. Provisions have to be laid in for the whole journey,—which Captain Burnaby rode in a fortnight, at the rate of 37 miles a-day, but which would take a military column twice that time. Even firewood has to be carried for part of the journey. For food the chief supply was cabbage-soup containing large pieces of mutton—the mess being frozen at once—and had to be melted at each resting-place. Tea, drunk scalding hot, is an absolute necessity when traversing the steppes or deserts in winter-time, and is "far superior in heat-giving properties to any wine or spirits." "In fact," says Burnaby, "a traveller would succumb to the cold on the latter when the former will save his life." Tea is also a valua-

ble help against the fatal drowsiness engendered by great cold. In crossing the deserts in winter, the tea is frequently quite brackish owing to the snow from which it is made being intermixed, however slightly, with the salt-impregnated sands. In summer-time on the deserts, the Russian officers prefer to diet their men on tea and bread, rather than on meat, which is too heating.

Here is a scene in the desert, just after leaving Kazalinsk, to cross the Kizzil Kum to Khiva. "Nought could be seen save an endless white expanse. The wind howled and whistled, billowing before it great waves of snow. Our eyes began to run, and the eyeballs to ache: the constant glare and cutting breeze half blinded us as we rode. The horses waded wearily through the piled-up ridges of snow. The poor beasts suffered like ourselves: their eyes were encrusted with frozen tears; and it was as much as we could do to urge them forward." At times the benumbed riders had to dismount to wipe off the icicles which covered and choked the noses and mouths of their steeds.

The camel marches somewhat quicker by night than by day; and the usual practice is to halt for two hours during the day, to encamp at sunset, and to resume the journey at midnight. In this way the private traveller may traverse the deserts at the rate of nearly 40 miles a-day, but the journey is of the most fatiguing kind: even a very strong man like Colonel Burnaby could hardly keep awake on his horse; and on one occasion he threw himself down on the snow, without tent or fire, and fell fast asleep on the instant.

In some parts the desert is broken by ravines, into which the traveller would fall if he lost the track; and the wide expanse is usually a monotonous level, where only the prac-

tised eye of the native guides can keep their way. It is not surprising to read that a Cossack expedition once so entirely lost its way, that instead of emerging from the desert at Khiva, found itself upon the inhospitable shores of the Aral Sea, and from sheer famine had to give itself up as slaves to the Khivans. But to the Kirghiz and other nomades of the steppes, "the Book of Nature is as familiar as the Koran is to the Moullah. The vision of the Kirghiz is very extraordinary, and my guide could discern objects with the naked eye which I could hardly distinguish with the help of my glasses. His knowledge of locality also is very remarkable. Sometimes, when no track could be seen, he would get off his horse, and search for flowers or grass. If he could find any, he would then be able to judge, by their appearance, as to the district in which we were."

It is the more wonderful that the guides never miss their way in those trackless wastes when so much of the journey is performed at night. But the sky is singularly clear. In those waterless and hillless regions there are no vapours to rise into the atmosphere, forming clouds or haze. This same clearness of the sky which so aggravates the sufferings of the traveller in the summer-time, when the sun shines down without a veil, and the sky overhead glares and scorches like molten brass, is of great advantage to the traveller during the long nights of winter. The moon lights up the desert with unsurpassable brightness and lustre. One evening the brushwood for the fire was so damp, and the acrid smoke became so intolerable, that it was better to face the cold without covering; so the top-piece of the tent was removed, leaving only the sides standing. "It was a glorious evening; the stars, as seen from the

snow-covered desert, were brighter and more dazzling than any I had hitherto witnessed,"—albeit he had sojourned on the deserts of Africa. "From time to time some glittering meteor shot across the heavens. A momentary track of vivid flame traced out its course through space. Showers of orbs of falling fire flashed for one moment, and then disappeared. Myriads of constellations and worlds above sparkled like gems in a priceless diadem. It was a magnificent pyrotechnic display,—Nature being the sole actor in the spectacle. It was well worth a journey even to Central Asia." On another occasion, when the tent was struck at midnight to resume the journey, Colonel Burnaby says: "It was a strange weird scene; the vast snow-covered steppe lit up as brightly as if it were mid-day by a thousand constellations, which reflected themselves in the cold white sheet below. Not a cloud dimmed the majesty of the heavens; the wind had lulled, and no sounds broke the stillness of the night."

These sandy deserts are utterly uninhabitable; and even on the pastoral steppes, where the nomadic tribes move about with their flocks and herds, it is a hard battle to support life. These tribes never think of killing a sheep in the summer months, in which half of the year they live entirely upon milk from their flocks, and upon grain which they obtain in exchange for their live stock from the settled districts. To kill and eat a sheep is an extravagance never indulged in save during the hard times of winter; and *then* it is a great event, to be remembered for months. "The road to a Kirghiz's heart lies through his stomach;" and the voracious repasts occasionally witnessed by Colonel Burnaby recall to one's thoughts the early times of our race, when the supreme

object of human life was simply to support existence, and when from year's end to year's end the daily task was a struggle for food—not for "livelihood" as nowadays, but for bare food—without a moment's time to think of comforts of dress or dwelling, such as even the poorest of our poor now partake of.

Such, then, are the stern physical obstacles which Russia has had to encounter in her advance across this region to meet two other of the greatest Powers of the world. The first military expedition in Central Asia undertaken by Russia during the present century, or indeed since the failure of Peter the Great's expedition against Khiva, was in 1839. And Khiva was again the object. But this time the advance was made, not as before from the eastern shores of the Caspian, but by a long march from the extreme north—starting from Orenburg, and marching southwards by the western side of the Aral Sea. General Peroffsky set out with 4500 fighting men, and 22 pieces of artillery, and, besides horse-transport, he took with him 10,000 camels, with 2000 Kirghiz drivers. But when he got only half-way to Khiva, and before the main body had even seen the enemy, the expedition had to retreat,—having lost two-thirds of the troops, and 9000 camels, besides an immense number of horses.

It was only about sixteen years ago that the real and continuous advance of Russia began. By that time the head of the Aral Sea had been reached, and Fort Kazalinsk had been erected at the mouth of the Jaxartes. And that great and navigable river opened a highway through the steppes and deserts up to the distant states on the lowlands at the foot of the great mountain-range which divides Asia in its central region. "The Russian frontier," said Prince Gortschakoff

in substance in 1864, "cannot remain where it is. At present it borders only with lawless nomadic tribes, with whom it is impossible to establish settled relations. We must of necessity go on until we reach the settled states, with whom we can enter into peaceful commercial relations, profitable to both parties. And there and then we shall stop." And so, up the course of the Jaxartes marched the Russian troops. But the settled states which they were approaching did not relish this invasion of a region over which their dominion then extended. Thus it happened that, when the Russians had advanced some 200 miles up the Jaxartes river, they found the Khokandian troops guarding the frontier town of Ak Mechet. The Khokandians were defeated, and there the Russians built Fort No. 2, or Peroffsky. Other 200 miles were overpassed, and the town of Hazret (now called Turkistan) fell before the Russian attack. General Tchernayeff was now the hero of the advance. Chimkent was captured (Nov. 1864) by a further advance; and at length the invaders drew near to Tashkent, the chief city of the khanate, with 80,000 inhabitants, —situated in a valley adjoining the Upper Jaxartes, and nearly 600 miles from the Russian starting-point at the mouth of that river. Or if, more correctly, we date the military base of the Russian expedition at Orenburg, the flourishing city of Tashkent, which they were thus approaching, was distant from that base nearly 1200 miles. Immediately after the capture of Chimkent, and before the year 1864 had closed, General Tchernayeff advanced in a reconnoitring expedition towards Tashkent, and finally made a sudden assault upon that city, in which he was repulsed. Six months afterwards (July 1865) he stormed the city with a loss of

only about a hundred in killed and wounded, in which number there were no officers; and Tchernayeff became known in the West as the "Conqueror of Tashkent."

Thus, advancing in a south-easterly course from Orenburg, first to the Aral Sea, and thence up the river Jaxartes—in a diagonal line across the western part of Central Asia—the Russians by the end of 1865 had acquired the whole country lying to the north (or rather north-east) of the Jaxartes, and westward up to the foot of the lofty mountain-chain which divides Central Asia. Pursuing this south-easterly line of advance, they next came upon the little state of Khokan, near the head of the Jaxartes river, and lying among the highlands of the great Dividing Chain; and the annexation of this remote corner, in 1866, completed the advance in this direction, and carried the Russian frontier southwards to the Terek Pass and the plateau of Pamir—overlooking Kashgar and Yarkand beyond the mountains. The Russian line of advance then turned due westwards, bending back in the direction of Khiva and the Caspian. The annexation of Tashkent and Khokan had brought the Russians upon the eastern front of the large state or khanate of Bokhara. This khanate is protected in the north by the Kizzil Kum desert, which separates it from the lower course of the Jaxartes river. But the Russians had passed round this desert in their south-easterly advance, and now came upon the state of Bokhara from the rear. The state of Bokhara consists of the broad and fertile oasis along the course of the Zarafshan river, and the Russians were now in possession of the highlands from which the Zarafshan descends. As the easiest route, however, they marched across the narrow desert which separates the upper Jaxartes

from the watershed of the Zarafshan, and then marched westwards down the course of that river to Samarkand and Bokhara. The Bokhariot army was scattered to the winds at the battle of Zerabulak in July 1868, Samarkand was occupied, and the Ameer of Bokhara became a feudatory of the Czar.

Khiva alone remained independent. But in 1873 the command was at length given from St Petersburg for a combined attack against this last of the khanates. One column was to advance from Tashkent by Samarkand and Bokhara, and thence westwards down the right bank of the Oxus. A second expedition was to start from Kazalinsk at the mouth of the Jaxartes, on the north-east side of the Aral Sea, and was to make its way across the sandy wastes of the Kizzil Kum; a third expedition was to set out from Orenburg across the pastoral steppes to the north-western corner of the Aral, and thence march along the western shores of the lake to the mouth of the Oxus, from which point there was easy marching up that river to the city of Khiva. Lastly, two columns were to advance from the Caspian,—one from Krasnovodsk across the Urst-Urt, to join the Orenburg column near the southern end of the Aral Sea; and the other, and more southerly, from Chikislar, which had to march north-eastwards to Khiva through the sandy wastes. This last-named column, under Colonel Markosoff, wholly failed, and the entire force was within an ace of perishing from heat and want of water in the desert. The column from Kazalinsk, in crossing the Kizzil Kum, nearly shared the same fate, owing to the ambition of the commander, who desired to take a new route; and it arrived too late at the field of operations. But the column from Oren-

burg made its long march successfully; so also did the column from Krasnovodsk on the Caspian, which joined the Orenburg column in the delta of the Oxus; the combined force reaching Khiva simultaneously with Kauffman's column, which had advanced from Tashkent by Samarkand and Bokhara, and thence down the southern bank of the Oxus. Khiva fell without a struggle; the Khan became a feudatory of the Czar; and the Russians built the fort of Petro-Alexandrovsk within his territories, on the south bank of the Oxus.

Thus the whole western half of Central Asia—namely, from the Caspian to the Roof of the World—is now really, although not wholly in name, under the dominion of the Czar. All the states have been conquered. A quadrangular mountain-region, formed by the Roof of the World and the lofty mountain-ranges running westward from it, down which flow the head waters of the Oxus, separates the Khokandian frontier of Russia from the Hindoo Koosh. Where these mountain-ridges sink into the plains, a straight and easy road leads southward from Samarkand across the Oxus to the Bameean Pass. But westward from this point, beginning about Balkh, the Kara Kum desert, lying to the south of the Oxus, extends all the way to the Caspian, covering the northern frontier of Persia. The Russians are now working round this desert, by their expeditions against the Tekke Turcomans, and will find their best road to India up the valley of the Attek river. In a second article we shall complete our description of Central Asia, dealing chiefly with the eastern part, where the Muscovite and Mongolian Empires meet in rivalry, and probably in conflict.

IN THE DEER-FOREST : A DAY BEWITCHED.

“Hope told a flattering tale—Hope lied.”

JOURNEY with us—in the mind only—to the north of Scotland—to Ross-shire. Survey—with mental eye—the part of that county which touches on the Sutherland march, and then listen with sympathetic ear to such a tale of shame and woe as surely few men have to tell;—a story of the hills—not, be it quickly understood, one of those accounts often met with, which tell, intermixed with description of scenery, of how a gallant royal was pursued, long unsuccessfully, perhaps, but never in the end in vain. There will be no mention here of “purple moors” or “shaggy wood.” We have to relate plain, unvarnished facts, terribly true, with reference to a day which, beginning badly, grew worse, and ended in a climax so fearful that it has made us old before our time, and which, when the remembrance of it comes across us in the night, even now causes us to writhe in impotent vexation and dismay.

One morning, in the first week of October, two or three years ago, four men were sitting in a keeper's house in the north of Ross-shire waiting for the dawn, in whom, as Hawthorne says, we shall be glad to interest our readers. It was very early, not much past five, and yet some of them had already had a long tramp—a dozen miles; while one, then ruefully examining by the peat-fire a blistered toe, had got over more than twice that distance since he last slept. The eldest was a man of about fifty, with a thin, rather anxious face, and the keen eyes which those who are constantly on the look-out often have. He was

slightly built and very active, with well-formed hands and feet and ankles, and altogether rather a refined air. The second, a great, strong, broad-shouldered fellow, more than six feet high, with black curly beard and moustache, and frank, pleasant face, also with keen eyes—eyes, we believe, which could see through a hundred yards of rock, but which, at any rate, would have made short work of such feeble obstacles to sight as Samuel Weller's flight of stairs and deal door; a man who, to save you the smallest bit of trouble, would run down—and up—a couple of thousand feet of steep hillside and think nothing of it. The third, quiet and silent, thoroughly up to his work and passionately devoted to it, loving rather to spend a cold day creeping up to his waist in a burn after a stag than to kill half-a-dozen salmon or fifty brace of grouse, a born deer-stalker, and a good, honest, straightforward fellow—as indeed were they all. There is no reason why we should not give their names. Thomas Herbert of Alladale—poor fellow! *he* will never walk on the hills again; and two George Rosses, the one of Deanich, the other of Braelangwell. Of the fourth man—the wounded one—it is not here necessary to say much. Before the day is over, something will be learnt about him. The three first described were keepers—the last, for the time being, their master; and for the sake of convenience, and to avoid the constant use of pronouns, we shall distinguish this latter by the initial letter G.

The candle, blown out, showed the daybreak creeping in; and the tea and oat-cake being finished, a move

was made outside. The men all had glasses, two of them rifles on their shoulders,—a long crooked stick being the only weapon carried at present by the fourth man. They were dressed pretty much alike, in knickerbocker suits of dim and faded material,—greys and yellows being the predominating shades, and all showing more or less signs of hard wear. Perhaps G. was the most to be noticed in this respect. He had, a day or two before, gone through some rather intricate manœuvres on a long sloping bed composed of mica-schist and granite, and had not had time since to get into thorough repair, but this, up in those regions, was not a matter of much moment. They waded the river which ran within a few yards of the lodge, and, rejoicing in the fresh cool feel of the air, forerunner of a fine autumn day in the mountains, went a little way up the glen, and attacked the steep hill at the head of it. It was a good stiff pull, but a few weeks' hard work soon puts on condition, and the blistered foot, helped by the rest, and by the cool water of the river, went bravely now. A heavy, dense dew lay on the heather; the grouse, never shot in that part of the forest, were crowing merrily on many hillocks; and now and then, far away above, a hoarse bellow was heard, sounding strange and weird in the dim light, and was taken up and answered from the more distant hillside opposite. After an hour's climb the spying-ground was reached, in a thick mist and heavy shower, which, however, soon cleared away, and the rest of the day, so far at least as the weather was concerned, was favourable.

As the mist rose, the keepers began to examine with their glasses the two corries and hillside on their front, while the other man lay comfortably on his back, on the driest

heather he could find, lazily smoking, and thinking of the pleasant prospect before him. Not of the view, though that was fair enough. If he had been up just a little higher, he could, by merely turning his head, have looked right across Scotland,—at the German Ocean on the one side, and the Atlantic on the other, with the Summer Islands—dim specks in the far distance,—and with a glass, perhaps, even seen the smoke of a steamer creeping along the west coast. He was meditating, however, on the long clear day before him. He was thinking of the good chance he had of killing two, or perhaps three fine stags; and as a soldier going into battle might think of the Victoria Cross, or a fisherman putting up his rod of a clean run 30-pounder, so he, lying there, let his imagination run riot on a royal with the roughest and blackest of horns. Deer had been roaring on every side as he came up the glen in the night (the rutting season was early that year, and the stags were daily falling off in condition), and once or twice when passing some sweet pasture by the river, he had heard the disturbed splashing they made as they crossed it in alarm.

And they were soon found here—half-a-dozen or more lying far up on the hillside facing them—but as soon pronounced to be hinds. There was a stag, however, near at hand,—a long hoarse roar betrayed him, and by the aid of a glass he was seen to be a fair beast, but with only one horn. He was lying just under the crown of a hill on the opposite side to where the hinds were, and it was thought that by coming carefully over this hill it would not be difficult to get a shot at him. It would be necessary to pass immediately below the deer, but the wind was fair, and there was no danger. So they started, going slowly and carefully at first when

in sight, and then at a good pace, since stags at this season rarely remain long in one place, especially when they have no hinds with them. When passing underneath him, one of the men ran up to the top of the little ravine they were following to see if all was right; and when he looked over he at once slipped off the cover of the rifle he was carrying, and motioned eagerly with his hand. The stag had shifted his ground, and was coming right down upon them. When within 120 yards or so, he altered his course, giving a good shoulder-chance as he crossed their line. No time was to be lost. The deer was on the edge of a hollow, and half-a-dozen strides would take him out of sight. So sitting down rather lower than he liked, not very comfortable, and not quite certain that the safety-catches of the rifle were back, G. fired. There was then no doubt about the catches; they were all right,—so was the stag. He gave one of those deceiving bounds which for a second or two often make a man think he has hit when he has missed, and disappeared. None of the men could then really say whether he was got or not; but he soon came in sight again, going hard up the opposite hill—safe.

Not much was said about this little incident, except the usual consolation—"Can't expect to kill everything that's fired at." The beast, however, was a good beast, with a good horn, and all secretly grudged his loss. Fragrant smoke curled once more into the clear air, and in a little while, as the deer had gone straight away, they continued their course along the top-ridge of the great glen out of which they had climbed in the morning. Cautiously proceeding, and carefully examining the ground, more deer were soon discovered—five-and-twenty or thirty, feeding in a corrie far away

below by the green sides of a burn. Now this corrie is a very curious one. It is very large, and whether it is owing to its shape and the lie of the ground, or whether, as some assert, to witchcraft, the fact is well known that it is exceedingly difficult to make in it a successful stalk, no matter from what quarter the wind may be in above. G. had had much experience in such matters, and knew quite well the reason. It *was* witchcraft. He had met, a day or two before, while driving up to this forest, a pretty girl, and had had good sport: on another occasion he had met an ugly old woman, and done nothing, so he might be allowed to know something about it. Besides he had read Scrope, and knew all about the Witch of Ben-y-Gloe and her doings, and the old woman who used to "louse" the strings of the bag which held the deer-stalker's breeze. But, witchcraft or not, it was decided, after a little hesitation, to attempt the stalk. To have sent men down to drive the corrie would have taken much time; and, as the wind was, there was no certainty of being able to make the deer take the desired pass. They began the descent, and, fortune seeming kind, were getting near their quarry when the first check came. A bare piece of ground, a hump standing out slightly from the sides of the hill, had to be crossed, and once over this they would be safe. Lying perfectly flat on their backs, with rucked-up knickerbockers, and ever and anon reminded of some ancient bruise, they worked their way slowly down. Another fifty yards and then— An ugly, ragged-looking hind saw them. Rising quickly, she came a few yards forward and stared intently up. Some of the other deer rose too, but not having seen anything themselves, were not much alarmed. Perfectly

still those four men lay on that hillside; as "carven statues"—very dirty ones—they lay there. In what position the hind caught them in, in that position must they stay, if need be, to the crack of doom. The active partner in the bloodthirsty firm—he of the rifle—was the worst off: not only was a choice collection of well-pointed heather "stobs" exploring his framework in every direction, but he felt an acute attack of cramp coming on in his left leg, which was doubled up under him. No matter if the fiercest cramp which ever assailed mortal body was to attack him with tenfold force in each individual limb, he knew well what his duty was, and was prepared to do it,—to die if necessary—even to do that quietly,—to lie still. In gentle groans he might vent his anguish, but that was all. All things, however, end, and the hind, after looking fixedly up for five minutes, turned away her head as if satisfied. In two seconds she swung it back again. Is it possible that those dingy-looking, dirty objects, 250 yards or so above her, which she had decided were stones, have moved? Surely one of them is more angular than before? Ah! clever, keen-eyed thing, are you so easily deceived? The poor cramp-stricken one had ventured to move his leg, and was fixed by the stony glare of the hind, with that member sticking out at a right angle. His sufferings were now dreadful. After another patient gaze, however, she went back, and began feeding, looking up once or twice, but not suspicious now. A little law was still given her, and then the remaining part of the ridge got over, and aching limbs stretched in safety. Out of sight they could move boldly, and in a few moments G. was lying, on his chest now, with the rifle in his hands, peering over at the unconscious deer below.

There were several fair stags: a nine-pointer, with good though rather light-coloured horns, which was a little nearer than the others, was to be the first victim. The single rifle was pushed, with a bloodthirsty grin, near his right hand, ready to be used. *Its* contents were for the thick-set, peat-stained beast standing a little to the right. The nearest stag was perhaps 130 yards away; but what is that to an express with five drams of powder behind the bullet? The position was a good one. No nasty bits of grass or heather could blow about in front of the sight, and the murderer only waited for the deer to rise. Some men don't like this waiting. We think it much preferable to a hasty shot: lying for an hour or more, as has often to be done, within sight of the deer, stills the heart which may have been beating pretty fast at the first glimpse—and so thought our friend. He was cool and comfortable, and meant to make no mistake this time. In about twenty minutes, a nobber, which had been driven out of the herd, came slyly back, hoping not to be noticed. The master of the hinds, however, soon saw him, and at once rose, looking angrily at the small intruder, and offering his whole fair broadside to the rifle. The centre of the forefinger was on the trigger, there was no pull, no jerk, only a gentle pressure—and the bullet went singing down to the depths below, just six inches too high. The first sight was for 150 yards: this had been forgotten, and a full one taken, as if it had been a hundred: hence this woe. The deer in a confused mass cantered off. The stag, however, going more slowly, and coming round the hill, gave another chance at about the same distance as before. The same mistake was made, and the second bullet went to join the first. Dropping the

empty rifle and catching up the "Henry," a desperate attempt was made to get another shot as they went out at the high pass. Any one who is accustomed to mountain work knows the difficulty of going at racing speed along a very steep hillside: where there is grass only, it may be done; where there is rank heather, with the stems lying downwards, it is an impossibility. A fearful slip was made, a wild attempt to recover, and then rifle and man (the former fortunately on half-cock) parted company and went down the hill. After some bold and graphic evolutions in the air, the latter came to anchor at a rock, and for a little while experienced that feeling of indifference to life which a sharp pain sometimes brings with it. The knee-cap of a man, no matter in what state of hard training his leg may be in, is a poor weapon to assault a stone with.

Of course this settled everything—failure number two, and a bad one. G. endeavoured now to explain the cause of the mishap to the keepers. They listened, but evidently without any belief in the story. If few remarks were made about the first stalk, fewer still were made now. One man, with a more anxious expression on his face than usual, quietly smoked. One George does the same. The other, not even yet discouraged, used his glass, and for a while there was silence on that uncanny hillside.

"He is a good one too, a switch-horn," very likely. He was on the top of a stupendous mountain, with sides as steep as a house, and appeared to be about ten miles away. The fourth man, not feeling quite sure that he will not be left to perish on the top of that mountain, and also conscious of his foot, now thinks it time to speak out, and does so. "Oh, I say, you know, I don't think it's any good

going up *there*. I don't think he'll wait for us." They laugh. Of course he has to go.

The great hill was attacked, and much the same manœuvres gone through as before, diversified in this case, however, by the passage of a marsh, through which, as the deer was in sight, they had to crawl and wriggle like eels, while the water ran into their waistcoats, and trickled pleasantly down their shirts. In long single file they go, as Red Indians do in pictures when they are going to attack sleeping emigrants by night—only with more clothes on. The stag was alone, and they got safely above him, and within 120 yards. G. got his favourite position this time—a sitting one, with legs well downhill, and elbows resting on his thighs. Big and long-bodied, with stately head and strong wide-spreading horns, by far the best stag seen that day, the switch-horn feeds unconsciously below. He *was* a beauty,—and the bullets go with a soft plug into the damp sod—one underneath him, the other a little to his right.

It would not be fitting to write down here the exclamations which burst simultaneously from three pairs of lips, and—when the smoke blew away—from four. The three men talked rapidly in Gaelic; one followed the fast diminishing stag with his glass; another, with agony depicted on every line of his face, sat down and looked up helplessly at this latter; the third picked up the discharged rifle, and, squinting down the barrels, seemed to be endeavouring to discover something about them which would account for such an extraordinary exhibition. G. was now very agitated: his blistered toe began to hurt very much; he felt, too, very sick; his cramp was coming back; and he heartily wished himself at home, in bed, anywhere but where he

was. He lit a pipe; but the "York River" tasted nasty, and the pipe was stuffed up and would not draw properly. He poked up a rush, but it broke off inside the stem, and stopped the whole performance. Seeking consolation, he then referred to a certain day, the week before, when he had killed two fine stags—the time he met the pretty witch. One man, who was not present, plainly disbelieved the story; the others, who were, hinted—equally plainly—that it was a fluke.

The back of the day was broken now: it was getting on; and it was decided, after having lunched, that as that part of the ground was thoroughly disturbed, it was necessary to cross over the great ridge at their back, and make one more gigantic effort for blood—the fourth.

So they left this unlucky bullet-sprinkled ground, and walked some miles over the tops, mostly quartz and granite, with a network of heather-roots, and nothing else but roots, stretched tightly over it,—a bare, useless district, tenanted only by a few ptarmigan and white hares. In due time the first corrie was reached, a curious sort of hole at the side of an immense rock. There, by a stagnant little peaty loch, were some deer lying, hinds and stags, but quite unapproachable by stalking. They could be driven, however (there was a first-rate pass in the corrie, which they would be almost sure to take), and one of the Georges at once volunteered to go round by the head of the glen, come in upon them from below, and put them up. This would be nearly an hour's work; so, when he was gone, the others went a little lower down, and, leaving the rifles, took shelter under a big stone, for the wind was blowing keenly here, and it was cold. There G., smoking a borrowed pipe, listened to the story, often heard before, of how, years

ago, a fox, hard pressed by the hounds, had jumped from the top of that stupendous rock on to a ledge a foot or two below, and let the dogs, less crafty and more ignorant of the ground, go over him and the frightful precipice at the same time—a thousand feet's sheer fall. Then the remaining George went up a little higher to see if his namesake was in sight. Whilst looking round he saw, scarcely half a mile to their right, another parcel of deer, and amongst them a very fine stag. They were separated from the first lot by a high spur of the mountain; but it was evident that when these latter were put up by the driver, the former would see them on the skyline, and take the alarm. No time was to be lost; the last-found stag was a much better one than any of those by the loch, so it was at once decided to sacrifice them. One of the keepers ran down towards them, and, showing himself, put them off successfully, sending them right in the teeth of the driver. The other rigged out a flag, by the help of a couple of pocket-handkerchiefs, as a signal. The driver soon appeared in sight—a tiny speck, at the turn of the glen—and meeting the deer, tried to turn them back—fortunately without doing so. Then using his glass, he saw and understood the signal, and came up, guided by them as to the road he was to take.

So far all had gone well. There seemed a chance—a good chance—of wiping out the disgrace of the day. The head of that stag would go a long way towards atoning for the three previous blunders, and G. vowed to himself that if he could carry it home in the dog-cart that night, he would be good for—an indefinite period. Such vows are often made at such times. So far all had gone well, but now *the* terrible calamity of a day marked by misfortune occurred. What crime

had that ingenuous youth committed, that he should be visited by so heavy a punishment? What god had he so bitterly offended, that such a fiery bolt of indignation should be hurled upon his head? Surely the fates might have been satisfied with the woes they had already worked.

The keeper was within a dozen yards of joining the party when he suddenly sank gently on his knees, at the same time making a warning gesture with his hand. Slowly, and with stately step, a stag with a head of ten points crossed the ridge on their right, and stood carelessly looking about him just below. Three or four hinds and a calf followed; they were the last-found deer shifting the ground. The men were lying spread-eagled on the hillside, bare except for some heather and withered grass, and the stag at once saw them, but he was deceived by their perfect stillness (deer's sight, though wonderfully acute in detecting movement, cannot be very minutely accurate), and after a short, steady look was satisfied. There he stood, not one single inch more than fifty yards away. And the rifles! O heavens! the rifles! Ah me! The covers which held them could be seen peeping out from a big stone about twenty yards away; and not for the wealth of Scotland—or, for the matter of that, of the universe—could they be reached unseen. Words are feeble, language utterly fails, to paint the feelings of those wretched men. Interjections, notes of admiration, blanks were fitter. It was not the least agony of their terrible position that they had to be silent.

It had been a fair sight for a gentle lady, or a still more gentle vegetarian, to look on. The graceful stag, whose ruddy coat and thick-maned neck the bright evening sun was lighting up; the

timid-looking hinds, cropping the short grass, or watching the calf which now visited its mother, and now ran madly round and round like a terrier just let loose, dividing its time like a master-mason in refreshment and labour. If hatred, if the hot blast of deeply-thought comminatory ejaculations could have slain them, they would have died a thousand times. Men say that there are now on that hillside four bleached patches on which the heather never grows; nay, that the solid granite itself has crumbled away under the intensity of unspoken feelings.

For twenty minutes—for twenty awful minutes, did this scene last, and then——gaily, carelessly, there passed away down the hill half-a-dozen animals, which may be safely said to have caused in that time a greater amount of concentrated anguish than any equal number of their species since the beginning of the world.

“Holloa! what's the matter now?” “Oh, nothing—only the belly-band broken and the dog-cart useless.” Only eight miles extra to walk home. It was all in the day's work. Tired and miserable G. got there, and first taking the necessary precaution of donning an ulster, received the sympathy of his host and hostess—the only consolation of the day. He dressed, burning the sleeve of his dress-coat over the candle in doing so; dined, spilling half a bottle of claret over the rest of his garments; and went sadly to bed, to dream of enormous corries and multitudes of deer, all inaccessible, except one gigantic switch, which, pinning him up against a rock, held him; while the three keepers, armed each with extra-powered, magnified gatling-guns, opened fire on him with explosive bullets at distances varying from fifteen to twenty-five yards.

DR WORTLE'S SCHOOL.—PART IV.

CHAPTER X.—MR PEACOCKE GOES.

THE Doctor had been all but savage with his wife, and, for the moment, had hated Mr Puddicombe, but still what they said had affected him. They were both of them quite clear that Mr Peacocke should be made to go at once. And he, though he hated Mr Puddicombe for his cold logic, could not but acknowledge that all the man had said was true. According to the strict law of right and wrong, the two unfortunates should have parted when they found that they were not in truth married. And, again, according to the strict law of right and wrong, Mr Peacocke should not have brought the woman there, into his school, as his wife. There had been deceit. But then would not he, Dr Wortle himself, have been guilty of similar deceit had it fallen upon him to have to defend a woman who had been true and affectionate to him? Mr Puddicombe would have left the woman to break her heart and have gone away and done his duty like a Christian, feeling no tugging at his heart-strings. It was so that our Doctor spoke to himself of his counsellor, sitting there alone in his library.

During his conference with Lefroy something had been said which had impressed him suddenly with an idea. A word had fallen from the Colonel, an unintended word, by which the Doctor was made to believe that the other Colonel was dead, at any rate now. He had cunningly tried to lead up to the subject, but Robert Lefroy had been on his guard as soon as he had perceived the Doctor's object, and had drawn back, denying the truth

of the word he had before spoken. The Doctor at last asked him the question direct. Lefroy then declared that his brother had been alive and well when he left Texas, but he did this in such a manner as to strengthen in the Doctor's mind the impression that he was dead. If it were so, then might not all these crooked things be made straight?

He had thought it better to raise no false hopes. He had said nothing of this to Peacocke in discussing the story. He had not even hinted it to his wife from whom it might probably make its way to Mrs Peacocke. He had suggested it to Mr Puddicombe, — asking whether there might not be a way out of all their difficulties. Mr Puddicombe had declared that there could be no such way as far as the school was concerned. Let them marry, and repent their sins, and go away from the spot they had contaminated, and earn their bread in some place in which there need be no longer additional sin in concealing the story of their past life. That seemed to have been Mr Puddicombe's final judgment. But it was altogether opposed to Dr Wortle's feelings.

When Mr Puddicombe came down from the church to the rectory, Lord Carstairs was walking home after the afternoon service with Miss Wortle. It was his custom to go to church with the family, whereas the school went there under the charge of one of the ushers and sat apart in a portion of the church appropriated to themselves. Mrs Wortle, when she found that the Doctor was not

going to the afternoon service, declined to go herself. She was thoroughly disturbed by all these bad tidings, and was, indeed, very little able to say her prayers in a fit state of mind. She could hardly keep herself still for a moment, and was as one who thinks that the crack of doom is coming;—so terrible to her was her vicinity and connection with this man, and with the woman who was not his wife. Then, again, she became flurried when she found that Lord Carstairs and Mary would have to walk alone together; and she made little abortive attempts to keep first the one and then the other from going to church. Mary probably saw no reason for staying away, while Lord Carstairs possibly found an additional reason for going. Poor Mrs Wortle had for some weeks past wished that the charming young nobleman had been at home with his father and mother, or anywhere but in her house. It had been arranged, however, that he should go in July and not return after the summer holidays. Under these circumstances, having full confidence in her girl, she had refrained from again expressing her fears to the Doctor. But there were fears. It was evident to her, though the Doctor seemed to see nothing of it, that the young lord was falling in love. It might be that his youth and natural bashfulness would come to her aid, and that nothing should be said before that day in July which would separate them. But when it suddenly occurred to her that they two would walk to and fro from church together, there was cause for additional uneasiness.

If she had heard their conversation as they came back she would have been in no way disturbed by its tone on the score of the young man's tenderness towards her daughter, but she might perhaps have

been surprised by his vehemence in another respect. She would have been surprised, also, at finding how much had been said during the last twenty-four hours by others besides herself and her husband about the affairs of Mr and Mrs Peacocke.

"Do you know what he came about?" asked Mary. The "he" had of course been Robert Lefroy.

"Not in the least; but he came up there looking so queer, as though he certainly had come about something unpleasant."

"And then he was with papa afterwards," said Mary. "I am sure papa and mamma not coming to church has something to do with it. And Mr Peacocke hasn't been to church all day."

"Something has happened to make him very unhappy," said the boy. "He told me so even before this man came here. I don't know any one whom I like so much as Mr Peacocke."

"I think it is about his wife," said Mary.

"How about his wife?"

"I don't know, but I think it is. She is so very quiet."

"How quiet, Miss Wortle?" he asked.

"She never will come in to see us. Mamma has asked her to dinner and to drink tea ever so often, but she never comes. She calls perhaps once in two or three months in a formal way, and that is all we see of her."

"Do you like her?" he asked.

"How can I say when I so seldom see her?"

"I do. I like her very much. I go and see her often; and I'm sure of this;—she is quite a lady. Mamma asked her to go to Carstairs for the holidays because of what I said."

"She is not going?"

"No; neither of them will come. I wish they would; and oh, Miss

Wortle, I do so wish you were going to be there too." This is all that was said of peculiar tenderness between them on that walk home.

Late in the evening,—so late that the boys had already gone to bed,—the Doctor sent again for Mr Peacocke. "I should not have troubled you to-night," he said, "only that I have heard something from Pritchett." Pritchett was the rectory gardener who had charge also of the school buildings, and was a person of authority in the establishment. He, as well as the Doctor, held Mr Peacocke in great respect, and would have been almost as unwilling as the Doctor himself to tell stories to the school-master's discredit. "They are saying down at the Lamb,"—the Lamb was the Bowick public-house,— "that Lefroy told them all yesterday—" the Doctor hesitated before he could tell it.

"That my wife is not my wife?"

"Just so."

"Of course I am prepared for it. I knew that it would be so. Did not you?"

"I expected it."

"I was sure of it. It may be taken for granted at once that there is no longer a secret to keep. I would wish you to act just as though all the facts were known to the entire diocese." After this there was a pause during which neither of them spoke for a few moments. The Doctor had not intended to declare any purpose of his own on that occasion, but it seemed to him now as though he were almost driven to do so. Then Mr Peacocke seeing the difficulty at once relieved him from it. "I am quite prepared to leave Bowick," he said, "at once. I know that it must be so. I have thought about it, and have perceived that there is no possible alternative. I should like to consult with you as to

whither I had better go. Where shall I first take her?"

"Leave her here," said the Doctor.

"Here! Where?"

"Where she is, in the school-house. No one will come to fill your place for a while."

"I should have thought," said Mr Peacocke very slowly, "that her presence,—would have been worse almost,—than my own."

"To me,"—said the Doctor,— "to me she is as pure as the most unsullied matron in the county." Upon this Mr Peacocke, jumping from his chair, seized the Doctor's hand, but could not speak for his tears. Then he seated himself again, turning his face away towards the wall. "To no one could the presence of either of you be an evil. The evil is, if I may say so, that the two of you should be here together. You should be apart,—till some better day has come upon you."

"What better day can ever come?" said the poor man through his tears.

Then the Doctor declared his scheme. He told what he thought as to Ferdinand Lefroy, and his reason for believing that the man was dead. "I feel sure from his manner that his brother is now dead in truth. Go to him and ask him boldly," he said.

"But his word would not suffice for another marriage ceremony."

To this the Doctor agreed. It was not his intention, he said, that they should proceed on evidence as slight as that. No;—a step must be taken much more serious in its importance, and occupying a considerable time. He, Peacocke, must go again to Missouri and find out all the truth. The Doctor was of opinion that if this were resolved upon, and that if the whole truth were at once proclaimed, then Mr

Peacocke need not hesitate to pay Robert Lefroy for any information which might assist him in his search. "While you are gone," continued the Doctor almost wildly, "let bishops and Stantiloups and Puddicombes say what they may, she shall remain here. To say that she will be happy is of course vain. There can be no happiness for her till this has been put right. But she will be safe; and here, at my hand, she will, I think, be free from insult. What better is there to be done?"

"There can be nothing better," said Peacocke drawing his breath, —as though a gleam of light had shone in upon him.

"I had not meant to have spoken to you of this till to-morrow. I should not have done so, but that Pritchett had been with me. But the more I thought of it, the more sure I became that you could not both remain,—till something had been done; till something had been done."

"I was sure of it, Dr Wortle."

"Mr Puddicombe saw that it was so. Mr Puddicombe is not all the world to me by any means, but he is a man of common-sense. I will be frank with you. My wife said that it could not be so."

"She shall not stay. Mrs Wortle shall not be annoyed."

"You don't see it yet," said the Doctor. "But you do; I know you do. And she shall stay. The house shall be hers, as her residence, for the next six months. As for money——"

"I have got what will do for that, I think."

"If she wants money she shall have what she wants. There is nothing I will not do for you in your trouble, — except that you may not both be here together till I shall have shaken hands with her as Mrs Peacocke in very truth."

It was settled that Mr Peacocke should not go again into the school, or Mrs Peacocke among the boys, till he should have gone to America and have come back. It was explained in the school by the Doctor early, — for the Doctor must now take the morning school himself, — that circumstances of very grave import made it necessary that Mr Peacocke should start at once for America. That the tidings which had been published at the Lamb should reach the boys, was more than probable. Nay, — was it not certain? It would of course reach all the boys' parents. There was no use, no service, in any secrecy. But in speaking to the school not a word was said of Mrs Peacocke. The Doctor explained that he himself would take the morning school, and that Mr Rose, the mathematical master, would take charge of the school meals. Mrs Cane, the housekeeper, would look to the linen and the bedrooms. It was made plain that Mrs Peacocke's services were not to be required; but her name was not mentioned, — except that the Doctor, in order to let it be understood that she was not to be banished from the house, begged the boys as a favour that they would not interrupt Mrs Peacocke's tranquillity during Mr Peacocke's absence.

On the Tuesday morning Mr Peacocke started, remaining, however, a couple of days at Broughton, during which the Doctor saw him. Lefroy declared that he knew nothing about his brother, — whether he were alive or dead. He might be dead, because he was always in trouble, and generally drunk. Robert, on the whole, thought it probable that he was dead, but could not be got to say so. For a thousand dollars he would go over to Missouri, and, if necessary, to Texas, so as to find the truth. He would

then come back and give undeniable evidence. While making this benevolent offer, he declared, with tears in his eyes, that he had come over intending to be a true brother to his sister-in-law, and had simply been deterred from prosecuting his good intentions by Peacocke's austerity. Then he swore a most solemn oath that if he knew anything about his brother Ferdinand he would reveal it. The Doctor and Peacocke agreed together that the man's word was worth nothing; but that the man's services might be useful in enabling them to track out the truth. They were both convinced, by words which fell from him, that Ferdinand Lefroy was dead; but this would be of no avail unless they could obtain absolute evidence.

During these two days there were various conversations at Broughton between the Doctor, Mr Peacocke, and Lefroy, in which a plan of action was at length arranged. Lefroy and the schoolmaster were to proceed to America together, and there obtain what evidence they could as to the life or death of the elder brother. When absolute evidence had been obtained of either, a thousand dollars was to be handed to Robert Lefroy. But when this agreement was made, the man was given to understand that his own uncorroborated word would go for nothing.

"Who is to say what is evidence, and what not?" asked the man, not unnaturally.

"Mr Peacocke must be the judge of that," said the Doctor.

"I ain't going to agree to that," said the other. "Though he were to see him dead, he might swear he hadn't, and not give me a red cent. Why ain't I to be a judge as well as he?"

"Because you can trust him, and he cannot in the least trust you,"

said the Doctor. "You know well enough that if he were to see your brother alive, or to see him dead, you would get the money. At any rate, you have no other way of getting it but what we propose." To all this Robert Lefroy at last assented.

The prospect before Mr Peacocke for the next three months was certainly very sad. He was to travel from Broughton to St Louis, and possibly from thence down into the wilds of Texas, in company with this man, whom he thoroughly despised. Nothing could be more abominable to him than such an association; but there was no other way in which the proposed plan could be carried out. He was to pay Lefroy's expenses back to his own country, and could only hope to keep the man true to his purpose by doing so from day to day. Were he to give the man money, the man would at once disappear. Here in England, and in their passage across the ocean, the man might, in some degree, be amenable and obedient. But there was no knowing to what he might have recourse when he should find himself nearer to his country, and should feel that his companion was distant from his own.

"You'll have to keep a close watch upon him," whispered the Doctor to his friend. "I should not advise all this if I did not think you were a man of strong nerve."

"I am not afraid," said the other; "but I doubt whether he may not be too many for me. At any rate, I will try it. You will hear from me as I go on."

And so they parted as dear friends part. The Doctor had, in truth, taken the man altogether to his heart since all the circumstances of the story had come home to him. And it need hardly be said that the other was aware how deep a debt of gratitude he owed to the protector

of his wife. Indeed the very money that was to be paid to Robert Lefroy, if he earned it, was advanced out of the Doctor's pocket. Mr

Peacocke's means were sufficient for the expenses of the journey, but fell short when these thousand dollars had to be provided.

CHAPTER XI.—THE BISHOP.

Mr Peacocke had been quite right in saying that the secret would at once be known through the whole diocese. It certainly was so before he had been gone a week; and it certainly was the case, also, that the diocese generally did not approve of the Doctor's conduct. The woman ought not to have been left there. So said the diocese. It was of course the case that though the diocese knew much it did not know all. It is impossible to keep such a story concealed, but it is quite as impossible to make known all its details. In the eyes of the diocese the woman was of course the chief sinner, and the chief sinner was allowed to remain at the school! When this assertion was made to him the Doctor became very angry, saying that Mrs Peacocke did not remain at the school; that according to the arrangement as at present made, Mrs Peacocke had nothing to do with the school; that the house was his own, and that he might lend it to whom he pleased. Was he to turn the woman out houseless, when her husband had gone, on such an errand, on his advice? Of course the house was his own, but as clergyman of the parish he had not a right to do what he liked with it. He had no right to encourage evil. And the man was not the woman's husband. That was just the point made by the diocese. And she was at the school,—living under the same roof with the boys! The diocese was clearly of opinion that all the boys would be taken away.

The diocese spoke by the voice of its bishop, as a diocese should do. Shortly after Mr Peacocke's departure, the Doctor had an interview with his lordship, and told the whole story. The doing this went much against the grain with him, but he hardly dared not to do it. He felt that he was bound to do it on the part of Mrs Peacocke, if not on his own. And then the man, who had now gone, though he had never been absolutely a curate, had preached frequently in the diocese. He felt that it would not be wise to abstain from telling the bishop.

The Bishop was a goodly man, comely in his person, and possessed of manners which had made him popular in the world. He was one of those who had done the best he could with his talent, not wrapping it up in a napkin, but getting from it the best interest which the world's market could afford. But not on that account was he other than a good man. To do the best he could for himself and his family, and also to do his duty, was the line of conduct which he pursued. There are some who reverse this order, but he was not one of them. He had become a scholar in his youth, not from love of scholarship, but as a means to success. The Church had become his profession, and he had worked hard at his calling. He had taught himself to be courteous and urbane, because he had been clever enough to see that courtesy and urbanity are agreeable to men in high places. As a bishop he never spared himself the work

which a bishop ought to do. He answered letters, he studied the characters of the clergymen under him, he was just with his patronage, he endeavoured to be efficacious with his charges, he confirmed children in cold weather as well as in warm, he occasionally preached sermons, and he was beautiful and decorous in his gait and manner, as it behoves a clergyman of the Church of England to be. He liked to be master; but even to be master he would not encounter the abominable nuisance of a quarrel. When first coming to the diocese, he had had some little difficulty with our Doctor; but the Bishop had abstained from violent assertion, and they had, on the whole, been friends. There was, however, on the Bishop's part, something of a feeling that the Doctor was the bigger man; and it was probable that, without active malignity, he would take advantage of any chance which might lower the Doctor a little, and bring him more within episcopal power. In some degree he begrudged the Doctor his manliness.

He listened with many smiles and with perfect courtesy to the story as it was told to him, and was much less severe on the unfortunates than Mr Puddicombe had been. It was not the wickedness of the two people in living together, or their wickedness in keeping their secret, which offended him so much, as the evil which they were likely to do—and to have done. "No doubt," he said, "an ill-living man may preach a good sermon, perhaps a better one than a pious, God-fearing clergyman, whose intellect may be inferior though his morals are much better;—but coming from tainted lips, the better sermon will not carry a blessing with it." At this the Doctor shook his head. "Bringing a blessing" was a phrase which the Doctor

hated. He shook his head not too civilly, saying that he had not intended to trouble his lordship on so difficult a point in ecclesiastical morals. "But we cannot but remember," said the Bishop, "that he has been preaching in your parish church, and the people will know that he has acted among them as a clergyman."

"I hope the people, my lord, may never have the Gospel preached to them by a worse man."

"I will not judge him; but I do think that it has been a misfortune. You, of course, were in ignorance."

"Had I known all about it, I should have been very much inclined to do the same." This was, in fact, not true, and was said simply in a spirit of contradiction. The Bishop shook his head and smiled. "My school is a matter of more importance," said the Doctor.

"Hardly, hardly, Dr Wortle."

"Of more importance in this way, that my school may probably be injured, whereas neither the morals nor the faith of the parishioners will have been hurt."

"But he has gone."

"He has gone;—but she remains."

"What!" exclaimed the Bishop.

"He has gone, but she remains."

He repeated the words very distinctly, with a frown on his brow, as though to show that on that branch of the subject he intended to put up with no opposition—hardly even with an adverse opinion.

"She had a certain charge, as I understand,—as to the school."

"She had, my lord; and very well she did her work. I shall have a great loss in her,—for the present."

"But you said she remained."

"I have lent her the use of the house till her husband shall come back."

"Mr Peacocke, you mean," said

the Bishop, who was unable not to put in a contradiction against the untruth of the word which had been used.

"I shall always regard them as married."

"But they are not."

"I have lent her the house, at any rate, during his absence. I could not turn her into the street.

"Would not a lodging here in the city have suited her better?"

"I thought not. People here would have refused to take her,—because of her story. The wife of some religious grocer who sands his sugar regularly would have thought her house contaminated by such an inmate."

"So it would be, Doctor, to some extent." At hearing this the Doctor made very evident signs of discontent. "You cannot alter the ways of the world suddenly, though by example and precept you may help to improve them slowly. In our present imperfect condition of moral culture, it is perhaps well that the company of the guilty should be shunned."

"Guilty!"

"I am afraid that I must say so. The knowledge that such a feeling exists, no doubt deters others from guilt. The fact that wrong-doing in women is scorned, helps to maintain the innocence of women. Is it not so?"

"I must hesitate before I trouble your lordship by arguing such difficult questions. I thought it right to tell you the facts after what had occurred. He has gone. She is there,—and there she will remain for the present. I could not turn her out. Thinking her, as I do, worthy of my friendship, I could not do other than befriend her."

"Of course you must be the judge yourself."

"I had to be the judge, my lord."

"I am afraid that the parents of the boys will not understand it."

"I also am afraid. It will be very hard to make them understand it. There will be some who will work hard to make them misunderstand it."

"I hope not that."

"There will. I must stand the brunt of it. I have had battles before this, and had hoped that now, when I am getting old, they might have been at an end. But there is something left of me, and I can fight still. At any rate, I have made up my mind about this. There she shall remain till he comes back to fetch her." And so the interview was over, the Bishop feeling that he had in some slight degree had the best of it,—and the Doctor feeling that he, in some slight degree, had had the worst. If possible, he would not talk to the Bishop on the subject again.

He told Mr Puddicombe also. "With your generosity and kindness of heart I quite sympathise," said Mr Puddicombe, endeavouring to be pleasant in his manner.

"But not with my prudence."

"Not with your prudence," said Mr Puddicombe, endeavouring to be true at the same time.

But the Doctor's greatest difficulty was with his wife, whose conduct it was necessary that he guide, and whose feelings and conscience he was most anxious to influence. When she first heard his decision, she almost wrung her hands in despair. If the woman could have gone to America, and the man have remained, she would have been satisfied. Anything wrong about a man was but of little moment,—comparatively so, even though he were a clergyman; but anything wrong about a woman,—and she so near to herself! Oh dear! And the poor dear boys,—under the same roof with her! And the boys' mammas! How would she be able

to endure the sight of that horrid Mrs Stantiloup;—or Mrs Stantiloup's words, which would certainly be conveyed to her? But there was something much worse for her even than all this. The Doctor insisted that she should go and call upon the woman! "And take Mary?" asked Mrs Wortle.

"What would be the good of taking Mary? Who is talking of a child like that? It is for the sake of charity,—for the dear love of Christ, that I ask you to do it. Do you ever think of Mary Magdalene?"

"Oh yes."

"This is no Magdalene. This is a woman led into no faults by vicious propensities. Here is one who has been altogether unfortunate,—who has been treated more cruelly than any of whom you have ever read."

"Why did she not leave him?"

"Because she was a woman, with a heart in her bosom."

"I am to go to her?"

"I do not order it; I only ask it." Such asking from her husband was, she knew, very near akin to ordering.

"What shall I say to her?"

"Bid her keep up her courage till he shall return. If you were all alone, as she is, would not you wish that some other woman should come to comfort you? Think of her desolation."

Mrs Wortle did think of it, and after a day or two made up her mind to obey her husband's—request. She made her call, but very little came of it, except that she promised to come again. "Mrs Wortle," said the poor woman, "pray do not let me be a trouble to you. If you stay away, I shall quite understand that there is sufficient reason. I know how good your husband has been to us." Mrs Wortle said, however, as she took the other's hand, that she would come again in a day or two.

But there were further troubles in store for Mrs Wortle. Before she had repeated her visit to Mrs Peacocke, a lady, who lived about ten miles off, the wife of the rector of Buttercup, called upon her. This was the Lady Margaret Momson, a daughter of the Earl of Brigstock, who had, thirty years ago, married a young clergyman. Nevertheless, up to the present day, she was quite as much the Earl's daughter as the parson's wife. She was first cousin to that Mrs Stantiloup, between whom and the Doctor interecine war was always being waged; and she was also aunt to a boy at the school, who, however, was in no way related to Mrs Stantiloup, young Momson being the son of the parson's eldest brother. Lady Margaret had never absolutely and openly taken the part of Mrs Stantiloup. Had she done so, a visit even of ceremony would have been impossible. But she was supposed to have Stantiloup proclivities, and was not, therefore, much liked at Bowick. There had been a question, indeed, whether young Momson should be received at the school,—because of the *quasi* connection with the arch-enemy; but Squire Momson of Buttercup, the boy's father, had set that at rest by bursting out, in the Doctor's hearing, into violent abuse against "the close-fisted, vulgar old fagot." The son of a man imbued with such proper feelings was, of course, accepted.

But Lady Margaret was curious,—especially at the present time. "What a romance this is, Mrs Wortle," she said, "that has gone all through the diocese!" The reader will remember that Lady Margaret was also the wife of a clergyman.

"You mean—the Peacockes?"

"Of course I do."

"He has gone away."

"We all know that, of course;—

to look for her wife's husband. Good gracious me! what a story!"

"They think that he is—dead now."

"I suppose they thought so before," said Lady Margaret.

"Of course they did."

"Though it does seem that no inquiry was made at all. Perhaps they don't care about those things over there as we do here. He couldn't have cared very much,—nor she."

"The Doctor thinks that they are very much to be pitied."

"The Doctor always was a little Quixotic,—eh?"

"I don't think that at all, Lady Margaret."

"I mean in the way of being so very good-natured and kind. Her brother came;—didn't he?"

"Her first husband's brother," said Mrs Wortle, blushing.

"Her first husband!"

"Well,—you know what I mean, Lady Margaret."

"Yes, I know what you mean. It is so very shocking; isn't it? And so the two men have gone off together to look for the third. Goodness me! what a party they will be if they meet! Do you think they'll quarrel?"

"I don't know, Lady Margaret."

"And that he should be a clergyman of the Church of England! Isn't it dreadful? What does the Bishop say? Has he heard all about it?"

"The Bishop has nothing to do with it. Mr Peacocke never held a curacy in the diocese."

"But he has preached here very often,—and has taken her to church with him! I suppose the Bishop has been told?"

"You may be sure that he knows it as well as you."

"We are so anxious, you know, about dear little Gus." Dear little Gus was Augustus Momson, the lady's nephew, who was supposed to

be the worst-behaved, and certainly the stupidest boy in the school.

"Augustus will not be hurt, I should say."

"Perhaps not directly. But my sister has, I know, very strong opinions on such subjects. Now I want to ask you one thing. Is it true that—she—remains here?"

"She is still living in the school-house."

"Is that prudent, Mrs Wortle?"

"If you want to have an opinion on that subject, Lady Margaret, I would recommend you to ask the Doctor." By which she meant to assert that Lady Margaret would not, for the life of her, dare to ask the Doctor such a question. "He has done what he has thought best."

"Most good-natured you mean, Mrs Wortle."

"I mean what I say, Lady Margaret. He has done what he has thought best, looking at all the circumstances. He thinks that they are very worthy people, and that they have been most cruelly ill-used. He has taken that into consideration. You call it good-nature. Others perhaps may call it—charity." The wife, though she at her heart deplored her husband's action in the matter, was not going to own to another lady that he had been imprudent.

"I am sure, I hope they will," said Lady Margaret. Then as she was taking her leave, she made a suggestion. "Some of the boys will be taken away, I suppose. The Doctor probably expects that."

"I don't know what he expects," said Mrs Wortle. "Some are always going, and when they go, others come in their places. As for me, I wish he gave the school up altogether."

"Perhaps he means it," said Lady Margaret; "otherwise, perhaps he wouldn't have been so good-natured." Then she took her departure.

When her visitor was gone, Mrs Wortle was very unhappy. She had been betrayed by her wrath into expressing that wish as to the giving up of the school. She knew well that the Doctor had no such intention. She herself had more than once suggested it in her timid way, but the Doctor had treated her suggestions as being worth nothing. He had his ideas about Mary, who was undoubtedly a very pretty girl. Mary might marry well, and £20,000 would probably assist her in doing so.

When he was told of Lady Margaret's hints, he said in his wrath that he would send young Momson away instantly if a word was said to him by the boy's mamma. "Of course," said he, "if the lad turns out a scapegrace, as is like enough, it will be because Mrs Peacocke had two husbands. It is often a question to me whether the religion of the world is not more odious than its want of religion." To this terrible suggestion poor Mrs Wortle did not dare to make any answer whatever.

CHAPTER XII.—THE STANTILOUP CORRESPONDENCE.

We will now pass for a moment out of Bowick parish, and go over to Buttercup. There, at Buttercup Hall, the squire's house, in the drawing-room, were assembled Mrs Momson, the squire's wife; Lady Margaret Momson, the rector's wife; Mrs Rolland, the wife of the bishop; and the Hon. Mrs Stantiloup. A party was staying in the house, collected for the purpose of entertaining the Bishop; and it would perhaps not have been possible to have got together in the diocese four ladies more likely to be hard upon our Doctor. For though Squire Momson was not very fond of Mrs Stantiloup, and had used strong language respecting her when he was anxious to send his boy to the Doctor's school, Mrs Momson had always been of the other party, and had in fact adhered to Mrs Stantiloup from the beginning of the quarrel. "I do trust," said Mrs Stantiloup, "that there will be an end to all this kind of thing now."

"Do you mean an end to the school?" asked Lady Margaret.

"I do indeed. I always thought it matter of great regret that Augustus should have been sent there, after the scandalous treatment that

Bob received." Bob was the little boy who had drunk the champagne and required the carriage exercise.

"But I always heard that the school was quite popular," said Mrs Rolland.

"I think you'll find," continued Mrs Stantiloup, "that there won't be much left of its popularity now. Keeping that abominable woman under the same roof with the boys! No master of a school that wasn't absolutely blown up with pride, would have taken such people as those Peacockes without making proper inquiry. And then to let him preach in the church! I suppose Mr Momson will allow you to send for Augustus at once?" This she said turning to Mrs Momson.

"Mr Momson thinks so much of the Doctor's scholarship," said the mother, apologetically. "And we are so anxious that Gus should do well when he goes to Eton."

"What is Latin and Greek as compared to his soul?" asked Lady Margaret.

"No, indeed," said Mrs Rolland. She had found herself compelled, as wife of the Bishop, to assent to the self-evident proposition which had been made. She was a quiet,

silent little woman, whom the Bishop had married in the days of his earliest preferment, and who, though she was delighted to find herself promoted to the society of the big people in the diocese, had never quite lifted herself up into their sphere. Though she had her ideas as to what it was to be a bishop's wife, she had never yet been quite able to act up to them.

"I know that young Talbot is to leave," said Mrs Stantiloup. "I wrote to Mrs Talbot immediately when all this occurred, and I've heard from her cousin Lady Groggram that the boy is not to go back after the holidays." This happened to be altogether untrue. What she probably meant was, that the boy should not go back if she could prevent his doing so.

"I feel quite sure," said Lady Margaret, "that Lady Anne will not allow her boys to remain when she finds out what sort of inmates the Doctor chooses to entertain." The Lady Anne spoken of was Lady Anne Clifford, the widowed mother of two boys who were intrusted to the Doctor's care.

"I do hope you'll be firm about Gus," said Mrs Stantiloup to Mrs Momson. "If we're not to put down this kind of thing, what is the good of having any morals in the country at all? We might just as well live like pagans, and do without marriage services at all, as they do in so many parts of the United States."

"I wonder what the Bishop does think about it?" asked Mrs Momson of the Bishop's wife.

"It makes him very unhappy; I know that," said Mrs Rolland. "Of course he cannot interfere about the school. As for licensing the gentleman as a curate, that was of course quite out of the question."

At this moment Mr Momson the

clergyman, and the Bishop, came into the room, and were offered, as is usual on such occasions, cold tea and the remains of the buttered toast. The squire was not there. Had he been with the other gentlemen, Mrs Stantiloup, violent as she was, would probably have held her tongue; but as he was absent, the opportunity was not bad for attacking the Bishop on the subject under discussion. "We were talking, my lord, about the Bowick school."

Now the Bishop was a man who could be very confidential with one lady, but was apt to be guarded when many are concerned. To any one of those present he might have said what he thought, had no one else been there to hear. That would have been the expression of a private opinion; but to speak before the four would have been tantamount to a public declaration.

"About the Bowick school?" said he. "I hope there is nothing going wrong with the Bowick school."

"You must have heard about Mr Peacocke," said Lady Margaret.

"Yes; I have certainly heard of Mr Peacocke. He, I believe, has left Dr Wortle's seminary."

"But she remains!" said Mrs Stantiloup, with tragic energy.

"So I understand;—in the house; but not as part of the establishment."

"Does that make so much difference?" asked Lady Margaret.

"It does make a very great difference," said Lady Margaret's husband, the parson, wishing to help the Bishop in his difficulty.

"I don't see it at all," said Mrs Stantiloup. "The man's spirit in the matter is just as manifest whether the lady is or is not allowed to look after the boys' linen. In fact, I despise him for making the pretence. Her doing menial work about the house would injure no one. It is her presence there,—

the presence of a woman who has falsely pretended to be married, when she knew very well that she had no husband."

"When she knew that she had two," said Lady Margaret.

"And fancy, Lady Margaret,—Lady Bracy absolutely asked her to go to Carstairs! That woman was always infatuated about Dr Wortle. What would she have done if they had gone, and this other man had followed his sister-in-law there. But Lord and Lady Bracy would ask any one to Carstairs,—just any one that they could get hold of!"

Mr Momson was one whose obstinacy was wont to give way when sufficiently attacked. And even he, after having been for two days subjected to the eloquence of Mrs Stantiloup, acknowledged that the Doctor took a great deal too much upon himself. "He does it," said Mrs Stantiloup, "just to show that there is nothing that he can't bring parents to assent to. Fancy,—a woman living there as housekeeper with a man as usher, pretending to be husband and wife, when they knew all along that they were not married!"

Mr Momson, who didn't care a straw about the morals of the man whose duty it was to teach his little boy his Latin and grammar, or the morals of the woman who looked after his little boy's waistcoats and trousers, gave a half-assenting grunt. "And you are to pay," continued Mrs Stantiloup, with considerable emphasis,—“you are to pay two hundred and fifty pounds a-year for such conduct as that!"

"Two hundred," suggested the squire, who cared as little for the money as he did for the morals.

"Two hundred and fifty,—every shilling of it, when you consider the extras."

"There are no extras, as far as

I can see. But then my boy is strong and healthy, thank God," said the squire, taking his opportunity of having one fling at the lady. But while all this was going on, he did give a half assent that Gus should be taken away at mid-summer, being partly moved there-to by a letter from the Doctor, in which he was told that his boy was not doing any good at the school.

It was a week after that that Mrs Stantiloup wrote the following letter to her friend Lady Grogram, after she had returned home from Buttercup Hall. Lady Grogram was a great friend of hers, and was first cousin to that Mrs Talbot who had a son at the school. Lady Grogram was an old woman of strong mind but small means, who was supposed to be potential over those connected with her. Mrs Stantiloup feared that she could not be efficacious herself, either with Mr or Mrs Talbot; but she hoped that she might carry her purpose through Lady Grogram. It may be remembered that she had declared at Buttercup Hall that young Talbot was not to go back to Bowick. But this had been a figure of speech, as has been already explained.

"MY DEAR LADY GROGRAM,—Since I got your last letter I have been staying with the Momsons at Buttercup. It was awfully dull. He and she are, I think, the stupidest people that ever I met. None of those Momsons have an idea among them. They are just as heavy and inharmonious as their name. Lady Margaret was one of the party. She would have been better, only that our excellent Bishop was there too, and Lady Margaret thought it well to show off all her graces before the Bishop and the Bishop's wife. I never saw such a dowdy in all my life as Mrs Rolland. He is all very well,

and looks at any rate like a gentleman. It was, I take it, that which got him his diocese. They say the Queen saw him once, and was taken by his manners.

“But I did one good thing at Buttercup. I got Mr Momson to promise that that boy of his should not go back to Bowick. Dr Wortle has become quite intolerable. I think he is determined to show that whatever he does, people shall put up with it. It is not only the most expensive establishment of the kind in all England, but also the worst conducted. You know, of course, how all this matter about that woman stands now. She is remaining there at Bowick, absolutely living in the house, calling herself Mrs Peacocke, while the man she was living with has gone off with her brother-in-law to look for her husband! Did you ever hear of such a mess as that?

“And the Doctor expects that fathers and mothers will still send their boys to such a place as that? I am very much mistaken if he will not find it altogether deserted before Christmas. Lord Carstairs is already gone.” [This was at any rate disingenuous, as she had been very severe when at Buttercup on all the Carstairs family because of their declared and perverse friendship for the Doctor.] “Mr Momson, though he is quite incapable of seeing the meaning of anything, has determined to take his boy away. She may thank me at any rate for that. I have heard that Lady Anne Clifford’s two boys will both leave.” [In one sense she had heard it, because the suggestion had been made by herself at Buttercup.] “I do hope that Mr Talbot’s dear little boy will not be allowed to return to such contamination as that! Fancy,—the man and the woman living there in that way together; and the Doctor keeping the woman on after

he knew it all! It is really so horrible that one doesn’t know how to talk about it. When the Bishop was at Buttercup I really felt almost obliged to be silent.

“I know very well that Mrs Talbot is always ready to take your advice. As for him, men very often do not think so much about these things as they ought. But he will not like his boy to be nearly the only one left at the school. I have not heard of one who is to remain for certain. How can it be possible that any boy who has a mother should be allowed to remain there?

“Do think of this, and do your best. I need not tell you that nothing ought to be so dear to us as a high tone of morals.—Most sincerely yours,

“JULIANA STANTILOUP.”

We need not pursue this letter further than to say that when it reached Mr Talbot’s hands, which it did through his wife, he spoke of Mrs Stantiloup in language which shocked his wife considerably, though she was not altogether unaccustomed to strong language on his part. Mr Talbot and the Doctor had been at school together, and at Oxford, and were friends.

I will give now a letter that was written by the Doctor to Mr Momson in answer to one in which that gentleman signified his intention of taking little Gus away from the school.

“MY DEAR MR MOMSON,—After what you have said, of course I shall not expect your boy back after the holidays. Tell his mamma, with my compliments, that he shall take all his things home with him. As a rule I do charge for a quarter in advance when a boy is taken away suddenly, without notice, and apparently without cause. But I shall not do so at the present mo-

ment either to you or to any parent who may withdraw his son. A circumstance has happened which, though it cannot impair the utility of my school, and ought not to injure its character, may still be held as giving offence to certain persons. I will not be driven to alter my conduct by what I believe to be foolish misconception on their part. But they have a right to their own opinions, and I will not mulct them because of their conscientious convictions.—Yours faithfully,

“JEFFREY WORTLE.”

“If you come across any friend who has a boy here, you are perfectly at liberty to show him or her this letter.”

The defection of the Momsons wounded the Doctor, no doubt. He was aware that Mrs Stantiloup had been at Buttercup and that the Bishop also had been there—and he could put two and two together; but it hurt him to think that one so “stanch” though so “stupid” as Mrs Momson, should be turned from her purpose by such a woman as Mrs Stantiloup. And he got other letters on the subject. Here is one from Lady Anne Clifford:—

“DEAR DOCTOR,—You know how safe I think my dear boys are with you, and how much obliged I am both to you and your wife for all your kindness. But people are saying things to me about one of the masters at your school and his wife. Is there any reason why I should be afraid? You will see how thoroughly I trust you when I ask you the question.—Yours very sincerely,

“ANNE CLIFFORD.”

Now Lady Anne Clifford was a sweet, confiding, affectionate, but not very wise woman. In a letter,

written not many days before to Mary Wortle, who had on one occasion been staying with her, she said that she was at that time in the same house with the Bishop and Mrs Rolland. Of course the Doctor knew again how to put two and two together.

Then there came a letter from Mr Talbot—

“DEAR WORTLE,—So you are boiling for yourself another pot of hot water. I never saw such a fellow as you are for troubles! Old Mother Shipton has been writing such a letter to our old woman, and explaining that no boy's soul would any longer be worth looking after if he be left in your hands. Don't you go and get me into a scrape more than you can help; but you may be quite sure of this, that if I had as many sons as Priam I should send them all to you;—only I think that the cheques would be very long in coming.—Yours always,

“JOHN TALBOT.”

The Doctor answered this at greater length than he had done in writing to Mr Momson, who was not specially his friend.

“MY DEAR TALBOT,—You may be quite sure that I shall not repeat to any one what you have told me of Mother Shipton. I knew, however, pretty well what she was doing, and what I had to expect from her. It is astonishing to me that such a woman should still have the power of persuading any one,—astonishing, also, that any human being should continue to hate as she hates me. She has often tried to do me an injury, but she has never succeeded yet. At any rate she will not bend me. Though my school should be broken up to-morrow, which I do not

think probable, I should still have enough to live upon,—which is more, by all accounts, than her unfortunate husband can say for himself.

“The facts are these. More than twelve months ago I got an assistant named Peacocke, a clergyman, an Oxford man, and formerly a Fellow of Trinity;—a man quite superior to anything I have a right to expect in my school. He had gone as a classical professor to a college in the United States;—a rash thing to do, no doubt;—and had there married a widow, which was rasher still. The lady came here with him and undertook the charge of the schoolhouse,—with a separate salary; and an admirable person in the place she was. Then it turned out, as no doubt you have heard, that her former husband was alive when they were married. They ought probably to have separated, but they didn't. They came here instead, and here they were followed by the brother of the husband,—who I take it is now dead, though of that we know nothing certain.

“That he should have told me his position is more than any man has a right to expect from another. Fortune had been most unkind to him, and for her sake he was bound to do the best that he could with himself. I cannot bring myself to be angry with him, though I cannot defend him by strict laws of right and wrong. I have advised him to go back to America and find out if the man be in truth dead. If so, let him come back and marry the woman again before all the world. I shall be ready to marry them, and to ask him and her to my house afterwards.

“In the meantime what was to become of her? ‘Let her go into lodgings,’ said the Bishop. Go to lodgings at Broughton! You know

what sort of lodgings she would get there among psalm-singing greengrocers who would tell her of her misfortune every day of her life! I would not subject her to the misery of going and seeking for a home. I told him, when I persuaded him to go, that she should have the rooms they were then occupying while he was away. In settling this, of course, I had to make arrangements for doing in our own establishment the work which had lately fallen to her share. I mention this for the sake of explaining that she has got nothing to do with the school. No doubt the boys are under the same roof with her. Will your boy's morals be the worse? It seems that Gustavus Momson's will. You know the father; do you not? I wonder whether anything will ever affect his morals?

“Now I have told you everything. Not that I have doubted you; but, as you have been told so much, I have thought it well that you should have the whole story from myself. What effect it may have upon the school I do not know. The only boy of whose secession I have yet heard is young Momson. But probably there will be others. Four new boys were to have come, but I have already heard from the father of one that he has changed his mind. I think I can trace an acquaintance between him and Mother Shipton. If the body of the school should leave me I will let you know at once, as you might not like to leave your boy under such circumstances.

“You may be sure of this, that here the lady remains until her husband returns. I am not going to be turned from my purpose at this time of day by anything that Mother Shipton may say or do.—
Yours always,

“JEFFREY WORTLE.”

IRISH DISTRESS AND ITS ORIGIN.

EDMUND SPENSER, describing the state of Ireland three hundred years ago, says:—

“There have been divers good plots devised and wise counsels cast already about the reformation of that realm; but they say it is the fatal destiny of that land that no purposes whatsoever are meant for her good, will prosper, or take good effect, which, whether it proceed from the very Genius of the soil, or influence of the stars, or that Almighty God hath not yet appointed the time for her reformation, or that He reserveth her in this unquiet state still for some secret scourge, which shall by her come unto England, it is hard to be known, but yet much to be feared.”

The description of Ireland given by Spenser has held good down to the present day. That country has been a rankling thorn in the flesh of every British Government, and the lapse of time shows no sign of amendment. Within the last thirty years there have been some short intervals of comparative prosperity, but these have been varied by periods of turmoil and agitation; and even in the most prosperous times there has been a constant risk of distress in the poorer districts of the country, from failures of crops, especially of the potato.

Much of this state of matters is due to the low social condition of the bulk of the Irish people, and so long as it remains in that state amelioration is hopeless. For ages the people have depended for subsistence chiefly upon the potato, and notwithstanding the many warnings they have had of the folly of so doing, they have not abated their confidence in a crop which has repeatedly failed, leaving them helpless. The potato crop failed in 1823, in 1837, in 1840;

and then we come to the great failure of 1846 and 1847, when, according to the late Earl Russell, “a famine of the thirteenth fell upon the population of the nineteenth century.” The efforts which were made at that time by public and private beneficence to relieve the distress were unparalleled for their magnitude. Parliament voted over seven millions sterling for public works, labour rates, and temporary relief; but this assistance is now ignored, and even occasionally denied, by the Home Rule organs and orators of the present day, although it is a historical fact.

In 1850 the country began to improve, and in many respects it materially advanced in prosperity until 1860, when three consecutive wet seasons set in, terminating in 1863, which entailed much loss to all classes of farmers, and considerable privations in the case of the peasant landholders and labourers. It has been calculated that the loss on live-stock alone during the years named amounted to over five millions sterling, even at the low scale of prices used at that time by the Registrar-General. The crops of all kinds were deficient; potatoes were small in size, and much affected by disease; a large proportion of the hay crop was unfit for use; and what added much to the privations endured by the people, was a fuel famine, the wet weather rendering it impossible to have a supply of turf. Many landlords made abatements of rents, varying from 15 to 30 per cent; and in various instances they also imported coals, which they either sold at a low price to their tenants, or gave as a free gift.

The results of the wet summer

and early part of the autumn of 1879 were simply a repetition of those which occurred from 1860 to 1863, with this difference, that the crops of 1879 were ultimately saved in tolerably fair condition, owing to the continuance of remarkably fine weather for several weeks during the months of October and November. It is not denied that the crops of 1879 were below an average in point of yield; but it was subsequently proved that the loss was not so great as the hastily collected statistics, published last winter by the Registrar-General, appeared to show.

The unfavourable weather of last year has been followed by results differing from those which attended any previous failure of the crops in Ireland. It has been made the groundwork of a political and social agitation of the worst kind. The Irish peasantry, especially in the west and south-west, were in a much worse plight in 1861 and 1862 than they have been in during the last six months; but their condition at that time caused no excitement, and, we may even say, that very little sympathy existed amongst those who were not directly affected by the unfortunate condition of the people. But eighteen years ago there was no one to make the misfortunes of the people a stalking-horse for the advancement of political and seditious projects. Mr Parnell was at that time a school-boy, and Home Rule had not become even a dream of any of those visionary schemers who delight in posing before the public gaze as Irish patriots.

In the interval, Mr Parnell came to the front as the political leader of a party professing intense hatred to the British Government and the maintenance of the Union, and resolved, also, to overturn all existing laws affecting the relations between

landlord and tenant in Ireland. Meetings were got up last year in those parts of the country where the people were supposed to be in favour of such views, and principles verging upon extreme Communism were broadly advocated by Mr Parnell and his supporters, lay and clerical. That gentleman could thank God for the torrents of rain which fell at the time when several of those meetings were held, beating the crops into the ground, and destroying the hopes of the farmers; and these calamities were blasphemously asserted by Mr Parnell to afford proof that Heaven was fighting on their side. His constant advice to farmers was, Pay no rent, but keep a firm grip of the land, no matter what the law might say or do to the contrary. This advice was very palatable to the bulk of his hearers; and the result is, that certain parts of the west of Ireland, particularly the counties of Mayo and Galway, have been the scenes of wild outrages, and even of murders. Men who paid their rents have been taken out of their huts at night and roasted over a fire, or "carded" until their bodies were rendered a mass of red flesh. In other instances cattle and horses have been hamstrung, and sheep driven into the sea. In short, the people of Connaught have shown that they are still the "savage nation" depicted by the poet Spenser. But what could be expected from poor, ignorant, excitable people, when an Irish M.P.—Mr Biggar—had the audacity to attempt to excuse in the House of Commons the assassination of Irish landlords!

The anti-rent agitation has also spread to other parts where the people have usually been peaceable and orderly. On the 13th of July, Mr Justice Lawson, addressing the grand jury of the county of Kerry, said—

"I am sorry to see that the picture presented, especially at the north end of the county, is that of a determined and organised opposition to the payment of rent, and to the carrying out of the process of the law, which state of things, if allowed to go on unchecked, must lead, I should say, to the breaking up of all the bonds of civilised society."

The agitators resolved to make capital of any distress which might exist in the west, from the failure of crops or other causes. With this view a "Special Commissioner" was despatched from the office of the 'Dublin Freeman's Journal,' and the nature of his instructions soon became manifest from the highly sensational style of his reports. Reporters from other journals, metropolitan as well as Irish, followed in the steps of the 'Freeman's' correspondent; and although their reports were couched in much more moderate terms, still it was evident that the writers were much impressed by the miserable condition of the people. No surprise need be felt that such was the case. Gentlemen accustomed to the comforts, conveniences, and decencies of civilised life, suddenly found themselves transported into a district where such things were utterly unknown. There could not be a greater difference between life in London as compared with life in Zululand, than between the Londoners and the Connaughtmen. The parties were at opposite poles of the social scale. But the people of Connaught had not temporarily sunk into the abject condition in which the reporters found them. It was their normal state, affected, no doubt, by temporary causes, but still the state in which they had been born and reared. The cabin or hut of a Connaughtman has from time immemorial been one of the most wretched kinds

of habitation on the face of this globe. It is impossible to imagine a worse. Daniel O'Connell described the condition of the Irish peasantry in the following terms:—

"The state of the lower orders in Ireland is such, that it is astonishing to me how they preserve health, and, above all, how they retain cheerfulness under the total privation of anything like comfort, and the existence of a state of things that the inferior animals would scarcely endure, and which they do not endure in this country [England]. Their houses are not even called houses, and they ought not to be; they are called cabins. They are built of mud, and partly with thatch, and partly with a surface which they call *scraws*, but which is utterly insufficient to keep out the rain. In these abodes there is nothing that can be called furniture; it is a luxury to have a box to put anything into; it is a luxury to have what they call a dresser for laying a plate upon. They generally have little beyond a cast-metal pot, a milk-tub, which they call a keeler, over which they put a wicker basket, in order to throw the potatoes, water and all, into the basket, that the water should run into their keeler. [The seats are usually large stones, or short pieces of wood resting upon stones.] The entire family sleep in the same apartment [and occasionally more than one family], they call it a room: they have seldom any bedsteads; and as to coverings for their beds, they have nothing but straw, and very few blankets. In general, they sleep in their clothes; there is not one in ten who has a blanket. [Pigs and poultry, and sometimes a cow or calf or goat, rest at night in the same apartment with the family.] Their diet is equally wretched. It consists, except on the sea-coast, of potatoes and water during the greater part of the year, and of potatoes and sour-milk during the remainder." [551103]

Since O'Connell's time, many landed proprietors have done much to improve the cabins on their estates, and in various instances

have erected cottages of a superior class, which some of the people do not seem to appreciate; but in the majority of cases, the dwellings, especially in the far west, remain in the condition so graphically described by O'Connell. Of late years, so long as the people had credit with the country shopkeepers, their diet was improved, and they have used flour to a large extent. They did not consider oatmeal good enough; and coming down, as they think, to Indian meal, has of late been one of their greatest hardships.

The effects of a partial failure of the crops last year in the west of Ireland, were increased to a great extent by the want of employment for the thousands of labourers who annually migrate to England and Scotland in search of work. It is remarkable the change which has taken place, especially in the clothing of the Connaught peasantry, in consequence of this annual migration. At one time they were very badly dressed, and chiefly in home-made coarse frieze; now they wear the substantial and familiar garb of the English navvy, with the exception of some of the old men; and instead of carrying their possessions tied up in a handkerchief, we have frequently seen them passing through Dublin carrying carpet-bags. The bundle in the red handkerchief is still, however, a distinguishing mark of the Connaughtman *en route* for England.

The extreme depression in trade which existed in 1879 in the manufacturing and mining districts of Great Britain, precluded any necessity for extraneous labour; whilst the lateness of the harvest, and the increased use of machinery, rendered farmers averse to engage the services of the swarms of Irish labourers which crossed the Channel. This annual migration has been carried on

to an extent of which few are aware, and we therefore gladly avail ourselves of certain statistical facts which Dr W. N. Hancock has published on the subject:—

“So far back as 1841,” says Dr Hancock, “that accomplished statistician, the late Sir Thomas Lurcom, had the number of deck-passengers to England ascertained, and in that summer it was 57,651; of these 25,118 came from Connaught, 10,450 from the county of Mayo. The statistics of migratory labourers, though collected in a less perfect form, from 1851 till a few years since, were never compiled or published; so it has been found necessary to resort to private information. With the development of railways and progress of education, the number of labourers migrating increased. The 25,000 from Connaught rose to 35,000 a few years since, and those from Mayo from 10,000 to 20,000 in 1878. Last year [1879] the Mayo men fell to 15,000; there was a further fall of 2000 from the rest of Connaught, or 7000 men whose English employment was stopped in 1879. This, at £14, 10s. a man, to cover wages usually brought home, and cost of food and clothes in England, represents, for 7000 men, £100,000 less English wages earned by them this year than last year. Then the 20,000 who went from Connaught this year brought home less wages. At the same rate as above stated, their English wages would be £300,000. According to one estimate they lost this year a third, or £100,000; according to another two-thirds, or £200,000. If we take a half, £150,000, and add it to the £100,000 lost by the 7000 men that did not go over to England at all, we get a loss to Connaught from this single source in this year [1879] of a quarter of a million of money, or £250,000.”

This loss was a serious matter to the people of Connaught, for it not only deprived them of the means of paying their rents, but it also rendered them unable to wipe off any portion of the debts they had incurred to shopkeepers, who had sold them food on the faith of being

paid, as usual, out of their earnings in England. Loss of credit was not confined to the class who depended chiefly on English earnings. Those small farmers who remained at home were also involved with the shopkeepers who had pressed their wares upon the people in previous years, when cattle sold readily at good prices, giving their customers almost unlimited credit. They had also dealt largely in accommodation bills with banks and usurers, and were overloaded with debts. It may be thought strange that people of that class were allowed to run so deeply into debt; but in the first place, and especially in their dealings with banks, they conducted their transactions with a wonderful amount of cunning secrecy; and next, the Land Act had given a certain value to their holdings, which shopkeepers and others regarded as affording ample security for their advances. It was calculated that even if a tenant were ejected, he would be awarded an amount of compensation sufficient to repay his creditors, although it would leave the debtor in a fit state for the workhouse. Indebtedness is the normal condition of the Connaught peasant. Even in the best times he obtains seed-oats or seed-potatoes from the shopkeepers on credit, who seldom charge less than fifty per cent profit for the accommodation; artificial manures, grossly adulterated by the retailers, are supplied on similar terms; and the poor, shiftless peasant feeds his family for a good part of the year upon credit. From the first day he earns a penny until his death, he is the bond-slave of the shopkeeper or the usurer,—usually one and the same individual; and the legitimate claims of his landlord are insignificant compared with those of his other creditors. His land-

lord usually gives him ample time, but the shopkeepers and usurers have no bowels of mercy.

Newspaper correspondents who visited the west of Ireland last winter, had, of course, to depend very much for information upon the people with whom they came into contact, and, from ignorance of the people and their ways, they were unable to sift the evidence brought before them so as to detect wilful imposture or interested exaggeration. Those who know how difficult it is to get the truth out of a Connaught peasant, when he is determined to withhold it, can easily understand how gentlemen who were total strangers to the country and to the people were misled. We are not vilifying the character of the Connaught peasantry when we allude to their inclination to deceive. The judges of assize have, over and over again, referred in strong language to the gross perjury which has been committed by witnesses, in cases tried by them, and have frequently expressed their opinion that it was impossible to believe any of them. Such a trivial matter, therefore, as deceiving a newspaper correspondent, was regarded as of little consequence, or rather that it was justifiable and necessary, as it might be the means of conferring upon themselves some direct pecuniary advantages.

One of the dodges practised upon reporters was to show them a small heap of potatoes in a corner of the cabin, and to state that the heap constituted the sole means of subsistence for the inmates for several months. This alleged fact was duly recorded, and much sympathy expressed for the people who were patiently waiting for the period when their limited stores of food would become exhausted, and absolute starvation would stare them in the face. It was not known

that the heap of potatoes, like the gammon of bacon which Goldsmith speaks of, was merely kept for show, and that the bulk from which it was taken was snugly hid in a hole in the field, beyond the reach of any prying Sassenach. As soon as seeds were supplied, through the agency of the Duchess of Marlborough's Committee, and of Major Nolan's Seed Act, the hidden stores were brought to light, and not only were the local markets fairly supplied, but a considerable export trade in potatoes sprang up, very much to the surprise of every one. The 'Irish Times,' a respectable Dublin daily paper, not given to sensationalism, stated, in its issue of March 23d, that

"almost every steamer leaving Dublin for England takes large quantities of Irish seed-potatoes nightly for agricultural districts in Lancashire and Yorkshire; but up to the present time the largest weights of these esculents have been despatched to Wales, the London and North-Western line to Holyhead taking as much as sixty to eighty tons daily. In addition to the steamers, return colliers are being largely employed in this traffic; and while, of course, a great deal of this seed reaches the Liffey from Munster counties, it is a noteworthy fact, in this period of distress in the west of Ireland, that by far the largest quantities of seed-tubers shipped from Dublin for England, and occasionally for Scotland, come direct from Connaught counties, and especially from the districts of Castlereagh, Castlebar, Claremorris, and other Mayo and Galway neighbourhoods, where the suffering is said to be keen."

This statement was never denied, nor was any attempt made to explain the circumstances by the famine-mongering section of the Irish press.

When the late Government saw that the peasantry of the west of Ireland were in a worse plight than usual, from the partial failure of their crops, and the loss of earnings

in England, steps were taken to meet any serious pressure on the rates that might arise in some localities from these causes. The rules for granting outdoor relief were relaxed, and money was advanced to landlords and local authorities for relief-works, the money required being supplied from the surplus fund of the Irish Church. Landlords, especially the owners of property in the west of Ireland, have availed themselves to a large extent of the facilities afforded for obtaining loans for improving purposes, there being, up to 1st July, 2466 applicants for loans amounting to £1,531,380. The extension of outdoor relief was imprudent, as it opened the door to imposition. Except in the case of, at most, three or four unions, the ordinary resources of the poor-law were quite sufficient to meet any demand which might be made upon them. No work-house in Ireland has been full—whereas, in 1846, extra accommodation had to be provided. Her Grace the Duchess of Marlborough, with that kindness and warmth of feeling which distinguished her character, organised and personally superintended a relief fund; whilst the Lord Mayor of Dublin, being apparently unwilling that his fellow-countrymen should receive help from the hands of the wife of an English Lord-Lieutenant, started a "Mansion House Fund" for the same purpose. Liberal contributions also came in from America, which were specially dealt with. These contributions, up to the beginning of July, were as follows:—

Duchess of Marlborough's Fund,	£133,757	0	0
Mansion - House Fund,	173,124	0	0
Voted by Dominion of Canada,	20,000	0	0
Mr Gordon Ben-			

nett's subscrip- tion,	20,000	0	0
'New York Her- ald' Fund,	60,000	0	0
Baroness Burdett Coutts,	5,000	0	0
	<hr/>		
	£411,881	0	0

The Land League also received contributions from America, but we have not seen any statement of the amounts, or of the manner in which the money was expended. Very large sums of money also reached Ireland, in the shape of remittances from Irish men and women settled in America, who sent help to their friends at home.

The distribution of the relief funds was left to the local committees, and in many instances these committees gave relief to persons who were not entitled to it. Professor Baldwin, Assistant Agricultural Commissioner, who is not likely to be suspected of exaggeration, has stated, through the press, that he has met with cases in which relief was given to persons who had money in the banks. That such is very likely to have been the case has been shown by a return recently laid before the House of Commons by the Postmaster-General, which proved that the deposits in the post-office savings banks, in what are called "the distressed districts," had increased to the extent of £26,000 since the period when "the distress" was alleged to have commenced. And even that increase does not represent the actual state of the case. The Irish peasant is a secretive animal, and hides his money in the thatch of his cabin, or some other place known only to himself. He goes about like a beggar-man; and it is not until money is required to buy a farm or portion a daughter that one obtains some idea of the amount of wealth possessed by persons who would

never be supposed to be worth a shilling. With regard to the improper distribution of relief, we have ourselves witnessed some glaring instances; and when we have pointed out those cases to some of the members of relief committees, we have been told that they were quite aware of the imposition, but that if they objected, their lives would not be worth a day's purchase.

At the time when the reporters of certain journals were piling up the agony in their exaggerated descriptions of the state of the country, a visit was paid to the worst parts of western Connaught by the Rev. James Nugent—better known as "Father Nugent"—of Liverpool, accompanied by another gentleman, also from the same place. Father Nugent and his colleague were specially appointed by certain philanthropic persons in England to visit Connaught, inquire into the actual condition of the people, and suggest such means as they might then consider best adapted, not merely to afford temporary relief, but also to put the people in a way to provide for themselves in the future. The report made by Father Nugent and his colleague was a remarkable document. They stated that they had interviews with the members of central local committees—with clergymen, Catholic and Protestant—with medical officers, police sergeants, officers, landlords, tenants, gentry, and tradespeople; and they also visited schools and convents, and used every means of obtaining information, which was in all cases frankly and freely given.

They found that the distress had been much exaggerated; that, with the exception of isolated cases, there was no destitution; that the supply of fuel was more abundant than they had been led to expect;

that the people looked remarkably healthy; and that in most places there was not more, and in some cases less, sickness than usual. They found that cases of imposition were by no means rare; and that gratuitous relief had been found utterly demoralising to the people. They found that the people, especially the children, were chiefly in want of clothing; and stated that help to supply that deficiency was needed. Want of proper clothing, especially for children, is by no means a new feature in Connaught; but the deficiency pointed out by Father Nugent was subsequently fully met by the Duchess of Marlborough's Committee, and from other sources.

No greater exposure could be given than Father Nugent's report of the enormous sham which had been perpetrated upon the public, chiefly for political purposes of the worst description. There is no doubt there were isolated cases of hardship, principally in remote parts and in the outlying islands on the west coast, but the country in general was not in the state of universal destitution which interested parties had represented it to be. The country shopkeepers have, however, made a good thing of the cry of distress and the funds provided for relief. They supply meal or groceries on the orders of the local committees, and thus many of them have been doing a ready-money business to a much greater extent than they had ever experienced when times were good.

The collection and distribution of relief funds stimulated the cry of distress. The average Irish peasant does not like to work if he can get his necessities supplied without doing so; and when it was known that money was to be had for the asking, there was no

lack of applicants. There are too many persons in Ireland who regard public money as a fit subject for plunder. This principle was extensively and unblushingly carried out in the distribution of relief in 1846 and 1847; and the experience of the past half-year has shown that some people, even of a class above the peasantry, have still a strong inclination to benefit themselves at the expense of the Government or of charitable individuals. Of course, such persons were always ready to join in the cry of "distress," for they found it profitable to do so.

In describing the causes of the chronic poverty which exists in the west, Father Nugent, after referring to bad harvests, depreciated value of live-stock, and want of employment in Great Britain, as merely temporary in their influence, proceeds to say:—

"There exists a system so rotten that recurrences of distress are inevitable so long as that system lasts. The population in places is far too dense to be supported on the poor patches of boggy land interspersed with rocks and stones. There are large districts where the average holdings are three to five acres of the poorest land imaginable; and as every cabin on such holdings seems to swarm with children, it is below the mark to put the average of mouths to be fed from the produce at six; and, in fact, they could not exist were it not for the money earned by the father and sons in this country [England] and Scotland at harvest. Last year this source of income almost entirely failed them. It is all very well for agitators to abuse landlords and land-laws, but if the land was given to the people for nothing, they would be in a worse plight ere long, because a check on the subdivision of their holdings, which the landlords now exercise, would be withdrawn. In many of the poorer districts a man when asked how much land he holds, says £2, 10s. or £3 worth. How much further from the brink of starvation

would the abolition of that rent place him? The foundation of any improvement in the condition of such a population lies in emigration, which would benefit those who left the country and those who remained; and the latter would be greatly benefited by the development of the sea-fisheries, to which end the proposed piers are essential."

At a subsequent period, Father Nugent, having collected funds in England for the purpose, sent fifty families from Galway to Minnesota, by one of the Allan line of steamers which was specially chartered for the purpose. But emigration has been denounced by the so-called "National" papers, which describe the removal of the paupers of the west from their barren bogs to a land of plenty as being a cruel step. The great cause of this opposition to emigration is that, with the removal of the pauper land-holders, the power of the "patriots" for mischief will be taken away. The small-farm system which prevails in the west must be abandoned. It is utterly unsuited to the requirements of the age; and no farm should be less in size than sufficient to keep a pair of horses in constant work throughout the year—or, say, from thirty to forty acres of strictly arable land. Irish farm-horses, it must be remembered, are, in general, mere weeds, and being, moreover, badly fed, are not able to cultivate the same number of acres that a pair of Scotch horses would do easily.

In consequence of the statements which appeared in certain journals, to the effect that the people would be compelled to use their seed-potatoes and seed-oats as food—although the contrary proved to be the case—it was resolved by the Duchess of Marlborough's Committee to supply seed as far as the funds would permit. Major Nolan also brought in a Bill to

enable Poor Law Guardians to borrow money for the purpose of procuring seed-potatoes, which was passed with the sanction of the late Government, and many landlords imported large quantities of Scotch Champion potatoes, which they distributed amongst their tenantry. The introduction of fresh seed was in itself a wise measure, for the Irish small farmers never think of changing their seed, which renders their crops weak and inferior, and liable to disease. The seed so obtained was of course largely used, but there were also many instances where the recipients sold the seed, as they got a large price for it, and were under the belief that they would never be asked for payment.

As time passed on, the public belief in the alleged distress became greatly modified, and, in fact, many persons who had inquired into the matter did not hesitate to say they had been duped as to its extent. Subscriptions decreased rapidly, and, under the circumstances, it was considered necessary to excite the public mind in some other way. As the famine scare had originated in the office of the 'Freeman's Journal,' so to that journal belongs the credit of having manufactured the fever scare, which has been the latest development of the distress cry. The experienced "Special" of the 'Freeman' was again despatched to Connaught, and from his descriptions of disease alleged to prevail in the west, one would imagine that the entire population of Connaught was doomed to destruction. Official investigation by medical men proved that the disease was a mild form of typhus, and that in districts represented to be severely attacked, there were actually fewer cases than usual. Typhus is seldom absent from the cabins of the peasantry of the west; nor is this to be wondered at, con-

sidering their wretched dwellings, usually overcrowded with inmates, and the filthy habits of the people. The following extracts, dated July 9th-15th, from a report made by Dr Nixon to the Local Government Board, afford a painful idea of their unsanitary condition:—

“*Faheen*.—It consists of 42 cabins, nearly all of which are single-roomed, accommodating 46 families, and having a population of 188. I examined most of these cabins, but found no cases of fever of any kind, diarrhoea, or dysentery in the village. The condition of the people here is, however, extremely wretched. In most of the cabins cattle and pigs are kept in the room that is occupied. The sewage matter is partly carried off by an open drain which runs through the centre of the floor, whilst stagnant pools containing all sorts of offensive matter lie in front of the cabins. In this village there is no sewerage of any kind, and no road for car within more than a mile's reach. The food of the people here consists almost exclusively of Indian meal without milk.”

“*Swinford and Kilkelly*.—Nothing could exceed the complete absence of sanitary arrangements in this village. There were fully eight inches of manure in one cabin, in the room where seven persons lived, and the woman of the house explained that she could not clean it out, as then she would have no manure. A large pond, filled with greenish water, and containing all kinds of sewage matter, was in front of the house, and the sewer in connection with it had its mouth closed by a large stone put against it. Yet, although illness existed in three families in this village for over two months, it was only on the preceding day that the medical officer of the district was sent for.”

“*Ballintadder*.—The cabin in which these persons lived was extremely offensive, and on entering it the smell from the excessive amount of organic matter in the air was almost overpowering. In the small single-roomed cabin in which the three patients, the mother, and two children lived, I counted at the time of my visit three cows, a number of chickens, three cats,

and a large dog. The food of these people was meagre, and consisted almost entirely of Indian meal; yet they had 13 or 14 acres of land. In an adjoining house three boys were lying, one of them since June 1st. Two of the patients were suffering from typhoid fever, one from dysentery. The water used for drinking purposes by both families was taken from a well in a neighbouring field. On examining the well I found it was merely a pit, which was enclosed by a stone wall, and into which opened the drains from the field, and, in wet weather, the washings of the roadway. The field had been manured during the winter with guano. In warm dry weather the well becomes dry, so that ordinarily it contains merely the surface-water from the soil and drainage-water. The well had been cleaned about a month previously, when a quantity of slimy foul-smelling matter was removed from its bottom. The water looked dark and muddy, and it had a greasy scum upon the surface.”

“*Knockatunny*.—In the house where those patients reside there is no sewer whatever; the refuse matter of all kinds is thrown in front of the houses, and nothing could exceed the horribly filthy condition of everything about them. I have just reported the state of things to the vice guardians, and they will have what is necessary done without delay.”

One is tempted to ask how human life, even in the best of times, can be preserved under such conditions?

The following statement, made by Dr Grimshaw, Registrar-General for Ireland, at a meeting of the Duchess of Marlborough's Committee held on the 8th of July, corroborates this view of the case. The Swinford district, it must be understood, was described as being a perfect hot-bed of “famine fever.”—

“Dr Grimshaw said: I have taken the trouble to go back for ten years through the records for Swinford district, analysing minutely those for the last year and the first half of the present. During the decennial period I find that fever has prevailed there—in fact it is endemic. There is, there-

fore, nothing remarkable about its presence this time more than at any other. Beginning with 1870, in that year there were 24 deaths from fever; in the next 22, in the next 38, in the next 33, in the next 13, in the next 18, in the next 16, in the next 36, and last year there were 48 deaths. Now, coming to nearer times, in the first half of the present year there were altogether 22 deaths from fever, while in the first half of last year there were 23, so that it appears this half-year there has been one death less than in the corresponding period last half. In the second quarter of this year there have been 8 deaths altogether from fever in the whole of the Swinford union, and that out of a population of 53,000. For the first half of this year the total number of deaths in Swinford union has been 508, while that for the first half of last was 585. So that the total mortality is 77 less this half-year than in the corresponding last half, although in the second quarter of 1879 there were 228 deaths against 249 in the corresponding quarter of the present, being an excess of 21. There are five districts in the Swinford union—Foxford, Kilkelly, Keltimogh, Lowpark, and Swinford. The registrars are desired to furnish information as to any peculiarity in the state of health of the people, and of the five registrars only two find anything so peculiar as to be worthy of mention. Of Kilkelly the registrar states: 'A few cases of typhus occurred during the last week of the quarter. The people are so ill-fed that the disease might very rapidly spread among them.' He does not state that it has spread. Of Lowpark the report is: 'Births below the average; deaths above the average, principally aged people, as might be expected. Typhus fever has broken out in Charlestown, and all removed to the workhouse hospital. Destitution prevails in every part of the district. I know several families solely dependent for food on the local committee.' But there is no evidence that there has been any starvation. Again, looking over the list of epidemic disease in Swinford, the most fatal disease there during the last year has been whooping-cough, which has proved very destructive indeed. The average death-rate of the Swinford

union has been only 14.8 per thousand for the ten years, and the average death-rate per annum for the second quarter during the ten years has been 12.5, while for the second quarter this year it was 18.8, which is probably below the average for the whole of Ireland. So far as can be ascertained, these outbreaks of fever are quite common among the people of Ireland. For instance, there has been an outbreak of fever on the Kilkerran Islands, another in Skibbereen, another in Donegal, besides others at places where there has been no exceptional distress at all."

The late Earl of Carlisle, when Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, used to press the importance of the Irish people cultivating a spirit of self-reliance. This is much required. They are always calling upon some Hercules or other—either upon their landlords or upon the Government—for assistance, in matters where an Englishman or Scotchman would put his own shoulder to the wheel. It has been long the fashion to abuse Irish landlords, and to represent them as merciless tyrants; but having a tolerably wide knowledge of the dealings of English and Scotch landlords with their tenants as well as Irish landlords, we have no hesitation in saying that the latter will compare favourably with their compeers in Great Britain. We do not mean to deny that there are bad landlords amongst them, but we do assert that such are rarely found amongst that class which Paddy calls "the ould stock." They are, for the most part, land speculators, who have purchased Irish estates as an investment for money; who, therefore, not only charge the highest rents that can be screwed out of the people, but also take care that those rents are never allowed to fall into arrears. Strange to say, those "screws" are chiefly to be found in the ranks of the so-called Liberal party. Sir J. Tollemache Sinclair

recently twitted Mr Parnell, in the course of a debate in the House of Commons, with the fact that the rents on the Parnell estate in county Armagh are 40 per cent above the rents on neighbouring estates; and that, although the Parnell tenants were promised a reduction last spring of 15 per cent, they only got $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. We know estates in Ireland where the rents are the same at the present day as they were forty years ago, without lease or writing of any sort, and notwithstanding the great increase which has taken place in the value of farm produce during that period. Are the landlords tyrants who act in that manner? Abatements of rents have also been recently made by the majority of landlords, varying from 20 to 50 per cent; the exceptions being the land-jobbers, who are patiently biding their time, when they will enforce payment of arrears without abatement.

The great drawback to the prosperity of Ireland is the manner in which it has been made a theatre for the operations of heartless, interested agitators. It is lamentable to think that such a huge imposition should have been successfully practised upon the English people by unscrupulous agitators. The Scotch and English farmers suffered, we believe, more severely than the Irish; but, from the pretentious and unreal agitation raised on behalf of the latter, we are reaping already bitter fruit. Not only has half a million of money, which might have been usefully employed at home, gone to demoralise and pauperise the Irish peasant, but a measure, whose communistic tendencies it is difficult to exaggerate, and which will ruin the Irish landlord in the disaffected districts, has received the sanction of the House of Commons. These mischievous effects

have been amply exemplified of late; and, unfortunately, Mr Gladstone has thought fit to foster agitation, and to encourage those who acknowledge that they aim at the destruction of all rights of property in Ireland, and the dissolution of the Union. The party in power has, by its Disturbance Bill, inflicted a blow upon Ireland from which she will not recover for many years. Landed property has, in the meantime, been rendered valueless; the owners in many cases see only ruin awaiting them; capital has been driven from the country, and every industrial interest outside of Ulster has been imperilled. Sales of landed property cannot be effected in the Land Court. There are no bidders, and the presiding judge recently said that "it was a perfect farce offering property for sale in that Court." No capitalist will lend a penny at present on the security of land outside of Ulster; and those who have money lent on such security have, in several instances, given notice of their intention to exercise their right of foreclosure. There is no hope for Ireland so long as "Irish ideas" continue to be interpreted by an impulsive enthusiasm which finds congenial allies in the passion of the mob, and the violence of the men who are ever eager to defy the law. It is only in the fall of Mr Gladstone from power that there is immediate prospect of amendment in Irish affairs. As he has declared that he will never sit in a Tory Parliament, let us trust the day is not far distant when he shall retire to the peaceful and classic shades of Hawarden, leaving the bark of the State to be steered by wiser and more prudent men, who will not tamper with Irish disaffection, no matter what form it may assume.

MINISTERIAL PROGRESS.

A CONSIDERABLE portion of the short session which began on the 20th May is over, and the result cannot be said to be a success for the Government. The majority which has been scraped together from the four quarters of the kingdom shows no signs of cohesion. The defection of a hundred members ceases to astonish, and upon one important occasion this strong Administration was left in a minority of forty-five. A congeries of politicians which includes Whig magnates and the Irish tail, Lord Selborne and Mr Bradlaugh, High Churchmen and earnest Dissenters, may easily enough form a majority, but can scarcely claim to be a political party sufficiently organised and disciplined to carry on with credit and success the government of the country. To increase an inefficiency which is already painfully apparent, and which will necessarily become more conspicuous as time goes on, they have at their head a statesman who has never been famous for his management of men, who loves to rule by successive *tours de force* rather than by prudence and forethought, and who has recklessly evoked passions and demands which it will be equally dangerous to gratify or to neglect.

It was foreseen that the management of the new majority would be a work of considerable difficulty, but few of us ever supposed, during the wildest prognostications of possible failure, that the reins would pass to the hands of Sir Stafford Northcote in less than six weeks, or that the Government would be defeated upon a matter which intensely interested and even excited the constituencies. But Mr Gladstone has never been famous for

prudent leadership. He has snatched the Premiership from Lord Granville and constituted himself the guardian of the infant Administration. If his plan is to withdraw before it is discredited, satisfied with having redeemed the defeat of 1874 and re-established the ascendancy of the Liberal party, it may be that he will be disappointed. The process of being discredited has begun early, and it begins not with departmental mistakes, but with the policy of the Government and the management of the House of Commons. A whole evening was wasted on the 15th June in putting a question to the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs. No doubt the question tended to raise a most inconvenient discussion on the character and antecedents of the new French ambassador, and such discussion was raised upon a motion to adjourn. But the impulsive leader of the House created an uproar first by claiming the right to treat such discussion as irregular and out of order, and second by moving, for the first time for two centuries, that a member addressing the House be not heard. It is needless to add that for the rest of the evening business was at a standstill. It would be a thankless task to pursue the details of a worthless dispute, but every one must have felt that such a scene would have been impossible under more adroit management. A septuagenarian who attempts not merely to direct the general policy of Government, but also to administer the department of finance, and manufacture sensational and superfluous budgets, and hastily frame rash legislation in obedience to popular agitation, must necessarily fail in the prudent

management of an unruly majority. The task is one which requires more careful attention and forethought than a man so weighted with years and excessive labour can possibly give to it. It is obvious that, in order to save the legislative time of the House, its leader must be on the alert to anticipate and remove occasions for dispute, or at least to terminate them as speedily as possible. The initiative rests with him, but it demands fuller consideration than he finds it convenient or possible to give. Mr Gladstone's love of rhetorical conflict, his faith in verbose declamation, his impatience of prudential restraint, combine to render his leadership seriously inefficient. There are plenty of ready speakers in the House prepared to take part in any wrangle which he may permit or encourage. But the waste of time which ensues is directly chargeable to the leader of the House, whenever it can be shown that the dispute might have been foreseen and prevented by reasonable tact and management.

There were only three months from the date of the Queen's Speech which could be reckoned upon. The country was interested in the state of its foreign affairs. The policy of confederation in South Africa, and the progress of the Affghan war with its results upon Indian finance, invited and engrossed attention. Then there were the necessary measures for the relief of Ireland. Apart from these questions the public were perfectly willing to wait till next session, by which time the new Government would have been able to mature its designs. There was nothing of urgent importance. A Savings Bank Bill, and a Post-Office Money Orders Bill, would have satisfied most people. If some of the more impatient spirits on the Liberal benches required subjects upon

which to display their rhetorical talents, their attention might have been profitably diverted to those very interesting people the Greeks, who have always excited their sensibilities, and who are destined to become very interesting indeed to every country in Europe, before Mr Goschen's mission is terminated. While the House of Commons has been absorbed in interminable wrangles over ill-considered projects of legislation, some of which are likely to prove abortive, and the rest might easily have been postponed, there are developing in the East all the materials for a severe diplomatic defeat, or a serious struggle which may not improbably involve the great Powers. Patience is not one of Mr Gladstone's numerous virtues, and under his *régime*, neither the claims of Greece abroad, nor of any legislative project at home can be allowed to wait. The policy of "meddle and muddle" is being speedily developed, and can only terminate in disaster or failure. Ireland and Greece are the unfortunate subjects of all this patronising activity. In the former, agitation is stimulated, and the Peace Preservation Act allowed to expire; in the latter, a thirst for annexation is sanctioned by invoking the united will of Europe, while the means of satisfying it without a sanguinary war have never yet been conjectured.

We shall, however, confine our attention to what is going on at home. Having regard to the serious difficulties found or created by the present Government in the East and in South Africa, and to the circumstance that both the Ministry and the House of Commons were new to their duties, a short programme of measures, shown to be necessary or inevitable, was all that prudence required. The Queen's Speech foreshadowed some new measures of Irish relief, a Burial Bill, a Bill re-

lating to ground game, another concerning the liabilities of employers for accidents sustained by workmen, and another for the extension of the borough franchise in Ireland. Of these the first alone related to a subject of immediate urgency. The last was one which it was ridiculous to mention at that early date. To deal with some of the others would require all the legislative time which a prudent leader might be able to save from the rapacity of new members burning to distinguish themselves. To these, however, have been added a sensational Budget, and a crude and ill-digested measure regarding the remedies of Irish landlords which has roused the utmost vehemence of controversy. Is it any wonder that, as the session proceeded, we heard complaints on all sides of failure, and of what is called the utter breakdown of the parliamentary machinery? The country has given to Mr Gladstone a splendid majority, and its inefficiency is already denounced. But the value of a majority depends upon its leader, and thus far it cannot be said to have been wielded with success. The leader seems to be thinking far more of his sway over the constituencies, and how he poses before them, both with regard to the measures which he brings forward and the principles which he permits himself to enunciate, than he does of conciliating support within the walls of Parliament, by tact in his management, or matured consideration in his proposals. It was constantly alleged against Lord Beaconsfield that he was seeking to augment the power of the Crown, and treated Parliament with studied neglect. It is far more true that Mr Gladstone's eye is on the masses, and his thought is how he can best manipulate their favour. It may be that the House of represen-

tatives is declining in power and public estimation, and that for the future the leading statesmen of the country will look outside its walls for the true source and security of their power. The growth of the power of the press, the decisive vigour with which a numerous constituency declares its will from the ballot-box, point in that direction. But as long as parliamentary machinery is maintained—and we trust it will remain for many centuries yet—the Ministers must lead the House of Commons, with loyal regard for its character and dignity, if they wish to find in it a ready and efficient instrument of government and legislation. The House looks to its leader for faithful guidance, as rightfully as it looks to the Prime Minister to direct the executive. And it will be a serious step taken in the decline of Parliament whenever the House of Commons learns to distrust its leader in all that relates to its own authority and power, and suspects that he either withholds or regulates his guidance, not from a loyal regard for its character and dignity, but from the more personal feeling of what is serviceable to his own position out of doors, either as regards the Crown or the masses. Mr Gladstone's attitude during the last Parliament was distinctly antagonistic to it; and it seems that the habit of mind is increasing, and that the position assigned him during the last election, as the nominee of the masses, divorces his political interests to a large extent from those of the House of Commons, which he betrays by the increasing fervour, rather than prudence, of his speeches, and a careless disposition with regard to the rights of Parliament. The Bradlaugh business, for instance, will, it seems to us, always be regarded as a marvel of mismanagement; but

the characteristics of that mismanagement were nevertheless the familiar manifestations of imprudence, shrinking from responsibility and despotic dictation. But there was lacking also that loyalty to the House on the part of its leader, which ought to be evinced by careful solicitude for its interests, instead of ostentatiously distinguishing between the Government and itself. The new member for Northampton was a well-known man. He had proclaimed in their most offensive shape, and in a manner which has repelled and disgusted all classes of the nation, certain opinions upon theological and social subjects, which there is too much reason to believe are not peculiar to himself. His entry into the House of Commons was known to have shocked many Liberals, and notably Mr Samuel Morley, who, though he had stood sponsor for the new member in the heat and hurry of the election, had come forward to explain away his responsibility in answer to the protestations of his supporters. Mr Bradlaugh gave full notice to the Government that he intended to raise the question of his liability to take the oath of allegiance, and to claim to make an affirmation instead. Ordinary foresight could have detected that here were the man and the occasion for a serious disturbance, and that firm and cautious guidance was emphatically required at the hands of the chief of a formidable but disunited majority. But so far from the Prime Minister being entitled to the credit of having wisely and successfully guided the House to the settlement of an issue which was fraught with personal irritation rather than with great consequences, the whole affair slipped out of his hands from beginning to end; and after six weeks of controversy, during which the House of Commons has been men-

aced by the mob, and compelled by the Government to rescind its own resolution and set aside the reports of two select committees, it has been finally handed over to the law courts to determine. Yet the sole question was whether a member who desired to affirm should be permitted to do so; and notwithstanding that that question was complicated by considerations arising out of Mr Bradlaugh's character and antecedents, and from the nature of his objections to the oath, it was clearly one which might and ought to have been settled without the interference of the mob. No question of principle was involved, for no one proposed to change the law. All that was wanted was to interpret it. Preliminary to doing so, the House had to decide whether it would interpret its own rules of procedure, or leave such interpretation to the courts of law.

It seems to us perfectly monstrous that the leader of the House of Commons should deliberately allow a question of this kind to drift, and, for fear of entangling his Government with issues of an inconvenient nature, abdicate the function of leadership. But Mr Gladstone derives his power so exclusively from the masses, that when questions of difficulty and delicacy arise, around which considerable public excitement may not improbably accrete, it is of the utmost importance to his position that he should have time to ascertain which way popular feeling is likely to go, and not to commit himself too hastily, by any word or act, to any course which his patrons might disapprove. Accordingly, from first to last, he took up the position which he accurately described on the 8th July, when the controversy was over,—viz.: "We consider that the return of any member to this House must be subject to the con-

ditions of the existing law ; and to ascertain the application of those conditions to particular cases is no part of the duty of the Government, which, when a proposal is made to alter the law in any one of its branches, will deal with it on general principles."

In other words, he washed his hands of the whole business and let it drift, careless of the honour of the House of Commons and the dignity of its proceedings. A definite proposal that the House should allow Mr Bradlaugh to affirm, subject to his responsibility by statute, made in the first instance by its leader, or still more, after the first committee had reported by the casting vote only of its chairman, would probably have settled the matter. But Mr Gladstone would make no definite proposition of any kind. The responsibility was not left to Mr Bradlaugh, it was referred to a select committee. By so doing the House virtually asserted jurisdiction over the claim, with the tacit assent of the Government ; in fact, the Secretary to the Treasury proposed the reference. Great conflict of opinion arose as to Mr Bradlaugh's legal right to affirm ; and the inability of the select committee to come to any decision, except by the casting vote of its chairman, was ample justification for then and there referring the matter to the courts of law. In the absence of any action on the part of the Government, Mr Bradlaugh came to the table and claimed to take the oath, and Mr Gladstone moved that that claim should be referred to another committee. The Opposition considered that it was time that the House should know its own mind, and resisted ; but the Government insisted upon formally and openly evading responsibility, and throwing the question to a select committee. Meanwhile the public excitement increased. The

defiant assertion of atheistic opinions distressed the religious bodies of all denominations. A conflict between the House and a constituency, the increasing notoriety of Mr Bradlaugh, a bitter and unpractical dispute over the retention of any form of oath, were evils which were unanimously deprecated. The committee, of course, reported that Mr Bradlaugh could not be sworn, since the oath was as unmeaning to him as a Chinaman's ceremony of breaking a saucer over his head would have been. The form of words was not an oath in Mr Bradlaugh's mouth. But the committee pointed out that the best way out of the difficulty was to refer the matter to the courts of law, by allowing Mr Bradlaugh to affirm on his own responsibility, and distinctly deprecated any action by the House which would prevent Mr Bradlaugh's obtaining a judicial decision as to his statutory rights. All admitted the delicacy and gravity of the situation, and that it demanded the utmost vigilance on the part of the leader of the House. But so fearful was the nominee of the masses of even appearing to run counter to what might turn out to be the popular voice, that even at this critical moment he hesitated to assume the reins. It was left to Mr Labouchere to propose that the House should take the matter into its own hands, and decide in Mr Bradlaugh's favour and his right to affirm, thus exercising at last the jurisdiction which it had all along assumed. Mr Gladstone, on the second night of the debate, supported that motion in a speech which pointed to the abolition of oaths altogether. It was rejected by a majority of 45. Thus far the House had, with the tacit acquiescence of the Government, shown by the reference to two committees and by the Ministerial support of

Mr Labouchere's motion, asserted jurisdiction over the case and exercised it. Then came the scene of Mr Bradlaugh's claiming to take the oath. Mr Gladstone declined to advise the House whether Mr Bradlaugh should be heard, or in what way the authority of the Speaker should be supported in compelling obedience to his orders, founded on the resolution of the House. In fact, he washed his hands of the whole affair in a huff, much in the same way in which he has twice resigned the leadership of his party when it failed in due submission. Sir Stafford Northcote assumed the leadership, rather than allow the whole business to degenerate into an ungovernable uproar, which, it seems, Mr Gladstone was willing should take place. Having vindicated the authority of the House, which its leader was willing should be trailed in the dust, Sir Stafford Northcote the next day moved that Mr Bradlaugh should be released, having first ascertained from Mr Gladstone that he had no suggestion to make, not having yet had time to consult his colleagues. Meanwhile the mob had begun to rise, and tumultuous meetings to be held in favour of a particular interpretation of a statute and of a particular form of procedure. Under singular mismanagement, Mr Bradlaugh's inclination or disinclination (it was not very clear which) to repeat the words of the oath was expanded into a question of the independence of all the constituencies of England. Then at last the nominee of the masses was willing to move. He proposed that the House, which had all along, and with his tacit consent and even at his instance, in the case of the second committee, asserted and exercised jurisdiction, should abandon that jurisdiction, rescind its resolution, and admit Mr Bradlaugh to affirm, subject to his

legal responsibility. He did so on the ground that the House was menaced by proceedings which were subversive of its dignity, and that the step proposed was the only way to preserve its peace and police. And the motion was carried.

The result of the whole affair, trifling as it was, being merely a question of procedure and interpretation, immediately involving no new principle, but merely the application of the existing law, was that both the Government and the House were thoroughly humiliated; unless indeed Mr Gladstone claims it as a triumph to have in the end imperiously dictated to the House with the aid of popular excitement. This result is one of which no one can be proud. At an early stage it might have given satisfaction. But coming after a protracted struggle, during which the leader of the House refused the initiative till clamours arose outside, and the House itself had been committed to a directly opposite decision, and to enforcing it by imprisonment, it was most unsatisfactory. The impotence of the conclusion is shown by its leaving Mr Bradlaugh, after all the debates and pretentious efforts to arrive at a decision, responsible for the consequences. The House of Commons, owing to the extraordinary mismanagement of its leader, has been menaced, has submitted, and has, after all, abandoned the interpretation and direction of its own procedure. The reputation of a House elected in the way and under the influences observable at the general election, is not a matter of any deep interest to Conservatives. But the readiness with which it has abdicated its authority in this instance, and the particular course which it took, show that it is a House of confused aims and uncertain conduct, reflecting by its temper, its

indecision, and its shrinking from responsibility, the ignorant and misguided excitement in which it found its origin.

The Bradlaugh episode is not the only one in which the Government have already achieved a parliamentary *fasco*. Its difficulties appear to be increasing, and to be mainly if not entirely of its own creation; showing that the strongest majority and the greatest ability and experience will not compensate for the want of patient forethought. Nothing has yet occurred to bring out the governing characteristics of this Ministry more conspicuously than the Compensation for Disturbance (Ireland) Bill. There was the rash and reckless determination to bid for popular support; then the hasty adoption of alleged facts and figures to justify it; then the flagrant disregard of admitted rights of property and principles of legislation; then successive changes of front as the difficulty of either advancing or receding became apparent; and then the welcome escape from legislative inefficiency by handing the subject over to the discretion of the county court judges. A more ill-considered project, consisting of only one operative clause, it was impossible to lay before Parliament. It was designed, no doubt, to redeem some of the idle pledges so recklessly strewn about during the general election; and at the outset, no doubt, the Government had argued themselves into the belief that some measure of the kind was necessary.

In some respects the leaders of the Government — Mr Gladstone and Mr Forster — are to be condoled with in regard to the way in which they were misled by their supporters' statistics. No doubt it was a misplaced confidence in those very misleading figures which originally perverted their judgment.

But the subordinates were not responsible for the tone of violence which was assumed, and the encouragement which was so thoughtlessly given to the anti-rent agitators and politicians in Ireland. The leaders appealed to very dangerous principles, which struck at the root of all property, and gratified for the time Mr Parnell and his followers. Some of their organs in the press deliberately advocated a dissolution, and pointed to this very measure as an instance how impossible it was to carry democratic measures with a plutocratic Parliament. For a time it seemed as if the most revolutionary proceedings were in contemplation. An immediate dissolution was so earnestly deprecated by some of the more temperate of the Ministerial journals, that the suspicion is inevitable that it must have been contemplated as a possible contingency. Somehow, nothing has seemed to go right; and it appeared not impossible that the Minister who in 1874 dissolved because he had a majority of 66, and could not go on with it, might find that a majority of double that number would be no impediment to a similar manœuvre. A partial disruption of the Ministry, moreover, had seemed to begin with the secession of Lord Lansdowne, who represents the rising Whig section of the party, and whose retirement may yet have an important influence on the future of the party.

This unfortunate measure, the fate of which has weakened a strong Ministry, and would have totally wrecked a weak one, was due to two admitted blunders of the first magnitude. One was an allegation that during the first half of this year, 1690 evictions had taken place in Ireland, and that unless this movement were checked, 15,000 persons would in the course of the year be thrown upon the wide

world, without home, without hope, and without remedy. The other was, that a force of between 3000 and 4000 men had been quartered upon the western division of Galway in order to carry out these evictions, and that thus a state of civil war had to all intents and purposes ensued. From these two allegations the deduction was made that the law under which such misfortunes arose was unsuited to time and place, and must be altered by transferring to tenants thus liable to eviction a portion of the rights which properly belonged to the landlord. This transference, which in a less mealy-mouthed generation would have been called rank spoliation, was described in more modern phraseology as compensating the tenant when disturbed by his landlord's remedies for rent.

Before, however, the discussion of the Bill in the least degree threatened exhaustion, it was made plain by Lord George Hamilton that the two allegations upon which it was founded were absolutely false, and that the Government had been hoaxed. The scare about homeless and hopeless tenants had been founded upon official returns of "ejectments," which the Government had been induced to believe meant the same thing as "actual evictions," whereas they referred to, for the most part, mere formal processes by the landlord with a view to establish and secure his right against tenants who were well able to pay. The alarm about civil war and the excessive application of the constabulary force arose from multiplying each member of the force by the number of times his services had been, during a given space of time, put in requisition. Consequently, when the figures of the Government came to be tested by these revelations, it appeared that the Government had resorted to panic legisla-

tion because, out of 600,000 Irish agricultural holdings, less than 200 had been in six months the scene of actual evictions. The additional police force, moreover, when ascertained in reference to the number of men whom it contained, instead of the number of times each man was employed, appeared to be something under 400,—not an excessive number, considering the nature of the agitation which has been going on, and the manner in which it has been encouraged. The Government Bill, therefore, could no longer be supported on the ground that tens of thousands of peasants had been driven from their homes to starve, and that thousands of police had to be employed in upholding a cruel law, and in evicting the farmers of a single district. As a sample of what really had occurred, Lord George Hamilton was able to show that in place of 156 evictions in Donegal during the past half-year alleged by the Government, there had only been seventeen, and of these a considerable majority were at the instance of creditors other than landlords, and therefore were no argument in favour of altering the law as between landlord and tenant. The whole ground upon which this panic legislation had been proposed and was being pressed upon Parliament was cut from under the feet of the Government. That ground we understand to be, that the Peace Preservation Act being no longer in force, the Government would not, in the face of the alleged numerous evictions, and the extensive operation of force to carry them into effect, be responsible for the peace of Ireland, unless this Compensation Bill were passed.

Not merely did the Government totally fail to sustain the ground upon which they originally placed the Bill, and attempted to vindicate its necessity, but from first to last

they failed to exhibit any clear perception as to the exact objects which they had in view, or as to the proper limits of their measure. We will assume in their favour that their real object was to prevent what thus, on the figures supplied and erroneously interpreted to them, was believed to be an abuse of the power of eviction during a period of great distress. They proposed to effect that object by restricting the landlord's right to evict; by proposing that if he does evict, he should compensate the tenant, not for any infringement of his (the tenant's) right, but for a harsh exercise of the admitted legal right to evict. It was not proposed to confer in so many words a proprietary right on the tenant, and, *pro tanto*, to confiscate the property of the landlord so as to transfer it to his defaulting debtor for rent. But the Bill provided that, if the inability to pay arose from the failure of crops, and if the landlord unreasonably refused to enter into some new arrangement with the tenant, then he should pay compensation to the extent of so many years' rent, not exceeding seven, for disturbing him. And further, the Bill limited the time and area of its operation.

Although no express transference of proprietary right was enacted, there was, nevertheless, a real deprivation of the landlord's remedy for his rent, and a recognition of a right in the tenant which was practically very difficult to distinguish from a proprietary right, and which the Chief Secretary, until rebuked, frequently described in so many words as a proprietary right. This right, too, had an excessive money value assigned to it by the Bill, under the name of compensation, which value represented so much abstracted from the pocket of the landlord. We are far from saying that, under urgent circum-

stances of extreme necessity, the exercise of proprietary rights may not for a time be interfered with, and even suspended. The necessity, however, should be strictly proved, the interference strictly limited by necessity, and proved to be just, either as a deserved penalty for past misconduct, or by reason of compensation to be equitably awarded. Nothing of the kind was attempted. The necessity was absolutely disproved; the Government betrayed any amount of vacillation as to the degree of their proposed interference, which was obviously regulated entirely by party exigencies and not by local necessities; while landlords, good, bad, and indifferent, were all swept into the same net, and treated without any regard to their past forbearance or their future inevitable losses. The exhibition of that vacillation of purpose, according as the desire of conciliating their Whig supporters or their Irish allies was uppermost in the mind of the Government, is one of the most striking features of this short session. Objectors were told that the provisions of the Bill were admittedly exceptional in their character, and temporary in their operation, due to overwhelming emergencies, and the necessity of preserving the general peace. But scarcely was that principle, *salus populi suprema lex*, asserted, than it was abandoned; and language was used which completely contradicted it, and raised, as Mr Gladstone himself complained, on the 16th July, "untrue and dangerous impressions in reference to the Bill." Not merely did Mr Forster describe this new claim, conceded temporarily to the tenant as one in furtherance of his proprietary right, but Mr Gladstone talked of it as a measure of absolute justice, necessary in order to enable the Government with a clear conscience to enforce the rights of property.

Members of the Government, including, if we recollect right, the Prime Minister, described the principle of the measure as an extension of the principle of the Land Act of 1870. Mr Gladstone also talked of Parliament and the landowners "having accumulated a debt to the people of Ireland which it would be difficult to redeem;" and of summary ejection for non-payment of rent as having been introduced "in fraud of the Irish tenant." The inevitable consequence of this dangerous language was that the Irish party in the House immediately retorted, with considerable force, that if the principle of the Bill, instead of being that of exceptional and temporary interference with proprietary right on account of grave public dangers, was in itself sound, recognised by previous legislation, and actually in operation, why should not its further application by the Bill be permanent and universal? And as for the Irish people, agitators and tenants outside the House, what was likely to be the effect of such language upon them? We have Mr Forster's admission on the same evening as that upon which Mr Gladstone complained of untrue and dangerous impressions, that unreasonable expectations had been aroused that the Bill was to be a Bill for the suspension of rent. Then the 'Nation,' an Irish national paper quoted by Mr Gibson, referred to Mr Gladstone's admissions as "covering the whole ground of the Irish demand in the matter of land law reform, and as justifying not merely the wretched little Bill in behalf of which they were made, but a measure as sweeping as any that had been recommended by Mr Parnell or Mr Davitt." It went on to urge that the Bill itself, restricted as to time and area, would be of little practical use; but that it gave

expression to a principle which all tenant-right advocates looked upon as vital.

The principle so much belauded was the principle of virtually transferring to one man the property of another. And it is a most serious matter, not merely as affecting agricultural classes in parts of Ireland, but as affecting all classes throughout the United Kingdom, whether and where such a principle is to be appealed to, and within what limits it is to be applied. It is obvious that a strong Government, dealing with a question of this magnitude, which goes to the very root of property, and affects every kind of landed and commercial security, was bound to proceed with the utmost care and caution. In the face of increasing Irish agitation upon the land question, a temporary expedient of the kind proposed was a very dangerous device, and every effort should have been made to render it clearly intelligible, and to circumscribe it within just and necessary limits. The condemnation of the Government lies in the fact that their Bill was received with satisfaction by the whole class of land agitators, as a concession to outcry, as an instalment of the sacred right of the tenant to dispense with the payment of rent altogether. The dangerous eagerness with which the Ministry seeks to raise burning questions, and to conciliate support by obedience to agitation, leads it into difficulties which will very soon spend its majority and destroy the confidence of the country. It gave up the Peace Preservation Act, and undertook, during the height of the anti-rent agitation, to govern without the aid of the Beaconsfield legislation. Then came Mr O'Connor Power's anti-rent Bill; and forthwith the Government, which had not foreshadowed in the Queen's Speech any measure of the kind, felt that here was an

encouragement to disturbance which they could neither quell nor profit by. Accordingly, they took the matter into their own hands, and deliberately proposed legislation which would virtually prohibit eviction; and they have coupled their proposition with language of the most inflammatory kind. Their only compensation hitherto for the parliamentary disturbance which they have unnecessarily created is, that the Opposition has been immensely strengthened, their own majority largely reduced, the Irish vote rendered hostile, the Liberal party disorganised, and the Ministry itself has begun the process of disruption.

The uncertainty with regard to the Ministerial view of the principle of the measure was followed by the most reprehensible vacillation as to the mode and extent of its application. It became evident that, as was remarked by Mr Gibson, the Government had no clear idea of what they really wanted to enact. They had suddenly departed from their original intention of postponing Irish land legislation till next session. They did so partly because of Mr O'Connor Power's Bill, partly because they feared the necessity of being obliged to return to the provisions of the Peace Preservation Act. The latter Act had been abandoned in deference to the confident language used by some Ministers during the elections. It became necessary in consequence to throw a sop to Cerberus, or at least to have the opportunity of saying that they had been prevented from doing so; and that if eventually they had to renew that Act, it was because they had been prevented from adopting remedial measures. Once embarked upon their adventure they betrayed their uneasiness by the constant changes which they proposed. As the 'Times' remark-

ed, "Nothing could be more disastrous than the state of unsettlement and anxiety in which public feeling in Ireland is kept by the incessant transformation scenes of this parliamentary drama." The first important step was the introduction of Mr Law's amendment.

As the rash Bill of the Government wended its way through parliamentary discussion, it appeared that its whole scope was ruinous to the landlords, and a far greater step in the direction of abolishing rent altogether than the Government intended, or felt themselves able, in the face of the defection of 100 of their supporters, to carry out. Accordingly, it was proposed to mitigate the landlord's liability to compensate his tenant for not paying his rent, by excluding any case where he had permitted his tenant to sell his holding and the tenant had failed to do so. In this clause, suddenly foisted into a temporary Bill, we had the whole question of introducing Ulster tenant-right into other districts of Ireland opened up for discussion. That was a broad issue to lay before Parliament, towards the close of a session, in a sudden and haphazard manner. No one seemed clearly to understand the drift of the proposal; but one thing at least was clear, that Mr Parnell and his friends discovered that what the Government had given with so much pomp and ostentation with one hand, they were preparing to take away in some mysterious manner with the other. Not merely was this measure creating an extraordinary degree of parliamentary disturbance, but it seemed tolerably certain that, as amended by Mr Law, it would aggravate the disasters of the scheduled districts. It is difficult to believe that the outgoing tenant would regard his purchaser with any other feelings than those which animate him towards his evicting landlord.

The incomer must be prepared to face agrarian vengeance; and as far as Mr Law's amendment was concerned, he would have no power to sell again, after the expiry of this temporary Act, the holding which he had purchased. Under such circumstances the tenant would in all probability fail to sell, and with this failure would go his claim for compensation; and in that way the provisions of the original Bill, to the disgust of Mr Parnell, were abrogated. Mr O'Connor Power thereupon proposed that the landlord should not escape unless there was a purchaser willing to buy the tenant's holding. Limited in that way, Mr Law's clause was immediately recognised as a mockery. Where there was a rack-rent there would be no purchaser forthcoming; and where there was a saleable holding any purchaser would, under the circumstances, be regarded as a traitor to his class, as an accomplice of the landlord, and as a fit object for summary vengeance. Mr Biggar's references to physical force, under which expression he includes the assassination of the late Lord Leitrim, had the greatest significance in connection with this particular interpretation of Mr Law's amendment. But unless it was limited in that way, it practically defeated the whole object of the measure. In fact, Mr Law's clause abrogated the Bill, Mr O'Connor Power's interpretation of it abolished the clause.

It was no wonder that Mr Parnell got up and declared that Mr Law's amendment would, in his opinion, make the Bill "utterly useless to effect the object which the Government, when they introduced it, said they had in view"—not worth the time spent and the fuss made about it. And he proceeded in a way that shows, at all events, the clearness and directness

of his aims as contrasted with the muddle-headed proceedings of the Government. "As the Bill was now proposed to be altered, it did not protect the tenant. It gave the landlord the right to evict, and the tenant the right of sale. They knew that these small tenants had no saleable interest." He went on to declare that if the Government proposed to extend the Ulster custom to the whole of Ireland permanently, he should vote for it; but that the present proposal benefited only the larger tenants, who held at a comparatively low rent; but it had not the slightest effect for the protection of small tenants in the west of Ireland. The O'Donoghue also remarked that "he had supposed that under this Bill a great portion of the rents of Ireland could be revised in open court; that everything bearing on them in the interest of the tenant would be sifted by skilled advocates; that the secrets of the Estate Office would be turned inside out; that the landlords would be put on their defence, and asked in the face of their countrymen why they should not be mulcted in heavy damages for being rack-renters. It now appeared, however, that they were simply to have the clause of the Irish Attorney-General, which would enable every landlord to come into court, and say he had agreed to let So-and-so sell his interest. No questions would be asked, and the Bill would be simply one for clearing off the small tenants in Ireland."

Such is the endless confusion in which the Government landed themselves by this piece of peremptory legislation. They declared it to be founded on just principles, and in the same breath claimed support for it because it was limited as to time and area. Originally, no doubt, it was intended to meet what were supposed to be exceptional circumstances, but it was defended upon

principles which gave the Irish party the right to say that it ought to be permanent and general. As the discussion proceeded, it was lost for some time in a dispute whether the provisions of the Bill should be limited to £15 holdings, as the Opposition proposed; to £30 holdings, as Mr Gladstone desired; or to £50 holdings, as Sir George Campbell suggested,—every limitation being unacceptable to Mr Parnell and his friends. In the end the Government carried a limit of £30 rateable value—*i. e.*, in rent £42 or £45. The great merit of that provision was, that as there were hardly any holdings above that value in certain districts the limit was inoperative for any practical purpose. As regards Mr Law's abortive amendment, it was eventually withdrawn; and at the instance of Mr Gladstone the difficulty was handed over to the law courts. The Prime Minister proposed, in lieu of it, an amendment which exempted all landlords from the operation of the Bill who showed that they had offered a defaulting tenant who proposed unreasonable terms "a reasonable alternative." The alternative of selling his holding might be a reasonable alternative, but Parliament could not lay down any definite rule; the county court judges must decide upon the facts of each particular case. Having arrived at this conclusion, which was nothing more nor less than shunting the whole subject, the Government would hear of no further amendments. Any attempt to lay down any rule for the guidance of the judge was the directing of his mind to one subject or to one rule, to the exclusion of another subject and some other rule which might be more applicable—*expressio unius, said Mr Gladstone, exclusio alterius*. With the aid of this convenient maxim, and a great parliamentary major-

ity, the task of vindicating the proprietary right of the landlord was handed over to the courts, and the Government claimed that in consequence their Bill had undergone hardly any alteration. Parliament was to trouble itself no further as to good landlords and bad landlords. Mr Parnell wanted a permission to sell to be accompanied by an offer of a fair and reasonable rent. Sir H. Giffard proposed that any tenant who was at the date of any ejection-process two years in arrear with his rent, should be exempt from the operation of the Act. Clearly such a tenant does not suffer from a harsh landlord, and does not require exceptional, and, above all, temporary legislation to protect him from the consequences of the failure of crops. This amendment brought to the test the statement of the Government, that good landlords—that is, indulgent landlords, not over-hasty in demanding their rents, were not aimed at by the Bill. Those who clamour that the principle of the Bill, the principle that a landlord shall not evict for non-payment of rent, should be universally applied, are more consistent or more candid than the Government. It is a mockery to declare that the Bill is temporary in its character, intended to prevent abuses, and at the same time to extend its operation to cases where no abuses are alleged, and where the evils complained of are prolonged and not temporary in their character. An amendment to exempt landlords who had not raised their rents for ten years fared no better. The Government had at last found rest for their souls in handing over to the county court judge the decision of what was a reasonable alternative. That was the rope to which they clung with the tenacity of drowning men, and by it they got safely to shore, with such remains of le-

gislative reputation as their disgusted and mutinous supporters may accord to them.

At the last stage Mr Gibson succeeded in introducing two amendments into the Bill, intended to prevent admitted injustice in its operation. The Government had evidently devoted so little consideration to their measure, and were so carried away by their panic, caused by their hasty abandonment of their exceptional powers under the Peace Act, and by Mr O'Connor Power's Bill, that they had overlooked some of its most obvious consequences. It was left to the Opposition to see that a landlord whose powers of eviction were suspended by this measure was not, contrary to the intention of its framers, subjected to the further penalties imposed by the 9th section of the Land Act of 1870 upon a landlord who allows his rents to fall into arrears. It was also left to the constitutional critics of the measure to supply another provision against admitted and grievous injustice, which its framers had overlooked. While compensating the tenant for being evicted, the Ministry forgot to provide against his statutory right of re-entry upon the land on payment of arrears. The Bill, therefore, as originally devised, enabled the tenant to pocket his compensation, and afterwards return to the land. Startling as that may sound, it is not inconsistent with the impression which the awkward drafting of the Bill is calculated to produce—that the landlord was to lose both his rent and his land, and be mulcted in damages besides.

The measure is now transferred to the consideration of the House of Lords. Much will depend upon the effect produced upon the public mind by the powerful debaters in that House. While no one expresses satisfaction with the Bill

as it stands, it has simply commanded toleration at the hands of those who regard it as a step in a direction in which both the Ministry and the House of Commons disclaim any idea of travelling. The aims of the Irish party are disavowed by both parties in the State; but the sole ground upon which approval of this measure can, after the discussion it has undergone, be rested, is that it recognises and partially accomplishes the end of the Irish Land League. It seems to us that a continuance of the Peace Preservation Act, for postponement of any legislation with regard to land till next session, would have best met the exigencies of the case, and avoided a great deal of unnecessary excitement and discontent.

If the position of home legislation is thus unsatisfactory, what is to be said of the position in the East? The Berlin Conference has come and gone. The Identical Note was presented on the 11th June. The Collective Note followed on the 15th July—the strongest instrument of peaceful diplomacy. The meaning of it all is, that Mr Gladstone and his interesting *protégés* the Greeks cannot be kept waiting; and the Turks, after all that has been said and done by the Liberals and their chief during the last four years, must be “coerced” about something, no matter at what risk, even of a general war and a dangerous reopening of the whole Eastern Question. The Porte is imperatively “invited” to accept the frontier line settled at the Berlin Conference. What next? The Porte declares that the Powers have in so many words decreed the cession of two provinces, regardless that portions of the Berlin Treaty favourable to the Porte have not yet been carried out. The Greek army is too small and undisciplined, and its shores too exposed to the

Turkish fleet, to enforce the cession. The Albanians, reinforced by Turkish disbanded troops, are too strong to be annexed by Greece, even if the Porte stands by and virtually submits to the decree of the Conference. The other Powers, except Russia, are not eager for action. Who is to be the executant of this decree? If it is not executed, there is a grand triumph for the Turk and a galling humiliation for the Gladstone Government. If attempts are made forcibly to execute it, there will be a certain outbreak of sanguinary strife in the localities immediately concerned, which, in all probability, will spread over the whole Balkan peninsula. Behind the Greek questions others arise of equal urgency and importance. There is the Bulgarian question, for the free Bulgarians desire the annexation of only half free Eastern Roumelia. The Albanians have their well-known dispute with the Montenegrins, Roumanians and Servians, Russians and Austrians, fill up the background; and on this scene of deadly discord and strong international jealousies, involving, so far as Constantinople and the Straits are concerned, such vital interests of so many Powers, our imperious and headstrong Premier has determined, with his usual impatience and uncalculating vehemence, to stir up a controversy which all the wiser heads of the Berlin Congress of 1878 resolved to postpone, and to commit to the slower but more peaceful developments of time and destiny. Everything is supposed

to be staked on the will of Turkey, which always, it is said, yields to the united pressure of Europe. We believe that that expectation is altogether unfounded; that the Porte has neither the will nor the power to execute this new device; that if it is to be executed at all, the attempt will light up the flames of strife, which we all hoped had been set at rest; that the advantages proposed are not worth the risk; and that the responsibility of the whole proceedings rests unfortunately with the British Government. We have substituted for the policy which so satisfactorily adjusted at Berlin the rivalries and disputes of all parties to this Eastern Question, the doctrine of peace at any price, which effectively encourages resistance, and at the same time the rash provocation to strife which springs from undervaluing the cause of dispute, the temper and resources of the disputants, and the consequences to which such provocation may lead. It is impossible to regard the present unnecessary crisis without grave anxiety, without feeling that it has been precipitated upon us in an utterly uncalled-for and reckless fashion. We trust that prudence may yet prevail, and that an unpopular war will be prevented, otherwise Englishmen will learn to appreciate the gravity of the crisis at the last election, at which they comported themselves with so much levity, and gave to Mr Gladstone the opportunity of inflicting humiliation on his own country, or war and desolation upon the territories of the East.

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THE PILLARS OF THE STATE.

FOR two generations past, or more than that, the House of Lords has been associated in men's minds with the denunciations of agitators and demagogues, and with charges of obstruction, hostility to the improvement and comfort of the people, and, above all, of a desire to restrict our liberties. If this branch of the Legislature were to be fairly judged by all that has been said of it in the present century, it must be regarded as one of the most monstrous institutions which human perversity has ever invented for the punishment of a nation. For the shouting has been all on the side of its enemies: whatever may have been uttered in its defence has been quietly spoken and sparingly,—from which it is fair to infer either that there was little to be said, or that the great Chamber rested on foundations against which the roaring of the demagogue was but as a cur's yelp, and its dignity did not admit of an answer being rendered to every infuriated railer.

The latter is certainly the case. Its enemies spend their breath and

hurl their defiance against it in vain; yet the clatter has at intervals been kept up so vigorously, that every one of us who was guided by his hearing only, must in some early period of his life have asked himself how it could be that the laws of a great kingdom like this could in any way proceed from a body which God and man alike condemned and execrated. We have, perchance, besought our elders to explain to us why this incubus continued to exist, and have been surprised to hear that we owe our present greatness and prosperity as much to our great hereditary Chamber as to any institution that we possess; that if, on the one hand, we have a popular Chamber to assert our rights against monarchical or aristocratic encroachments, and to lead us along in the course of civilisation, we require, on the other hand, some safeguard against the fatal rashness of popular movements, and against the disregard of justice, honour, and prudence to which popular excitement would sometimes, in its haste, drive us. Democracy, we have been told, can

be tyrannical and unreasonable as well as monarchy. If we had not had a powerful legislative assembly independent of the caprice of the multitude, the greatness and wealth which this day make our institutions interesting subjects of inquiry, would long ago have ceased to be.

Explanations such as have above been suggested, would certainly have been accompanied by references to the pages of history, from whence alone can be gathered the knowledge of our national growth, and of the seemingly antagonistic forces of which that "harmonious whole," the British Government, is compounded.

It is in the nature of a populace to be continually proclaiming its inspirations, to be publishing its grievances, to be asserting its rights, to be giving daily proofs of its strength—sometimes to be clamouring for vengeance, and for the overthrow of everything that may stand in the way of its wrath or its desire. The Chamber which represents it must therefore be a demonstrative assembly; it must let the public know every day, and late and early, that it is in strength and vigour, and ready for any responsibility that may devolve upon it.

But it is not in the nature of an aristocracy to be for ever demanding attention to its thoughts, its wishes, its impulses, its duties, or its power. Generally, it is observant rather than active. We must not therefore expect a legislative body that is formed from it to be continually making exhibitions of its strength, but rather to be sparing of its action until the knot is formed which is worthy the intervention of a superior influence. Hence every day's experience does not contain proof of the necessity for, or the utility of, the House of Lords. The watch-dog does not pass his time in snarling, or in challenging

his master's foes. He is patient and gentle with those whom he knows, and puts up with much hard usage from them; but let not the wolf or the robber therefore presume that his throat will be safe from such a sentinel.

To the brisk experimenter in government, to the confident revolutionist, to the red-eyed Jacobin, to the selfish demagogue who looks for his advantage of a day or two and then the deluge, to him who would tamper with the public credit or the public honour—to all the sections of the community, rash, restless, ambitious, or criminal, of whom the characters above noted may be extreme examples,—the steady, imperturbable House of Lords, standing calmly in the way, cannot but be an abomination. Even he who is honest and right in his views, but whose patience cannot endure till the whole nation learn to think with him, chafes at the caution and delay imposed by the Upper House. He would blind us all with his sudden and lightning brilliancy; and lo! he is met by the "slow and steady" of the Peers, and he hates and reviles them. Yea, they must necessarily be much reviled. The abuse which is heaped on them is the best proof we can have of their wholesome influence!

Let us not think the less of the benefits which we derive from the Lords because they are not for ever demanding the first place in our thoughts. The rod which hangs with six weeks' dust upon it above the pedagogue's desk, does not hang in vain: the knowledge that it is there silently operates upon the unruly. The Peers prevent more folly than they frustrate. Neither let us regret that more frequent opportunities of justifying their State are not afforded to the Peers. The best proof that we can

give of our wisdom and moderation is, that they have an idle time of it. The machinery of government and of legislation must be heinously out of order when the country has to fall back upon the rusty armoury and the time-honoured authority of the Peers.

Party marshalled against party in the People's House is generally found to maintain a tolerable equilibrium—now one side gaining a little advantage, and now the other, but all remaining within moderate and reasonable bounds. Nevertheless there do come upon us times—once in a century or so, perhaps—when popular passion, heedlessness, caprice (what shall we say?), upset all poise, send the adverse scale into the air, proclaim the prevalence of mere will, and bid injustice, hatred, cupidity, to take their way. In such times it will be found that the House of Commons does not fairly represent all classes of the people, but is chiefly elected by one selfish class, which, aware of its preponderance, and ready to seize opportunity, proceeds to urge, without scruple or apology, many an iniquity.

The steadier, the reflecting, the more scrupulous classes, discover with alarm that their Palladium, their peculiar Chamber, has for the time fallen into the power of an unrighteous section, which, *bon gré, mal gré*, will go straight for its own ends, trampling down principles and the rights of all other sections. The deeds which they have hitherto known to be done by only the lawless and the criminal are now to be done under the sanction of law. The danger is not immediately recognised; but when it is seen, and every man becomes alarmed for his religion, his hearth, and his possessions, the common apprehension drives all the threatened into union. Rapine and envy

are in the ascendant; let all who love right and order sink their smaller differences, and make their stand together. How the stand is to be made may be for a time matter of perplexity; the ordinary channel for representing their grievances is dammed up for them, and become a close path in the hands of their enemies. Then, perhaps, when nigh desperate, they bethink them of the hardly appreciated refuge which has come down to them from old, old days—of that branch of the Legislature which they may have in younger days reviled as obstructive, or despised as senile and obsolete. Then they see, as they have never seen before, how excellent a thing it is to have a legislative body independent of popular rage and popular impatience—a body which can stand in the gap, and ward off wrong, until the tyranny be overpast.

Here, then, is a state of things which could hardly have been imagined beforehand—the more thoughtful and substantial portions of the people praying protection against their own House. It is, while it lasts, a remarkable *bouleversement*. The Houses of Parliament change places. Wealth and intelligence are represented by the Upper House alone; and the Lower loses the lead at once, and begins to feel the impotence of a mere numerical majority, which is not in harmony with the interests of the community at large.

If we consider the home political events of the summer which is passing, we shall perceive that we are now in one of those rare conjunctures of which a general description has been attempted above. Sectional ascendancy and violence have succeeded in pushing through the Commons a measure which has filled the thinking and propertied classes with apprehension and in-

dignation. The Lords have come to the rescue; and so far is their action from being looked on as officious, or supererogatory, or usurping, that they have on their side a great preponderance of the educated and responsible classes. The House of Commons represents, for the moment, only the very dregs of the people. The people will always be divided; and there are an infinite number of chances as to how they will range themselves politically. But the present exceptional division is that of the humblest yet most numerous order arrayed on one side; and property, intelligence, enterprise, ability, on the other.

The above, it may be said, is 'Maga's' estimate; the above is the Tory account of what the new House of Commons represents. But one would like to hear the other side: it would probably be a different story. Very well; we, fortunately, can give a picture of the Liberal constituencies drawn by no friend of 'Maga,' and by (at present) no Tory, whatever he may have been, or yet may be, for he is a Protean politician. We can give a picture furnished by one who is at present a Liberal of the Liberals—one whose evidence on such a subject no Liberal would venture to question. We can give it in what must be his own words if he has been fairly reported:—

"You have great forces arrayed against you—I will not say 'You' if you will permit me to identify myself with you. I will say we have great forces arrayed against us. Unfortunately we cannot make our appeal to the aristocracy, excepting that which never must be forgotten, the distinguished and enlightened minority of that body, the able, energetic, patriotic, liberal-minded men, whose feelings are one with those of the people, and who decorate and dignify their rank by their strong sympathy with the

entire community. With that exception in all the classes of which I speak, I am sorry to say we cannot reckon upon the aristocracy; we cannot reckon upon what is called the landed interest; we cannot reckon upon the clergy of the Established Church either in England or in Scotland, subject again and always in each case to those most honourable exceptions—exceptions, I trust, likely to enlarge and multiply from day to day. On none of these can we place our trust. We cannot reckon on the wealth of the country, nor upon the rank of the country, nor upon the influence which rank and wealth usually bring. In the main these powers are against us; and there are other powers against us, for wherever there is a close corporation, wherever there is a spirit of organised monopoly, wherever there is narrow and sectional interest apart from that of the country, and desiring to be set up above the interest of the public, there, gentlemen, we, the Liberal party, have no friendship and no tolerance to expect. We must set them down among our most determined foes. But, gentlemen, above all these, and behind all these, there is something greater than these—there is the nation itself. And this great trial is now proceeding before the nation."

The nation then, according to this extract, is represented in the new House of Commons, but it is the nation *minus* the aristocracy, *minus* the Established clergy of both England and Scotland, *minus* the landed interest, *minus* the wealth of the country, *minus* the rank of the country, *minus* all close corporations. When all these deductions have been made, what have we left? To what has the nation been reduced? Pretty nearly to the dregs one sees. Now our Liberal authority here cited is the present First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. We have quoted from a speech which he made at West Calder on the 2d of last April. Upon whatever point we may differ from the right hon.

gentleman, we seem to be entirely in accord with him as to the class which returned the Liberal majority in the present Parliament.

We turn, for a moment, from consideration of the details of our present embarrassing position, and look to find when and how our Upper House has before been placed by circumstances on such commanding ground. It is a long retrospect that we have entered upon, we soon discover. Not for nearly a hundred years have the Lords been so urgently called upon to save the country from the inconsiderateness of the popular assembly. We have to turn back to the days of the coalition between Lord North and Mr Fox, when the two had hatched their celebrated India Bill, — a scheme which would have made the Administration of the day practically irremovable, and would have established a tyranny of Ministers, if it had succeeded.*

Those were very different days from the present. The middle class did not interest itself in, and did not understand, politics as it does to-day. On the other hand, the Crown then interfered more actively in public affairs than has ever been the case in our time. But the situations then and now were so far similar, that the House of Commons had then been induced to pass by a large majority a measure which would have been fatal to our liberties had it become law. Not the people, but the King, was

first to perceive the danger that was impending. His Majesty took the alarm, and did that which we have seen the sound and orderly part of our population do lately—that is, he called upon the House of Lords to come to the rescue of the Crown and of the country, and to defeat the wily Bill which Ministers had devised for their own aggrandisement.

It was a most important crisis in the history of Great Britain. But fortunately, the Lords, having been warned by the King, were soon alive to the snare which the Cabinet had prepared, and by a great majority rejected the specious Bill. Thereupon his Majesty insisted upon the immediate resignation of the conspirators, and he called upon the younger Pitt to form an Administration. Pitt obeyed, took office as First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, and remained at the head of the Government continuously for eighteen years. The people took some little time before they understood how entirely in their interests had been the decided and spirited action of the Lords and of the Crown. The House of Commons, which, before it passed the India Bill, had seemed to possess commanding influence, sank now to an inferior place in the councils of the nation; and the strong majority which sided with the old, and against the new, Ministry, began to decline, and fell off week by week

* "Nothing can be more evident from the simplest view of the Bill, than the Ministerial resolve to defy all the power of the Constitution. The whole patronage of India, the military and judicial commissions, the contracts, the trade, the purchase of merchandise and stores to the amount, even then, of six millions a-year, in the hands of a small body of men, must have created an influence dangerous to the throne and the Constitution. With this influence on his side, a corrupt or ambitious Minister might make himself master of every corruptible mind in the country, and storm the Legislature. The Bill, by its own nature, in the first instance, involved the most comprehensive violation of public engagements, by the seizure of the charters; and the most comprehensive violation of established policy, by the general change of the Indian system in all things that related to government and trade."—*Vide* 'Blackwood's Magazine,' March 1835, article "William Pitt."

till it was reduced to nothing. A new Parliament was then summoned, and the people in it gave an overwhelming majority to Mr Pitt, thereby showing that they entirely approved and confirmed the independent action taken by the Lords. Pitt, as long as he lived, never lost the confidence of the country. Well may it be said, therefore, that the action of the Lords on that occasion was most important. It not only disposed of a most objectionable and dangerous project, but it seated on the Treasury bench the great Minister who safely guided the vessel of the State through innumerable dangers and difficulties.

Between that day and the present, the Upper House has often acted in opposition to the Lower, but in cases where the Lower House was at last shown to be not unsupported by the country. Instances like these are not to our purpose. We seek for an occasion where the Peers confessedly and triumphantly defended the liberties of the nation against the Commons, and we do not find it till we have gone back nearly a hundred years. It was in 1783 that Mr Pitt, then three-and-twenty years of age, became First Minister of the Crown in consequence of the decided vote of the House of Lords.

In 1880 we are again in such a state of things that our hope of preserving justice, "dealt equally to all," and of averting revolution, is once more in the House of Lords. The circumstances are in many respects different—widely different they seem at a careless view; but on examination there will be found to be more resemblance. We have not an open coalition of two sets of Ministers; but we have, under the name of one party—under the name of the Liberal party—in effect a coalition, and nothing else. We have parties of

entirely opposite views and aims—parties, the thorough triumph of any one of whom would be the ruin and extinction of the others—banded together, exercising the government and attempting to make law. These parties hold no sentiment or political principle in common, except hatred of one other party, and a determination to possess power if they can. We have Whigs of the old school, Radical reformers who may be called Revolutionists in fact, and Irish demagogues. It is not necessary that we should stop here to prove the compound character of this so-called party, or the incongruous elements of which it is composed. The proof has been offered over and over again, and the demonstration may be regarded as complete. The sections of the dominant party in the House of Commons are really as much opposed to each other as were the parties represented by Lord North and Mr Fox respectively. That is resemblance the first.

They are bent upon the making of laws which shall throw the representation entirely into the hands of one class, and that the lowest, of the community, and which shall break down all barriers and safeguards against democracy; in other words, they are bent upon rendering it impossible for any but themselves to have a majority in the Lower House. This is precisely what Mr Fox's India Bill was intended to effect for the coalition of that day. Behold resemblance the second.

They have, by the disproportioned views which they announce, and by the disrespect for right and order which they evince, sent alarm among all the sober and steady-going classes of the State, insomuch that those classes, though mainly of the commons, find their present hope of security in the House of Lords,

uphold that House in resisting and defeating the iniquities which the Commons have devised, and expect from that House alone an equal consideration of public affairs. Here is yet another resemblance.

This, like other analogies, can hardly be expected to go on all-fours. Any ingenious person probably could, with a little trouble, point out a variety of disagreements between the cases. Yet we have said enough, we think, to show that the main points of danger which existed in 1783 exist now in 1880,—namely, a conspiracy of adverse parties to deprive us of our liberties.

The country, as one may say, has fetched a deep sigh, and is breathing freely again, since the Lords, by an immense majority—composed of Liberal peers as largely as Conservative, but all made Conservative for the occasion by stress of a common danger,—since the Lords, we say, rejected emphatically the Bill for compensating Irish tenants disturbed for the non-payment of rent. There have been already, and there will yet be, most savage threats uttered against the Upper Chamber for having so essentially and decidedly done their duty. These threats were to have been expected from the disappointed sections, the foiled conspirators. But the feeling against the unjust, the wicked Bill, is too general, too strong throughout the country, for the roar of the baffled faction to be aught but a *brutum fulmen*—the viper's bite against a file.

“There is no terror, railers, in your threats;

For we are armed so strong in honesty,
That they pass by us as the idle wind
Which we regard not.”*

Be just and fear not, was the maxim offered for the guidance of the Peers by one of their own body.

They have dared to be just, and they have nothing to fear. Big words and horrible threats are easy to utter, but not so easy to execute, for those who have been shown to be beyond contradiction in the wrong. “All hell shall stir for this,” said Ancient Pistol when he got his head broke. But hell did not stir, and the glorious ancient had to heal his pate as best he might. If railing can crush the Peers, they will go down ten thousand fathoms deep. But (we reflect on it with thankfulness) hard words cannot crush.

Not only have the Lords, by patient examination and lengthened argument, fully justified their absolute rejection of the Compensation Bill, but they have shown the Ministerial party to be without a shadow of excuse for the intended enactment. The best, and almost the only, apology for their measure which the supporters of the Bill were able to bring forward was, that Ministers, after a careful examination into the state of Ireland, were of opinion that it was indispensable. They believed because Ministers believed; they had no better reason. *Fides religionis nostræ fundamentum habetur*. It is not often that Radicals are so ready to accept doctrine of any kind at second-hand.

Now, as a supplement to sound argument, it may be proper to say that men who have every means of forming a right judgment think as the speakers think; but to have nothing but other men's belief to adduce in support of a position against which strong and numerous attacks are made, is to be weak indeed. Why did not the Ministers who were supposed to be so thoroughly satisfied of the soundness of their views, find an answer to the many objections which were levelled

* Slightly altered from Shakespeare's 'Julius Cæsar.'

at the wretched measure so forcibly? They were well pleased with the Bill, and thought it a right one. Good; but then why not meet the plain and forcible arguments of Lord Derby, which went to prove that it was a villanously bad one? His lordship said, among many other equally strong strictures on the Bill—

“By this Bill, if it passes, you suspend the ordinary remedy, and what by the general consensus of Irish landlords is the only effective remedy which the landlord has, against the non-paying tenant; you suspend it for eighteen months. Now it has been argued again and again—and for my part I see no answer to the argument—that while that suspension lasts you do injustice in two ways. First of all, because while you hinder the landlord from obtaining his due from the tenant, you do not relieve the landlord from the pressure which is brought to bear upon him by mortgagees and other creditors. He remains still liable to pay, while his only means of payment are withheld from him by the operation of this Bill. In the next place, the tenant himself has other creditors besides the landlord. He owes money to the baker, the grocer, probably to the local whisky-dealer, and almost certainly to the local money-lender; and in regard to them the ordinary methods of law remain, and these creditors are free to obtain payment of their debts, while the one exemption applies to the landlord only. And although I do not want to repeat what has been said a hundred times over, I do not think there is any answer to the plea that the hardship is increased by the landlord being the only creditor who cannot help going on giving credit. The local dealer may refuse to supply articles if he is not paid. The local money-lender may not possibly get back his old loans, but at any rate he may refuse to make any fresh advances. But the landowner cannot get back his land, whether he is paid for it or not. Now I do not see how it is possible to deny that these circumstances, taken together, constitute

what, in an ordinary condition of society, would be called a case of great injustice to the owners of the soil.”

We have no more seen an answer to the argument than Lord Derby has; and we assume that no answer can be given. It is, in truth, a strange way to relieve a tenant who is indebted and impoverished, to compensate his losses or his waste out of the pocket of a landlord who is also impoverished through bad seasons; while in relation to all other of his creditors, the tenant is left where he was before. It is a strange method, we repeat, and it would be an inexplicable method were we to believe that the Bill was invented for the sake of the tenant alone. But it becomes more intelligible if we look at it in another way,—if we reflect that the rôle of the tenant in the argument is to blind men to the real purpose of the Bill—if we perceive that the Bill was intended not so much to benefit the tenant as to mulct the already suffering landlord. Having caught this idea, one sees plainly enough that the tenant's other creditors, referred to by Lord Derby, have nothing to do with the matter.

The Bill was an attempt to introduce the thin end of a wedge, which would unquestionably have been driven in from time to time until it was home to the head. It was the beginning of a systematic attack upon property, commencing with landed property. Attempts were made to exhibit it as a very secondary matter, temporary in its operations, restricted in its field, trifling in its effects. But the instincts of all propertied classes told them plainly for what it was that they were being patted on the back and hushed with so many soothing expressions. They knew that if they once admitted the principle of confiscation contained in the Bill,

they would soon have more, and more open, confiscation, and be told that it was only the extension of a principle to which they had already agreed. But they saw the danger. *Obsta principiis* was their rule. And they committed their cause to the Peers.

Even the superior knowledge which Ministers were said to possess, and to which their followers pinned their faith, turned out to be no knowledge at all, but fictitious information dressed up in the style of authentic facts, yet wholly untrustworthy. We do not accuse Ministers of having put forward this information (the main prop of their Bill) knowing it to be fictitious; but we do accuse them of having accepted it negligently, and without taking proper steps for its verification. It was simply an insult to Parliament to lay before it, in the form of statistics accepted and used by the Government, loose statements which had never been confirmed or even tested. The process by which returns is especially worthy of remark. It is one which would speedily have "replenished the earth" with policemen so as to make Nature appear as "a very slow coach." It beats to nothing Falstaff's method of generating men in buckram: the scale on which Sir John worked was so modest compared to this. The sublimest things are the simplest; and this is the simple Liberal method by which the police may rapidly become as the stars of heaven for multitude. Every time that an officer is recorded as having been on duty, he is put down as a separate person. He has an existence for every appearance; and if he should appear fifty times in a week, he is reckoned as fifty policemen. Observe, then, the wonderful police

propagation which may thus be rapidly effected. There may be limits to it, but the limits are at an infinite distance apart, and the field of genesis is practically boundless. A modest number of officers, numerated by some one of the teens, may be expanded to ten places of figures. A new form this of infinite series!

"Even as a broken mirror, which the
glass
In every fragment multiplies; and makes
A thousand images of one that was,
The same, and still the more, the more it
breaks."

The poet, if he had lived in this our day, would, we are certain, have used the police instead of the glass, as being a more familiar and striking illustration, and would have written

"A thousand *constables* for one that was,"
&c., &c., &c.

Happily there were in the House of Commons men quick to detect and to expose an imposture like this. Its authors—let us say rather its parents by adoption—were completely crushed by proofs that their figures were spurious, and had to give them up as indefensible. Thus what they asserted to be the strong base of their measure was cut away from under it.

These be your wise men, O great Liberal party! (you like to be called "great," do ye not?) These be your sages and your pundits! Are ye not proud of them?

There was yet another argument in default of answers to potent objections, used by the few supporters of the Compensation Bill. "Pass the Bill," they said to the non-contentants, "or the consequences may be incalculably serious. Irish tenants have set their hearts upon obtaining this gratification at the expense of their landlords. Their wrath will be terrible if you baffle them. Pre-

pare for riot and outrage. All will be your fault. We would have given to the tenant the little indulgence about which he is so eager; and so have kept him in good-humour."

It is, we believe, very commonly the case that an intending wrong-doer, balked of his desire by the intervention of justice, or of any champion of the right, gives way to violent rage, and will take vengeance on any being, offending or not, who may lie at his mercy. That is, he will do so if order be not taken to prevent him. It is dangerous work to interfere with burglars. Many a man, of late years, has been knocked down and kicked to insensibility for attempting to keep the fists of a savage off a helpless woman, whom the savage had hoped to chastise in his moderate judicious way. It is probable that, if Mr G. Fawkes and other gentlemen, his friends, had not had their time much occupied by the Government, on or about the 5th of November 1605, the Lord Monteagle might have had a broken head, or something worse, for his meddlesome conduct in apprising the Council of a forthcoming little pyrotechnic entertainment of which he had had notice.

But we never before heard men cautioned to keep from interfering with robbers, or savage miscreants, or traitors, on pain of being made responsible for any crime which these malefactors might commit in their rage at being balked of their prey. On the contrary, we have always heard it maintained that it was the abettors, and not the with-standers, of the lawless, who took upon them a heavy responsibility.

"Let us not, however," some good-natured person may say, "be too severe upon men who were driven to desperate shifts. They had no answer to give to what was said, and so they were obliged to

vapour a little that they might not appear to be altogether put to silence." But was it mere vapouring? Let us examine farther, and find whether this denunciation of the wrath of the lawless was a mere makeshift, conceived in the moment when it was uttered, or part of a deep-laid scheme which will be wrought out by nefariously using the bad passions and violent acts of men in open hostility to the law as a means of terrifying the Legislature into the enactment of unjust law. This prattle about the ire of the disaffected Irishman reminds one (does it not?) of something we all heard and marvelled at not long ago.

We remember that Mr Gladstone, who is at present Prime Minister, said publicly last spring that Fenian outrages, the abuse of nitro-glycerine, the murder of the policeman at Manchester, and so on, were means by which great and useful legislation had been brought about. The application of this, of course, is that if Irishmen want what they call reforms—*i.e.*, iniquitous measures like the defeated Compensation for Disturbance Bill—they must terrorise the law-abiding populations and the Legislature by repeating the acts above mentioned, and by perpetrating acts like to them. The hints about the effect on the disaffected Irishmen of rejecting the Bill, may therefore have been uttered *in terrorem*.

Mr Gladstone's hints will perhaps be taken. Irishmen are not slow, generally, at understanding an intimation that a few outrages may probably be for their advantage. Let us, at any rate, be prepared for outbreaks: but let us not be frightened thereby into allowing the law-breakers to have their desire upon the peaceful classes; let us rather insist that the laws be put in force for the punishment of

wickedness and vice. Time was when the knowledge that a proposed law was for the gratification of men who were prepared to pursue their ends by unlawful means, would have decided the fate of the proposed law with Ministers as well as others. But we have changed all that now. The art of government recognises the expediency of legalising injustice in order that the unjust may be kept quiet, or perhaps that the unjust may repay the goodwill of the Government by striking with panic any who may oppose it.

To return to our subject. The House of Lords has arrested the beginnings of the threatened evil; but it need scarcely be said that the country cannot look to the Lords to go on defending them. The Upper House holds the coalition in check long enough to give the country opportunity of consulting how it can best help itself; but the one Chamber cannot for long keep undoing what the other Chamber has done. The people are now thoroughly advised of the plot against their welfare, and must take measures accordingly. It is impossible to forecast the course which things will take; yet there are one or two circumstances which are significant as to the change.

The House of Lords did not act by parties, in dealing with the Compensation Bill. Members of the Government and their immediate friends stood quite alone in defence of it. In condemnation of it appeared the great body of Liberal Peers, who, joining with the Conservative Peers, rejected the obnoxious Bill by an immense majority. The rejection was moved by Earl Grey, a Liberal Peer.

Now we may feel certain that there is in the Lower House a strong

Liberal section which feels exactly as the Liberal Peers felt who condemned the Bill. These latter, having put aside all pretence of being Ministerialists, and having voted dead against the Government, the schism which they have openly made can hardly be prevented from extending on the same lines down into the Lower House.

It may seem presumptuous to say that a House of Commons recently elected, and inclining to the Ministerial side by the huge majority of 170 or thereabouts, does not fairly represent the country. And yet there are strong signs that it does not represent the country, as we have already said. And this is not simply a Conservative opinion, as we shall show. We can prove, out of Mr Gladstone's own mouth, that already, when his Administration was not above three months old, it had lost (if it ever possessed) its hold of the public support. He has given us a test whereby to gauge the strength of a Liberal Government. That strength is, as he tells us, in the inverse ratio of the power and vigour with which the House of Lords deals with the Government's measures. These are his words: *—

"In our day—there is no reason why I should not say it to the House of Lords freely, for it is an historical fact—whenever we were backed at the moment by a very strong national feeling that it would have been dangerous to confront and to resist, then the House of Lords passed our measures. So they passed the Disestablishment of the Irish Church, so they passed the Irish Land Act, and so I have no doubt, if it please the Almighty in the course of future years, they will pass a great many good measures. But the moment the people go to sleep—and they cannot be always awake—the moment public opinion flags, the moment the people become satisfied, and

* From his speech at Edinburgh, March 17, 1880.

cease to take a very strong and decided interest in public questions, that is the moment when the majority of the House of Lords grows powerful, and then they mangle, then they cut about, then they postpone, then they reject the good measures that go up to them from the House of Commons."

Now we know that the House of Lords has very decidedly rejected a measure on which the Government laid much stress, and which they had induced the Commons to pass. *Ergo*, the people have gone to sleep, or public opinion flags, or the people have become satisfied, or they have ceased to take a very strong and decided interest in public questions. Not expecting to receive so early proof of the soundness of his remark, the right hon. gentleman unluckily took the electors and the general public too closely into his confidence,—revealed to them too plainly how his barometer of popularity is graduated. If they have taken his lesson to heart, all his hearers must know this day that the index of the glass stands at *indifference*. We may be sure, too, that Mr Gladstone, studying his place in public opinion according to his own rule, has learned to his dismay that democracy is asleep. In an extract which we gave, a page or two back, he stated that democracy—*i.e.*, the nation, *minus* all but its dregs—was his sole reliance. Clearly, then, Mr Gladstone has built his house upon the sand. The floods and the winds are not loosed yet, but surely they will come, and beat upon that house!

The enormous majority of the Government in the Commons may not, on a sudden, be changed into a minority, but it may receive a blow from which it cannot recover. There is hope that we are already at a "measurable distance" from deliverance from the wicked coalition.

The Bill which has produced the recent action of the Lords was, our Ministers would have us believe, an afterthought. Whether it had not been thought of at the beginning of the session, or whether it was produced suddenly and unexpectedly with the hope that so its importance might escape notice, certain it is that there was no mention of it in the Queen's Speech. Fortunately the Opposition was not "taken aback" by the manœuvre, if manœuvre it was. But undoubtedly, by the whole announcement made by the new Administration on their first meeting Parliament, the nation at large was much taken aback—their communications were so entirely different from what their previous threats and denunciations had led us to expect. We heard about Irishmen, and savings banks, and more income-tax. We expected to have revealed to us the blackest criminality that a Government could be capable of; and an attempt made to fix the odium of that criminality on Lord Beaconsfield and his late colleagues, whom for the last three years we have been accustomed to hear accused by Liberal orators of having been the wickedest Ministry that ever held office!

Yes; to judge by former speeches of the men now in power, high treason, gross misappropriation of the public money, breach of engagements and of every moral obligation, wanton quarrels, criminal designs to involve all Europe in war—a terrible indictment—could be proved against the Conservative Government as soon as ever the people should have pushed it from its vantage-ground of office. But, strange to say, no sooner had it been deposed, and laid open to attack for its unspeakable, flagitious conduct, than—Presto!! its accusers, the great champions of

morality and right, imitated the policy of Bully Bottom, and aggravated their voices so that they roared you as gently as any sucking-dove; they roared you an't were any nightingale. The charges befet so loudly and so bitterly trumpeted have ceased to be—are not. One is lost in amazement at this. One asks, Is it possible that men claiming to be gentlemen and men of honour can utter such fearful accusations against other gentlemen, and then capriciously abandon them? or, Is it possible that gentlemen, who have sought power for the purpose of redressing iniquities like these, can be proved to have invented the iniquities for the sake of obtaining the power?

From the time that we have waited in vain for substantiation of the horrible charges, we may assume that judgment has gone already against the accusers by default. Not only have they ceased to assail their predecessors, they have followed them, treading in their very footsteps. And this is the outcome of these heinous aspersions. It has frequently been said of late that the slanders are without parallel, for number, for the persistency with which they were repeated, and for the intensity of hatred with which they were preferred. Conspicuous in all these respects were the slanders uttered by Mr Gladstone.

It is remarkable how our lower orders can be imposed upon by a solemn countenance and a Jesuitical avoidance of sensual enjoyment. Provided a man's life be austere as to meats and other gratifications, it matters not to them how black his heart may be. They might suspect him if he was known to enjoy a good dinner, a bottle of old wine, or an evening with some jolly companions; but envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness, do not

seem to them to be drawbacks to a man's character. And yet how much less harmful are social indulgences than those bad things which proceed out of the heart!

“He didn't mean half the hard things he said,” has been an excuse made for him. Didn't he? then how dared he to say them? That the man was insincere in most things that he said, and that he said them solely for the sake of turning Lord Beaconsfield's Ministry out of office, we entirely believe. But should insincerity be a recommendation to public favour?

Few men can have failed to remark the apathy and indifference with which Mr Gladstone, since he has been again a Minister, has received authenticated reports of dreadful outrages, committed in what are now, or what were lately, parts of the Sultan's dominions. And comparison must force itself upon them of this indifference with the indignation and excitement which he evinced on the occurrence of the “Bulgarian atrocities” with which he made us so familiar. Then Mr Gladstone's nature was stirred to its very depths at the excesses which were committed; his human sympathies were aroused and found expression in countless declamations; his righteous soul could find no rest because of the atrocious things which had been done. He not only called down the wrath of Heaven on such sins, but he did all that in him lay to direct the wrath of man upon the “unspeakable” Turks. He would have driven them out of Europe headlong, without thought of what was to become of them or of the land from which they were to be ejected. His holy wrath could not wait to think of detail or of consequences. Vengeance speedy, vengeance hot, first; when that was secured it might be possible

to think of circumstances and of the future!

But what a different reception only a month or two ago of reports of equally barbarous and more numerous acts which disgraced humanity! No indignation; scarcely any feeling even. The reports treated more like an impertinent interruption to business than like anything else. Mr Gladstone "couldn't help it," he said, and turned him to more interesting matters.

If it be remembered that in his orations against the Turk he always, after having wrought his hearers to the desired pitch of rage, endeavoured to turn that rage against Lord Beaconsfield and his Government, some reason begins to appear why Mr Gladstone, who was then so carried away by his zeal in the cause of humanity, is so lukewarm about humanity now. He has achieved his desire of unseating Lord Beaconsfield, and no political purpose is to be served, but rather a political difficulty would be raised, were humanity at present to be considered.

Can a man who ponders these things be deemed uncharitable if he decides that Mr Gladstone's emotions at the time of the "Bulgarian atrocities" were assumed? that, as a man, he cared as little about atrocities then as he does now; that he was rousing the passions, and seeking to wield the wrath of the multitude, for purposes of his own? Can there be a doubt that Mr Gladstone in this matter was *insincere*? That, probably, is the key to all that Mr Gladstone has been doing before high heaven for the last four years. His ostensible objects were not his real objects. His sentiments were mere implements. While his mind pretended to be ranging from East to West, search-

ing the things that belong to nations and races; while good and evil were his theme; while peace on earth and goodwill to men (except Turks) were his desire and aim,—the thought of a calm figure seated on the Treasury bench was gnawing at his heart, stimulating his tongue, keeping alive his energies, and operating as the true motive power to all his acts. As with the Irish Church, so with all other subjects to which he has given himself: he has been an adoring friend or a deadly enemy just according to his own convenience.

We have refrained from accusing Mr Gladstone of being actuated by the desire of returning to office, because he has on more than one occasion distinctly denied that he had any such desire, and because his words and actions do not prove that he entertained it. But as to his intense desire to overthrow Lord Beaconsfield there can be no misunderstanding whatever. His words, his every act, his bitterness of soul, give undeniable proof of that.

We write this in full recollection that, in 1868, when he for the first time became Prime Minister, "goodness" was ascribed to Mr Gladstone before all his other great attributes, and that some fond persons may imagine even to this day that he is "too good" to be guilty of so much hypocrisy. And we would remark that, whatever exalted notions some few minds may entertain of Mr Gladstone's goodness, the whole nation did, during his former Administration, quietly but decidedly relinquish the ascription of goodness. He was credited with fine qualities enough still, as Heaven knows; but the goodness was dropped, as not exactly fitting in with the accounts which from day to day appeared of the conduct of his Government. We confidently appeal

to the utterances of the press in 1872-73-74, as compared with those in 1868, in support of the assertion that the nation had dropped, by consent as it were, Mr Gladstone's goodness as an article of faith.

We point back to the vituperation itself which for four years flowed in a continuous stream from his mouth, like lava from Vesuvius, and ask whether such bitter railing, such uncharitable aspersion, ever was indulged in by any *good* man, as Christians understand the term. He will adhere to his assertions and utterances as long as they serve his purpose, and drop or contradict them without scruple whenever he finds it convenient to do so. It requires only to watch his career to be satisfied of his *insincerity*. When the poet was reflecting on sordid natures, he asked what excesses the human soul was not capable of when urged by the accursed love of money. In our day the same question may be asked concerning him who gives himself up to the thirst for notoriety. We cited above that the invectives uttered by Mr Gladstone were often said to be without parallel. They have, we hope, been very seldom equalled, but they are unhappily not without parallel. Mr Fox could be equally abusive, and, as the event showed, equally insincere. We have spoken of the coalition between Mr Fox and Lord North: let us for a moment refer to the manner in which Mr Fox spoke of Lord North before they joined their forces. He called Lord North

“The great criminal of the State, whose *blood* must expiate the calamities he had brought upon his country; the object of future impeachment, whom an indignant nation must in the end compel to make such poor atonement as he might *on a scaffold*: the leader and head of those weak, wicked, and incapable advisers of the

Crown, who were the source of all the public misfortunes, and whom he and his friends would proscribe to the last hour of their lives.”

Of Lord North's Cabinet Mr Fox said—

“He never could suffer the idea of a connection with the members of that Cabinet to enter his mind—a connection with men who had shown themselves devoid of the common principles of honour and honesty, and in whose hands he could not venture to trust his own honour.” And Mr Fox declared that, “whenever he should be found entering into any terms with an individual of the noble lord's (North's) Cabinet, he should rest satisfied to be called the most infamous of mankind!”

Yet, in less than a year Mr Fox had joined his forces to those of Lord North, all his former professions cast to the winds. His greed of eminence was really at the bottom of all he said and did; and when he found that it could be gratified by eating his former words, and violating his former pledges, he did not scruple to gratify it at that price,—at the price of his honour! Therefore, alas! such wanton vituperation was not wholly unknown in politics before Mr Gladstone's time.

There is, however, one direction in which, as we believe, even Mr Fox never dared to go so far as Mr Gladstone. We mean that Mr Fox, however rashly he may have dealt with his own honour or his consistency, did not venture to drag sacred names into the controversy—never dared to appeal to the Supreme Being against his political opponents. This piece of strategy is, we fancy, quite Mr Gladstone's own invention, and one which few men, we hope, will envy him the discovery of. No doubt this impiety imparts a show of earnestness to his assertions, but the political advantage must be fearfully dear at

the price. It is a pity that they who listened to these sanctimonious protestations could not have heard him, a week or two later, exerting himself to introduce an *atheist* into the House of Commons. Had they done so, they would have been edified.

And we do not think that Mr Fox ever did, or ever would have done, as we know that Mr Gladstone did, in the way of teaching the people to lightly and systematically say the thing that is not. The instructions which the latter right hon. gentleman gave for saying that which is false, in reference to votes given at elections, was, perhaps, when its actual and probable consequences come to be regarded, the most reckless, and cruel, and wicked advice which he has ever volunteered. The electors of Mid-Lothian were at liberty to say that which was not the truth, because Sir Walter Scott had once, when impertinently questioned as to his being the author of 'Waverley,' answered and said, "I am not."

Let us consider what this advice amounted to. Sir Walter's name is, as we all know, a spell throughout the "land o' cakes," as indeed it is throughout most lands where it is known. Sir Walter, in his sound, and manly, and honourable discretion—the discretion of a mind far better able to discriminate in such a case than ever Mr Gladstone's will be—decided that he might deny the authorship and be guiltless. We do not believe that Scott did this lightly. We do believe that he bitterly resented the cruel necessity of making answer which had been thrust upon him, and that it cost him a severe pang to have to palter in any way with the truth. However, he decided, and, no doubt, decided as an honourable man and good Christian might decide. Mr Gladstone's les-

son to the indiscriminating, the ignorant, the unstable multitude, is, "See what your revered Sir Walter did: go ye and do likewise." Can any one doubt that the tendency of such advice is to do away with the distinction between truth and falsehood? to familiarise the electors with deceit?

Nor was the pernicious advice long in bringing forth fruit. We observe that there is in Mid-Lothian, and that there comes from many parts of Scotland, a cry against the duplicity and the "false promises" by which candidates for Parliament were deceived. We learn, moreover, from the reports of judges who have tried election petitions, how extensively and shamefully breach of promise has prevailed. It is impossible, of course, to judge how much or how little of this immorality is attributable to Mr Gladstone's unhallowed advice; but at least we know that he did his best to bring about such a state of things.

Perhaps it was only a coincidence—if so, it was a very awkward one—that only a week or two after Mr Gladstone had been so urgent with the electors not to be too scrupulous about what they might say, one of his own followers—a person whom he thought it right to recommend for an office under the Crown—was, as Dr Watts has it, "caught with a lie upon his tongue." Another official, who *had* some regard for truth, pointed out to the rancorous romancer that what he had said was not sooth, and that there were ample means at command of showing that it was not so. Thereupon the foiled slanderer surrendered his invention, not with the candour of a generous man who feels that he has been hasty in his assumption and is anxious to make amends; not with the readiness of one who rejoices to

find that his fellow-men are not so bad as he had supposed them ; but with a manifest reluctance to let go his calumny ; with such a growl as a cur gives when he is compelled to part with a bone. He let us see that he *wished* the slander to have been a truth. And yet this person is tolerated among gentlemen, allowed to sit at good men's feasts, and, so far as we can hear, not in any way visited with the displeasure of society for having so disgraced himself!! It is an old remark that the age of chivalry is past, but now the age of honour and truth seems to be fast passing also.

Some few years ago* we deemed it our duty to comment upon the conduct of a right-reverend Bishop who had been frequently known to publicly excuse sin if committed by a *poor* person. His lordship courted the rabble by making light of their wickedness, as if they were not already only too ready to look leniently at transgressions. He seemed, as we remarked at the time, to be teaching the doctrine that *Poverty* shall cover the multitude of sins, as a little soft-sawder for the multitude. This was one way of warning men to flee from the wrath to come. But Mr Gladstone's position is not confined in its operation to poor men. It tampers with the truthfulness of every man who has got a vote.

Unfortunately a large licence has been accorded to public speakers to exhibit passing events in such lights as may suit their own purposes. They avail themselves of this, but, as a rule, their observations and advice are directed to particular instances. It is not only every man's interest, as a responsible being, that he should in all things be truthful;

but it is every man's interest as a social being—that is, it is the common interest of us all—that he should scrupulously speak the truth in all things. We know how weak minds are often tempted to err in this thing, and how the strictest principle is required to keep them from offending. Surely it is a wickedness and a cruelty to smooth the way of such towards sin!

Attempts to lower the morality of the population should be looked at, not from a political, but from a judicial point of view. Whoever is guilty of them is an enemy to all. We have not yet reached a time, we hope, when deceit and falsehood may be inculcated with impunity,—when men may openly use their talents in the cause of vice. Society will rise and vindicate its rights against the false preacher, be he who he may. When we meet such a one let us close our ears to his words. Let us give him no tolerance even for a moment. But let every honest hand wield the whip which shall lash him from the East to the West! But we digress.

The Minister departmentally responsible for bringing the Lords now into the front place is Mr Forster ; and many are the regrets that we have heard expressed at his having shown so much weakness and so much want of judgment. To Mr Forster's credit stand recorded many acts by which he showed himself superior to the arts and wiles of party, and in regard to which he bore himself with honest independence. It was not expected that he would lend himself to such a pitiful design as the Compensation for Disturbance Bill ; and even his adversaries regret that that affair did not devolve upon some

* *Vide* 'Blackwood's Magazine' for June 1875,—art., "Thoughts about British Workmen—Past and Present."

one of the Cabinet who had no character to lose. The Bill has been a very damaging piece of work, unfair in itself, and most discreditably accounted for, and presented to and pushed through the House of Commons. The Irish Secretary cannot but feel how much he has suffered in reputation through it; and cannot but sigh as he looks back to the days when, with a firmer mind, he laboured in the Department of Education. He will have now to consider carefully his ways, and to exhibit something of his old vigour and independence, if he would have the country forget this blunder. We owe him something for the manly front he showed to the impudent caucus at Bradford, and wish him better fortune and better sense than to employ himself in doing the dirty work of his party. He is the man who has given their present prominence to the House of Peers.

This transference of the regard of the country to the Upper House throws some little more light on a question which has been a good deal canvassed—namely, the meaning of the last election. It is pretty clear now that the large Liberal majority was not given for the purpose of promoting any fair and reasonable class of legislation, or to abolish any oppressive law, or to remove any galling burden. But it is likely that the more ignorant classes were, by continued iteration, led to believe that the late Government was dealing unfairly by them, and leading them on to much damage. It is also to be presumed that they expected to witness a notable exposure of Lord Beaconsfield's evil doings, and also to receive some not very definitely perceived benefits, if a change of Ministry should take place. They have changed the Ministry, but not attained to any

of these results. They are disappointed, and conscious of having been beguiled into folly, and they fall into an apathetic condition. The rest of the country did not agree in the election at all. And thus the House of Commons seems at present to be a mistake all round, and the Upper House takes the chief place.

It is remarkable, and it tends to prove some muddle in the whole business, that in such a state of things the Liberal leaders should have shown so little capacity for management. If the people could not specify what they wanted, though not indisposed to a little iniquity, and were simply persuaded into returning a Liberal majority, the leaders had the more obligation to avoid false steps, and not to further embarrass a situation which was already sufficiently perplexing. Yet Ministers, as if possessed by a perverse spirit, have, ever since they took office, been going out of their way to find blunders and to commit them. Any *prestige* which their great majority may have lent them was immediately dissipated by their own ill-advised acts. They are labouring in a slough. Mr Bright promised wonderful benefits to be obtained from the legislation of next year; but with such a stumbling set of leaders as we have got, it is difficult to look to next year with any confidence. Since May last the press has been announcing, at very short intervals, blunder after blunder of the most startling and un-called-for kind. The most demented of all, perhaps, was the attempt made by the Prime Minister to silence a member of the House of Commons. This was a capital mistake. It brought out in strong relief the Premier's ignorance of men, and his incapacity to estimate situations. Of course every mem-

ber felt that the "stopper," then designed for an Irish member, might to-morrow be applied to himself, if the gagging should be carried. The proposal, therefore, found no supporter; and the Speaker informed the House that *such a motion had not been made for two hundred years!!*

The wise saw of the Chancellor who reflected on the modicum of wisdom with which states are governed, may thus be fortified by a notable modern instance. But what strikes us more than the blunder (are not the Premier's blunders as common as blackberries?) is the despotic character of his design—the tyranny of it. The designer, forsooth, is a champion of Liberalism; will Liberals abet this proceeding? Our readers probably remember a scene at Dotheboys Hall where Mr Squeers struck the desk with his cane, and is reported then to have delivered himself as follows: "Now then," said Mr Squeers mildly, "let me hear a boy speak, and I'll take the skin off his back." We should not describe Mr Squeers as a Liberal: but thus it is that extremes meet. Perhaps Wackford could have cited Liberalism for his purpose, just as William could recur to the mode of silencing which was in vogue shortly after the scene closed on the middle ages. But, seriously, could any man who might respect Liberal sentiment in his heart have been ready thus to disinter the crushing engines of the past? Is not his Liberalism a mask? Is not this another proof of his *insincerity*?

A reference to the events of the past month was not in the original plan of this article, which, indeed, must be closed while August has yet many days to run. But we cannot refrain from some comment on the distressing news which now,

soon after the middle of the month, is, from day to day, arriving from Ireland. That unhappy country is in a ferment, sure enough. The command seems to have gone out among the people, as it did in the camp before Sinai, "Slay every man his brother and his companion." Mr Gladstone's words, and the wretched Compensation Bill, are bearing sad fruit. The Ministers told us that the ordinary laws would be found sufficient for securing the peace of Ireland. But peace, clearly, has not been secured, and we await with anxiety the measures which her Majesty's Government may take for its preservation. There is no time to lose: action must be immediate if Ministers would show themselves equal to the emergency. It is fortunate that Parliament has not been prorogued. We trust that it may be determined to do something more than "strike at wretched kernes." The kernes are defying the law, and they must be taught to respect it; but the head of the hydra will not have been crushed until the traitors who are urging the ignorant people to violence have been amply punished. The speech of the member for Tipperary which has been read in the House of Commons simply astonishes by its audacity and truculent character. By the manner in which Ministers may deal with it we may judge of the probability or otherwise of their adopting a sensible Irish policy. Dare they take the bull by the horns, or will they play fast and loose with the agitation already begun in that land? Will they aspire to govern Ireland, or only to manage Irish members? To act vigorously and honestly may cost them some votes; but it will do for their reputation what neither apathy nor hesitation nor confiscatory sugar-plums can achieve.

The foreign policy, too, of the Government with respect to Turkey, is such as furnishes but small ground of hope, and leaves a great deal to be feared. An incautious move has been made in the hope that it would be followed by a result of startling brilliancy. Instead of brilliancy we have had dulness long drawn out; and the result is still far off. Pray Heaven it be not a disastrous one! And of the incapacity shown in India, and of its melancholy consequences, we know not how to speak as it deserves. If *responsibility* mean anything when applied to the Cabinet, there must be a heavy account to settle regarding India before many months have passed. On all sides clouds hang around the Gladstone Ministry. It needs but for one cloud to break, and the country will *feel* the grievous error which it refused to *see* in the spring!

We feel that we have been somewhat discursive in this paper, yet our remarks proceeded fairly from the subject. It is such a significant and suggestive theme, and the action of the Upper House has been recently so much the pivot on which home politics turned, that it was almost impossible to keep

clear of collateral headings. One direction we hope that we have given to thought, and that is towards honestly and patiently examining the great and eminently useful functions which the hereditary Chamber discharges. It stood by our forefathers; and it has recently stood by us in our need. If it were always invariably in harmony with the cry of the multitude it could not perform its duties: those duties must occasionally be unpopular at the time of performance. But when party feeling has passed by and men can dispassionately scan results, then they understand this their venerable institution. And so it is that, when our minds are clear of fretting questions of the hour,— whenever we feel, not as partisans, but as Britons, we are always ready to do honour to the Peers. Sure are we that on the next festal occasion when we are asked to toast them, the eminent service which they rendered to us and our liberties in August 1880, will fill every heart with affection and respect. The toast will have a deeper meaning than usual; the sentiment will be of the present as well as the past; and heartfelt will be the shouting after every man has drained his bumper to the health of

THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

DR WORTLE'S SCHOOL.—PART V.

CHAPTER XIII.—MR PUDDICOMBE'S BOOT.

It was not to be expected that the matter should be kept out of the county newspaper, or even from those in the metropolis. There was too much of romance in the story, too good a tale to be told, for any such hope. The man's former life and the woman's, the disappearance of her husband and his reappearance after his reported death, the departure of the couple from St Louis, and the coming of Lefroy to Bowick, formed together a most attractive subject. But it could not be told without reference to Dr Wortle's school, to Dr Wortle's position as clergyman of the parish,—and also to the fact which was considered by his enemies to be of all the facts the most damning, that Mr Peacocke had for a time been allowed to preach in the parish church. The 'Broughton Gazette,' a newspaper which was supposed to be altogether devoted to the interest of the diocese, was very eloquent on this subject. "We do not desire," said the 'Broughton Gazette,' "to make any remarks as to the management of Dr Wortle's school. We leave all that between him and the parents of the boys who are educated there. We are perfectly aware that Dr Wortle himself is a scholar, and that his school has been deservedly successful. It is advisable, no doubt, that in such an establishment none should be employed whose lives are openly immoral;—but as we have said before, it is not our purpose to insist upon this. Parents, if they feel themselves to be aggrieved, can remedy the evil by withdrawing their sons. But when we consider the great power which

is placed in the hands of an incumbent of a parish, that he is endowed as it were with the freehold of his pulpit, that he may put up whom he will to preach the Gospel to his parishioners, even in a certain degree in opposition to his bishop, we think that we do no more than our duty in calling attention to such a case as this." Then the whole story was told at great length, so as to give the "we" of the 'Broughton Gazette' a happy opportunity of making his leading article not only much longer, but much more amusing, than usual. "We must say," continued the writer, as he concluded his narrative, "that this man should not have been allowed to preach in the Bowick pulpit. He is no doubt a clergyman of the Church of England, and Dr Wortle was within his rights in asking for his assistance; but the incumbent of a parish is responsible for those he employs, and that responsibility now rests on Dr Wortle."

There was a great deal in this that made the Doctor very angry,—so angry that he did not know how to restrain himself. The matter had been argued as though he had employed the clergyman in his church after he had known the history. "For aught I might know," he said to Mrs Wortle, "any curate coming to me might have three wives, all alive."

"That would be most improbable," said Mrs Wortle.

"So was all this improbable,—just as improbable. Nothing could be more improbable. Do we not all feel overcome with pity for the poor woman because she encounter-

ed trouble that was so improbable? How much more improbable was it that I should come across a clergyman who had encountered such improbabilities?" In answer to this Mrs Wortle could only shake her head, not at all understanding the purport of her husband's argument.

But what was said about his school hurt him more than what was said about his church. In regard to his church he was impregnable. Not even the Bishop could touch him,—or even annoy him much. But this "penny-a-liner," as the Doctor indignantly called him, had attacked him in his tenderest point. After declaring that he did not intend to meddle with the school, he had gone on to point out that an immoral person had been employed there, and had then invited all parents to take away their sons. "He doesn't know what moral and immoral means," said the Doctor, again pleading his own case to his own wife. "As far as I know, it would be hard to find a man of a higher moral feeling than Mr Peacocke, or a woman than his wife."

"I suppose they ought to have separated when it was found out," said Mrs Wortle.

"No, no," he shouted; "I hold that they were right. He was right to cling her, and she was bound to obey him. Such a fellow as that,"—and he crushed the paper up in his hand in his wrath, as though he were crushing the editor himself,—"such a fellow as that knows nothing of morality, nothing of honour, nothing of tenderness. What he did I would have done, and I'll stick to him through it all in spite of the Bishop, in spite of the newspapers, and in spite of all the rancour of all my enemies." Then he got up and walked about the room in such a fury that his wife did not dare to speak to him.

Should he or should he not answer the newspaper? That was a question which for the first two days after he had read the article greatly perplexed him. He would have been very ready to advise any other man what to do in such a case. "Never notice what may be written about you in a newspaper," he would have said. Such is the advice which a man always gives to his friend. But when the case comes to himself he finds it sometimes almost impossible to follow it. "What's the use? Who cares what the 'Broughton Gazette' says? let it pass, and it will be forgotten in three days. If you stir the mud yourself, it will hang about you for months. It is just what they want you to do. They cannot go on by themselves, and so the subject dies away from them; but if you write rejoinders they have a contributor working for them for nothing, and one whose writing will be much more acceptable to their readers than any that comes from their own anonymous scribes. It is very disagreeable to be worried like a rat by a dog; but why should you go into the kennel and unnecessarily put yourself in the way of it?" The Doctor had said this more than once to clerical friends, who were burning with indignation at something that had been written about them. But now he was burning himself, and could hardly keep his fingers from pen and ink.

In this emergency he went to Mr Puddicombe, not, as he said to himself, for advice, but in order that he might hear what Mr Puddicombe would have to say about it. He did not like Mr Puddicombe, but he believed in him,—which was more than he quite did with the Bishop. Mr Puddicombe would tell him his true thoughts. Mr Puddicombe would be unpleasant, very likely; but he would be sincere

and friendly. So he went to Mr Puddicombe. "It seems to me," he said, "almost necessary that I should answer such allegations as these for the sake of truth."

"You are not responsible for the truth of the 'Broughton Gazette,'" said Mr Puddicombe.

"But I am responsible to a certain degree that false reports shall not be spread abroad as to what is done in my church."

"You can contradict nothing that the newspaper has said."

"It is implied," said the Doctor, "that I allowed Mr Peacocke to preach in my church after I knew his marriage was informal."

"There is no such statement in the paragraph," said Mr Puddicombe, after attentive reperusal of the article. "The writer has written in a hurry, as such writers generally do, but has made no statement such as you presume. Were you to answer him, you could only do so by an elaborate statement of the exact facts of the case. It can hardly be worth your while, in defending yourself against the 'Broughton Gazette,' to tell the whole story in public of Mr Peacocke's life and fortunes."

"You would pass it over altogether?"

"Certainly I would."

"And so acknowledge the truth of all that the newspaper says."

"I do not know that the paper says anything untrue," said Mr Puddicombe, not looking the Doctor in the face, with his eyes turned to the ground, but evidently with the determination to say what he thought, however unpleasant it might be. "The fact is that you have fallen into a—misfortune."

"I don't acknowledge it at all," said the Doctor.

"All your friends at any rate will think so, let the story be told as it may. It was a misfor-

tune that this lady whom you had taken into your establishment should have proved not to be the gentleman's wife. When I am taking a walk through the fields and get one of my feet deeper than usual into the mud, I always endeavour to bear it as well as I may before the eyes of those who meet me, rather than make futile efforts to get rid of the dirt, and look as though nothing had happened. The dirt, when it is rubbed and smudged and scraped, is more palpably dirt than the honest mud."

"I will not admit that I am dirty at all," said the Doctor.

"Nor do I, in the case which I describe. I admit nothing; but I let those who see me form their own opinion. If any one asks me about my boot, I tell him that it is a matter of no consequence. I advise you to do the same. You will only make the smudges more palpable if you write to the 'Broughton Gazette.'"

"Would you say nothing to the boys' parents?" asked the Doctor.

"There, perhaps, I am not a judge, as I never kept a school;—but I think not. If any father writes to you, then tell him the truth."

If the matter had gone no farther than this, the Doctor might probably have left Mr Puddicombe's house with a sense of thankfulness for the kindness rendered to him; but he did go farther, and endeavoured to extract from his friend some sense of the injustice shown by the Bishop, the Stantiloups, the newspaper, and his enemies in general through the diocese. But here he failed signally. "I really think, Dr Wortle, that you could not have expected it otherwise."

"Expect that people should lie?"

"I don't know about lies. If people have told lies, I have not

seen them or heard them. I don't think the Bishop has lied."

"I don't mean the Bishop; though I do think that he has shown a great want of what I may call liberality towards a clergyman in his diocese."

"No doubt he thinks you have been wrong. By liberality you mean sympathy. Why should you expect him to sympathise with your wrong-doing?"

"What have I done wrong?"

"You have countenanced immorality and deceit in a brother clergyman."

"I deny it," said the Doctor, rising up impetuously from his chair.

"Then I do not understand the position, Dr Wortle. That is all I can say."

"To my thinking, Mr Puddicombe, I never came across a better man than Mr Peacocke in my life."

"I cannot make comparisons. As to the best man I ever met in my life, I might have to acknowledge that even he had done wrong in certain circumstances. As the matter is forced upon me, I have to express my opinion that a great sin was committed both by the man and by the woman. You not only condone the sin, but declare both by your words and deeds that you sympathise with the sin as well as with the sinners. You have no right to expect that the Bishop will sympathise with you in that;—nor can it be but that in such a country as this the voices of many will be loud against you."

"And yours as loud as any," said the Doctor, angrily.

"That is unkind and unjust," said Mr Puddicombe. "What I have said, I have said to yourself, and not to others; and what I have said, I have said in answer to questions asked by yourself." Then the

Doctor apologised with what grace he could. But when he left the house his heart was still bitter against Mr Puddicombe.

He was almost ashamed of himself as he rode back to Bowick,—first, because he had condescended to ask advice, and then because, after having asked it, he had been so thoroughly scolded. There was no one whom Mr Puddicombe would admit to have been wrong in the matter except the Doctor himself. And yet though he had been so counselled and so scolded, he had found himself obliged to apologise before he left the house! And, too, he had been made to understand that he had better not rush into print. Though the 'Broughton Gazette' should come to the attack again and again, he must hold his peace. That reference to Mr Puddicombe's dirty boot had convinced him. He could see the thoroughly squalid look of the boot that had been scraped in vain, and appreciate the wholesomeness of the unadulterated mud. There was more in the man than he had ever acknowledged before. There was a consistency in him, and a courage, and an honesty of purpose; but there was no softness of heart. Had there been a grain of tenderness there, he could not have spoken so often as he had done of Mrs Peacocke without expressing some grief at the unmerited sorrows to which that poor lady had been subjected.

His own heart melted with ruth as he thought, while riding home, of the cruelty to which she had been and was subjected. She was all alone there, waiting, waiting, waiting, till the dreary days should have gone by. And if no good news should come,—if Mr Peacocke should return with tidings that her husband was alive and well, what should she do then? What

would the world then have in store for her? "If it were me," said the Doctor to himself, "I'd take her to some other home, and treat her as my wife in spite of all the Puddicombes in creation;—in spite of all the bishops."

The Doctor, though he was a self-asserting and somewhat violent man, was thoroughly soft-hearted. It is to be hoped that the reader has already learned as much as that;—a man with a kind, tender, affectionate nature. It would perhaps be unfair to raise a question whether he would have done as much, been so willing to sacrifice himself, for a plain woman. Had Mr Stantiloup, or Sir Samuel Griffin if he had suddenly come again to life, been found to have prior wives also living, would the Doctor have found shelter for them in their ignominy and trouble? Mrs Wortle, who knew her husband thoroughly, was sure that he would not have done so. Mrs Peacocke was a very beautiful woman, and the Doctor was a man who thoroughly admired beauty. To say that Mrs Wortle was jealous would be quite untrue. She liked to see her husband talking to a pretty woman, because he would be sure to be in a good humour, and sure to make the best of himself. She loved to see him shine. But she almost wished that Mrs Peacocke had been ugly, because there would not then have been so much danger about the school.

"I'm just going up to see her," said the Doctor, as soon as he got home,—“just to ask her what she wants.”

"I don't think she wants anything," said Mrs Wortle, weakly.

"Does she not? She must be a very odd woman if she can live there all day alone, and not want to see a human creature."

"I was with her yesterday."

"And therefore I will call to-

day," said the Doctor, leaving the room with his hat on.

When he was shown up into the sitting-room he found Mrs Peacocke with a newspaper in her hand. He could see at a glance that it was a copy of the 'Broughton Gazette,' and could see also the length and outward show of the very article which he had been discussing with Mr Puddicombe. "Dr Wortle," she said, "if you don't mind, I will go away from this."

"But I do mind. Why should you go away?"

"They have been writing about me in the newspapers."

"That was to be expected."

"But they have been writing about you."

"That was to have been expected also. You don't suppose they can hurt me?" This was a false boast, but in such conversations he was almost bound to boast.

"It is I, then, am hurting you?"

"You!—oh dear, no; not in the least."

"But I do. They talk of boys going away from the school."

"Boys will go and boys will come; but we run on for ever," said the Doctor, playfully.

"I can well understand that it should be so," said Mrs Peacocke, passing over the Doctor's parody as though unnoticed; "and I perceive that I ought not to be here."

"Where ought you to be, then?" said he, intending simply to carry on his joke.

"Where indeed! There is nowhere; but wherever I may do least injury to innocent people,—to people who have not been driven by storms out of the common path of life. For this place I am peculiarly unfit."

"Will you find any place where you will be made welcome?"

"I think not."

“Then let me manage the rest. You have been reading that dastardly article in the papers. It will have no effect upon me. Look here, Mrs Peacocke;”—then he got up and held her hand as though he were going, but he remained some moments while he was still speaking to her,—still holding her hand;—“it was settled between your husband and me, when he went away, that you should remain here under my charge till his return. I am bound to him to find a home for you. I think you are as much bound to obey him,—which you can only do by remaining here.”

“I would wish to obey him, certainly.”

“You ought to do so,—from the peculiar circumstances more especially. Don't trouble your mind about the school, but do as he desired. There is no question but that you must do so. Good-bye. Mrs Wortle or I will come and see you to-morrow.” Then, and not till then, he dropped her hand.

On the next day Mrs Wortle did call, though these visits were to her an intolerable nuisance. But it was certainly better that she should alternate the visits with the Doctor than that he should go every day. The Doctor had declared that charity required that one of them should see the poor woman daily. He was quite willing that they should perform the task day and day about,—but should his wife omit the duty he must go in his wife's place.

What would all the world of Bowick say if the Doctor were to visit a lady, a young and a beautiful lady, every day, whereas his wife visited the lady not at all? Therefore they took it turn about, except that sometimes the Doctor accompanied his wife. The Doctor had once suggested that his wife should take the poor lady out in her carriage. But against this even Mrs Wortle had rebelled. “Under such circumstances as hers she ought not to be seen driving about,” said Mrs Wortle. The Doctor had submitted to this, but still thought that the world of Bowick was very cruel.

Mrs Wortle, though she made no complaint, thought that she was used cruelly in the matter. There had been an intention of going into Brittany during these summer holidays. The little tour had been almost promised. But the affairs of Mrs Peacocke were of such a nature as not to allow the Doctor to be absent. “You and Mary can go, and Henry will go with you.” Henry was a bachelor brother of Mrs Wortle, who was always very much at the Doctor's disposal, and at hers. But certainly she was not going to quit England, not going to quit home at all, while her husband remained there, and while Mrs Peacocke was an inmate of the school. It was not that she was jealous; the idea was absurd: but she knew very well what Mrs Stantiloup would say.

CHAPTER XIV.—‘EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS.’

But there arose a trouble greater than that occasioned by the ‘Broughton Gazette.’ There came out an article in a London weekly newspaper, called ‘Everybody's Business,’ which nearly drove the Doctor mad. This was on the last

Saturday of the holidays. The holidays had been commenced in the middle of July, and went on till the end of August. Things had not gone well at Bowick during these weeks. The parents of all the four newly expected boys

had—changed their minds. One father had discovered that he could not afford it. Another declared that the mother could not be got to part with her darling quite so soon as he had expected. A third had found that a private tutor at home would best suit his purposes. While the fourth boldly said that he did not like to send his boy because of the “fuss” which had been made about Mr and Mrs Peacocke. Had this last come alone, the Doctor would probably have resented such a communication; but following the others as it did, he preferred the fourth man to any of the other three. “Miserable cowards,” he said to himself, as he docketed the letters and put them away. But the greatest blow of all,—of all blows of this sort,—came to him from poor Lady Anne Clifford. She wrote a piteous letter to him, in which she implored him to allow her to take her two boys away.

“My dear Dr Wortle,” she said, “so many people have been telling so many dreadful things about this horrible affair, that I do not dare to send my darling boys back to Bowick again. Uncle Clifford and Lord Robert both say that I should be very wrong. The Marchioness has said so much about it that I dare not go against her. You know what my own feelings are about you and dear Mrs Wortle; but I am not my own mistress. They all tell me that it is my first duty to think about the dear boys’ welfare; and of course that is true. I hope you won’t be very angry with me, and will write one line to say that you forgive me.—Yours most sincerely,

“ANNE CLIFFORD.”

In answer to this the Doctor did write as follows:—

“MY DEAR LADY ANNE,—Of

course your duty is very plain,—to do what you think best for the boys; and it is natural enough that you should follow the advice of your relatives and theirs.—Faithfully yours,
JEFFREY WORTLE.”

He could not bring himself to write in a more friendly tone, or to tell her that he forgave her. His sympathies were not with her. His sympathies at the present moment were only with Mrs Peacocke. But then Lady Anne Clifford was not a beautiful woman, as was Mrs Peacocke.

This was a great blow. Two other boys had also been summoned away, making five in all, whose premature departure was owing altogether to the virulent tongue of that wretched old Mother Ship-ton. And there had been four who were to come in the place of four others, who, in the course of nature, were going to carry on their more advanced studies elsewhere. Vacancies such as these had always been preoccupied long beforehand by ambitious parents. These very four places had been preoccupied, but now they were all vacant. There would be nine empty beds in the school when it met again after the holidays; and the Doctor well understood that nine beds remaining empty would soon cause others to be emptied. It is success that creates success, and decay that produces decay. Gradual decay he knew that he could not endure. He must shut up his school,—give up his employment,—and retire altogether from the activity of life. He felt that if it came to this with him, he must in very truth turn his face to the wall and die. Would it,—would it really come to that, that Mrs Stantiloup should have altogether conquered him in the combat that had sprung up between them?

But yet he would not give up Mrs Peacocke. Indeed, circumstanced as he was, he could not give her up. He had promised not only her, but her absent husband, that until his return there should be a home for her in the schoolhouse. There would be a cowardice in going back from his word which was altogether foreign to his nature. He could not bring himself to retire from the fight, even though by doing so he might save himself from the actual final slaughter which seemed to be imminent. He thought only of making fresh attacks upon his enemy, instead of meditating flight from those which were made upon him. As a dog, when another dog has got him well by the ear, thinks not at all of his own wound, but only how he may catch his enemy by the lip, so was the Doctor in regard to Mrs Stantiloup. When the two Clifford boys were taken away, he took some joy to himself in remembering that Mr Stantiloup could not pay his butcher's bill.

Then, just at the end of the holidays, some good-natured friend sent to him a copy of 'Everybody's Business.' There is no duty which a man owes to himself more clearly than that of throwing into the waste-paper basket, unsearched and even unopened, all newspapers sent to him without a previously declared purpose. The sender has either written something himself which he wishes to force you to read, or else he has been desirous of wounding you by some ill-natured criticism upon yourself. 'Everybody's Business' was a paper which, in the natural course of things, did not find its way into the Bowick rectory; and the Doctor, though he was no doubt acquainted with the title, had never even looked at its columns. It was the purpose of the periodical to amuse its read-

ers, as its name declared, with the private affairs of their neighbours. It went boldly about its work, excusing itself by the assertion that Jones was just as well inclined to be talked about as Smith was to hear whatever could be said about Jones. As both parties were served, what could be the objection? It was in the main good-natured, and probably did most frequently gratify the Joneses, while it afforded considerable amusement to the listless and numerous Smiths of the world. If you can't read and understand Jones's speech in Parliament, you may at any rate have mind enough to interest yourself with the fact that he never composed a word of it in his own room without a ring on his finger and a flower in his button-hole. It may also be agreeable to know that Walker the poet always takes a mutton-chop and two glasses of sherry at half-past one. 'Everybody's Business' did this for everybody to whom such excitement was agreeable. But in managing everybody's business in that fashion, let a writer be as good-natured as he may, and let the principle be ever so well founded that nobody is to be hurt, still there are dangers. It is not always easy to know what will hurt and what will not. And then sometimes there will come a temptation to be, not spiteful, but specially amusing. There must be danger, and a writer will sometimes be indiscreet. Personalities will lead to libels even when the libeller has been most innocent. It may be that, after all, the poor poet never drank a glass of sherry before dinner in his life,—it may be that a little toast-and-water, even with his dinners, gives him all the refreshment that he wants, and that two glasses of alcoholic mixture in the middle of the day shall seem, when imputed to him, to convey a charge

of downright inebriety. But the writer has perhaps learned to regard two glasses of meridian wine as but a moderate amount of sustentation. This man is much flattered if it be given to be understood of him that he falls in love with every pretty woman that he sees;—whereas another will think that he has been made subject to a foul calumny by such insinuation.

'Everybody's Business' fell into some such mistake as this, in that very amusing article which was written for the delectation of its readers in reference to Dr Wortle and Mrs Peacocke. The 'Broughton Gazette' no doubt confined itself to the clerical and highly moral views of the case, and, having dealt with the subject chiefly on behalf of the Close and the admirers of the Close, had made no allusion to the fact that Mrs Peacocke was a very pretty woman. One or two other local papers had been more scurrilous, and had, with ambiguous and timid words, alluded to the Doctor's personal admiration for the lady. These, or the rumours created by them, had reached one of the funniest and lightest-handed of the contributors to 'Everybody's Business,' and he had concocted an amusing article,—which he had not intended to be at all libellous, which he had thought to be only funny. He had not appreciated, probably, the tragedy of the lady's position, or the sanctity of that of the gentleman. There was comedy in the idea of the Doctor having sent one husband away to America to look after the other while he consoled the wife in England. "It must be admitted," said the writer, "that the Doctor has the best of it. While one gentleman is gouging the other,—as cannot but be expected,—the Doctor will be at any rate in security, enjoying the smiles of beauty

under his own fig-tree at Bowick. After a hot morning with 'τῦπτω' in the school, there will be 'amo' in the cool of the evening." And this was absolutely sent to him by some good-natured friend!

The funny writer obtained a popularity wider probably than he had expected. His words reached Mrs Stantiloup, as well as the Doctor, and were read even in the Bishop's palace. They were quoted even in the 'Broughton Gazette,' not with approbation, but in a high tone of moral severity. "See the nature of the language to which Dr Wortle's conduct has subjected the whole of the diocese!" That was the tone of the criticism made by the 'Broughton Gazette' on the article in 'Everybody's Business.' "What else has he a right to expect?" said Mrs Stantiloup to Mrs Rolland, having made quite a journey into Broughton for the sake of discussing it at the palace. There she explained it all to Mrs Rolland, having herself studied the passage so as fully to appreciate the virus contained in it. "He passes all the morning in the school whipping the boys himself because he has sent Mr Peacocke away, and then amuses himself in the evening by making love to Mr Peacocke's wife, as he calls her. Of course they will say that,—and a great deal worse." Dr Wortle, when he read and re-read the article, and when the jokes which were made upon it reached his ears, as they were sure to do, was nearly maddened by what he called the heartless iniquity of the world; but his state became still worse when he received an affectionate but solemn letter from the Bishop warning him of his danger. An affectionate letter from a Bishop must surely be the most disagreeable missive which a parish clergyman can receive. Affection from one man to another

is not natural in letters. A bishop never writes affectionately unless he means to reprove severely. When he calls a clergyman "his dear brother in Christ," he is sure to go on to show that the man so called is altogether unworthy of the name. So it was with a letter now received at Bowick, in which the Bishop expressed his opinion that Dr Wortle ought not to pay any further visits to Mrs Peacocke till she should have settled herself down with one legitimate husband, let that legitimate husband be who it might. The Bishop did not indeed, at first, make reference by name to 'Everybody's Business,' but he stated that the "metropolitan press" had taken up the matter, and that scandal would take place in the diocese if further cause were given. "It is not enough to be innocent," said the Bishop, "but men must know that we are so."

Then there came a sharp and pressing correspondence between the Bishop and the Doctor, which lasted four or five days. The Doctor, without referring to any other portion of the Bishop's letter, demanded to know to what "metropolitan newspaper" the Bishop had alluded, as, if any such paper had spread scandalous imputations as to him, the Doctor, respecting the lady in question, it would be his, the Doctor's, duty to proceed against that newspaper for libel. In answer to this, the Bishop, in a note much shorter and much less affectionate than his former letter, said that he did not wish to name any metropolitan newspaper. But the Doctor would not, of course, put up with such an answer as this. He wrote very solemnly now, if not affectionately. "His lordship had spoken of 'scandal in the diocese.' The words," said the Doctor, "contained a most grave charge.

He did not mean to say that any such accusation had been made by the Bishop himself; but such accusation must have been made by some one at least of the London newspapers, or the Bishop would not have been justified in what he had written. Under such circumstances he, Dr Wortle, thought himself entitled to demand from the Bishop the name of the newspaper in question, and the date on which the article had appeared."

In answer to this there came no written reply, but a copy of the 'Everybody's Business' which the Doctor had already seen. He had, no doubt, known from the first that it was the funny paragraph about "τρπρω" and "amo" to which the Bishop had referred. But in the serious steps which he now intended to take, he was determined to have positive proof from the hands of the Bishop himself. The Bishop had not directed the pernicious newspaper with his own hands, but if called upon, would not deny that it had been sent from the palace by his orders. Having received it, the Doctor wrote back at once as follows;—

"RIGHT REVEREND AND DEAR LORD, — Any word coming from your lordship to me is of grave importance, as should, I think, be all words coming from a bishop to his clergy; and they are of special importance when containing a reproof, whether deserved or undeserved. The scurrilous and vulgar attack made upon me in the newspaper which your lordship has sent to me would not have been worthy of my serious notice, had it not been made worthy by your lordship as being the ground on which such a letter was written to me as that of your lordship's of the 12th instant. Now it has been invested with so much solemnity by your lordship's

notice of it, that I feel myself obliged to defend myself against it by public action.

“If I have given just cause of scandal to the diocese, I will retire both from my living and from my school. But before doing so I will endeavour to prove that I have done neither. This I can only do by publishing in a court of law all the circumstances in reference to my connection with Mr and Mrs Peacocke. As regards myself, this, though necessary, will be very painful. As regards them, I am inclined to think that the more the truth is known, the more general and the more generous will be the sympathy felt for their position.

“As the newspaper sent to me, no doubt by your lordship's orders, from the palace, has been accompanied by no letter, it may be necessary that your lordship should be troubled by a subpoena, so as to prove that the newspaper alluded to by your lordship is the one against which my proceedings will be taken. It will be necessary, of course, that I should show that the libel in question has been deemed important enough to bring down upon me ecclesiastical rebuke of such a nature as to make my remaining in the diocese unbearable, unless it be shown to have been undeserved.”

There was consternation in the palace when this was received. So stiff-necked, —so determined to make much of little! The Bishop had felt himself bound to warn a clergyman that, for the sake of the Church, he could not do altogether as other men might. No doubt certain ladies had got around him, —especially Lady Margaret Momson, —filling his ears with the horrors of the Doctor's proceedings. The gentleman who had written the article about the Greek

and the Latin words had seen the truth of the thing at once, —so said Lady Margaret. The Doctor had condoned the offence committed by the Peacockes because the woman had been beautiful, and was repaying himself for his mercy by basking in her beauty. There was no saying that there was not some truth in this. Mrs Wortle herself entertained a feeling of the same kind. It was palpable, on the face of it, to all except Dr Wortle himself, —and to Mrs Peacocke. Mrs Stantiloup, who had made her way into the palace, was quite convincing on this point. Everybody knew, she said, that he went across, and saw the lady all alone, every day. Everybody did not know that. If everybody had been accurate, everybody would have asserted that he did this thing every other day. But the matter, as it was represented to the Bishop by the ladies, with the assistance of one or two clergymen in the Close, certainly seemed to justify his lordship's interference.

But this that was threatened was very terrible. There was a determination about the Doctor which made it clear to the Bishop that he would be as bad as he said. When he, the Bishop, had spoken of scandal, of course he had not intended to say that the Doctor's conduct was scandalous; nor had he said anything of the kind. He had used the word in its proper sense —and had declared that offence would be created in the minds of people unless an injurious report were stopped. “It is not enough to be innocent,” he had said, “but men must know that we are so.” He had declared in that his belief in Dr Wortle's innocence. But yet there might, no doubt, be an action for libel against the newspaper. And when damages came to be considered, much weight would be placed naturally on the atten-

tion which the Bishop had paid to the article. The result of this was that the Bishop invited the Doctor to come and spend a night with him in the palace.

The Doctor went, reaching the palace only just before dinner. During dinner and in the drawing-room Dr Wortle made himself very pleasant. He was a man who could always be soft and gentle in a drawing-room. To see him talking with Mrs Rolland and the Bishop's daughters, you would not have thought that there was anything wrong with him. The discussion with the Bishop came after that, and lasted till midnight. "It will be for the disadvantage of the

diocese that this matter should be dragged into court,—and for the disadvantage of the Church in general that a clergyman should seem to seek such redress against his bishop." So said the Bishop.

But the Doctor was obdurate. "I seek no redress," he said, "against my bishop: I seek redress against a newspaper which has calumniated me. It is your good opinion, my lord,—your good opinion or your ill opinion, which is the breath of my nostrils. I have to refer to you in order that I may show that this paper, which I should otherwise have despised, has been strong enough to influence that opinion."

CHAPTER XV.—"‘AMO’ IN THE COOL OF THE EVENING."

The Doctor went up to London, and was told by his lawyers that an action for damages probably would lie. "‘Amo’ in the cool of the evening," certainly meant making love. There could be no doubt that allusion was made to Mrs Peacocke. To accuse a clergyman of a parish, and a schoolmaster, of making love to a lady so circumstanced as Mrs Peacocke, no doubt was libellous. Presuming that the libel could not be justified, he would probably succeed. "Justified!" said the Doctor, almost shrieking, to his lawyers; "I never said a word to the lady in my life except in pure kindness and charity. Every word might have been heard by all the world." Nevertheless, had all the world been present, he would not have held her hand so tenderly or so long as he had done on a certain occasion which has been mentioned.

"They will probably apologise," said the lawyer.

"Shall I be bound to accept their apology?"

"No, not bound; but you would have to show, if you went on with the action, that the damage complained of was of so grievous a nature that the apology would not salve it."

"The damage has been already done," said the Doctor, eagerly. "I have received the Bishop's rebuke,—a rebuke in which he has said that I have brought scandal upon the diocese."

"Rebukes break no bones," said the lawyer. "Can you show that it will serve to prevent boys from coming to your school?"

"It may not improbably force me to give up the living. I certainly will not remain there subject to the censure of the Bishop. I do not in truth want any damages. I would not accept money. I only want to set myself right before the world." It was then agreed that the necessary communication should be made by the lawyer to the newspaper proprietors, so as to put the matter in a proper train for the action.

After this the Doctor returned home, just in time to open his school with his diminished forces. At the last moment there was another defaulter, so that there were now no more than twenty pupils. The school had not been so low as this for the last fifteen years. There had never been less than eight-and-twenty before, since Mrs Stantiloup had first begun her campaign. It was heartbreaking to him. He felt as though he were almost ashamed to go into his own school. In directing his housekeeper to send the diminished orders to the tradesmen he was thoroughly ashamed of himself; in giving his directions to the usher as to the re-divided classes, he was thoroughly ashamed of himself. He wished that there was no school, and would have been contented now to give it all up, and to confine Mary's fortune to £10,000 instead of £20,000, had it not been that he could not bear to confess that he was beaten. The boys themselves seemed almost to carry their tails between their legs, as though even they were ashamed of their own school. If, as was too probable, another half-dozen should go at Christmas, then the thing must be abandoned. And how could he go on as rector of the parish with the abominable empty building staring him in the face every moment of his life?

"I hope you are not really going to law," said his wife to him.

"I must, my dear. I have no other way of defending my honour."

"Go to law with the Bishop?"

"No, not with the Bishop."

"But the Bishop would be brought into it?"

"Yes, he will certainly be brought into it."

"And as an enemy. What I mean is, that he will be brought in very much against his own will."

"Not a doubt about it," said the Doctor. "But he will have brought it altogether upon himself. How he can have condescended to send that scurrilous newspaper is more than I can understand. That one gentleman should have so treated another is to me incomprehensible; but that a bishop should have done so to a clergyman of his own diocese shakes all my old convictions. There is a vulgarity about it, a meanness of thinking, an aptitude to suspect all manner of evil, which I cannot fathom. What! did he really think that I was making love to the woman? did he doubt that I was treating her and her husband with kindness, as one human being is bound to treat another in affliction? did he believe, in his heart, that I sent the man away in order that I might have an opportunity for a wicked purpose of my own? It is impossible. When I think of myself and of him, I cannot believe it. That woman who has succeeded at last in stirring up all this evil against me,—even she could not believe it. Her malice is sufficient to make her conduct intelligible;—but there is no malice in the Bishop's mind against me. He would infinitely sooner live with me on pleasant terms if he could justify his doing so to his conscience. He has been stirred to do this in the execution of some presumed duty. I do not accuse him of malice. But I do accuse him of a meanness of intellect lower than what I could have presumed to have been possible in a man so placed. I never thought him clever; I never thought him great; I never thought him even to be a gentleman, in the fullest sense of the word; but I did think he was a man. This is the performance of a creature not worthy to be called so."

"Oh, Jeffrey, he did not believe all that."

“What did he believe? When he read that article, did he see in it a true rebuke against a hypocrite, or did he see in it a scurrilous attack upon a brother clergyman, a neighbour, and a friend? If the latter, he certainly would not have been instigated by it to write to me such a letter as he did. He certainly would not have sent the paper to me had he felt it to contain a foul-mouthed calumny.”

“He wanted you to know what people of that sort were saying.”

“Yes; he wanted me to know that, and he wanted me to know also that the knowledge had come to me from my bishop. I should have thought ill of any one who had sent me the vile ribaldry. But coming from him, it fills me with despair.”

“Despair!” she said, repeating his word.

“Yes; despair as to the condition of the Church when I see a man capable of such meanness holding so high place. “Amo” in the cool of the evening!’ That words such as those should have been sent to me by the Bishop, as showing what the ‘metropolitan press’ of the day was saying about my conduct! Of course, my action will be against him,—against the Bishop. I shall be bound to expose his conduct. What else can I do? There are things which a man cannot bear and live. Were I to put up with this, I must leave the school, leave the parish;—nay, leave the country. There is a stain upon me which I must wash out, or I cannot remain here.”

“No, no, no,” said his wife, embracing him.

““Amo” in the cool of the evening!’ And that when, as God is my judge above me, I have done my best to relieve what has seemed to me the unmerited sorrows of two poor sufferers! Had it come

from Mrs Stantiloup, it would, of course, have been nothing. I could have understood that her malice should have condescended to anything, however low. But from the Bishop!”

“How will you be the worse? Who will know?”

“I know it,” said he, striking his breast. “I know it. The wound is here. Do you think that when a coarse libel is welcomed in the Bishop’s palace, and treated there as true, that it will not be spread abroad among other houses? When the Bishop has thought it necessary to send it me, what will other people do,—others who are not bound to be just and righteous in their dealings with me as he is? “Amo” in the cool of the evening!” Then he seized his hat and rushed out into the garden.

The gentleman who had written the paragraph certainly had had no idea that his words would have been thus effectual. The little joke had seemed to him to be good enough to fill a paragraph, and it had gone from him without further thought. Of the Doctor or of the lady he had conceived no idea whatsoever. Somebody else had said somewhere that a clergyman had sent a lady’s reputed husband away to look for another husband, while he and the lady remained together. The joke had not been much of a joke, but it had been enough. It had gone forth, and had now brought the whole palace of Broughton into grief, and had nearly driven our excellent Doctor mad! ““Amo” in the cool of the evening!” The words stuck to him like the shirt of Nessus, lacerating his very spirit. That words such as those should have been sent to him in a solemn sober spirit by the Bishop of his diocese! It never occurred to him that he had, in truth, been imprudent when pay-

ing his visits alone to Mrs Peacocke.

It was late in the evening, and he wandered away up through the green rides of a wood the borders of which came down to the glebe fields. He had been boiling over with indignation while talking to his wife. But as soon as he was alone he endeavoured,—purposely endeavoured to rid himself for a while of his wrath. This matter was so important to him that he knew well that it behoved him to look at it all round in a spirit other than that of anger. He had talked of giving up his school, and giving up his parish, and had really for a time almost persuaded himself that he must do so unless he could induce the Bishop publicly to withdraw the censure which he felt to have been expressed against him.

And then what would his life be afterwards? His parish and his school had not been only sources of income to him: the duty also had been dear, and had been performed on the whole with conscientious energy. Was everything to be thrown up, and his whole life hereafter be made a blank to him, because the Bishop had been unjust and injudicious? He could see that it well might be so, if he were to carry this contest on. He knew his own temper well enough to be sure that, as he fought, he would grow hotter in the fight, and that when he was once in the midst of it nothing would be possible to him but absolute triumph or absolute annihilation. If once he should succeed in getting the Bishop into court as a witness, either the Bishop must be crushed or he himself. The Bishop must be got to say why he had sent that low ribaldry to a clergyman in his parish. He must be asked whether he had himself believed it, or whether he had not

believed it. He must be made to say that there existed no slightest reason for believing the insinuation contained; and then, having confessed so much, he must be asked why he had sent that letter to Bowick parsonage. If it were false as well as ribald, slanderous as well as vulgar, malicious as well as mean, was the sending of it a mode of communication between a bishop and a clergyman of which he as a bishop could approve? Questions such as these must be asked him; and the Doctor, as he walked alone, arranging these questions within his own bosom, putting them into the strongest language which he could find, almost assured himself that the Bishop would be crushed in answering them. The Bishop had made a great mistake. So the Doctor assured himself. He had been entrapped by bad advisers, and had fallen into a pit. He had gone wrong, and had lost himself. When cross-questioned, as the Doctor suggested to himself that he should be cross-questioned, the Bishop would have to own all this;—and then he would be crushed.

But did he really want to crush the Bishop? Had this man been so bitter an enemy to him that, having him on the hip, he wanted to strike him down altogether? In describing the man's character to his wife, as he had done in the fury of his indignation, he had acquitted the man of malice. He was sure now, in his calmer moment, that the man had not intended to do him harm. If it were left in the Bishop's bosom, his parish, his school, and his character would all be made safe to him. He was sure of that. There was none of the spirit of Mrs Stantiloup in the feeling that had prevailed at the palace. The Bishop, who had never yet been able to be masterful over him, had desired

in a mild way to become masterful. He had liked the opportunity of writing that affectionate letter. That reference to the "metropolitan press" had slipped from him unawares; and then, when badgered for his authority, when driven to give an instance from the London newspapers, he had sent the objectionable periodical. He had, in point of fact, made a mistake;—a stupid, foolish mistake, into which a really well-bred man would hardly have fallen. "Ought I to take advantage of it?" said the Doctor to himself when he had wandered for an hour or more alone through the wood. He certainly did not wish to be crushed himself. Ought he to be anxious to crush the Bishop because of this error?

"As for the paper," he said to himself, walking quicker as his mind turned to this side of the subject,—*"as for the paper itself, it is beneath my notice. What is it to me what such a publication, or even the readers of it, may think of me? As for damages, I would rather starve than soil my hands with their money. Though it should succeed in ruining me, I could not accept redress in that shape."* And thus having thought the matter fully over, he returned home, still wrathful, but with mitigated wrath.

A Saturday was fixed on which he should again go up to London to see the lawyer. He was obliged now to be particular about his days, as, in the absence of Mr Peacocke, the school required his time. Saturday was a half-holiday, and on that day he could be absent on condition of remitting the classical lessons in the morning. As he thought of it all he began to be almost tired of Mr Peacocke. Nevertheless, on the Saturday morning, before he started, he called on Mrs Peacocke,—in company with his

wife,—and treated her with all his usual cordial kindness. "Mrs Wortle," he said, "is going up to town with me; but we shall be home to-night, and we will see you on Monday if not to-morrow." Mrs Wortle was going with him, not with the view of being present at his interview with the lawyer, which she knew would not be allowed, but on the pretext of shopping. Her real reason for making the request to be taken up to town was, that she might use the last moment possible in mitigating her husband's wrath against the Bishop.

"I have seen one of the proprietors and the editor," said the lawyer, "and they are quite willing to apologise. I really do believe they are very sorry. The words had been allowed to pass without being weighed. Nothing beyond an innocent joke was intended."

"I daresay. It seems innocent enough to them. If you throw soot at a chimney-sweeper the joke is innocent, but very offensive when it is thrown at you."

"They are quite aware that you have ground to complain. Of course you can go on if you like. The fact that they have offered to apologise will no doubt be a point in their favour. Nevertheless you would probably get a verdict."

"We could bring the Bishop into court?"

"I think so. You have got his letter speaking of the 'metropolitan press'?"

"Oh yes."

"It is for you to think, Dr Wortle, whether there would not be a feeling against you among clergymen."

"Of course there will. Men in authority always have public sympathy with them in this country. No man more rejoices that it should be so than I do. But not the less

is it necessary that now and again a man shall make a stand in his own defence. He should never have sent me that paper."

"Here," said the lawyer, "is the apology they propose to insert if you approve of it. They will also pay my bill,—which, however, will not, I am sorry to say, be very heavy." Then the lawyer handed to the Doctor a slip of paper, on which the following words were written;—

"Our attention has been called to a notice which was made in our impression of the — ultimo on the conduct of a clergyman in the diocese of Broughton. A joke was perpetrated which, we are sorry to find, has given offence where certainly no offence was intended. We have since heard all the details of the case to which reference was made, and are able to say that the conduct of the clergyman in question has deserved neither censure nor ridicule. Actuated by the purest charity he has proved himself a sincere friend to persons in great trouble."

"They'll put in your name if you wish it," said the lawyer, "or alter it in any way you like, so that they be not made to eat too much dirt."

"I do not want them to alter it," said the Doctor, sitting thoughtfully. "Their eating dirt will do no good to me. They are nothing

to me. It is the Bishop." Then, as though he were not thinking of what he did, he tore the paper and threw the fragments down on the floor. "They are nothing to me."

"You will not accept their apology?" said the lawyer.

"Oh yes;—or rather, it is unnecessary. You may tell them that I have changed my mind, and that I will ask for no apology. As far as the paper is concerned, it will be better to let the thing die a natural death. I should never have troubled myself about the newspaper if the Bishop had not sent it to me. Indeed I had seen it before the Bishop sent it, and thought little or nothing of it. Animals will after their kind. The wasp stings, and the polecat stinks, and the lion tears its prey asunder. Such a paper as that of course follows its own bent. One would have thought that a Bishop would have done the same."

"I may tell them that the action is withdrawn."

"Certainly; certainly. Tell them also that they will oblige me by putting in no apology. And as for your bill, I would prefer to pay it myself. I will exercise no anger against them. It is not they who in truth have injured me." As he returned home he was not altogether happy, feeling that the Bishop would escape him; but he made his wife happy by telling her the decision to which he had come.

THE BAYARD OF THE EAST.

THE character of a Bayard can be appreciated in its fullest significance only by an age of chivalry. In the lips of men of our own generation the phrase at best only conveys half a compliment. The qualities which made the good knight of the days of Froissart and Monstrelet are more cheaply rated by the nineteenth century, unless backed up by attributes which we have come to regard as more solid. "*Sans peur et sans reproche*" is as noble a legend as ever was borne on a shield, yet it would produce but a moderate impression upon either the Horse Guards or the War Office. In modern warfare personal bravery has declined in value, personal recklessness is altogether at a discount; while personal action, unless it is directed along the hard and fast lines of the orders of the day, is altogether condemned. But there are times when the military machine gets out of joint or cannot be worked, and then we must look to pluck and cold steel for deciding the issue. At such times we are ready enough to applaud valour, and to reward it with Victoria Crosses or Stars of India and of the Bath; but we do not hold that these decorations carry with them a title to the more solid guerdons of staff appointments and brigade commands. But so long as war is war, whatever changes overtake the way in which it is conducted, the soldier's readiness to hazard his own life for the chance of killing his enemy, must ever be the main foundation for confidence of victory; and we cannot bring ourselves to think that army adminis-

trators would be less successful if they kept this fact more steadily before their eyes.

It is not very easy to imagine Bayard tied up by the bonds of the Queen's Regulations, and to conceive how, fettered by such encumbrances, he could have maintained his character. The necessity of perfect subordination must often war against not only the desire of personal distinction, but even the exercise of those generous and chivalrous qualities which made up the better side of medieval knighthood. To a strong-minded man it is an easier duty to hazard his life than to sacrifice his judgment to the carrying out of commands which he believes to be wrong in themselves, or which he is convinced could be more nobly and successfully carried out after his own fashion. It is only the man who can make circumstances his own, however, that may venture on such revolt. Success may compel disobedience to be condoned; failure only aggravates the original offence, however praiseworthy the intention may have been.

The career of Sir James Outram is one of the most notable instances in our own day of an independent judgment, exerted in the teeth of authority, forcing its way to recognition and high reward. His contemporaries styled him the "Bayard of the East;" and he owed the title even more to his chivalrous defiance of the authority of Government when he conceived its policy to be wrong or unsuitable, than to the dauntless courage which never failed him in the field or in the

hunting-ground. Glorious as Outram's career was, even his admiring friends would never have recommended it for general imitation. Not a man in a hundred could have exercised the same independence, and have secured the same condonation for splendid disobedience. Time after time he set aside his written instructions, and even the special orders of his superiors; and as often the Government felt compelled to own that he had done right in the main, although it was obliged to qualify its approbation by reflections upon his mode of action. Not that Outram was always right: indeed, in our rapid sketch of his history we shall have occasion to refer to not a few matters in which we conceive him to have been seriously in error; but his mistakes were those which a strong and generous nature that has spurned aside the safeguards of subordination and official routine is peculiarly liable to commit. The part which Outram played in the great events amid which his life in the East was spent, has been the turning-point of much controversy and hot political feeling, from which, even at the present day, it is difficult to wholly dis sever our judgment. And if his biographer has failed to present us with an altogether impartial estimate, he has at least illustrated the debated points in Outram's conduct with such fulness, that the reader's task in forming an opinion of his own is greatly simplified.

Believers in heredity will trace most of the marked peculiarities of Outram's character to his maternal grandfather, Dr James Anderson, a distinguished Scotch horticulturist and *savant*, a correspondent of George Washington, and the editor of the 'Bee,' the Liberal politics of which got him into trouble with the Crown officers, although he was

also the friend of Lord Melville, and an active coadjutor in that nobleman's projects for developing industries on the wild coasts and islands of Scotland. Mrs Outram was possessed of all her father's natural vigour and resolution; and when the failure of her husband's affairs, followed by his death, left her a widow with five young children, almost entirely dependent on the bounty of relatives, she faced her position "with characteristic spirit and independence," as her son's biographer justly terms it. Her own account of her visit to Lord Melville gives a better insight into this lady's character than a volume of biography could do:—

"My spirit rose, and in place of meanly supplicating his favour like a pauper soliciting charity, I addressed him like a responsible being, who had misused the power placed in his hands by employing my father's time and talents for the good of the country, and to meet his own wishes and ends, then leaving him ignobly to suffer losses he could not sustain, but which his high-toned mind would not stoop to ward off by solicitations to those who had used him so unjustly. I then stated my own situation, my dependence and involved affairs, and concluded by saying that I could not brook dependence upon friends, when I had claims on my country, by right of my father, adding, 'To you, my lord, I look for payment of these claims. If you are an honest or honourable man, you will see that they are liquidated; you were the means of their being incurred, and you ought to be answerable for them. In making this application, I feel that I am doing your lordship as great a favour as myself, by giving you an opportunity of redeeming your character from the stigma of holding out promises and not fulfilling them.' All this I stated, and much more, in strong language, which was so different from anything his lordship expected or was used to meet with, that he afterwards told me he was never so taken by surprise or got such a lecture in his life."

The heroine of this scene, with its spirit, temper, and feminine logic, might have sat to Thackeray for the portrait of Madame Esmond, the mother of the Virginians. Such a woman was likely to bring up manly boys; and from his childhood Outram showed all the boldness and resolution that marked his latter years. His mother's circumstances did not permit of her giving her family what would now pass for a good education, but he seems to have laid in a fair stock of learning at an excellent parish school in Aberdeenshire, whither his mother had gone to reside, and afterwards at an academy in the county town. His elder brother Francis, whose career in the Bombay Engineers afterwards came to so melancholy a termination, had got a nomination to Addiscombe and was preparing for India; and his uncle Archdeacon Outram seems to have recommended his sister to educate James for the Church. But for this calling the young Bayard felt no vocation. "You see that window," he said to his sister; "rather than be a parson I'm out of it, and I'll 'list for a common soldier." Fortunately, Mrs Outram had kind friends in the county, who intervened to save the lad from a career for which he had so little relish; and through Captain Gordon, the member for Aberdeenshire, he was nominated to a cadetship in the Bombay infantry, and sailed for the East in May 1819. He was then only in his sixteenth year, but the Lords of Leadenhall Street knew that boys often did them good service. It was on record that when the Directors were disposed to demur at the childish appearance of John Malcolm, to whose nature that of Outram was much akin, a spirited answer speedily removed their scruples. "Why, my little man,"

said one of the Directors to young Malcolm, as Sir John Kaye tells the story, "what would you do if you were to meet Hyder Ali?" "Do, sir?" replied Malcolm; "I would out with my sword and cut off his head;" and the Directors unanimously agreed that he would do. Like Malcolm, Outram was childish in appearance, and was, when he joined in Bombay, "the smallest staff officer in the army." He was, however, posted to the 1st Grenadier Native Infantry, but was almost immediately transferred to the 4th N.I.

There is little to record of Outram's early days as a subaltern of native infantry. Drills, duty, hog-hunting, and *munshis* made up the story of the lives of most of his class. He seems to have been a diligent soldier, for he was able in the course of a year to act as adjutant of his corps. He had his fair share of the maladies of the Deccan and Gujerat, and doubtless the usual pecuniary struggles which a subaltern has to make ends meet. The increasing thoughtfulness of his character is manifested by the regard which he began to show for his mother's circumstances, and by the plans which he laid for allowing her a portion of his income. "You used to say you were badly off," he wrote to his mother in the cold weather of 1822; "but as I had been used to poor Udney," the parish school where he had been educated, "I thought we were very comfortable at our humble home. Now when I see how many privations you had to put up with, I think you made wonderful sacrifices for your children, whose duty it is to make you as comfortable as they possibly can."

A wider career was soon to open up to Outram than the routine duties of his regiment, varied by an occasional expedition to quell

local disturbances in some of the districts which had not yet begun to take kindly to the rule of the Company. The Mahratta power had fallen in 1818, and we had entered into the inheritance of the Peishwas. The following year Mountstuart Elphinstone became Governor of Bombay; and never was a statesman better qualified by natural talents and training for introducing a foreign rule into conquered territories. Among other countries to be broken in, was the vast territory of Khandesh, lying to the south of the Sautpoora range and the Nerbudda. It is now a settled and prosperous district, paying a good revenue, and inhabited by law-abiding and industrious cultivators. But in 1825, when James Outram was sent into the country, Khandesh included some of the wildest portions of India. The deep ravines of the Sautpoora mountains, shrouded in dense forests, gave cover to a savage race, to whom the name of law was unknown, who had no avocation except the pursuit of plunder, and whom both Hindoo and Muhammadan had agreed in considering as irreclaimable to civilisation. Khandesh had been the seat of a Muhammadan kingdom established by revolted viceroys of Delhi, for two hundred years, until Akhbar, in the last year of the sixteenth century, reunited it to the empire. It had afterwards come under the dominion of the Mahratta conquerors; but neither Mussulman nor Mahratta had been able to tame the tribes of the highland country, and had been content to treat them as wild beasts, ruthlessly destroying them when caught out of their jungles, and punishing them by retributive expeditions into their fastnesses. These tribes were known by the appellation of Bhil. They were non-Aryans, and had been less

influenced by the northern immigration than any of the other Indian tribes which we are accustomed to speak of as aboriginal. The same attributes which distinguished them in Outram's days had been their characteristic in the earliest ages of Indian history. In the Mahabharata, Drona refuses to teach archery to the son of the Rajah of the Bhils, saying, "The Bhils are robbers and cattle-lifters—it would be a sin to teach them to use weapons;" and the same legend would seem to indicate that even for the use of the bow the Bhils had been indebted to their Aryan enemies. Pent in their mountain ravines, and held at enmity by all their neighbours from prehistoric times, it was no wonder though administrators considered it as a hopeless task to reduce the Bhils to order, and reclaim them from their thievish propensities. Yet this was the duty which was now prescribed to Outram. Mountstuart Elphinstone was anxious to restore Khandesh to the prosperity which it had enjoyed under Muhammadan rule; and to promote this plan, it was necessary that something should be done to keep the Bhils in order. With his usual judgment Elphinstone pitched upon the right men, though two young and comparatively untried officers, for the work which he had in view. Outram he called his "sword," and Captain Charles Ovans was to be his "plough." A fair idea of the services which he expected from each of them may be inferred from these epithets; but if Outram was to be the sword, he was speedily to prove himself a blade of the finest temper. The Scotch governor, remembering possibly the policy by which Chatham had broken in the Highlanders of his own country, intrusted Outram with the duty of raising a Bhil corps among the robber

tribes. The town of Dharangaon was to be his headquarters, and his jurisdiction extended over a vast tract of country running up into the glens of the Sautpooras, where the fiercest and most irclaimable tribes of the Bhils were harbouring. Outram at this time was only two-and-twenty; but he applied himself to his work with a zeal and wisdom which would have been creditable to an officer of double his age and experience. His first aim was to gain the confidence of the Bhils; and this he achieved by fearlessly living in their villages unattended by a guard, and by convincing them of his courage in desperate encounters with their enemy, the tiger. He had, however, to commence by hostilities, and the nucleus of the future corps was formed out of a handful of outlaws captured by his troops. "I thus effected an intercourse with some of the leading Naicks"—chieftains—"went alone with them into their jungles, gained their hearts by copious libations of brandy, and their confidence by living unguarded among them, until at last I persuaded five of the most adventurous to risk their fortunes with me, which small beginning I considered insured ultimate success."

The young Bayard was now in his element. He had a great work to do; he was not tied down by precise instructions; he had no superiors on the spot to whom to account strictly for his mode of action; his life was one of peril and adventure; and the signal success which soon attended his efforts would have stimulated even a less zealous nature to increased exertions. The doubts which the Bhils were at first disposed to feel speedily wore off. As soon as he was sure that his recruits felt confidence in himself, Outram returned their trust. He had no guards except

his Bhils; he gave them arms; he shared in their amusements; and he convinced them that obedience and good conduct would insure for them promotion and reward. They willingly took the field against the plundering bands of their own race, and in the course of four or five months he had together so respectable a corps that he felt no shame in marching them into the Maligaon to take their place beside his own regiment of the native line. The reception which the Bhils met with from the Bombay Sepoys at once crowned Outram's efforts with success. The Sepoy had always been looked upon by the Bhil as his natural enemy. There were the great barriers of caste and no-caste between the two, and their natural repugnance must have been equal. But discipline kept the Sepoy's prejudices in check, and he surprised the Bhil by meeting him on the footing of a fellow-soldier. "Not only were the Bhils received by the men without insulting scoffs," says Outram, "but they were even received as friends, and with the greatest kindness invited to sit among them, fed by them, and talked to by high and low. . . . The Bhils returned quite delighted and flattered by their reception, and entreated me to allow them no rest from drill until they became equal to their brother-soldiers!" Let those who undervalue the ends which English influence is working out in India think how much was implied in such a meeting. For the first time since the days of Mahabharata, some two or three and twenty centuries back, the Bhils had been received on a footing of equality by their fellow-creatures, treated as men, and not as vermin of the jungle. It was not much wonder though they were deeply impressed, and that when

Outram went back to Dharangaon he had no want of recruits for his corps.

From 1825 to 1835 Outram was employed among the Bhils; and the country, as well as the people, underwent a marked change under his rule. Raids from the Saut-pooras became more rare, for the outlaws were speedily made to understand that when Outram and his Bhils got on their trail no hiding-place was too remote, no jungle too dense, to save them from capture. Although only a lieutenant in the army, and seven-and-twenty years of age, he found himself in 1830 commander-in-chief of a force some fifteen hundred strong, with which he subdued the lawless tribes of the Dang country, and earned the special thanks of Government. He opened schools for the children of his Bhil soldiers; and in spite of the contempt which not a few felt for this attempt to educate a race that had ever been ignorant of reading and writing, the experiment was fairly successful, and had at all events the good effect of raising the Bhil in his own self-respect. Amid all this ruling, educating, and fighting, Outram contrived to distinguish himself among the tigers in the Khandesh jungles; and it is probable that the dauntlessness with which he sought out and encountered the fiercest man-eating tigers, raised him more in the estimation of the Bhils than all his other exploits. His game-bag for the ten years of his sojourn among the Bhils will raise a sigh of envy among sportsmen of the present day:—

“From 1825 to 1834 inclusive, he himself and associates in the chase killed no fewer than 235 tigers, wounding 22 others; 25 bears, wounding 14; 12 buffaloes, wounding 5; and killed also 16 panthers or leopards. Of this grand total of 329 wild ani-

mals, 44 tigers and one panther or leopard were killed during his absence by gentlemen of the Khandesh hunt; but Outram was actually present at the death of 191 tigers, 15 panthers or leopards, 25 bears, and 12 buffaloes.”

His lieutenant, Douglas Graham, who was as entertaining a writer as he was a bold shot, has recorded many remarkable adventures which we would gladly repeat if our space allowed. We must, however, content ourselves with one anecdote which Captain Stanley Scott, in recent times, found still fresh in the memory of the Bhils.

“In April or May 1825, news having been brought in by his *shikari*, China, that a tiger had been seen on the side of the hill under the Mussulman temple among some prickly-pear shrubs, Lieutenant Outram and another sportsman proceeded to the spot. Outram went on foot, and his companion on horseback. Searching through the bushes, when close on the animal, Outram's friend fired and missed, on which the tiger sprang forward roaring, seized Outram, and they rolled down the side of the hill together. Being released from the claws of the ferocious beast for a moment, Outram, with great presence of mind, drew a pistol he had with him, and shot the tiger dead. The Bhils, on seeing that he had been injured, were one and all loud in their grief and expressions of regret; but Outram quieted them with the remark, ‘What do I care for the clawing of a cat!’ This speech was rife among the Bhils for many years afterwards, and may be so until this day.”

These ten years among the Bhils were the making of Outram. They matured his courage, taught him self-reliance—a lesson which he was ever too apt to learn—afforded him an experience in command which he could never have acquired in his regiment, and brought his capacity and talent prominently before the Bombay Government. Both Mount-stuart Elphinstone and Sir John

Malcolm could fully appreciate the difficulties with which Outram had to contend, and both were well content that he should be left to take his own way. It was when thus freed from official leading-strings that Outram was sure to do his work best. By the time he left Khandesh, although only thirty-two years of age, he had made a reputation for ability that was recognised far beyond his own Presidency; and he left such memories of himself among the Bhils as Cleveland had left among the Kols, or Macpherson among the Khonds, or John Nicholson among the wild clans of the Peshawur border. To Outram as well as to these latter officers divine honours were paid after his departure. "A few years ago some of his old Sepoys happened to light upon an ugly little image. Tracing in it a fancied resemblance to their old commandant, they forthwith set it up and worshipped it as 'Outram Sahib.'"

When the time came for Outram to take leave of the Bhils, he found a governor ruling in Bombay who was not the most likely man to appreciate his special gifts and turn them to the best account. Sir Robert Grant was a well-meaning but weak governor, more anxious to earn a character as a philanthropic administrator than to take the steps which were necessary to enforce order in the outlying parts of his Presidency. When Outram was sent to the Mahi Kanta, a native State in Gujerat, he did not hesitate to cavil with his instructions, and to bluntly tell the Government that they did not go far enough. But though rebuked for his frankness, Outram was not deterred from taking his own way; and the Bombay Government was sorely exercised in finding language which would at once congratulate

him on the success he had achieved, and condemn the mode in which he had acted. We need not go into details of these Mahi Kanta troubles, which have no interest for us except so far as they illustrate Outram's predilection for modifying his orders to suit his own views, which were certainly always conceived in the higher interests of the State and of the people with whom he was concerned. His spirited conduct in the Mahi Kanta earned the commendation of the Court of Directors; but this also was qualified by a reminder that they were not "forgetful of the fact that on several occasions he had shown a disposition to act in a more peremptory manner, and to resort sooner to measures of military coercion, than the Bombay Government had approved." Outram was not the man to bear such a remark in silence, and he drew up a memorandum in vindication of his career, which the Bombay Government answered by soothing encomiums. He was too good an officer for Government to lightly quarrel with, and his consciousness of his own powers enabled him to address the Secretariat in a tone which would have insured certain suspension in the case of any less qualified officer. But it is important to note that, even at this early period of his career, he had begun to indulge in those contests with Government which, more or less all his life through, retarded his advancement and interfered with the disposition of his superiors to employ him on service worthy of his abilities.

In the interval between his employment among the Bhils and his mission to the Mahi Kanta, Outram had married; and the union, in spite of many separations arising from his wife's ill health and his own absences on duty, was in every

way calculated to promote his happiness. But sickness compelled Mrs Outram and her infant son to return to England in 1837; and Outram himself had then purposed to take leave and follow her in 1840. But meantime the Affghan war had broken out, and Outram was among the first to send in his name as a volunteer.

Sir John Keane, commanding the Bombay column, appointed him an extra aide-de-camp; and Outram accepted the appointment, apparently more because it would give him admission into the campaign, when he would be able to find other opportunities of making himself useful, than that he cared much for a place in the general's household. Outram's peculiar talents soon found adequate employment in his new position. The position of the Talpur Ameers of Sind, lying across the line of communications of the Bombay column, rendered it necessary that an understanding should be come to with them. Outram and Lieutenant Eastwick were despatched to Haid-erabad to obtain the Ameers' acceptance of a draft treaty prepared by Colonel Pottinger, the Resident; and this mission was the commencement of that intercourse with the Talpur families which subsequently ripened to a warm friendship, and which brought so much trouble and worry upon Outram's after-career. On this occasion his mission was unsuccessful, and it required a demonstration from the north to make the Ameers listen to reason. Shortly after, Outram was sent on to Shikarpur, where the king, Shah Sujah-ul-Mulk, and Mr MacNaghten, the Envoy, then were, to arrange about the commissariat and transport for the advance of the Bombay column. The success with which Outram accomplished this mission marked him out as the

most suitable officer for keeping up communication between Sir John Keane and the Envoy's headquarters; and into this work—involving, as it did, long and dangerous rides through wild passes and unfriendly tribes, perils from ambush and from mutinous escorts, fatigue, and scanty fare—Outram threw himself with all his heart. The employment carried with it the valued advantage that it took him to the scene of action whenever anything of importance was going on. On one occasion he was severely hurt by a fall from his horse; but instead of lying up until recovery, he travelled with the column in a palanquin. At the storming of Ghuzni—from the official accounts of which Outram's name was omitted, probably from the provincial jealousy which characterised the Bengal and Bombay armies so strongly in the first Affghan wars—Outram was present, and had distinguished himself by a gallant exploit on the eve of the battle with a small party of the Shah's contingent, capturing the holy banner of white and green, and routing a strong party of the Affghans. But his great exploit in the Affghan campaign was his pursuit of Dost Mohammed, which, though it failed to capture the Ameer, was a feat of *derring-do* which the earlier Bayard might have been proud to number among his enterprises. On the fall of Ghuzni, Dost Mohammed made for Bamian, with the evident intention of falling back upon Balkh, then as now the natural refuge of every discomfited pretender to the Affghan throne. A flying force of 2000 Affghans and 100 of our own cavalry, the whole under the command of Outram, were to endeavour to hunt down the flying Ameer; and a number of young officers, most of whom were destined to attain after-distinction in the service, volun-

teered to accompany him. There was Wheeler of the Bengal cavalry, Colin Troup, Christie, George Lawrence, Broadfoot, Keith Erskine, and others; and Bayard could not have wished for a braver following. The hopes founded on Affghan assistance were delusive. The cavalry supplied by the Shah were a badly-mounted rabble. The guide, an old melon seller, who had risen to high rank by changing sides in the Affghan troubles, was utterly untrustworthy. He wished to follow the trail of the Ameer, while Outram's desire was to make his way across the hills and intercept his flight. The native guide, however, contrived to lead them by such routes as would waste time and give the Ameer an opportunity of getting beyond the Paropamisus. At every halting-place the native forces were falling off; and when they came within a day's march of "the Dost," as Sir Francis Goldsmid designates the Ameer, he had barely fifty Affghans to support him, and his supplies were exhausted.

"But Hajji Khan urged a halt, on the plea that the force at their disposal was insufficient to cope with the enemy. Outram insisted on moving, and managed in the course of the afternoon to get together some 750 Affghans of sorts, whom he induced to accompany his own particular party. Through accident or design, the guides went astray, and in the darkness of the night the way was lost 'amid interminable ravines, where no trace of a footstep existed;' so that Yort was not reached until next morning, when Dost Mohammed was reported to be at Kharzár, sixteen miles distant on the highroad leading from Cabul to Bamian. No inducement could get the Affghans to advance another stage until the morning of the following day, August 7th; and in the interim their leader attempted by every available means, and including even threats, to dissuade Outram from proceeding any further, strongly representing the

scarcity of provisions for his men, and the numerical superiority of those whom he sought to encounter. He was unable, however, to carry his point; for he pleaded to one who went onward in spite of every obstacle. When the pursuers arrived at Kharzár they ascertained that the Ameer had gone to Kalu, whither, leaving behind their Affghan adviser, they pressed on the same afternoon, over the Hajji Guk (or Khak), a pass 12,000 feet above the ocean, whence they saw the snow 1500 feet below them. At Kalu they were again doomed to disappointment. Dost Mohammed had left some hours previously, and it was supposed that he had already surmounted the Kalu Pass, the highest of the Hindu Kush. Here Outram and his comrades were compelled to remain the night, encamped at the foot of Kuh-i-Baba, the 'Father Mountain,' monarch of that mighty range, and 22,000 feet high: they had been nine hours in the saddle, and horses and men were knocked up. The next day they were overtaken by Captains Taylor and Trevor, with 30 troopers and about 300 Affghans,—which reinforcement, though it seems to have inspired Hajji Khan with courage to rejoin his headquarters, did not a whit diminish his ardour in endeavouring to persuade the British commandant to delay the pursuit. He tried, by entreaty, menace, and withholding guides, to keep back this dauntless soldier, even when mounting his horse and in the act of departure; but in vain: before nightfall Outram had crossed the steep Shutargardan (camel-neck), a pass some thousands of feet higher than the Hajji Guk, and after dark he halted at a deserted village at the foot of the Ghat, . . . on the banks of a stream which flows into the Oxus. Briefly, after six days' hard riding and roughing he reached Bamian, to miss again the object of his search, and to certify that with such a guide and in such a country, it would be madness to continue the chase."

Fruitless as this expedition was, it was one of the most gallant achievements in the whole of the first Affghan war; and the fact that an officer of Outram's stand-

ing should have been chosen to lead it, showed that his native aptitude for such enterprises had already been recognised by the military authorities and by the Envoy, the latter of whom, in spite of differences of opinion as to the policy which they were engaged in carrying out, was anxious to procure Outram's transfer to the political department. He was, however, next sent to reduce the Ghilzai country—a duty which he performed with characteristic energy and success, capturing their leaders and dismantling or blowing up their forts. He took part in General Willshire's capture of Kelat, where he so specially distinguished himself as to be selected to carry the despatch to the Bombay Government—a hazardous duty, as the general desired him to return to India by the direct route to Sonmiani Bundar, and report upon its practicability for the passage of troops. Disguised as an Afghan, accompanied by one servant and guided by two Syuds, Outram made his way by Nal to Sonmiani, a distance of 355 miles, in eight days, supporting the character of a Pir or holy man on the road with much skill; and he astonished his brother-in-law, General Farquharson, by bursting into his quarters at Kurrachee in Afghan costume, armed with sword and shield. He learned afterwards that the Chief of Wadd had been made acquainted with his journey, and had followed him hot-foot down through the passes to Sonmiani, with a view to intercept and slay him.

The immediate reward of Outram's Afghan services was the political agency of Lower Sind, in succession to Colonel Pottinger, although the appointment was shorn of the title of Resident, by which the latter officer had been

distinguished. Outram had scruples about this change, but Sind presented a field for a man of action which he could not fail to appreciate. Afghanistan was far from settled, and Sind must be the basis of all operations in the southern part of the country as well as in Beluchistan. The condition of the Talpur Ameers was then growing more and more critical; and though Outram was by no means well calculated to practise the diplomacy which the Government of India was disposed to exercise in their case, he was yet alive to the prospects of distinction which the situation in Sind presented. He was never a "political" in the successful sense of the term. He drew a somewhat fanciful distinction between his obligations in civil and military employ, which was a prolific source of embarrassment to him in the former capacity. He entertained the idea that while the soldier ought to yield unquestioning obedience to the orders of his superiors, the political officer might be permitted the greater latitude of accommodating the policy of Government to the dictates of his own conscience. Such feelings were to Outram's credit as a man, but they naturally detracted from his utility as an agent of Government, and laid the foundation of the painful controversy regarding the annexation of Sind in which he subsequently became involved, and which for many years cast a heavy cloud over his life. We cannot now go into the details of this unprofitable discussion. Of the necessity for annexing Sind we do not entertain a doubt, and the prosperity which British rule has brought to that province must more than condone the irregularity of the steps which Lord Ellenborough and Sir Charles Napier took against the Ameers. Outram seems to have

exaggerated in his own mind the obligations which he conceived himself to be under to the Talpur dynasty. He was present at the death of Nur Muhammad Khan, and had solemnly accepted the guardianship of his children; and he seems to have considered that this pledge affected his personal honour as well as his political capacity. At the same time Outram, in the exercise of his political agency, displayed an independence of the Supreme Government which naturally drew down upon him Lord Ellenborough's displeasure. That nobleman was unpopular with all branches of the service; he was constantly finding his orders thwarted by the personal views of the officers who ought to have carried them out; and we cannot wonder at his feeling that so prominent a case as that of Outram required to be made an example, in spite of the hard work and brilliant services which the Governor-General readily acknowledged. The political agent took the extreme step of maintaining Lieutenant Hammersley in his post at Quetta, "on the plea of urgent requirements," after that officer had been remanded to his regiment, in consequence of the displeasure of the Supreme Government; and though the motives which actuated Outram were generous to Quixotry, he himself was conscious of the risk which he was incurring. "See this correspondence about Hammersley," he writes to the Secretary of the Bombay Government, "which, I take, will end in his lordship sending me to my regiment." With an officer who thus takes his own way with his eyes open, we cannot sympathise very much when his worst anticipations are realised. The first punishment that befell him was the appointment of General Nott to the chief political as well as military

power in Lower Afghanistan, Sind, and Beluchistan, which interposed that officer between himself and the Supreme Government. Outram felt the slight, but it was characteristic of his generous nature that he was resolutely resolved that his sore feelings on this point should not be allowed to affect his zeal in co-operating with his new superior. But Outram threw too much personal feeling into the affairs amid which he was moving to be a desirable assistant in a course of policy so tortuous as that which Lord Ellenborough was forced by circumstances to follow. He was friendly to the Sind Ameers, and he obstinately shut his eyes to their hostile disposition, which was obvious to Lord Ellenborough's Government. He had a great liking for the young Khan of Kelat, whom he had personally been the means of bringing into the British alliance; and he restored to him the territory of Shawl almost on his own responsibility, and certainly with a precipitation that could not but be displeasing, and might well have been embarrassing, to the Supreme Government. On the whole, we cannot say that Lord Ellenborough was altogether to blame because, on the arrival of Sir Charles Napier to assume the chief military and political power in Sind, he took the opportunity of sending Major Outram back for a season to his regiment. The comparison between the reputations of Outram and Lord Ellenborough has naturally made their dissensions reflect to the disadvantage of the latter; but a dispassionate review of Outram's proceedings in the Sind agency will convince any impartial judge that he took more upon him than his subordinate position warranted; and that unless the Governor-General was prepared to have his policy dictated by his political

officers, he had no alternative except to remove so wilful a diplomatist to a field of action where his temperament would be less liable to bring him into collision with the dominant policy. In the estimation of many competent Anglo-Indian politicians, it might have been well for Lord Ellenborough had he followed Outram's counsels. On this we offer no opinion. We simply maintain that the Governor-General, holding the views which he did, was perfectly justified in removing Outram for following the course which he had chosen.

By this time Outram's character was thoroughly established in the eyes of all India. His bravery, his zeal, and his capacity as a leader, had been demonstrated beyond question in the Cabul campaign; and his chivalrous loyalty to his friends, his modesty of his own exploits, and his hatred of untruth, had come forcibly before the public in the course of his contests with the Supreme Government. It is probable that the independence which he displayed did much to enhance his popularity; for Lord Ellenborough's Government was generally disliked, and opposition to it was accounted a cardinal virtue both in the services and among non-officials. When, therefore, at the farewell dinner given to Outram on his departure from Sind, Sir Charles Napier proposed his health as the "Bayard of India, *sans peur et sans reproche*," the epithet was adopted by acclamation throughout the country; and the compliment had no small influence on Outram's after-career. The Government too, although it could not help regarding him as an impracticable political, was yet fully convinced of his capacity for doing it excellent service, and had no intention of shelving him for good in his native infantry regiment; nor was he long destined

to be absent from the scene of his former labours. Just as he was preparing to sail for England on leave at the end of 1842, Sir Charles Napier desired his services as commissioner for arranging the details of the revised treaty with the Talpur Ameers; and the Supreme Government acceded to the request. Outram was disposed to quarrel with the curt way in which his appointment was communicated, but his desire to be back in Sind was stronger than his feeling of resentment. In the events which followed, the position of Outram freed him from all ulterior responsibility for the measures which were ultimately taken. The treachery of the Ameers put an end to his functions as a negotiator, and would have sacrificed his life but for his gallant defence of the Haiderabad Residency. This, however, does not seem to have alienated Outram's sympathies from the Talpur family, or to have relieved his conscience of what he considered due to his pledge to Nur Muhammad. The course of events is very succinctly and justly summed up in a letter from Lord Ellenborough to the Queen, which we prefer to quote, as giving the reader a more correct account of the principles upon which Sind was annexed than either Outram's letters or his biographer's comments:—

"The new treaty proposed to the Ameers, justified by their violation of the existing treaty and by various acts of intended hostility, would have given to the British Government in India practical command over the Lower Indus. Between acquiring that command and retiring at once from the Indus there was no safe course. The retirement, following upon the withdrawal of the armies from Cabul, would have given credit to the misrepresentations studiously circulated with respect to the circumstances un-

der which that withdrawal took place ; and it would have had the necessary consequence of leading to the violation in all its details of the commercial treaty which secured the free navigation of the Indus.

"The position in which the Government of India would have stood had the new treaty been acceded to, and at first faithfully carried out, would not have been without its embarrassments. It could not be expected that the Ameers would have at all times quietly submitted to provisions they had accepted with reluctance, and war would have been forced upon us hereafter at an inconvenient moment.

"It cannot be regretted, therefore, that the treachery of the Ameers should have obliged the British Government to take at once a more decided course, and to establish its own authority in all such parts of Scinde as it may be desirable to hold in our hands.

"To attempt to enter into terms with the defeated Ameers would have been an act of weakness and self-destruction. No faith could be expected from them ; and even if they were disposed to adhere to their engagements, the barbarous violence of their followers would not permit them to do so. There appeared to be no advisable course of policy but that of at once taking possession of the country which had been thus thrown into our hand, and so using our power as to make our conquest beneficial to the people."*

Whatever view may be taken of the conquest of Sind, it is much to be regretted that Outram should have plunged into controversy upon the subject. His own share in the troubles of Sind had never been seriously reflected upon, and his reiterated vindications of his own conduct were even more uncalled for than his criminations of the officers more immediately connected with the annexation. Of his quarrel with Sir Charles Napier, Outram's biographer wisely says very

little. Both were hot-tempered, outspoken men, alike too ready to seize the pen when their feelings were warm ; and the only conclusion that we could come to from an investigation of their quarrel would be, that there were right and wrong on both sides, and that, if Outram's course was the more generous, Sir Charles Napier's was the more statesmanlike.

We must hurry over the succeeding years of Outram's life, nor linger over the testimonials to his merits which poured from all quarters—a sword worth 300 guineas from the people of the Bombay Presidency, a gold medal from the Pope, and a Bible and Prayer-book from the Bishop of Bombay, who felt himself debarred from contributing to the more warlike present. He visited England a Lieutenant-Colonel and a C.B. in 1843, and plunged into the thick of the Sind controversy which was then raging fiercely in Parliament and at Leadenhall Street. But the time had passed for altering the Sind policy, and all that Outram could do was to widen the breach between himself and Lord Ellenborough's party. Naturally, on his return to India, the Government showed no disposition to provide him with an appointment adequate to his services and merit. The only post offered him was the Nimar agency in Central India, the salary of which was inferior to what he had drawn in the Mahi Kanta ; and the duties were merely of a routine character. The disturbances in the Southern Mahratta country breaking out soon after, found him active employment again ; and he served in a half-military, half-political capacity in the Kolapore and Sawant Wari States, doing brilliant service in the attacks upon the insurgents' forts, and, it

* The Indian Administration of Lord Ellenborough. Edited by Lord Colchester. Pp. 70-72.

must be owned, incurring frequent expostulations from the Government for the very free interpretation which he frequently put upon its instructions.

In 1845 we find Outram filling the post of Resident of Satara, an easy but not over-lucrative appointment. Although a Lieutenant-Colonel and a Companion of the Bath, Outram's substantive rank in the army was still only that of Captain, and his pay suffered in consequence. But though not free from the pinchings of poverty, he scornfully refused to touch an anna of the Rs. 29,941 (nearly £3000) which came to him as his share of the Sind prize-money. Bayard would not participate in what he looked upon as plunder, and would have restored his portion to the son of his old friend, the Ameer Nur Muhammad, who had been committed to his charge. But there were obstacles in the way of such benevolence, and Outram got rid of the money by dividing it among the military and missionary institutions for the education of European children. He would fain have taken part in the exciting events that soon took place in the Punjab, but the Bombay Government refused to spare him. The Residency of Baroda, then the great prize in the Bombay political department, was soon to fall vacant, and the reversion of this post was Outram's by right of natural selection; and accordingly, in May 1847, he was gazetted to his new appointment.

It might have been thought that by this time Outram's Quixotic feelings would have been well tamed down by the varied experiences through which he had passed, and the troubles which he had brought upon himself by breaking through the bonds of routine. He was now in middle life, with matured experience, and with a reputation which gave him a firm

ho'd of the ladder leading to the highest prizes in the Company's service. It was his interest to avoid further sources of unpleasantness with his Government and with the Board of Directors. But while Outram was as yet beholding Baroda only from a distance, he had already planned out a work for which he had every reason to know his Government would give him scanty thanks. In Baroda, as in almost every other native State, there reigned the demon of *Khatpat*, which presides over bribery, corruption, the malversation of justice, and official oppression generally; but there was this difference, that *Khatpat* had a stronger hold on Baroda than on any other native State of the day. Outram had long eyed the evil from afar, as if he fain would grapple with it; and even when in the Mahi Kanta, he had made use of his limited opportunities to denounce the system. On his arrival at Baroda he threw himself into the work of beating down corruption wherever he could detect it, and the consequence was that he soon had the whole State in a ferment. The Government and the Board of Directors knew as well as Outram the corrupt condition of the Gaikwar's court and administration; but they knew also that to strike at the root of the evil they would have to strike at the Gaikwar himself, and the time had not yet arrived when so extreme a measure could be ventured upon. The Resident had plenty of hints to be moderate in the measures which he was taking to unearth and hunt down corruption; but he was too high-minded to allow prudential advice to stand between him and what he saw to be the clear line of his duty, or to lend his official assistance to gloss over evils which were discreditably to the honour of British rule. Revelation after revelation of the grossest cor-

ruption in the palace, in the Residency, in every department of the Gaikwar's administration, aroused the public mind, both in India and in England, to the Baroda abuses; and the Court of Directors could no longer stifle the subject. Investigations were ordered, and the results did not always bear out the statements of the Resident. He had, of course, perjury and falsehood to contend with at every step; and there is little doubt that his warm temperament had led him to entertain extreme views of the corruption with which he was warring, and of the cases which he had championed. In December 1851, the Bombay Government, at the head of which Viscount Falkland then was, found it impossible to maintain Outram longer at Baroda without committing itself to the extreme measures which would have been the natural action to have taken upon his reports; and a letter was sent to him announcing its resolution to remove him, but leaving it to him "to withdraw in the manner least offensive to his own feelings, and least calculated to embarrass Government or affect their amicable relations with H.H. the Gaikwar." The Court of Directors wrote even more harshly of his proceedings; and although a large number of its members sympathised with Outram's aims, a despatch was sent out strongly condemnatory of the tone of Outram's reports and of the character of his proceedings. The subject was ventilated in Parliament with very little result, and two huge blue-books were laid before the Houses, which had but little influence on public opinion. People generally felt that the course taken by Outram had been a noble and disinterested one, and that if he had sinned at all, he had sinned from excess of zeal on behalf of the honour of his Government. His time, thus placed

at his own disposal, was employed in revisiting England; but it was fated that his holidays at home were always to be marred by his Indian quarrels. He persisted in fighting the battle of Baroda corruption in England with but little expectation of obtaining so unanimous a verdict in his favour as might compel the Court of Directors to reverse its harsh sentence. But when the time came for him to return to India, the Court addressed a despatch to Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General, expressing a hope that, as there was no position under the Bombay Government equal in importance to the one from which Outram had been removed, his claims to employment under the Supreme Government might be favourably considered. Meanwhile the troubles in the East which ended in the Crimean war had broken out, and the Foreign Office was disposed to take advantage of Outram's services; but Lord Stratford de Redcliffe could hold out no immediate prospect of employment, and so he went on his way to Calcutta. He was now fortunate enough to meet with a chief who could appreciate his peculiar disposition and utilise his powers; and as soon as the transfer of the Baroda Residency from the Bombay to the Supreme Government was completed, Outram was replaced in his old appointment. At Baroda he had the satisfaction of removing from office some of the worst of his old antagonists, and his conduct called forth the warm approbation of the Governor-General. Had he been backed by a ruler like Lord Dalhousie during the eventful years of his first residence at Baroda, there can be no question but that he would have been able to purge the Gaikwar's Court, and have earned commendation instead of rebuke for his exertions. "The mingled sternness and consideration with which you

have treated the Gaikwar," wrote the Governor-General, "will, I hope, have a lasting effect upon the Gaikwar himself, and will teach both him and those about him that, while the Supreme Government is desirous of upholding him, it must be obeyed in all things. . . . You must accept my personal congratulations and thanks in regard to the complete success of your return to Baroda."

Lord Dalhousie's aim in sending Outram back to Baroda had, however, rather been a generous desire that he might have an opportunity of removing the effects which the harsh judgment of the Bombay Government and the Court of Directors had produced, and that the Gaikwar might be shown that the Supreme Government was not disposed to put up with the corruption which had unhappily characterised his administration, than that he had any intention of continuing Outram in the post. To have maintained him longer than this end was accomplished, would not have been in accordance with the principles upon which the feudatory policy of the Indian Government is conducted; and accordingly, when the Residency and command at Aden fell vacant, Outram was selected to fill it. The short period which he occupied this office, coupled with his shattered health, did not admit of his leaving his impress upon this ungenial station, but it gave him an insight into Arabian affairs which was subsequently useful in his Persian command. He gladly received Lord Dalhousie's summons to take up the Residency at Lucknow from Colonel Sleeman, who was retiring at the close of a long, useful, and honourable career. Here Outram was destined to take part in the crowning acts of Lord Dalhousie's Indian administration, upon which history never has been, and never will be, able to adopt a

unanimous opinion. Had any possibility remained of preserving Oudh as an independent State, by a vigorous exercise of the influence which the Company's Government were entitled to exert by treaty, by a vigorous application of the knife to the corruptions of the Lucknow Court, and by the entire remodelling of the administration of the kingdom, Outram was of all others the man to carry such a work to a successful termination. But the Government had come to the conclusion upon very sufficient grounds that the Court of Oudh was past the aid of political surgery, and Outram was called in to kill and not to cure. By the time that he was sent to Lucknow annexation may be looked upon as having become a foregone conclusion, and it cannot be said to have been a part of his mission to deal with reform. But no fitter man could have been found to hold the helm while so important a revolution was being effected, and of this Lord Dalhousie was well aware. Had his duty lain in a different direction, we can scarcely suppose that Outram would have succeeded any better than Low and Sleeman had done. But his presence in Oudh unquestionably maintained peace while the arrangements of the annexation were being effected, and postponed for eighteen months the outbreak which was destined to put an end to the Company's Government in its turn. From a Calcutta newspaper of the day we get an interesting glimpse of Outram's personal appearance as he made his splendid entrance into Lucknow. "Everybody was delighted to see the Colonel looking so well, and many an anxious glance was turned to behold the Bayard of India. He is a small man, with dark hair and moustache, and the eyes of a falcon, with gentleman and soldier stamped in every feature." In addition to

his previous honours, his services in Oudh brought him a civil K.C.B. at the same time that a similar decoration was conferred on John Lawrence for his services in the Punjab. To Outram this honour was enhanced by the farewell letter from Point de Galle, in which his retiring chief announced the distinction. "It is some comfort to me for other mortifications," wrote Lord Dalhousie, "that I am able, by the Gazette which I found here, to hail you as Sir James Outram before I cease to sail under the Company's flag. . . . As long as I live I shall remember with genuine pleasure our official connection, and shall hope to retain your personal friendship. A letter now and then when you can find time would be a great gratification to me." The strain of his duties in Oudh told severely upon a constitution already shattered by hard service and climate, and Outram had again to take leave to England in the hot weather of 1856. He had learned wisdom from previous experience, and kept aloof as much as possible from the discussions of the India House. He had risen greatly in the estimation of the Directors since his late successes in Baroda and Oudh, and might calculate upon the best things the Court had to bestow. But his health was still in an unsatisfactory condition, and he seems for some time to have been doubtful whether he would again be able to return to the East. His cure, however, is said to have been effected in this fashion:—

"On the determination of the Government to declare war against Persia, Colonel Sykes, then an East Indian Director, went to Outram, who was lying ill at Brighton. 'I am glad to see

you,' said the sick man, 'for it may be the last time.' 'I am sorry for that,' said the Colonel, 'for I had come to tell you that we had decided to offer you the command of the expedition against Persia.' 'What! Persia?' exclaimed Outram; 'I'll go to-morrow.'"

The anecdote is at least *ben trovato*; and Outram's ailments were certainly soon forgotten in the bustle of preparations for taking up his command. The story of Outram's Persian campaign has been already told at length in the columns of this Magazine by one of his brave companions, and we must refer the reader to that paper* for a just and succinct summary. He was preceded in the field by General Stalker, who had carried Bushire and destroyed the magazine at Chahkota before his chief could arrive. Outram's biographer gives us to understand that the General was anxious that his old friend should have the credit of reducing Bushire before he himself appeared on the field. The other magazine, Borasjun, awaited Outram's arrival. His march against this village resulted in the cavalry and artillery battle of Kooshab, at the commencement of which Outram was stunned by a fall from his horse, when his place was ably supplied by Colonel Lugard, his chief of the staff, until, as he says in a letter to the Governor-General, "the noise of the commencement of the contest brought me to my senses." Havelock, whose name was destined to be coupled with that of Outram in a still more memorable campaign, joined the force with his division in the middle of February; and the attack was then carried out upon Mohummra, which Outram had resolved to make from the time

* 'Blackwood's Magazine,' vol. xc., September 1861—"The Persian War of 1856-57," by the late Lieutenant-General J. A. Ballard, C.B., whose lamented death, within the present year, deprived the Royal (Bombay) Engineers of one of their ablest and most cultured officers.

that he assumed the command. This strong position, which was situated on a branch of the Shatel-Arab, was attacked by steamers and sloops of war; and the only argument that could prevent Outram from exposing himself in the leading ship, was the plea that his presence might deprive the Commodore and the Indian navy of their due share of credit. The Scindian in which he sailed came, however, under heavy fire, and a musket-ball was prevented from striking his foot by a *hookah* which fortunately happened to be in the way. Although the Persians numbered nearly four to one, the batteries were carried, and their force entirely routed, with a very trifling loss on our side. The Persians halted at Ahwaz, a town a hundred miles up the Karun river, whence a force under Captain Hunt of the 78th Highlanders quickly dislodged them. Outram himself, writing in testimony of the gallantry of his troops on this occasion, says :—

“A more daring feat is not on record, perhaps, than that of a party of 300 infantry, backed by three small river boats, following up an army of 8000 men, braving it by opening fire and deliberately landing and destroying the men, magazines, and capturing one of his guns in face of his entire army, and actually compelling that army to fly before them, and occupying for three whole days the position they had compelled the enemy to vacate !”

This daring feat, at which Outram was as much elated as if it had been carried out by himself, really closed the Persian war. The news of peace reached the General along with the intelligence of the success at Ahwaz. Victorious as we had been, the war had closed for us not a minute too soon, for the elements of mutiny were already making their appearance in Northern India, and the time was at hand when only the presence of such men as Outram in

their own provinces could save British rule in the East from extinction.

Outram returned in all haste to Bombay on the summons of Government. He was covered with fresh honours, and now wore the Grand Cross of the Bath; but we may readily believe that the tidings which reached him before sailing from Bushire, of the narrow escape of his wife and son from the mutineers at Allyghur, was a more heartfelt source of congratulation; but he was still on “the tenter-hooks” to hear if they continued in safety at Agra.

We now come to that portion of Outram’s career which it would be needless to recapitulate in detail. His name, with those of Lord Clyde and Havelock, occupies the central point of the history of the Sepoy war; and if his services met with a less meed than befell those of his distinguished chief, we are to remember that Outram enjoyed even the greater honour of having sacrificed his own chances to swell the glory of Havelock. But looking back to the whole campaign, from the day that he took up his command at Dinapore down to the final capture of Lucknow, it will be readily admitted that no single officer contributed more to the suppression of the Mutiny than Sir James Outram. He brought to the task all the qualities of an experienced and successful general; his personal daring warmed into enthusiasm all the troops with whom he came in contact; while his native energy successfully battled against the overwhelming difficulties by which he was surrounded. With marvellous celerity he put Behar in a position of safety, and pushed on to assist Havelock in the relief of the beleaguered garrison of Lucknow. In those days he was as hot for vengeance as Neill himself, though his views subsequently veered to

the other extreme. "Proclaim at Cawnpore," he writes to Havelock on his march up, "that for every Christian woman and child maltreated at Lucknow an Oudh noble shall be hanged." He had already informed Havelock that he did not design to deprive him of the glory of relieving the Residency, but would join him in his capacity of Chief Commissioner and serve as a volunteer. It was not once or even twice that Outram had made similar sacrifices for the sake of his brothers-in-arms, but this splendid instance of self-denial eclipsed all the others. The episode has been worthily chosen for the central device of the magnificent shield presented to him by his own Presidency.

The meeting between Havelock and Outram took place on the morning of September 15th, and the first charge of the latter was to demit his rights as senior officer. The Governor-General had heard of the proposal, and expressed himself "in the warmest terms of admiration." We cannot say, however, that the necessary division of responsibility and of views was not without its disadvantages; but this arose more from the nature of things than from any wish that Outram had to influence the other General. As the chief of the volunteer cavalry Outram was in his element, and he led the charge at Mangalwar, which materially aided Havelock in making good his position after crossing the Ganges, with a stout cudgel in his hand. On the advance from the Alum Bagh, his knowledge of Lucknow "mainly, if not solely, enabled the column to thread its way through the streets, especially intricate near the Residency. The final attack had not been ventured on without differences of opinion between the Generals, but Outram gallantly did

his best to contribute to the success of the day. Outram would have halted at the Chattar Munzil when night fell, but Havelock was impatient to carry the goal; and the other would not balk him."

"Onward went the gallant and devoted band—Highlanders and Sikhs—with Havelock and Outram at their head. Neill and the Madras Fusiliers followed, charging through a very tempest of fire. The Baillie Guard was reached, the garrison was saved; but the cost was heavy. Neill fell like a true soldier, shot through the head; while of the entire force of about 2000 one-fourth were killed and wounded. The rear-guard, with many wounded, remained at the Moti Mahal, beyond which they were unable to pass until extricated by a force sent out the following day. In the words of the despatch, 'Sir James Outram received a flesh-wound in the arm in the early part of the action near Char Bagh, but nothing could subdue his spirit; and though faint from loss of blood, he continued to the end of the action to sit on his horse, which he only dismounted at the gate of the Residency.'

Thus was the Residency relieved, or rather reinforced, for the masses of rebels soon again closed round the British position, which but for its strength in numbers and store of provision and *matériel*, would soon have been in as great straits as the glorious little garrison. Retirement in the presence of so overwhelming a hostile force as that which hovered about them was hopeless, and from September 25th to November 22d Outram had to hold his ground against a constant series of attacks until the arrival of the Commander-in-chief. He has been blamed for having, by his urgent representations, hurried Sir Colin Campbell away from Cawnpore, and thus prevented the previous dispersion of the Gwalior contingent. Upon this point we may possibly receive fuller informa-

tion when Major-General Shadwell's forthcoming 'Life of Lord Clyde' appears. But that the Lucknow garrison was critically placed is manifested by the fact that Outram's last gun-bullock was killed on the day he and Campbell met at the Moti Mahal. His letters also rebut the charge that he had placed the safety of his position before the dispersion of the Gwalior force. On the Commander-in-chief's arrival the Residency was silently evacuated by a movement which Lord Clyde pronounced to be a model of discipline and exactness, but Outram afterwards publicly disclaimed the credit in favour of his chief. "The withdrawal of the Lucknow garrison," Outram himself says, "the credit of which is assigned to Sir James, was planned by Lord Clyde, and effected under the protection of the troops immediately under his lordship's command, Sir James Outram merely carrying out his chief's orders." Lord Clyde, in his despatches, has on his part given Outram the honour of both planning and executing the evacuation; so we may fairly suppose that the credit of the movement is divisible between them.

With regard to the course to be next followed the Generals were divided. Outram wished to attack the Kaiser Bagh and town, and hold the city after turning out the rebels. Sir Colin preferred to move to an open position outside the town without further loss of life. The Governor-General, to whom reference was made by telegraph, took Sir Colin's view; and Outram was consequently left at the Alum Bagh to hold the city in check from November 27th to the end of the following February. We need not go over the incidents of his gallant stand upon this position, or of his subsequent movements across the Goontee, which

have been fully described in Sir Hope Grant's Journals. We shall better employ our remaining space to give the following personal reminiscence of him while at the Alum Bagh:—

"His care for the soldiers, consideration for brother officers, and abnegation of self, were then, as throughout his career, proverbial; and anecdotes no doubt abound in illustration of these prominent features in his character at this period. At the Residency, we are told that, on one occasion, when the scarcity of provisions for the mere sustenance of life necessitated a strict frugality on the part of all ranks, his indignation was aroused at the unexpected offer of an exceptionally luxurious meal. The soldier-butcher had begged his acceptance of the heart and liver, or other delicate portions of the internal economy of a bullock, in addition to the ration of meat for the day. Now such a proposal was, in his opinion, simply outrageous; the idea that *he*, of all others in the camp, should be selected as the recipient of a kind of modified *Khat-pat*, was too horrible to contemplate: nothing would satisfy him but to place the culprit under arrest! But a little after-inquiry into the matter elicited the fact that the proffered dainties were the legitimate perquisites of the well-inclined butcher, who was at liberty to dispose of them as he liked, and had as much right to offer them to the General commanding as to the junior subaltern among his officers. The poor man was therefore released with a kindly apology."

There was always a thorough feeling of *camaraderie* between Outram and his troops, which enabled him to call out the enthusiasm of the men whenever there was occasion; and though at times he could be a severe disciplinarian, he gratified them by showing an unusual amount of confidence with regard to what was going on around them.

"A general officer thus illustrates this latter trait: 'Nothing could exceed the courtesy and kindness of Sir

James to all under his command, of whatever rank. Whilst in camp at Alum Bâgh, when we visited the outlying pickets, who do not turn out to pay compliments, the men would all come forward to meet the General and salute him. They would come up and pat his charger, and ask him if he had any news. On one occasion a *co ssid* had brought him some welcome intelligence: he said to me, "I will tell you shortly"—and we galloped off. When surrounded by the men he pulled the letter out of his pocket and read out to us all the report of one of Sir Colin's victories over the rebels. He then turned to me and said, "I wanted to be the first to let these fine fellows have the good news." His kindness and attention to the sick and wounded were very great."

The appointment of military member in the Viceroy's Council called Outram away to Calcutta before the campaign was finally over, and he was destined to take part in the great questions that were being discussed affecting the transfer of the government from the Company to the Crown. He filled this post for two years, from May 1858 to July 1860, but all the time he was struggling with failing health and against a constitution worn out with toil, care, and hardships. He returned home to be literally crushed with honours, for he had scarcely strength to appear in public to make acknowledgments for the addresses, testimonials, and thanks which were proffered to him. He moved about hither and thither in search of restored strength, but he was worn out. An attack of bronchitis at Nice hastened his end, and he died peacefully in his chair on March 11, 1863. His mother had only predeceased him by a few weeks, having lived to witness the full fruition of her son's triumphs.

A character like that of Outram is much more easily summed up than his career. He died a com-

paratively young man, but he had enjoyed the "crowded hour of glorious life," which requires volumes to describe it adequately. Outram's nature, however, lay on the surface, and could be read at a glance. Brave to recklessness where he was personally concerned, cautious and prudent where the lives of others were in question; self-sacrificing for himself, hotly jealous in behalf of the interest of his friends and followers; animated by high ideas, which he often carried to the verge of Quixotry, and which, as we have seen, brought him too frequently into collision with the authorities and with routine; a gallant, loving, and generous nature,—James Outram stands forth in our days as the true representative of the Chevalier, whose name has been added to his own. He was, indeed, a knight *sans peur et sans reproche*. It is noteworthy that on his last departure from India, when he broke up his little stock of books among the soldiers' libraries, he carried away with him his copies of Froissart and Monstrelet.

We share Sir Francis Goldsmid's regret that Sir John Kaye did not live to fulfil his purpose of writing a life of Outram. Since Kaye's death, Anglo-Indian biography seems to have fallen upon evil days. No career in the present century affords ampler materials for a picturesque memoir than that of Outram. But Sir Francis Goldsmid has given us a biography, which, but for its subject, would certainly have been tedious reading, and of which the chief value is the ample material it affords for forming an independent opinion apart from the biographer's reflections. It would require the pen of the genial canon of Chimay or of Sir Walter Scott to write a life of Outram worthy of such a *preux chevalier*.

A WEEK IN ATHENS.

"On the Ægean shore a city stands
Built nobly, pure the air, and light the soil;
Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts
And eloquence, native to famous wits,
Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,
City or suburban, studious walks and shades."

—MILTON.

WE had ridden across the Peloponnese from shore to shore, and now in three, or at the most four, hours' time we were to be in Athens. So we thought. But *aliter visum est*. The south-west wind, before which we sped merrily out of the little harbour of Epithavro (Epidaurus) about 4 P.M. on an April afternoon, dropped as soon as we were in the open waters of the Saronic Gulf, to be succeeded by a stiff nor'-wester blowing right athwart our track from where, in the far horizon, the mighty Acrocorinthus towered above the low-lying Isthmus of Corinth.

Our captain did not care to venture across to the Piræus in his small boat under these altered circumstances; so as night was coming on we ran for shelter into the harbour of Ægina. Here meeting with a collision which shattered one of our bulwarks, and might well have sent us to the bottom, we were fain to throw ourselves upon the mercy of a Greek naval officer, Captain Miaoulis, whose steam-launch we found lying at the quay. He also had been driven into Ægina by stress of weather. He kindly agreed to take us across with him on the morrow, and named four o'clock in the morning as the hour of his start.

Though the morning broke gloriously fine, the north-west wind was still blowing, and continued to do so all the forenoon. This gave us time to see something of Ægina, though not, unfortunately, the famous tem-

ple of Zeus Panhellenios, which stands on a height some four hours' ride from the town. We saw, however, the remains of the old harbour, and of a temple of Aphrodite, built on the cliff about a quarter of a mile to the east of the town. From this point we could see distinctly the opposite coast of Attica, though Athens is not conspicuous enough to be seen at such a distance; and the rugged back of Salamis, which is higher and more imposing than I had expected to find it.

Modern Ægina is a busy port, with a frontage of tall buildings—warehouses, inns, coffee-houses, and shops—along the quay, which is thronged with sailors. Behind the town rise heights covered with white villas, picturesquely set in gardens of olives, oranges, and mulberries; while here and there a single palm-tree reminded us that we were now in comparatively Eastern climes. In the background are the rugged peaks which make the island so conspicuous an object from Athens and from all the surrounding country.

Among the inhabitants of Ægina, especially the boys, we noticed more heads and faces of the type familiar to us in old Greek sculpture than we had met hitherto, or were destined afterwards to meet, in the Greece of to-day. Three or four of these young fellows, with their large eyes, low foreheads, finely-cut profiles, and luxuriant heads of hair, might have sat as

models for the Pan-Athenaic procession with which Phidias adorned the frieze of the Parthenon. Our hostess, too, a comely woman of forty, with two beautiful children, had a face and figure cast in true Attic mould.

By two o'clock at last the adverse wind had dropped, and we were able to set off, in a trim little yawl, in tow of the steam-launch.

Now were we indeed in the very heart of historic Hellas. The dancing waters over which we were speeding, and in which now and again the fabled dolphin showed his tawny back, had been crossed and recrossed by all the fleets that Greece had ever equipped, and by all the great men who had ever left or visited her shores. Greek heroes must have sailed over them on their way to Troy. Here, at any rate, was the central point of that splendid maritime dominion which Athens, in the days of her greatness, wielded over all the coasts and islands of the Ægean. To the west, following the gulf till it narrowed to a point, the eye fell upon the huge Acrocorinthus. To the north rose mountain-masses, stretching back, as we knew, to Helicon and Parnassus, though those peaks were not in view. Cithæron, in the foreground, wore a crown of luminous golden haze.

Looking eastward, the low coast of Attica could be traced as far as Cape Sunium. Beyond loomed three or four of the "shining Cyclades." In front, but somewhat to the left of our course, a white row of houses along the shore betokened Megara, that troublesome neighbour and stubborn foe, whom Athens found a very thorn in her side. It is easy to see, when the scene is before you, how it was that this little State so long held possession of Salamis, which lies along the shore not much further from Me-

gara than from the Piræus. And we must remember, too, that in those early days, before Solon's eloquent appeal had shamed his countrymen into seizing the island, the Piræus was not bound to Athens by the tie with which the genius of Themistocles afterwards united the city and the port. So that in fact Salamis was nearer to Megara than to Athens.

But now right in front of us the sun catches some white buildings on the shore which must belong to the Piræus, and as we look inland a low conical height strikes the eye. It is too peaked to be the Acropolis. It is Mount Lycabettus. Before long, however, another elevation can be made out a little way to the right — an oblong mound, of a deep orange-brown, and with a remarkably level surface. And there, surely, are buildings upon it! An earnest gaze leaves at last no doubt in our minds that this mere speck in the landscape, but faintly visible against the background of hills, is in truth that which we have longed all our lives to see, the rock which seems to sum up in itself the supremest effort that art has achieved in the world, — the Acropolis of Athens! Every moment we are drawing nearer to the shore, and the objects upon it become more distinct. One by one the buildings upon the Acropolis fall into their true relations, and the shattered wreck of the Parthenon stands out by itself. The main outline of the picture being thus stamped upon our minds, we must wait for a closer inspection to show us its details.

Salamis is now quite close to us on the left; and while crossing the east end of the bay which lies between it and the shore, we are busy in our conjectures as to the exact scene of the battle. However far we may have been from forming

a true idea of the positions of the rival fleets, we had at least no difficulty in recognising a tiny little islet, within a few yards of which we passed, as *Psyttaieia*, whereon the flower of the Persian army was cut off, and round which at last the struggle raged most fiercely.

Meanwhile the *Piræus*, the *Athenian Acropolis*, and even *Mount Lycabettus*, have quite disappeared from view, and we are nearing an apparently harbourless shore, when of a sudden, rounding a rocky point which runs out from the left to bar our path, we find ourselves in a roomy harbour full of shipping, of life and stir of all kinds. A few minutes' bustle, and we are in an open carriage, bowling along the dusty tree-fringed road between the *Piræus* and *Athens*. We have scarcely passed the outskirts of the port when the *Acropolis* again comes prominently into view, touched to purple by the sun now setting behind *Salamis*. To its left rises the conical peak of *Lycabettus*, and in the background the view is closed by *Pentelicus*, which has been most appropriately likened to the pediment of a Greek temple. *Hymettus* is on our right, parallel with the road; and on our left, the plain is shut in by a ridge which near the sea is called *Korydallos*, and further inland bears the name of *Ægaleos*. Along the foot of it a belt of trees marks the course of the *Kephisos*, and the famous olive-groves which stretch away to *Kolonos*. Further inland, between this ridge and *Pentelicus*, rises the massive shoulder of *Parne*, which, with *Cithæron* further west, parts *Attica* from *Bœotia*. By the time we approach *Athens* the light has faded, leaving in the western sky an after-glow of orange fading into a lovely pale blue, while *Salamis* and *Korydallos* become black as night. Still there

was sufficient twilight to show us the *Acropolis* and its buildings, the *Theseum*, the *Areopagus*, and the *Hill of the Muses*, and to make us realise that we were in the city of *Pericles*.

The whole scene seemed strangely familiar, the more so that it is just the ancient part of *Athens* which the traveller first sees on his road from the *Piræus*. He passes next through what remains of *Athens* as it was under Turkish rule—low dirty houses, narrow streets, and bazaars. From this quarter one comes into the modern town, fast becoming as trim and bright as *Paris* itself.

Our slumbers, though well earned by a hard week's travelling, were by no means undisturbed. I should think that no city could vie with *Athens* in the extent and variety of its night-noises. Dogs, cats, men, and perhaps most trying of all, the *Attic owl*, with its melancholy piping monotone, unite to make the blessed silence of night a hollow mockery. The *Athenians* of old might be excused for preferring the image of the owl in silver to its unmusical and feathered prototype.

If, however, the noises of the night recalled rather some *London court* than the city of *Pericles*, a glance in the morning from the windows of our hotel in *Æolus Street*, reassured us at once. For at the end of the street rose an enormous barrier of orange-brown rock, and upon its summit stood two mighty fragments of a temple, separated by a chasm of blue sky. There, indeed, was the *Parthenon*, shattered and maimed, but still instinct with beauty and grandeur. It, too, is of an orange-brown tone, and that dark-blue sky forms the most harmonious background one could conceive.

It was not long before we were

making our way along Æolus Street, then to the left, past the Temple of the Winds, to where some stone steps lead to the foot of the Acropolis on the north side. Then a winding footpath takes one to the western side, whence a zigzag track through a plantation of giant aloes runs up to the side-door which now serves for an entrance to the rock. The old broad steps up which processions used to pass are now blocked up below by a wall and disused gateway. Passing through an archway on the right, we enter on the left a small doorway which leads us through a little yard strewn with beautiful architectural and sculptured fragments, on to the main steps about half-way up. The Propylæa were immediately above us; on our right the lovely little temple of Wingless Victory; on our left the Pinacotheca, adorned of old with the famous paintings of Polygnotus. But these must not detain us now. Moving upwards and onwards, we had hardly gained the level of the Propylæa, when our eyes fell upon a grand temple-front, seared and discoloured with the wear of ages, but majestic beyond belief. Of hue varying from light brown through rich orange to absolute black, while here and there, where a column has been chipped, the marble shows its dazzling whiteness, the mighty building confronts one with the calm dignity, and yet faultless beauty, which one associates with the goddess herself, to whom, by men of old, this shrine was raised.

Between the Propylæa and the Parthenon the rugged surface of the rock is marked with wheel-tracks, associated by tradition with the chariot processions which went yearly to the Acropolis on the great Pan-Athenaic festival. All around lie huge fragments of marble. But these, and the details of the Par-

thenon front, were only taken in at a later time. An irresistible fascination, not unmingled with awe, led me now to mount the steps and at once enter the temple. Some people have felt disappointment at first sight of the Parthenon, but I can only say that it surpassed all my expectations in beauty and grandeur. Apart from the historic associations that come crowding into the mind as one stands on a spot so rich in memories, the scene itself cannot but fix contemplation. Now the imagination strives to restore the building, even in its ruin exquisitely harmonious, to its original perfection of form, adding the brilliant colouring which is now generally believed to have adorned it; or to recall to its place round the walls of the *cella*, that wonderful frieze which, born beneath the deep-blue of an Athenian sky, has at length found shelter in the gloom of a Bloomsbury basement. Now vain longings and regrets are stirred by the thought that this building, after surviving some two thousand years, fell a victim, hardly two centuries ago, to the explosion which has rent asunder the eastern and western ends, not only wrecking the inner shrine, but throwing down many of the outer columns on either side. Again, the eye is delighted by the rich tone which the wear of centuries has imparted to the western front, and which contrasts strikingly alike with the original marble where its surface has been laid bare, and with the sky above; or follows lovingly the beautiful lines of the still standing columns, allowing due picturesque value even to the ghastly gap in the centre, and drinking in the strong sunlight which beats down upon the whole and throws deep shadows in contrast to its own radiance. And such a scene, if you are fortunate, you can enjoy in perfect stillness, so aloof

at times seem the precincts of the Acropolis from the stir of modern everyday life.

For the sake of clearness I will here depart from the chronological sequence hitherto observed, and proceed to mention more in detail certain features of the Parthenon, and of the Acropolis, which were stamped upon my memory by repeated visits.

To begin with the west front of the Parthenon. It was a most pleasant surprise to find that the frieze of Phidias* is on this side of the building still in its place, and though somewhat discoloured by age, in a fair state of preservation. One is thus enabled to form some sort of judgment as to the effect it was intended by the artist to produce. For of all artists the Greeks most thoroughly understood how to adapt means to ends, and workmanship to the conditions not only of material but of place. Now the first thing that strikes one is that from no point of view could the famous procession which we are accustomed to see running in unbroken line round the walls of the Elgin Room in the British Museum, have been seen even approximately as a whole. Only the friends of Phidias, who saw it in his studio, or who, as Mr Alma Tadema has pictorially and happily suggested, were allowed to mount the scaffolding and walk round the wall of the *cella*, when the frieze was first installed in its true position, can ever have seen his masterpiece except, so to speak, in detachments, till the time came for it to be taken down from its place, carried across the seas, and exposed to public view in

the capital of a nation which neither Phidias nor Pericles could have conceived of as being otherwise than mere barbarians. For the utmost that can be seen from below at one time is commensurate with the distance between any two of the columns of the peristyle. Framed, therefore, between these, the observer, standing some ten or fifteen yards back from them, sees the successive groups of horsemen which compose the one part of the frieze still remaining *in situ*.

One mighty fragment of the group which adorned the pediment, and two or three mutilated metopes, enable one, by the aid of the imagination, to form some idea of how these further adornments of the west front looked when the temple was still entire. Readers need hardly be told that the most important remains of these masterpieces, again, are to be seen in the British Museum.†

Speaking generally, my impression is that these latter features of the temple must have been on the whole more successful in their ultimate effect than the more delicate and beautiful frieze. But it is really impossible for a modern observer, still less one untrained, to pass judgment on these matters. Given the bright colours which must have materially added clearness to the different groups of the procession, how beautiful may not have been the ever-shifting vignettes of graceful figures which caught the eye as one wandered round the temple, thrown into strong relief by the darker tone of the intervening columns!

A lover of Greek art is not naturally inclined to feel gratitude to

* I use this phrase for convenience, and as according with popular usage. But we cannot really suppose the whole frieze, or necessarily even the pedimental sculptures or metopes, to have been the sole handiwork of this artist, though, no doubt, his guidance and care were always present.

† There, too, is a model of the Parthenon, which renders minute description of its construction on my part quite unnecessary.

the Turks for any mark that they have left behind on the monuments of Athens. But if the staircase which now leads to the roof of the Parthenon was indeed built by them as an approach to the tower which they erected at one corner to mar the perfection of the building, due thanks must not be withheld even from the barbarian. The tower happily has been removed, but the staircase still leads to the roof, and to one of the most lovely views that Athens can boast.

At one's feet lies the whole Athenian plain. Immediately below rise the columns of the Propylæa; slightly to the left the Museion or Hill of the Muses; beyond the Propylæa the dark-brown rocky summit of the Areopagus, sloping down on the left to the hollow which separates it from the Pnyx. To the right of the Areopagus, but on a lower level, stands the Theseum, or, as others prefer to call it, the Temple of Herakles. Beyond these the eye can follow the straight line of road, shaded by grey poplars and plane-trees, which unites now as in old times Athens and Piræus, the city and the port. Beyond the clustered houses of Piræus, where even now more than one tall chimney betokens the presence of modern industry, glitters the blue Ægean, with the peaks of Ægina in the far background, and to the right the rugged back of Salamis, behind which loom the hills of the Morea. Coming northward again, the eye rests on the slopes of Korydallos and Ægaleos, with the dark belt of olives running along their base. Facing these heights on our left hand, the plain is closed by the graceful lines of Hymettus losing themselves in the sea at Phalerum.

Such, then, is the scene which meets the gaze of any one who mounts the roof of the Parthenon; and it was from this point of van-

tage that I saw one of those rich feasts of colour which, night after night, are spread before the delighted eyes of the dwellers in this city of the immortals. So regular are they, that even Murray thinks it necessary to catalogue the various shades of purple and red which the setting sun throws nightly on the hills. As one stands, say on the road to Piræus, with one's back to the west, Ægaleos on the left is of a purple almost melting into blackness; Pentelicus, which closes the view in front of us, dons the rich garb of an emperor; Hymettus, on our right, is rosy pink; and rosy, too, is the tone which touches the Acropolis. But to return to the particular sunset which suggested this digression.

Over the Morean hills and Ægina hung a mass of dark storm-clouds, which cast a dull leaden tone on to the waters of the Ægean, shining, nevertheless, here and there with a strange sheen. Gradually the lower edge of these clouds grew fiery red as the sun passed through them on his way to rest; and Ægina, too, borrowed something of his radiance. Above the clouds the sky was orange fading into pale green. But nearer the zenith glowed one belt of rosy cloud; and as I looked, behold! the silver bow of Artemis, newborn, shone forth to greet her brother Apollo ere he sank from sight. Above Hymettus the sky was pale blue fading almost magically into the warm rose-colour which soon diffused itself over the mountain, and tinged the very Parthenon itself where I was seated. In strong contrast to this glow were the greyish-white masses of cloud which weighed close upon the opposite slopes of Ægaleos. One charming and unexpected feature was a distant view over Salamis of the Acrocorinthus, which, before

the last struggles of the sun had suffused the heavens with red, stood out in a luminous golden haze above the waters of the Saronic gulf.

The Parthenon is an inexhaustible subject, but I have said as much of it as space will allow, so I will now ask my readers to return to the entrance of the Acropolis, through which, in our eagerness to see its crowning glory, we passed so hurriedly. Let us stand, then, on the marble steps and look about us. The view westward is practically the same as from the roof of the Parthenon. Turning round to ascend the steps we see above us the beautiful avenue of columns which forms the centre-piece of the Propylæa, or Porch on a grand scale, which guards the entrance of the rock.

The beauty, originality, and perfect appropriateness of this building, which was designed by Mnesicles about the year 436 B.C., have often been extolled, but, I think, not exaggerated. Though the middle portion, the Propylæum proper, is much mutilated—hardly a single column standing entire, and one architrave only remaining to represent the roof, while the two wings are also mere wrecks—the imposing character and successful boldness of the design are still evident. A glorious gateway, indeed, by which to approach the splendours within; glorious now, as its marble front glitters in the clear air, and stands out in bold relief against the sky, but how much more glorious when it shone resplendent with gold and rich colouring, and admitted, on their way to the temple of Athene, the chariots and horsemen, and priests, and young men and maidens, who passed in glittering procession up the steps to bear their annual gift-robe to the goddess! No wonder that Epaminondas, in noble envy of so grand a monu-

ment of art, prayed, half in jest half in earnest, for its forcible removal to his native Thebes!

The Propylæa being an undoubted instance of the lavish use of colour in architecture by the Greeks, a few words on this vexed question may not be out of place here. At first sight, to those who have given no special attention to the subject, the idea of laying colour on the virgin purity of Pentelic marble is certainly repugnant. It was a shock to the present writer, as it must have been to many others, to realise the notion for the first time. But a little consideration, and, I might add, a little more faith in such perfect masters of artistic taste as the Greeks have otherwise shown themselves to be, may modify this first impression. In the first place, the delicate ornamentation in which, at any rate, Ionic buildings abound, would, without the aid of colour, be in many cases lost upon an observer standing below; while, without such aid, elaborate compositions, like the frieze of the Parthenon, must, in the situation selected for them, have lost greatly in value. But there is another point which at once strikes the traveller who stands beneath an Attic sky, and is brought face to face for the first time with the actual conditions under which the Greeks worked. This is, that the intense clearness, one might almost say radiance, of the air makes it impossible even to look at a white glittering substance like marble, except through some medium, such as smoked glass. What, then, would have been the use of a Greek sculptor lavishing his skill and invention upon works of which, when exposed in open air and to public view, only the general effect could be appreciated, while the grace and delicacy of design and execution upon which he

prided himself was lost in the glare of sunlight? If the Greeks were an artistic nation, they were also an eminently practical one; and I can hardly think that they would have been content with such disproportion of means to ends, of labour to the result produced. Need we wonder, then, that they took the most obvious means of overcoming this difficulty? Let any one walk in the glare of noonday past some of the new houses which the Athenians of to-day have decorated with bare marble, and say whether these men or their ancestors of twenty centuries ago best understood the proprieties.

I have already mentioned the temple of Wingless Victory. It stands on a platform of hewn marble, of which one side forms the right-hand boundary-wall of the steps leading to the Propylæa. It is placed, however, by one of those delicate *nuances* of artistic effect in which the Greeks delighted, not flush, or even parallel, with the edge of the wall, but inclined at a slight angle, so that the light catches it at a different time, and the uniformity of line is broken. In the same way the Parthenon does not exactly front east and west, or stand exactly either at right angles to the Propylæa or parallel with the Erechtheum. Any one who studies carefully the art and architecture of the Greeks is met at every turn by those conscious deviations from mathematical accuracy, and is struck by the boldness of a people whose sense of the laws of harmony is so strong

that they can dare to violate them and yet never be inharmonious. The fact established by Mr Penrose, that every seemingly straight line in the Parthenon is in reality a delicate curve, is a yet stronger case in point. But to return to our temple. It is a lovely and perfect example in miniature—for it is not much more than 16 feet by 18—of the Ionic order. There was a beautiful little frieze running round the top of the outside wall (now in the British Museum), and it had formerly one remarkable feature, in the shape of a parapet of slabs, adorned with beautiful draped figures of Victory in various attitudes, which was set on the platform round the building. Some of these slabs are preserved in the Museum on the Acropolis, and there are casts of them in the Elgin Room at the British Museum. They are remarkable as showing how even violent motion could be treated with freedom and yet perfect grace in the best days of Greek sculpture.*

A few words now about the Erechtheum, the general name given to the little block of buildings (including the so-called Pandroseion and the Cecropeion) which, as we pass through the Propylæa, stands on our left hand, close against the outside wall of the Acropolis. Beside the Parthenon it is a mere pigmy, but in the days of its perfection it must have been quite a gem. Even now its remains are covered with delicate and lovely ornamentation. The south porch, which faces its giant

* M. Beulé, to whose exhaustive work on the Acropolis I may refer readers who wish for detailed information on the subject, thinks that the Temple of Victory may have been built in the time of Cimon, and therefore earlier, though only by a few years, than the Propylæa or the Parthenon. The parapet slabs he considers to have been added in the fourth century B.C. We are safe in saying, and it is a fact worthy of remembrance, that all these buildings, with the Theseum and others no longer extant, were built within the space of fifty years, the breathing-time between the Persian and Peloponnesian wars, 480-430 B.C.

neighbour the Parthenon, is supported by the famous Karyatides, —six most graceful draped female figures. Four of the sisters are still in their place, but one stands disconsolate in our own Museum, still holding on her head a fragment of the cornice which she was created to support; another is at Munich. These vacancies are supplied by modern casts which help one to realise the general effect of the structure far better than if mere blocks had been put in to fill their place. There is something very beautiful and dignified about this porch, in spite of the objection raised by some critics to the principle of employing the human figure as an essential element in architecture. The objection would be perfectly just, were there any sense of strain or unnatural effort in the effect produced. But these stately women bear their burden with perfect ease. Any feeling of difficulty is removed by the delicate device of making them all to rest on the foot nearest the centre of the porch.

The northern porch is a lovely specimen of the Ionic order, perhaps one of the most perfect we have. Several columns are standing quite entire. The doorway over which the porch is raised is richly ornamented with the honeysuckle and kymation design, and a line of single rosettes adorns the lintel and doorposts. The honeysuckle occurs again on the top of the columns and along the architrave. This porch we know to have been richly adorned with gold and red and blue, and very beautifully must the delicate tracery of the designs have come out under this treatment.

Between these two porches is an oblong chamber, the shrine of Athene Polias, wherein grew the sacred olive-tree, and where was

kept with reverent care the wooden image of Athene which fell from heaven.

Close to the Erechtheum, excavation has revealed a piece of the wall built by Themistocles. It is a splendid piece of masonry, qualified to stand almost any assault before the days of gunpowder. Built into this wall at one point are some of the drums of the old Parthenon, showing at what press of need the wall was raised, the builders working in whatever stones came ready to their hand.

A few yards beyond the eastern end of the Parthenon, but on a considerably lower level, stands a trim little museum, well stored with precious fragments of architecture and sculpture. Here are three or four of the most beautiful slabs of the frieze of Phidias, notably the maidens bearing waterpots in various yet ever graceful attitudes, and two noble youths on horseback from the equestrian procession. Casts of these supplement the originals in the British Museum. Here, too, are the Victories from the temple of Nike Apteros (Wingless Victory), mentioned above, and many other less known but hardly less beautiful remains. Interesting from another point of view are some pieces from the cornice and soffits of the Parthenon, on which traces of red and blue are still visible. In a smaller building—an old Turkish guard-house—between the Erechtheum and the Parthenon, are other beautiful things; but the key of the place is not very readily accessible, and I was not lucky enough during our week's stay in Athens to find an entrance. The whole surface of the rock, especially between the Parthenon and Propylæa, is strewn with fragments of architecture and sculpture which await the ingenuity of scholars to identify and piece them together.

Even as they lie they seem to confirm the account given by Pausanias of the countless works of art he saw on the Acropolis.

Now let us descend from the Acropolis, and wander, so far as time will allow, round the other remains of ancient Athens. As we leave the famous rock behind us, and descend the slope, only a small hollow separates us from the rugged summit of the Areopagus. Some steps are cut in the rock towards the eastern end, so that one climbs easily to the judgment-seat, where sat that grave and reverend court. Two scenes in particular occur most naturally to the mind as one stands on this spot—the trial scene in the *Eumenides* of Æschylus, and the speech of St Paul. To remind us of the one, there are at our feet the hollow recesses in which, at the sublime close of the great trilogy of the Greek tragedian, the Furies, now turned from their wrath, find at once a resting-place and a shrine. There, too, peering over the summit of the rock above, stands the great temple of Athene, to remind us that she stepped in to arbitrate between Orestes and his fierce pursuers. To the truth of one at least of the charges made by St Paul against the Athenians—*δεισιδαιμονώστεροι ἐστέ*—ye are too superstitious: the Theseum, the Parthenon, and the temple of Victory, still standing around and above, and in the far southward, the grand columns reared to Olympian Zeus, still remain as living testimony.

Descending from the Hill of Ares, and moving westward, we come to the Kerameicus, where were found those beautiful tombstones, or funeral *stelæ*, the discovery of which revealed to us so important, and hitherto so unappreciated, a side of Greek art. These are now for the most part placed in the Patissia Museum, and will be dealt with

later. Some few yet remain where they were dug up. Differing widely both in spirit and execution, hardly one but conveys some trait of personal or national character. And the value of such mute testimony, over and above that borne by written memorials, few will deny. Thoroughly to know a nation's character one must know it in all its moods, and what mood strikes such solemn and touching chords in the common heart of mankind as that to which death is the key-note?

The temple of Theseus, to which, after leaving the Kerameicus, we pass, by inclining slightly to the right, stands by itself in an open space, round which some attempt has been made to plant aloes and other ornamental shrubs. Of all extant buildings in the Doric order, this, though the smallest, is the most perfect. It owes its preservation to the fact that it was in early Christian times turned into a church and dedicated to Saint George. The thought reminds one that the Parthenon too, long dedicated to the service of the Virgin Mary, might have been preserved in like manner had not the Turks misused it for a powder-magazine, and the Venetians dropped a bomb-shell into it!

The beautiful harmony of proportion which strikes one in the temple of Apollo at Bassæ, and in the Parthenon, is hardly less conspicuous in this smaller example of the Doric order. The impression is rather to be felt than described, but it is real nevertheless. To look at such a building has upon the mind the same soothing influence as to hear delicious music. For the time all the senses are satisfied, and nothing is wanting.

Turning eastwards again from the temple of Theseus, and passing the western end of the Areopagus, we see on our left, at the foot of the

Acropolis, the remains of the Odeum of Herodes Atticus, with its brick proscenium, pierced with many windows. On our right, at the distance of one hundred yards or so, is the Hill of the Muses, crowned with the interesting but unornamental monument of Philopappus. We may note, in passing, that hereabouts lay the most ancient part of the city, as Thucydides bears witness. As we advance along the south-western side of the Acropolis, we pass the scene of busy excavations which have already revealed the foundations of a temple of Æsculapius, and may be expected to produce yet more valuable results. For the *débris* which conceals the face of the rock is the accumulation of centuries, and who knows what treasures may not lie beneath? Already more than one important inscription has been found. These are the spoils of history; but art, too, need not despair of some prize from so rich a field.

Not far beyond we come upon the theatre itself, laid bare only a few years ago by similar excavations. Next to the Parthenon, no spot in Athens is so rich in associations and memories as this. Indeed, in some ways even the marble shrine of Athene yields in interest to this rock-cut temple dedicated to the rites of Dionysus. When we think of the tremendous part played in literature, in history,—nay, in civilisation itself,—by the Greek dramatists, and then remember that it was here on this very spot that each of those splendid masterpieces—ay, and many more which have not come down to us—were produced; that on these very stone seats were assembled year after year the great Athenian people and their guests; that here, therefore, must have sat to witness the triumphs of Æschylus, of Sophocles, of Euripides, and of Aristophanes—all

those mighty spirits whose names are deathless, whose deeds and words live on in the life of humanity,—when we call to mind all this, we may well be excused for emotion when we stand in the theatre at Athens. To name but three or four of those who must have been there before us—Socrates, Pericles, Phidias, Demosthenes,—is to name men each in his own line supreme.

These, then, being some of the human associations of the place, what of its natural features? Let us sit, as I did, in one of the marble arm-chairs which form the lowest circle of the cavea, and which were set aside for priests, ambassadors, archons, and other officials, that of the priest of Dionysus occupying the central place. We are looking south-east and facing the stage. All that remains of the stage is a low wall adorned with figures in high relief, belonging to about the second century B.C., but still possessing no little gracefulness and decorative effect. Beyond is the Ilissus, and in the background Hymettus sloping down to the sea at Phalerum. Were we sitting in the topmost seats we might, by looking westward, catch a sight of Piræus, and the sea and islands beyond; but from our present position they are hidden by high ground intervening. Looking eastward Lycabettus rises up seemingly close at hand, though in fact much of the modern town lies between. Beyond this soars Pentelicus, closing our view. Quite near to us on the left of the stage stands the arch of Hadrian; and beyond, though still on this side of the Ilissus, rise the few tall columns which remain of the temple of Olympian Zeus, begun by Pisistratus just before his expulsion, but never actually completed till the time of Hadrian, seven centuries

later. Hence the use of the Corinthian column, perhaps nowhere in Greece seen to more advantage than here.

If we turn in our seat and look at the Acropolis above our heads we can see part of the eastern end of the Parthenon, and just a corner of the Propylææ, with the temple of Victory. To an actor on the stage these buildings would, of course, be more completely visible. He might catch a sight, too, across the Areopagus, of Salamis, with the far mountains of Achaia and Argolis.

Let this imperfect sketch of the theatre and its surroundings conclude my notice of the ancient monuments of Athens. The reader who is disappointed at the number of omissions and the meagreness of treatment must remember that a week spent in such a place flies only too quickly, and really allows but little time for accurate observation. All I have attempted has been to convey a general impression of the most obvious remains of ancient Athens.

There is, however, one point which demands a special word of explanation. There was one spot in Athens, even more closely associated with the genius of the people, more bound up with their daily life as citizens, than either the Parthenon or the theatre. I mean, of course, the Agora. Why, then, have I passed this by in silence? Because it must be admitted that archaeological authorities have not yet agreed as to its site. It were out of place here, even were I competent to deal with the subject, to discuss the various theories that have been in vogue. Suffice it to repeat that no theory has yet established itself beyond dispute. All that one can say is, that it lay somewhere between the Areopagus and the rising ground to the south-west,

which is identified with the Pnyx. In this very space, separated from the Areopagus by a grassy slope, shaped somewhat like a horse-shoe and bounded by a semicircular wall of hewn stone, still stands what looks temptingly like a *bêma*, a small stone platform with steps. And this travellers were content to recognise as the genuine relic until the conscientious research of modern archæologists—French, German, and English—threw discredit upon its claims. How much rapturous emotion must these few stones have called forth upon false pretences! How many people must have fancied that they stood where Pericles and Demosthenes had stood before them—stood to sway the passions or to raise the ardour of the Athenian *demos*! For myself, however, the doubt had already entered into my soul before I saw the *soi-disant bêma*, so that all the enthusiasm which such a scene ought to have summoned up was chilled at the outset, and I did not even stand on the stone platform at all. It is now commonly supposed to be an altar; and I understand that one of the latest theories as to the genuine *bêma* is that it was movable, so that the chance of coming upon it seems small indeed.

I must now say a few words upon the various museums of Athens, wonderfully rich, as in Athens they ought to be, in relics of Greek art. It is a consolation to find that the "eye of Greece" still possesses such treasures, when we remember the rich spoils that have been carried from thence to adorn the museums of Western Europe. The *Varvakion*, a building which stands in a large quadrangle approached by a covered passage from Æolus Street, and is devoted to purposes of public instruction, contains a very rich col-

lection of vases, especially those of an early period, and the varieties peculiar to Attica. Here, too, are many of the curious terra-cotta figures found in tombs at Tanagra and elsewhere, and examples of which may be seen at the British Museum, and not a few fragments of fine sculpture. In a small room at the Ministry of Public Instruction are preserved some important relics, such as a remarkable iron circle with an inscription from Olympia, a rude copy of the famous Athene of Phidias, with several beautiful heads, and more vases. I have already referred to the museums on the Acropolis. There remains the new National Museum, on the road leading to Patissia, where are stored the most striking of the funeral *stelæ* dug up in the Kerameicus. Here, indeed, there is enough of beauty and interest to repay many visits. The funeral monuments themselves deserve a month's study at the least, if one is to appreciate fully the exquisite feeling and the beauty of workmanship which distinguish many of them. One I must attempt to describe, because it is so eminently characteristic of the calmness of the Greek mind in presence of death. Among many farewell scenes of touching tenderness, mother parting from children, husband from wife, friend from friend, is one slab on which stands out in high relief the fully modelled figure of a young man. No agony of death is on his brow, no sorrow of parting, no shadow of regret. He leans in an attitude of easy grace against a pedestal. The left leg crosses the right, the whole body being bare save for a cloak flung across the bent left arm and passing behind his back so as to serve as cushion for his seat. The left forearm is gone; and the right arm too, which seems to have been stretched out across the chest, is broken off

above the elbow. Though the nose and lips are much mutilated, the rest of the head is perfect, the hair crisp and curly, the eyes steadfastly gazing to the front. The modelling of the whole figure, if an unskilled observer may pronounce upon such a point, seems to recall the best efforts of Greek sculpture. Grace of outline is combined with strength and dignity. The treatment reminds one of the various figures of Hermes, whose original, attributed to the hand of Praxiteles, has lately been unearthed at Olympia. To the left of this principal figure, but on a lower step of the pedestal, crouches a small child, also unclothed, apparently asleep, with his head bowed upon his hands, which are crossed upon his knees. At his feet, on the right, lies a dog, somewhat resembling a stag-hound, and perhaps indicating that his young master was noted as a hunter. On the extreme right the slab is broken away; but enough remains to show in profile the reverend aspect of an old man with flowing hair and beard, leaning upon a staff which is grasped in his left hand, while his right is raised, as if in meditation, to his mouth. He is clad in a loose garment, falling in simple folds. The right arm, which is finely modelled, is perfect; so, too, save for a slight defect in the nose, is the head. He looks thoughtfully at the young man. Can the figure be a personification of Death come to summon him away? If so, he has found a victim who is calmly ready for the call, whether it came to him in the field of battle, in the chase, or on the bed of sickness.

Space will not allow me to say more of the rich contents of the National Museum, except to mention that the inscriptions are remarkable both in number and interest. I must add to my sum-

mary of museums, that some rooms in the adjoining *Ecole Polytechnique* have been set aside for the display of objects of archaic art and manufacture. Here is by this time arranged the famous Mycenæ treasure discovered by Dr Schliemann, which, when we were in Athens, a few weeks only after the find, was carefully stowed under lock and key in the National Bank. And here are the very similar objects since found at Spata and elsewhere.

Before summing up the results of "A Week in Athens," I will briefly describe three short trips which we found time to make in the neighbourhood of the city, to the olive-groves of Kolonos, to the plain of Marathon, and to the tomb of Themistocles at the Piræus.

Kolonos.

It was about noon one day that we drove to Kolonos, along a very dusty road, past pretty villas standing in their own gardens, well planted with orange, lemon and cypress trees, and almonds in full blossom. The day was as hot as an English July, so we were not sorry, on reaching the village, to seek the shade of some grand white poplars which stand in an open space in front of the inn. The heat, too, and especially the glare from the chalky soil (*τὸν ἀργῆτα*—flashing—*Κολωνόν*, Sophocles calls it), prevented us from going some two hundred yards to the right of the road, just before reaching the inn aforesaid, in order to stand on the undoubted hill, or mound as it is in reality, which has been glorified by the genius of Sophocles.

A few hundred yards beyond the village-green brings one to the fa-

mous olive-groves, somewhat thin and disappointing here, though more venerable trees are to be seen if one wanders far enough into the woods. One cannot honestly say that all the details of the charming description given by Sophocles in the 'Œdipus Coloneus' are still to be identified. We at least heard no nightingales warbling shrilly beneath the green glades, or haunting the dark ivy. Dionysus never showed us his radiant face. Narcissus and crocus may still bloom there, but their bloom was over. Still the place has beauties of no common order. The ground was all planted with corn, whose waving green contrasted well with the silver-grey of the olive and the opalescent blue overhead. As one enters the grove the footpath quickly leads to the bed of the Kephisos, quite dry even in April, sad to say, though Sophocles would have us believe that the sleepless nomad fountains of the stream never grow less. One could not then, as one had hoped, find relief from the heat in the sight, the touch, and the sound of this familiar stream. The gift of the water-nymph was withheld. Yet were we not without immortal aid against the shafts of Apollo the far-darter. For Athene lent the shade of her olive,* and the green gift of Demeter served us for a cool resting-place after the dust; and as we lay there enjoying the stillness, and musing upon the associations of the place, one of us caught sight, through the trees, of the Athenian Acropolis and the Parthenon, showing a rich golden orange against the blue background of sky. We saw no more effective view of the rock and its monuments than this one vignettted in the olive-wreath of Kolonos. Sophocles may have seen

* *Γλαυκᾶς παιδοτρόφου φέλλον ἐλαίης, ὃ τᾶδε θάλλει μέγιστα χάρᾳ.*—Soph. Œd., Col. 700.

it thus when as a boy he wandered in the woods around his native *deme*, and dreamed of the day when he was to be chosen for his beauty of form and presence to lead the bright Athenian procession to that temple on the great festival of the goddess. If no further thought of his future fame as a poet stirred his mind in those early days, it is at least a fact of no common interest to the modern traveller that a place so closely linked with the name of the most characteristically Athenian of the Greek dramatists should command so suggestive a view of the centre-piece of ancient Athens, standing out alone and above all other signs of the city, whether ancient or modern.

Marathon.

From a spot whose main interest lies in the domain of poetry and legend we pass to one of those scenes which stand out in the world's history as witnesses of noble and decisive deeds wrought by men in presence of overwhelming difficulty and danger; and the name of Marathon somehow arouses a feeling of affectionate reverence such as few other historical spots have called forth. To leave Athens, then, without seeing Marathon, was not to be thought of. Early one morning we secured a carriage, and soon found ourselves passing through the eastern outskirts of the city, under the northern slope of Mount Lycabettus, and into the plain beyond. It was a grey morning, rather wanting in colour, but pleasantly cool. At first the country was barren and stony, producing little but wild-flowers of the ruder sort. The Attic plain was always known for the poverty of its soil. But as we neared Pentelicus, the soil, though still for the most part uncultivated, be-

came richer in wild vegetation, and we passed through fine plantations of aged olives, of fir, and of plane. The sun now shone brightly, tempered by a delicious breeze, and the eye was delighted by the most charming contrasts of colour, the fresh green of the fir and plane, the silver-grey of the olive—these upon a background of blue sky with banks of white cloud. Beneath was a tangled undergrowth of greens of various hue, relieved by brilliant masses of scarlet poppies and of purple vetch, with a delicate accompaniment of cistus,—a little flowering shrub like a dog-rose, with blossoms of pale creamy white peeping out from tiny leaves, thick-set, and of the loveliest shades, from green to the darkest purple. These poppies were quite glorious, some of them nearly two inches in diameter, and with a black cross in the centre.

Leaving on our left the little village of Kephisia, picturesquely situated at the foot of Pentelicus, and on our right the king's summer palace and the northern extremity of Hymettus, we soon got beyond these famous mountains, and in sight of the sea. Even then we had something like an hour's drive before we reached our journey's end. At last the road, which had been running in a north-easterly direction, under a back-spur of Pentelicus, inclined to the left, round the end of the spur, and made across a low-lying grassy expanse to some white houses a mile or so away. We did not need to follow it to that point, for now that the whole plain and bay of Marathon lay stretched before us, our business was to find the mound which is the sole visible memorial of the event which has raised the place to immortality. This was easy enough, for it is the only break in the dead level. Turning sharp to the right,

along a very rugged track, among scattered fig-trees just bursting into leaf, with here and there a row of vines and a carpet of green corn, a few hundred yards brought us to the spot. A plunge into the blue Ægean to annul the effects of a hot and dusty drive, quickened our senses to take in the points of the scene. It has been often described, but no description can convey its quiet beauty and grandeur.

Standing on the mound and looking seaward, the bay, with its deep blue waves lashed into little points of white foam by the breeze, and sparkling in the sun like diamonds, is shut in, save at its southern extremity, by the rugged bar of Eubœa, whose topmost peaks, snow-clad, glitter against the sky, in contrast with the bare grey rocks beneath. A few hundred yards only from the shore, towards the northern end of the bay, lies the little rocky isle where the Persian leaders bivouacked on the night before the battle.

This, then, was the scene which lay before the eyes of the Greeks as they stood waiting the approach of the foe—the same then as now, but that the dancing waters of the bay were crowded with Persian vessels.

Now let us consider the view which presented itself to the sight of the invaders. First, a shore of white sand, and behind it a marshy plain, so described by Herodotus, probably more so then than now, when some part of it at least is under cultivation. In the background rises a semicircle of rugged hills, with one bare peak conspicuous in the centre, the eastern extremity of a ridge running at right angles from Pentelicus. To the right opens up a pass which winds round the northern end of Pentelicus into the Attic plain. It was through this pass that the victorious Greeks

made their way back to the city, and once more confronted the Persian fleet, which, in answer to the traitor's signal on Pentelicus, had in the meantime sailed round to the Piræus. Between the hills proper and the plain are lower slopes covered with herbage: on these it seems probable that the Athenian host was drawn up, and from this point of vantage made their rush upon the foe, already entangled in the morasses beneath. In the midst of these morasses, where even now the soil is luxuriant of tall reeds and a tangled mass of wild vegetation, is the mound beneath which lie buried 300 Athenians of that brave army. To stand on the mound which covers that glorious dust, to think of that struggle and its significance, in presence of the very mountains and sea which beheld it, is a sacred privilege and a lifelong fund of exalted remembrance.

Byron's lines express wonderfully the spirit of the scene, and we may repeat them without feeling the melancholy contrast which forced itself upon his mind, between the Greek patriots of 2000 years back and their descendants groaning beneath a foreign yoke,—for Greece has risen at last and shaken off the yoke, and after half a century of freedom may hold up her head again among the nations with pride and with hope.

“The sun, the soil, but not the slave,
 the same;
 Unchanged in all except its foreign
 lord,—
 Preserves alike its bounds and bound-
 less fame,
 The battle-field, where Persia's victim
 horde
 First bow'd beneath the brunt of Hellas'
 sword,
 As on the morn to distant glory dear,
 When Marathon became a magic word;
 Which utter'd, to the hearer's eye appear
 The camp, the host, the fight, the con-
 queror's career.

The flying Mede, his shaftless broken
bow ;
The fiery Greek, his red-pursuing spear ;
Mountains above, earth's, ocean's plain
below,
Death in the front, destruction in the
rear !”

We started back to Athens at about two o'clock, and got in by six, when the sun was setting behind Ægaleos, and casting a rich glow across to Hyettus.

The Tomb of Themistocles.

As if to have stood on the plain of Marathon was not enough for one day's delight, we must needs start off after dinner (and by train, too, on the only railway in Greece!) to the Piræus, to pay our homage at the last resting-place of the man who, whatever his faults, was the first to see what Athens had it in her to accomplish, and to open her eyes and guide her hands to the fulfilment of her destiny.

Making our way as best we could in the darkness past the shipping and the dockyards, then through the straggling houses which lie scattered above the harbour to seaward, and where, each house being provided with a fierce and obstreperous dog, we had some difficulty in escaping with a whole skin, we at length came out upon a narrow footpath leading through waste moorland along the sea-shore.

A scramble of five minutes or so through the rough boulders brought us to a point where the coast-line turned slightly southwards, and left us looking across S.W. to the island of Salamis and the mountains of the Morea. Hard by lies the great Athenian. His tomb commands the scene of the battle which rivals the fame of Marathon, and which would hardly have been fought at all save for him. Hitherto the night had been dark, and the moon

chary of her light ; but now, as we looked, her struggle with the clouds grew more intense, and their efforts to hide her radiance each moment more vain, till at last, shaking off her last foe—a great black fellow, that floated moodily down to join his discomfited comrades upon the Morean hills—she shone forth triumphantly, and amid flocks of white cloudlets, which here and there relieved the blue-blackness of the heavens. And what lovelier scene could she have illumined ? At our feet gleamed the dark waters of the gulf, just trembling in the breeze, and beyond the gleam the cone of Ægina rose sheer into the silent air—Ægina, the “eyesore of the Piræus.” How easy to imagine, standing where we stood, the impatient indignation which the daily sight of that persistent peak, ever pointing upwards, and the rugged aspect of the whole island—fit emblem of her people's stubborn temper—must have roused in Athenian breasts ! It was as if, in the days when bitterness between England and France ran highest, France had been as plainly and constantly visible from the port of London as the Isle of Wight is from Southampton. Behind Ægina, and sweeping round to the right, loomed the hills of Argolis and Achaia. Nearer at hand lay Salamis, her jagged outline well defined against the sky. Between her and the shore little Psyttaleia, whose name lives in the record of the battle, asserted its existence by the steady ray from its lighthouse shining across the mouth of the harbour. Looking inland, the lights of the Piræus added to the scene fresh interest, both of picturesqueness and of association, as showing that, not less now than in old days, the place was full of the stir and hum of men.

It was hard to turn one's back upon a scene so rich in memories,

so calmly beautiful; it was hard to feel that one might never again see it under such perfect conditions. But the lateness of the hour compelled us at last to be mindful of returning. So, after fighting our way once more by dint of frequent stone-throwing through our canine foes, we secured a carriage (the last train having long departed), and drove back into Athens.

Farewell.

And now our eight days were up, and we had to bethink ourselves of returning indeed—of leaving behind not one lovely scene only, but the very city of Pericles, and Greece itself. Our last night was to be spent in a moonlight visit to the Acropolis, which had only become possible quite late in our stay, for at first there had been no moon. Alas for putting off anything till the last moment! The day had been fine enough, but clouds began to gather suspiciously about sunset, and by nine o'clock when we set out the sky was quite overcast, and a drizzling rain was falling. Still we pressed on, for, wet or fine, it was to be our last visit to the Parthenon, and was not to be forgone. The old doorkeeper who let us on to the rock looked considerably astonished at any one dreaming of going up on such a dismal night. Probably no one but Englishmen, and an enthusiast to boot, would have dreamt of it. I do not think, however, that the trouble was at all thrown away. There was a weird grandeur about the great temple, and the ruins generally, which they had not worn before. There was something, too, in the temper of the heavens, strangely akin to the deep regret we could not but feel at standing for the last time on so sacred a spot. After wandering aimlessly and somewhat

sadly about the Parthenon for half an hour or so, I at last seated myself under the peristyle at the S.W. corner, and there remained with no company but my own thoughts, and with the wind howling through the broken columns, and bringing now and again gusts of rain across my face, till at last unutterable melancholy at the desolation of the scene, at the glory passed away, at the thought of leaving it all behind, made longer stay unbearable. One last gaze then at the temple, so far as the darkness revealed its grand outlines, a last look at the beautiful porch of the Karyatides—the grave maidens calm and unmoved in storm as in sunshine—and the Ionic façade of the Erechtheum, and we tread for the last time the worn rocky roadway leading down to the Propylæa. Passing (as if loath to pass) through the avenue of columns, beautiful even in the darkness, we linger for a few moments on the marble steps below, casting perhaps one backward glance at the mighty Parthenon behind, nodding an affectionate farewell to the little temple of Victory at our left hand, and gazing as best we can through gloom and rain at the plain and sea beneath. Then rousing once more the drowsy janitor, we in good earnest turn our backs upon the Acropolis of Athens. No gleam of moonlight ever shone out to cheer us.

Next morning we set out early for the Piræus. It was gloriously fine, and the Acropolis again showed a golden orange against blue sky, as on our first morning in Athens. Arrived at the harbour, we found that for some reason or other the steamer which was supposed to start at ten was not, after all, to sail till three. It was not worth while to go back to Athens, so we spent our morning pleasantly and not unprofitably in inspecting, first, a very flourishing

cloth manufactory, and then the little harbour of Munychium, lying between the Piræus and the roadstead of Phalerum. Along a considerable part of this little promontory, which is broken by two picturesque basins, are visible remains of the long walls which protected them in the days of Athenian greatness; and similar remains may be seen close down to the shore, and even under the water outside the Piræus.

Between three and four o'clock we at last weighed anchor, and soon left behind all trace of the city, which, as I have said before, is a very insignificant object in the landscape. Our eyes, however, were fixed on it so long as anything at all was visible, and then rested on the stronger features of the surroundings,—on Salamis, Parnes, Pentelicus, and Hymettus, and rugged Ægina, lying nearer to us on the left hand. The sail was really most delightful. A fresh breeze was blowing off the Peloponnesian coast, and lashing the blue waters into foam. Then the coast itself was full of interest and picturesque beauty, especially when later on the sun set behind the hills, and gorgeous colours came out in contrast with the deepest shadows. The sunset was followed by a brilliant moon, which added fresh beauty to the scene and lightness to our hearts. Of the rest of our voyage—of the storm to which we awoke on the following morning, and which would have driven us, like St Paul, right down on to Malta, had we not run for shelter into the Gulf of Messenia (for the wind was that self-same Euroclydon named in Holy Writ,—the same “*Auster, dux turbidus Hadriæ*,” familiar to us in Horace); of the lovely sail through the Straits of Messina, with sea and sky a brilliant blue, the coast of Italy gorgeous in colour of soil and vegetation,

and Ætna sparkling in front like a pyramid of molten silver,—of these and other sights this is not the place to speak. For Athens is our present text, and Athens is now far behind.

Conclusion.

And now to sum up in a few words the impressions of “*A Week in Athens.*” Had our expectations been realised? Could we feel that the dreams of past years had not been mere illusions, to be dispelled at first sight of the reality? Would the name of Athens still have the same indescribable charm for us, or would familiarity have deadened its magic influence? To such questions I can, for my own part, looking back across an interval of three years, emphatically answer, No! In some points, of course, the place was not exactly as we had imagined it,—when did imagination, unaided, ever call up a true picture either of nature or of man? But in no respect did Athens fall short of my ideal, while fresh and quite unimagined charms revealed themselves. Among these not the least was the quality of the atmosphere, its extraordinary radiance and delicacy, which seems to give poetry to objects in themselves neither striking nor picturesque. The hills of Attica, Hymettus, Ægaleos, Parnes, and Pentelicus, present no very remarkable features, save a certain noble simplicity of form, but as they glitter in the noonday sun, or take the rich colouring of sunset, their beauty is quite fascinating. There is a very curious and interesting testimony to their attractiveness in Thackeray’s ‘*Cornhill to Cairo*,’ which is the more valuable that the writer’s attitude is distinctly not that of a worshipper. He seems indeed to find difficulty in summoning up the proper enthu-

siasm; yet these hills are too much for him. This is what he says:—

“Round this wide, yellow, barren plain—a stunt district of olive-trees is almost the only vegetation visible—there rises, as it were, a sort of chorus of the most beautiful mountains; the most elegant, gracious, and noble the eye ever looked on. These hills did not appear at all lofty or terrible, but superbly rich and aristocratic. The clouds were dancing round about them; you could see their rosy-purple shadows sweeping round the clear serene summits of the hills.”

Another pleasant surprise was the rich orange tone of such buildings as the Parthenon and the Propylæa; and of the very rock of the Acropolis, contrasting so finely with the blue sky, and also giving one an idea of the advantage of adding colour to marble buildings in such a brilliant atmosphere. The country is rather wanting in colour, the scanty soil producing little foliage but olives and poplars and cypresses, so that the value of this tone in the prominent buildings is more marked. I have already spoken of the important part played by Mount Lycabettus in every view of the city. This is a point that strikes one at once, and yet quite unexpectedly. The hill is too steep and inaccessible to have ever been available as a fortress, or indeed in any way, so that its name hardly comes into history—and it did not occur to the ancients that a hill was worth mention merely for its picturesqueness.

I have spoken very little of the modern town, because space obliged me to dwell only on what was of the highest interest. I may say, however, that it is bright and attractive, and daily becoming more so as the number of travellers, usually of the more cultivated kind, increases. The people are most courteous and kindly, and to tra-

vellers eager to learn about the antiquities, the professors of the university and other learned men are both able and willing to render assistance. In fact, now that the Germans and French both have flourishing schools of archæology established in Athens (an example soon, we trust, to be followed by ourselves), while the Greeks themselves are taking a keen and intelligent interest in such matters, scholars and men of culture are beginning to flock there, and Athens bids fair to become, as Rome was at the beginning of the century, a centre of attraction and a meeting-place for *savants* of all lands.

Of the surroundings of the city a week's stay hardly allows one to form an adequate impression. Eleusis, Phylê, Sunium, and other places of interest, we had no time to see. The city itself needs at least ten days or a fortnight to do even scanty justice to its wonders—especially to the unexpected richness of the museums. At the same time, let not this deter any one, with limited time at his disposal, from making the journey. Two days will give you a very fair impression of the whole place, and enable you to see the Acropolis and its surroundings with perfect ease. Go to Athens, if only for two or three days, is my advice to all who can find an opportunity. Don't mind the journey. By travelling down through Italy to Brindisi, and thence by steamer past Corfu and Zante up the Gulf of Corinth, across the isthmus and the Saronic gulf, you may reach the Piræus in eight, or at most nine, days from London. The very journey is full of beauty and interest. Athens, at any rate, will reward you for your pains. Go, then! in the spring if you can, or in the autumn, or at Christmas; but go—at whatever time—go to Athens! *Crede experto.*

A LASTING MEMORY.

THE night of my return I went to the Haymarket Theatre. After my long wanderings my arrival had disappointed me. It was a dull November Saturday. London was not full, and I found scarcely any of the greetings I had longed for and expected. My few relatives were absent; in the clubs I belonged to I only found strangers. Time hung heavy on my hands after the strange scenes of the past five

years. So I went to the Haymarket.

The little theatre had always been my fancy. I remembered it from very early youth—Farren, Webster, Buckstone, Howe, Holl, Mrs Nisbet, Mrs Glover, Julia Bennett, and Miss P. Horton. I have never been a great theatre-goer or devotee of the drama, and my knowledge of theatrical history is pretty well confined to the Haymarket.

I.

There was rather a long *entr'acte*, and my mind by instinct but mistily went over different occasions of play-going. Here I had been with A, and B, and C, in days when the end of the play was the beginning of the evening. Nearly opposite once existed a kind of hell upon earth called Bob Croft's, whither young men went merely because it was disreputable.

Once or twice in early youth I had been taken there, and I had not fancied it, for rough amusements had never been to my liking. At Mr Croft's an ordinary evening generally ended in a fight, and a not very extraordinary one in a police invasion. Here I had been kept from harm's way by Jock Campbell—since dead. Once—the remembrance followed quick—I had come to the theatre in a box with Jock Campbell and others. Among them was Lydia Mainwaring. The play was the same as that now being acted—the 'School for Scandal.' I glanced at the box we had occupied. It was empty. The curtain again drew up.

Another *entr'acte*. The box was still empty. I sighed. My

longed-for return had been such a disappointment. I had almost expected to see some friend in the box. Curious—in a box near it two hands in black gloves are holding an opera-glass directed towards me. The wrists seem familiar, small, but with hard wiry sinews expressing power and strength. The next time I look up, the hands and the glass are there no longer, and their owner has retired to the back of the box.

The play was over, and a well-known farce was about to commence. The stalls were half emptied, when a well-known face came and greeted me. It was Sir Esmé Egerton, once a school-fellow, then a clergyman—a vocation he had renounced on succeeding to a baronetcy and a property. He was a kindly, dull man.

"Westerham," he said, "I had no idea you were in London."

"I have only just returned after nearly five years' wandering in the two Americas."

"I knew you were travelling somewhere, but no one ever heard from you."

"I have so few people to write to," I answered, "and no one wrote to me. I have often been beyond the range of all news, public or private."

"Then, I daresay you never heard of my marriage? Come up and make the acquaintance of my wife."

He took me to the box in which I had seen the black gloves.

"My dear, I don't think you ever knew my old friend Lord Westerham, though I believe you come from the same country and bear the same name. He has just returned from South America."

Lady Egerton bowed for a moment without a word. Then, as though to make reparation, she said, "I am always glad, Esmé, to see your friends. Welcome home, I should say, Lord Westerham. I know you already from Esmé and others."

It was the same voice and the same gesture as before—a mixture of defiance and submission, of resentment and fear. To Esmé her bearing was affectionate and caressing, almost compassionate and full of gratitude.

But to me Lydia Mainwaring showed no sign of recognition.

"I was surprised to hear of Sir Esmé's marriage just now. I have had no letters for months, and have seen no newspapers except in the last few weeks."

"Won't you ask the wanderer to dine to-morrow?" suggested the husband.

"I hope you will come, Lord Westerham. Esmé will long to hear your adventures; and," she added more slowly, and with an emphasis perceptible only to myself—"and they will interest me too." She continued—"I feel a little chilly, Esmé, and should like to go home."

He begged me to escort his wife down-stairs while he looked out for the carriage.

When alone she said no word of recognition or reminiscence.

"You must have seen the play before, Lord Westerham."

"Once," I replied, "a long time ago, from the box next to this one."

"Then you will remember to-morrow," she said, as she entered the carriage. "I know your promises are sacred. Good night."

II.

My youth was most unhappy. My mother had married a second time a Welsh clergyman, who had speculated on her family. She was the sister, and later the heir general, of Lord Westerham, who, having two boys and an encumbered estate, could do little for her, even if so inclined. The death of his two boys made but little change in his inclination, as it seemed to embitter his wife, a hard Scotch Puritan, towards those who were to succeed to the inheritance of her sons. Nor did it improve the disposition towards me of my step-

father. Small as were my prospects, they stood in the way of his son, my step-brother—an impulsive, choleric, sickly boy, who died before his father. But my early life and home were unhappy. My small patrimony was seized on by my step-father, who grudged me the food and shelter he gave me from my own money. Things could not last thus. At an early age I therefore found myself living in London with a distant cousin, a conveyancer, who gave me a latch-key, and allowed me to have my own way, under the guidance of

another distant relative, a sporting man and a scapegrace. It was under his patronage that I became acquainted with the establishment of Mr Robert Croft. It is a wonder to me now that I was not ruined in purse and reputation before I reached the age of nineteen. Fortunately, I disliked the society into which I was initiated, and after the first flattering assurance that I was "seeing life," I backed out of Mr Croft's intimate circle. Indeed I never entered into his establishment above two or three times—once with my cousin, who, having secured me the *entrée*, allowed me alone to improve the occasion. It was on my third and last appearance that I made the acquaintance of Jock Campbell.

After dining alone with the conveyancer, I left him to his work, went to the theatre, and sat in the stalls next Jock. I looked much younger than my age, which was not more than seventeen. When I left the theatre I crossed the Haymarket and passed up the little court which led to Croft's. I had engaged to meet my scapegrace cousin there. He had dazzled me with the promise of taking me to a scene of even greater bliss. At the door of Bob Croft's, waiting for it to be opened at the necessary signal, stood the tall, heavy, but well-proportioned form that had sat next me at the theatre. Looking at me as we entered, he said, in a tone of compassion, "Hillo! young man, you are beginning early." I half resented his remarks, and with an air of superiority I asked the waiter if Mr Alan M'Tavish had arrived.

"Alan M'Tavish!" Jock Campbell murmured to himself as, on learning that my cousin had not arrived, I walked into the first room.

The rooms were small and crowded. The gas flamed, but the

floors were sanded. The space was divided into boxes, of which only two sides were fenced off. The atmosphere was thick with smoke; and there was to be found the refuse of race-courses and singing-halls, with a large sprinkling of young men of the upper and middle classes, Guardsmen, and others who, like myself, imagined they were enjoying life.

Jock Campbell entered as a king, and was rapturously greeted by all the assembly.

He was a splendid fellow—tall, at least six feet four, muscular, with great breadth of shoulders, powerful arms, and a handsome, high-bred, fair-complexioned face, on which he wore a moustache—an ornament only known in those days to men who, like himself, were in the cavalry.

"Good night, Jock," the mob cried out.

"Good night," he responded, cheerily; and notwithstanding the vile surroundings, his presence and his voice showed the good there was in the man.

He was not more than four-and-twenty, and the days had not died out, now almost forgotten, when coarse debauchery was deemed the extreme of wit and good company. Spring-heeled Jacks wrenching off door-knockers, midnight surprises, fights in the street, attacks on the police,—these were the pleasures of many young men of the world now staid grandfathers and lights in their generation. Jock Campbell had fallen into these ways from high spirits rather than from depravity. He was full of energy, strong, handsome, and beloved—beaming with sympathy, which was enlisted by his companions for the moment, whether these were innocent or the reverse. Belonging to a regiment in which such pursuits were the vogue, he

plunged readily into them. But he was equally popular in ball-rooms with maiden aunts, or even little children, for he was only pleased with giving pleasure.

Waiting for my cousin, I called ostentatiously for a glass of "pale white," the synonym for brandy-and-water in an unlicensed institution. An inner feeling seemed to tell me that Jock Campbell had his eye on me; and half resentful, yet half fascinated, I followed him up-stairs with my brandy-and-water in my hand. The room was rather larger, as supper could be obtained there, and a table stood very nearly the whole length of the room, covered with a cloth spotted with gravy, beer, and strong drink. I sat down at an unoccupied corner of this, sipping my brandy-and-water and smoking a cigar, a newly-acquired accomplishment. A man with a broken nose named Shepherd, a betting man, sat at the other end. The rest of the room was crowded; for it was known Jock Campbell, who had a beautiful voice, would be asked to sing a song.

"Come, Jock—a song!" they all cried; and he trolled forth, in a rich, strong tenor, an Irish song with a rollicking chorus, in which the whole room joined.

"*Encore! encore!*" shouted the crowd.

"I 'ope the song won't be so noisy, captain," said Mr Bob Croft, "acos of the peelers."

"All right," said Jock Campbell, as he took a puff of his cigar, looking me straight in the face; and leaning his chin on his hand, he sang in a minor key, and in a low tone, a pathetic Scotch song. The effect was extraordinary. The crowd was hushed while he sang; and when he ended, the lost, hardened women present were crying and sobbing like children.

On myself the effect was electrical. I had often heard the song in my home, and had always been told that it was unpublished, and related to an event in our family history. It set me musing.

"Come, young man," said the broken-nosed ruffian at the end of the table; "don't you know it's your duty to stand the company with champagne round?"

I was quite dazed with the speech.

"If you go wool-gathering, young man," continued Shepherd, "I'll bring you to, soon enough."

"Don't be too hard on the youngster, Tim Shepherd," said Jock Campbell.

"If he don't stand champagne, I'll knock his head off," replied the bully.

"No, you won't, Tim," rejoined Jock. "A big fellow like you can't hit a child like that."

"No, you can't, Tim," said the company. "We don't want no champagne."

"You shall have some, however," declared Jock Campbell; and he ordered half-a-dozen of Mr Croft, who brought it up himself.

By this time Jock Campbell had come near me.

"You must take a glass, youngster," he said, "if only for the sake of my song. Do you know it?"

"Yes," I answered. "In my family it is known as the song of Lydia Mainwaring, the Welsh girl who loved the Scotchman."

"Where do you live, my boy? You had better go home."

"I am waiting for some one."

"Alan M'Tavish won't come here to-night. He has been taken to a spenging-house. You had better leave this, as there is sure to be a row soon. Can I give you a lift?"

"I live in Baker Street."

"What! with old Calvert M'Tavish? It is not far out of my way to the barracks."

His brougham was standing at the door, and he took me home.

"Don't go any more to Bob Croft's," he said at parting. "Trust my word, it is not good for you, and my name is Jock Campbell. We shall meet soon."

III.

Alan M'Tavish was soon set free from the sponging-house. Calvert was rich, and his mission seemed to be the release of Alan from arrest. He was a quaint, kind-hearted, yet selfish old man, who had discovered the secret that immediate compliance saved a great deal of trouble. His only hobby was his profession, which had produced, and was producing, a good deal of money. To a great part of this his few relatives seemed welcome. Alan helped himself freely, and was only arrested when Calvert was out of town. I was far more humble and contented myself with my small means—ample enough, as Calvert would not hear of my paying for bed or board.

"Who is Jock Campbell?" I asked of Alan.

"As good a fellow as ever lived. A captain in the —, and a kind of cousin of yours and mine. Did you ever hear the song of Lydia Mainwaring?"

"Yes, I have—often." Somehow or other I did not like to tell the manner in which I had last heard it.

"Well, since the loves of Lydia, and of Jock her lover, the names of Mainwaring and Campbell have been intertwined in almost every generation. You,—at least your mother is a Mainwaring. Lord Westerham has married a Campbell. But Lady Westerham has nearer Mainwaring relations than her husband. Jock Campbell is her nephew, and she has a girl living with her, half cousin, half dependant, whose name is Lydia Mainwaring, and whose relationship to Lord Westerham is scarcely appreciable."

"I wish I knew my relations," I said, with a sigh. "I have so few respectable acquaintances."

"Am I not sufficient?" asked Alan. "Well, perhaps I am not respectable," he replied in his turn. "You know," he went on to say, "the difficulty. Lady Westerham has a crotchet, and your stepfather is a brute. But you certainly should know more people. It won't do for your acquaintance to be confined to Calvert and myself. I'll think it over. Just lend me a couple of pounds."

IV.

Lord and Lady Westerham came to town, and Jock Campbell insisted on their asking me to dinner. Lord Westerham was a heavy, high-bred man, interested in agriculture, and deep in reviews and newspapers. Lady Westerham was the real figure round which was grouped the fam-

ily history. Aged, with grey hair under a cap, dressed in a great deal of rich silk and old laces, she was in every respect the *grande dame*. Her manners at first were somewhat assuring; but there was a hardness in her well-cut features, and a look almost ferocious in her eyes, over-

hung by bushy eyebrows, which impressed you very soon with the feeling almost of cruelty. She seldom smiled, and never laughed; and her eye, with an expression of command and triumph, was constantly searching the looks and watching the movements of Lydia Mainwaring.

It was impossible to see this girl without pitying her. She was very beautiful, but never appeared happy. Her eyes wore a startled look, like that of a deer on the alert—sometimes almost a look of terror. It was easy to learn the secret. Lady Westerham never left her alone, never omitted some phrase that must cut her to the heart. If she spoke to Jock Campbell or myself, she was bidden to leave the room. If absent, she was recalled and cross-questioned as to her doings. For Jock Campbell alone had Lady Westerham any affection. He was her nearest relation and her heir. It was principally on her income that Lord Westerham managed to keep up Castle Creasy, his house over the Scotch Border.

Even Lady Westerham's hard nature yielded to Jock's sunny presence. He seemed to have some dominating influence over her, which at times reduced her to silence in the middle of a cutting remark to Lydia. To him Lydia owed her few pleasures. When she went rarely to the theatre, it was with Jock and myself, under the chaperonage of Calvert M'Tavish.

To myself Lady Westerham was very gracious.

"I am glad to know you, Mr Masters," she said, with a slight Scotch accent, "for we are doubly cousins; and in Scotland more than elsewhere we hold the doctrine that blood is thicker than water. I am Campbell and Mainwaring, and nothing else. This girl is a Main-

waring, and her mother was a Campbell, and that's why she lives here, Mr Masters."

"I suppose she is a cousin also?" I said, shaking hands with the poor girl, and rather glad to claim relationship with her.

"Yes, in a kind of way. Lydia, you had better go through the accounts."

Without a word Lydia left the room.

A year or two after my acquaintance with the Westerhams my mother died, and I became the heir to the title and such estate as went with it. At the bidding of Lord Westerham, I assumed the name of Mainwaring, and in the winter of the same year went with Jock Campbell to Castle Creasy.

"Theo," he said to me in the train, after smoking in silence, "I want to take you into confidence." The tone in which he spoke impressed me. It seemed as though some turning-point of my life was presenting itself.

"We'll talk business," he said. "I have been thinking over matters, and I find that, barring my little sister in the country and Lady Westerham, I have no nearer relation than you. Now, I am not going to live long. My heart is shaky, and I know it; and I have no one to whom, as much as to yourself, I can bequeath my confidences. My little sister is well provided for. She had exactly the same fortune as myself, and the accumulations will be considerable when she comes of age. I therefore intend dividing my own fortune into two parts—one I leave to her and one to you."

I made some gesture of deprecation.

"Don't interrupt me, and don't think I shall leave you your share absolutely. I hope not to die just

yet; but when I do, you will receive a letter making a charge on the money I leave you. This is what lawyers call a secret trust. It is not legally binding; but you, I know, will respect it. I do not even ask you to give me your word. You will know the letter to be genuine both from my

handwriting and from two seals—this one I wear on my finger, and another with the initials ‘L. M.’”

The communication was so sad-denying that I could not find a word of reply. Probably my silence pleased him more than phrases. I hope so.

v.

Castle Creasy is a very lonely place. The house is built in granite, with a moat round it, now dry and grown in grass. The ghost of Lydia Mainwaring haunts one portion of it—a long corridor, with bachelors’ rooms, and ending in a billiard-room. The house was more gloomy than necessary, owing to its half-tenantless state. It was rare that any visitors were admitted to the house, partly from the want of income, partly from the almost ascetic seclusion of its masters since the death of the two sons. One custom alone partly relieved the oppressive character of the residence. Gas—not long introduced into country-houses—was kept burning all night in different portions of the building. This was absolutely necessary in case of any night alarm, and made up for the small number of the servants. Jock and I walked through the large gloomy hall.

“There is the heroine of the song,” he said. I looked up, and either in imagination or reality saw a striking likeness of the present Lydia Mainwaring. We went up an oaken staircase and passed a long gallery. Then we were received by the master and mistress of the house. Lydia Mainwaring was with them, her eyes more startled and fear-stricken than before. The likeness to the picture again struck me.

Lord Westerham received us in a kind but somewhat reserved manner. Lady Westerham kissed Jock on the forehead. Then she turned to me and said—

“I must bid you welcome, Mr Mainwaring, though you will enjoy the inheritance of my sons.”

Lydia shook hands with us with a look as though she feared a blow.

“Perhaps you will go to your rooms to dress,” interposed Lady Westerham. “They are in the bachelors’ wing. Lydia, ring the bell.”

Jock seemed half inclined to make some joking observation, but the whole atmosphere was too chilling and oppressive, and we followed the butler to our rooms.

The corridor in which they were situated was entered by a flight of four or five steps. Over the entrance there was a dim gas-light. The same over the door of the billiard-room opposite. It contained twelve rooms, six on either side. These were furnished in the rough style with which bachelors used formerly to be treated.

There was a bed very little better than a ploughman’s, with a dimity curtain. Patches of carpet were placed here and there. The wash-hand-stand was of common painted deal, and the dressing-table was covered with an unbleached cloth, on which stood a small, plain looking-glass. The windows had shut-

ters, but only two plain calico curtains; and a battered tin bath stood in one corner.

"My servant will look after Mr Mainwaring," said Jock to the butler. "Which room would you like, Theo?" he continued.

I mechanically took the first on the left. Jock took the next.

"We must have a fire, Waters," said Jock Campbell to the butler.

"My lady has said nothing about it," answered the latter.

"Well, Waters, I'll take the risk upon myself, and pay you for the coals in case of necessity."

Jock spoke half in jest, but it was clear that the jest was half in earnest.

As our stay continued, it became no easier. Hitherto I had never shot, and Jock initiated me into the mysteries of the art, for which I had contracted a passion. I sometimes thought he seemed to tire himself to please me by staying out as long as possible, and more than once he seemed worn out on our return; but he was so unselfish that he appeared for my sake to be as greedy of the amusement as myself. One evening we were later than usual, and when we returned to dinner he was deadly pale. Lydia looked at him with an anxiety I had never before seen, and her gaze of terror intensified.

We never sat up very late, and that night we were both tired.

"Good night, Theo, boy," said Jock, cheerfully; "sleep well, and God bless you."

I always had slept well, but at Castle Creasy I slept better than usual after all my exercise and out-of-door life.

But I was restless. Perhaps I had overstrained my nerves or had drunk too much whisky. I slept, but not soundly—that kind of sleep in which the senses are very acute. It must have been about one o'clock

when I started up in my bed. I had distinctly heard the entrance-door of the passage open. Then there were thuds as though some heavy substance was falling from step to step. Then I heard a heavy sigh and a sweeping sound, as though the same heavy load was being dragged slowly along the passage, till it stopped for a moment. I could resist my feelings no longer. I leaped up from my bed and opened the door, and I saw Lydia Mainwaring scared and wan, the perspiration streaming down her cheeks, dragging along the floor the dead body of Jock Campbell. He was dressed in his evening waistcoat and trousers, with a lighter smoking-jacket I had often seen. His smoking-cap had fallen off, and lay near the steps. My eyes caught Lydia's. She did not say a word, but lifting her hand with a meaning I never conceived a gesture could express, and gazing at me with her look of terror and entreaty, I felt I knew her prayer. I returned to my room.

The dragging noise still continued till it came opposite Jock's room. I heard it in the room itself. Then there was a pause. Meanwhile I had not gone to bed again, but hastily putting on some clothes, I waited what was to come. In about a quarter of an hour my own door opened, and Lydia beckoned to me silently.

She said but a few words in a whisper so low that, except for the silence round, it would have been inaudible.

"He died in my room," she said. This was all.

The next day Jock Campbell was found lying dead on his bed. Nothing in the room was disturbed. His cap lay near him. His clothes bore no trace of the ghastly journey.

The authorities who investigated the matter reported that he "died

by the visitation of God." It was a true verdict, as the heart-disease of which he had spoken to me had killed him.

In the night before his funeral, at the hour of his death, I heard the door open once again. Again Lydia walked down the steps, and again came to my room. Together we went and prayed by the side of his coffin.

"Cousin Theo," she said to me, "you know that he loved you as we both loved him. I must never see you again if I can help it. Never seek me; and if we meet, let us do so as strangers. I ask you this favour on his coffin."

I pressed her hand and gave her the promise. Then she kissed the coffin and glided noiselessly from the corridor. I did not see her again.

The next night Lady Westerham sent for me. She said to me hardly—

"The grave has closed over Jock. He is gone. My sons are gone. Doubtless you will enjoy

their inheritance. I do not love you, but I am not unjust. Let us never meet again."

Next day I left the house. Calvert M'Tavish was Jock's executor, and his will was as he had announced it. But the letter never reached me.

I was nearly twenty-one, and Calvert M'Tavish, my next friend, agreed to my travelling. I had always longed for adventure, and my first journey was to the deserted cities of Central America.

At Guatemala I had heard of the death of Lord Westerham, followed shortly after by that of his wife. The latter had left me her fortune, which was not very large, as her will expressed it, "out of pure justice." It was charged with an annuity for Lydia Mainwaring.

I knew I was well off, but nothing more. Out of Jock Campbell's legacy I had put by one half religiously as a reserve against the secret trust, which, as yet, had never been communicated to me.

VI.

I dined, as invited, the next day with Sir Esmé and Lady Egerton.

There was but one guest beside myself. It was Jock Campbell's sister. She is now my wife. The day after our marriage Lady Egerton enclosed me a letter. It was the secret trust of Jock Campbell.

It ran thus:—

"DEAREST THEO,—This is my secret trust. If Lydia Mainwaring is ever in want of money, give her half my legacy to you. She is the one love of my life.

"If you die without heirs, bequeath the sum I have left you to my sister. It is my dying wish that you should marry her. Good-bye, dear young cousin.—Your affectionate cousin,
JOCK."

BUSH-LIFE IN QUEENSLAND.—PART X.

CHAPTER XXX.—A RAID OF THE MYALLS.

THE months flew round rapidly in the new country. Shearing was past, and things were beginning to assume a more homely aspect on John's station and at Lilianfield, as Stone had christened his new possession. There was much intercourse between John and the Stones, and he often rode over to Lilianfield during the wet weather; and with the intuitive quickness of her sex, Bessie guessed before long his love for some one; and he at last confided to her his secret, feeling much relieved in being able to talk about Ruth to one who could understand his feelings.

How different was the aspect of things this wet season compared with the last!

Stations were formed for nearly a hundred and fifty miles outside John's run, and he began to regard himself quite as an inside squatter. His neighbours greatly assisted him in keeping his cattle together, turning them back, and sending over notice whenever they were discovered making away; and, in like manner, he performed the same good office for them. Things soon began to wear quite a settled look.

He had also been most fortunate in his relations with the blacks. From the outset it had been his principle to leave them unmolested unless provoked to adopt severer measures; and he had been enabled as yet to keep them away without bloodshed. A more intimate acquaintance with the ways and customs of the whites had produced a certain amount of contempt for them among the Myalls; and here and there a murder of a white man or two in the district, or a

wholesale spearing of cattle, announced that a war of aggression, and also of retaliation, had commenced. Indeed the behaviour of some of the whites was reprehensible in the highest degree; and a few of the more brutal spirits thought as little of "knocking over a nigger" at sight as they would have done of shooting a kangaroo.

This was, however, far from being a general feeling; and notwithstanding the charges brought against the pioneer squatters in the southern newspapers, by, for the most part, ignorant and sentimental writers, those who were acquainted with them, and with the dangers and provocations of their daily lives, will admit that the greater number acted with temperate forbearance towards those tribes of aboriginals with whom they came in contact.

It was indeed both instructive and amusing to investigate the surroundings of some of those who espoused most loudly the cause of "the poor black." Some were comfortably settled southern squatters, whose fathers or predecessors had once been pioneers themselves, and who, in bequeathing to their followers the country they had wrested from the original inhabitants, had, along with it, transmitted to them a complicity and share in any injustice and guilt exercised in its acquisition. Others were blatant town politicians, anxious to develop the "resources of the country," who, by neglecting no opportunity of furthering immigration, discovering new gold-fields, and exploring fresh pastoral country, urged the energetic white men to seek their fortunes in places where

they must of necessity come in contact with their black brethren,—a contact which history shows to have been ever attended with conflict.

A few were ministers of the Gospel, who, although shaking their heads in sorrowful disapproval of the manner in which the "poor blacks" were driven from their hunting-grounds in order to make room for the white man's sheep, never hesitated to acquire, if possible, on favourable terms, land thus appropriated,—or who were to be seen, armed with carbine or pistol, making their way from one little bush community to another, for the purpose of collecting money. The majority, however, were well-meaning men, but thoroughly ignorant of the state of matters, and of the real feelings and behaviour of most of those whose actions they condemned.

Things, as we have said, bore a cheerful and bright aspect; and the rapidly increasing number of his young stock led our hero to look forward hopefully to the time when he might clear off the heavy debt which at present embarrassed him, and settle down into a breeder of pure stock, after the manner of his friend Fitzgerald. Stone had also done very well; his lambings had been good,—indeed they could hardly have been otherwise on the splendid country he owned; but the heavy expense of carriage, wages, &c., materially affected his profit. He felt that the roughness of the life was by no means suited to his young wife, and had made up his mind to sell Lilianfield on the first fair offer.

In pursuance of this scheme he had started on a trip down to the coast to meet a would-be purchaser, leaving Bessie with her infant at home. A married overseer, whose wife attended to the cooking, resided in a cottage close by, and Bessie's

plucky heart would not permit her to detain her husband from his important business. The overseer was a good enough servant under the direction of his master, but foolhardy and totally incapable of being intrusted with any charge by himself. Stone left with the intention of returning in about ten days, or twelve at the most.

Everything was safe; there seemed no possibility of anything going wrong at home; and if Bessie was in want of advice or help of any sort, she could send over for John.

So thinking, and hoping the result of his journey would render all fears unnecessary in future, Stone had started. John had been made aware of his friend's intended absence, and would have ridden over to see Bessie, but had been prevented owing to the sudden appearance of blacks on his run, who not only disturbed his cattle, but speared a number of them, and, among others, a valuable herd bull.

He had just returned from viewing the remains of the slain animals, and was sitting musing on the best course to pursue, when Stone's blackboy, a little fellow about twelve years old, dashed up on a reeking horse.

"Missa Wess, black fellow kill 'em altogether. White fellow 'long o' Lillanfill!"

"What name?" (what do you say?) roared John, jumping up.

"Yohi," said the boy, still sitting on his horse, "altogether bong" (dead), "one fellow bail bong" (one not dead).

"Which one bail bong?" demanded John, in terror.

"Missis bail bong, ony *caubawn* prighten" (Missis not dead, only dreadfully frightened).

"Blucher!" vociferated John at the top of his voice. (Gunpowder had been sent home to his tribe at his special request.)

Blucher appeared in a moment. He had grown to be a smart, active, intelligent lad, with his energies always strung to the utmost, as if waiting to dash forward and execute his master's orders as soon as communicated.

"Blucher," said John, "black fellow kill him white fellow."

Blucher's eyes glistened and started forward, the whites of them becoming ominously bloodshot.

"Which way?" he asked.

"Along o' Lilianfield. Get up the horses."

In a moment Bluey was mounted upon the other boy's horse; and soon gathering up the paddocked horses, he caught and saddled his own and his master's.

Arming himself with Snider and revolver, and providing his attendant with the same, John mounted, and with his two companions was soon galloping towards the scene of the disaster. As they proceeded, the usually smiling downs seemed to tell a tale of horror and bloodshed. Between the road and the blue mountain-ranges a huge bush-fire raged fiercely, the smuts from which, though many miles away, floated down upon them as they tore along. The sky was lurid, and a dull roar struck their ears, intimating the extent and fury of the conflagration.

Blucher spurs alongside of his master, and points out that the road is covered with naked footprints. Presently they come across scattered mobs of sheep, apparently lost, and approach a sheep-station hut, to which the flock evidently belongs. John, still at a gallop, turns off the road to examine the hut, and Blucher draws his carbine, looking about him eagerly.

Yes; it is just as the blackboy expected. There lies one old shepherd on his face, across the threshold of the door, pierced by a couple

of spears, and his head ghastly with tomahawk-wounds.

John does not feel at all surprised. Somehow it seems quite natural. He has no time to do anything at present, and is about riding away, when the little boy calls from the gateway of one of the yards.

"Here 'nother one white fellow."

Yes, so there is,—it is the mate of the first man. He lies doubled across a log, his head battered in in a most frightful manner, his old blue-serge shirt thick with gore, the jagged "nullah-nullah" which was used in the atrocious deed broken on the ground near him.

"Come along," shouts John, and once more he is hastening along towards Lilianfield.

As he dashes up to the door of the barred-up house, it opens, and Bessie rushes out dishevelled and pale, with her infant in her arms. She holds out her hand, but she cannot utter a word, and John has to lead her to a seat, where her feelings relieve themselves in a flood of tears. As soon as she could speak, she explained to John that soon after her husband left, the overseer had met some blacks on the run, and in opposition to the treatment adopted towards them by Stone, he had encouraged them about the head-station. For a few days they had behaved themselves with propriety; but Bessie, fearful for the life of herself and child, had barricaded the house she resided in, and determined to await her husband's return. The overseer and his wife, on the contrary, saw no danger, and the woman could not be persuaded to sleep in the same house with Bessie. What occasioned the outbreak Bessie did not know, but a number of savages made a rush upon the unfortunate woman, killing her at once. They

then tried to enter the house in which she herself dwelt, and were only deterred upon her firing two or three shots from her husband's revolver, which, urged by desperation, notwithstanding her total ignorance and dread of firearms, she succeeded in. The little blackboy had been away playing in the creek; and frightened by the wild shouts, which enabled him to guess what was being enacted, he lay hidden among the long-bladed grass tussocks until night, when, stealing out quietly, he made his way to the house, and finding his mistress alive, was directed by her to seek out John.

Bessie had seen nothing of the overseer, and feared that he had also paid for his foolhardiness with his life.

John soon made up his mind as to what had to be done. Writing a hasty note requesting the presence of the detachment urgently, he despatched the boy once more to the "officer in charge of the native mounted police barracks," near Byng's station, trusting that he might not be absent on patrol. Inditing another to the manager of an adjoining sheep-station, he put it into the hands of Blucher, instructing him to return with all haste.

He then set to work to dig a grave for the poor woman who had fallen a victim to the bloodthirsty aborigines, with Bessie, whose nerves were dreadfully shaken, for a companion. So much occupied

was he, that he did not hear her joyous exclamation of surprise as her husband galloped up furiously, and springing off his horse, folded her to his heart; and his happiness was scarcely less than Bessie's when Stone stepped to the edge of the grave and called to him. Something had made Stone uneasy—what it was he could not say; but without waiting to finish his business he had hurried back, unable to rest until he had once more seen his wife and child. As he drew near his home his vague fears grew stronger, and the smoke-laden atmosphere seemed to fill him with a dread, to which the body of the overseer, lying a mutilated trunk on the road, gave only too fearful a reality.

All was well now, however, Bessie thought; and that evening, late, they had plenty of assistance in the shape of the Super of the run to which John had sent Blucher, who came over with three or four men.

Next morning early, Stone put Bessie in the buggy, and started over with her for the friendly manager's dwelling, where he had arranged she should remain for a week or two. John and the rest busied themselves in burying the overseer and the poor shepherds, and in collecting the sheep, which, fortunately, had remained in the vicinity of the yard. These they left in charge of three of the men, well armed, and then returned to Lilianfield head-station.

CHAPTER XXXI.—THE BLACK TROOPERS—PURSUIT AND ATTACK.

They had not been long back when two or three laden pack-horses passed the window, and, going to the door, they saw a body of ten native troopers drawn up in a line, and heard the command,

"Dismount," from the officer in charge, who thereupon came up and shook hands with John and his friend, with whom he was a favourite. He was about twenty-seven or twenty-eight years of age,

by birth an Irishman, very gentlemanly in his manners, and of good family. Judicious and firm in the management of his command, he was one of the best officers in the service of Government, and his tact in managing his boys prevented desertions and kept them in a state of constant efficiency. He had been transferred to his present district from a barracks near a large gold-field, where a slight *hauteur* of manner had rendered him somewhat unpopular among the roughs, who believe in the glorious maxim of "Liberty, fraternity, and equality."

"Very glad to meet you, West, but sorry for the occasion. Nothing happened to Mrs Stone, I trust? I don't see her about."

"No, thank God!" said John; and he gave a short account of what had occurred.

"Ah! just so," returned the mounted trooper; "one-half of the murders are occasioned by foolhardiness and an overweening trust in the generosity of the blacks. I'll just walk down and see the rations served out, and return." So saying, he walked down to where his men had erected their tents.

Stone returned late in the evening; but as he felt the urgent need of looking after his other shepherds, and as their friend the superintendent could not longer spare the time from his own business, it was arranged that John alone should accompany the troopers in their pursuit. To tell the truth, John was not sorry for the opportunity thus afforded of striking wholesome terror into the tribe, which, notwithstanding his peaceful behaviour towards them, was beginning to cause him serious trouble and loss.

The troopers were, of course, delighted at the prospect of a colli-

sion with their countrymen, and an unusual degree of activity prevailed in the camp,—so much so, that next morning before sunrise, while Stone and his guest were getting through their hasty breakfast, the corporal of the troop made his appearance at the door, and stiffening himself into an erect military attitude, saluted gravely, reporting at the same time, "Every sing all righ, Mahmy."*

"Very good, Howard," returned his superior, whose name was Blake.

All were soon in readiness to start, and Blucher brought up his master's horse and his own, his eyes glistening with envy as he noted "the pomp and circumstance of glorious war" which attended the marshalling of his sable brethren.

The black troopers presented a very warlike and efficient front, as they stood up in line, each one by his horse's head, awaiting the order to mount.

The blue jackets, with their red collars and cuffs, became the dark complexions exceedingly well, and their wild faces were brought out into fierce relief by their curtained white cap-covers. White riding-trousers and serviceable leggings protected their extremities, and black leathern belts with large cartridge-pouches hung across their shoulders. Under each saddle lay a large blue military saddle-cloth bound with red. A change of clothing and a blanket, rolled in a strong piece of American duck, were strapped over the pommel of their saddles, and a Snider carbine hung on the right side.

Blake took his horse from the orderly who stood holding it, and walking forward a little, quietly gave the command—

* Mahmy or Mammie, the name given by black police to their officers.

“Prepare to mount. Mount”—motioning them at the same time in the direction in which they themselves knew they had to go.

After the first hundred yards the men broke the stiff cavalry order which they at first preserved, and rode at ease—two being, however, specially detailed to look after the pack-horses bearing the rations and spare ammunition, with the tents of the troop.

John and Blake brought up the rear at some distance.

The sub-inspector was a good-looking young man, with refined features and a dark complexion. A short moustache shaded the upper lip, and an occasional lisp gave a piquancy to his modulated voice, indicating a boyishness which its owner was far from possessing. He wore no uniform, with the exception of a white-covered forage-cap; but his horse was accoutred in a similar manner to that of his men, and in addition he wore a revolver in his belt. They made their way towards the sheep station where the unfortunate shepherds had been killed—all the tracks having been ascertained to run in that direction. It soon turned out, from examination of circumstances, that the men were slaughtered merely because, in their retreat, the blacks had happened to drop across them.

Blake now halted his men, and ordered two to the front for the purpose of following up tracks, desiring the others to keep behind him and John with the pack-horses. It would have been a work of some difficulty to trace the retreating mob from the hut, owing to the bush-fire which had swept over the country, but for the fact that the tracks of two or three who had lagged behind were discovered making over the burnt ground after their tribe.

The soft, powdered, black and grey *débris* of the long grass revealed the naked footprints distinctly; and steadily the advanced-guard followed them over the wide plain, and on to the banks of the river, where it issued from the hilly country, nearly fifteen miles above Lillianfield, and not very much farther from John's own run.

The tracks were two days old, and the boys pushed on rapidly but cautiously—eagerly listening to the slightest sound, and examining, with the most careful scrutiny, the leaves and twigs disturbed by the light-heeled Myalls in their retreat. Nothing escaped them; and whenever an important fact was discovered tending to throw light upon the particular tribe of blacks, or their numbers, or motives, the trooper who observed it would ride up and report the matter to his officer.

In about five miles farther they came upon a deserted camp. The numerous fires proved that it had been occupied by a large number of natives; and the bark gunyahs, and the heaps of ashes, denoted that they had resided in it for some time. Many trees were stripped of their bark in the neighbourhood, and beaten paths ran down to the water. Circular ovens, formed of large stones, for roasting meat, were in plenty; and here and there the presence of bullock-bones told John that his herd had supplied the camp with several good feeds. Smaller heaps of grey ashes, and heaps of mussel-shells surrounding the main hearth, pointed out where the warrior's wives and children had slept around him; and in the neighbourhood of each lay a big round stone or two, for the purpose of pounding up the kernels of the nuts, whose husks lay in small piles about the camp. A few broken gourds, a broken spear or two, and a cracked

coolaman,* were to be seen here and there; and small irregular pieces of the soft, thick bark of the ti-tree were scattered round the fires, on one or two of which a brand still smouldered.

The detachment halted and camped for the night about a mile farther on. There was a certain amount of romance about the pursuit of the savages, which awoke a sentiment of pleasure in John's nature; and the feeling of being the hunter was much more agreeable than that of being the hunted one, a position which, in connection with this very tribe, he had experienced several times.

The night was bright and clear, and the moon was at the full. The fire-lights falling upon the stacked carbines and military accoutrements, formed a fitting background for the circle of wild-eyed and fiercely whiskered and moustachioed troopers, and gave a picturesqueness to the camp. Blucher sat in the centre, an entranced listener to endless stories, the drift of which John could guess from the oft-repeated sounds of "Poo'oh, poo'oh,"—as the narrator imitated the firing of carbines, amid roars of laughter from the rest. John shared Blake's tent;—their conversation was prolonged until near midnight, and on going outside before preparing for sleep, they were astonished to find that a total eclipse of the moon had taken place. The boys were all asleep, but were soon awakened by the orderly who answered Blake's summons. They stared at the moon in wonder, and discussed matters in awestruck whispers.

"Ask them," said Blake, "what has occasioned this darkness."

The man left, and after some time returned, saying the rest were unanimous that the "devil-devil"

had caused it, in order the more easily to catch 'possums.

"No doubt," returned Blake; and soon John and he were fast asleep.

Next morning all hands were in their saddles by sunrise, and the pursuit was recommenced. The travelling was in some places very difficult, it being necessary to cross the river frequently, owing to the tortuous nature of its course; and the fording of the stream was made very dangerous by the large rocks and slippery boulders which lay in its bed, causing the horses to stumble or their shod hoofs to slide. The numerous tracks in the river-sand plainly showed that the main body of the retreating natives had followed the water-course; and the peculiar smell from the small fresh-burnt patches of river-grass here and there, told that they could not be very far away. Camps of small parties, all making after the main mob, were frequently found; and the heaps of mussel-shells, fish-bones, and remains of fresh-water turtle about them, proved that it did not take them long to provide a liberal supply of food for a mid-day meal. That they were in dread of being chased was evident by the long stages between their principal resting-places. The troopers' excitement now gave them much the air of kangaroo-hounds looking about for their game; and one of them, after staring fixedly ahead of him for some time, rode up and reported that he saw a camp-smoke in the distance. Blake now called a halt, and took the opinion of the troop. They were all keen bushmen, and acquainted with every artifice of bush warfare.

"Do you all see the smoke, boys?" inquired Blake.

"Yes, sir; good way ovah dere," answered the corporal, Howard,

* Native vessel for fetching water.

a large-bodied, active, bloodthirsty-looking man, with a long drooping moustache. John followed Blake's gaze, and shaking his head slowly from side to side, in imitation of the troopers, was thereby enabled clearly to discover a faint column of smoke rising afar off. They now proceeded more cautiously, passing as they did some places where, from the fresh wood-shavings from newly-made nullah-nullahs, and recently-cut holes in trees covered with 'possum-hair or owls' feathers, they felt assured the tribe had passed that morning early. Numbers of crows also indicated that the offenders were not far ahead, these birds always following in the wake of a native camp.

Blake once more commanded a halt, and ordering two of his most intelligent boys to strip naked, he sent them ahead to scout, their uncovered forage-caps, however, being carried in their belts, to serve if necessary as a distinction between them and the Myalls.

Pushing rapidly onwards, the spies disappeared in the forest, and the troop moved slowly after them. In about an hour's time they were met returning, and in excited whispers reported that they had come in sight of the wild men's camp. They further stated that their presence had been observed by the watchful eyes of one of the natives, who, however, mistook them in the distance for two of his own companions, signalling to them with his hand to join him, which they, however, managed to avoid; and under the pretence of looking for *chewgah-bag*, they made their way into the river-bed, and thence back to the troop.

A rapid description of the situation of the camp enabled Blake to make a proper disposition of his men in attacking it. The Myalls were, it appeared, settled for the

night in the sandy bed of the river, which there flowed between the rocky eminences, densely clothed with scrub.

First of all dismounting and turning out the horses, the troopers stripped themselves of everything but their shirts, caps, and cartridge-belts.

Then addressing them shortly, Blake rehearsed his plan of attack. Four boys were to advance stealthily on each side through the scrub and occupy the rocky heights. One of the four on each side was then to make his way to the river-banks, taking the camp in rear. As soon as these had effected a junction they were to advance, driving, if possible, the unsuspecting savages down the river into the teeth of Blake and John, who, with the two other troopers, were to bear the brunt of the shock.

This arrangement being thoroughly understood, the party started on foot, and shortly afterwards the faint cooys and shouts told them that the cruel murderers were all gathered together and resting after the toils of the chase, which, notwithstanding the rapidity of the retreat, they had not neglected. The thick bushes and shrubs growing in the river afforded a shelter to the small party who there awaited the signal which was to tell them that the camp was surrounded and the hour of retribution arrived.

At last it came. Boom—boom, broke upon the still evening air, and in a moment the river-gorge resounded with the wild war-cries of the men and the terrified clamour of the women and children.

"Look out, West! here they come," shouts Blake, as a dozen black figures, with hideous features under their streaming locks, burst upon them, armed with spears and nullah-nullahs.

Bang—bang, go a couple of carbines, and two of them drop on their tracks.

“Hu—hu—hu—hu—prrrrrr!—hah—hu—hu—hio—prrrrrr!” yell the Myalls, sending two or three volleys of spears and boomerangs at their unexpected assailants.

They have as yet had no experience of the superiority of the white man's weapons, and make a stand for a little, but they soon perceive that it is futile. Here and there the carbines crack among the rocks and bushes, and at last cease. The black fellows have succeeded in getting away or in hiding themselves in the crevices of the rocks. Blake and his party advance to examine the camp. As they go along, Howard, the corporal, who has distinguished himself particularly, almost stumbles over a little, fat, round pickaninny, (child) rolled up in a bundle of bark; and picking it up hastily, he carries it along with him. Here are a group of ugly old black hags on the ground, clamorously yelling, and gashing their heads with sharp stones. “It is a pity,” says Blake, pointing to them, “that their sex prevents their punishment; they are always the instigators of any outrage committed by the men.” Howard deposits the infant in the lap of one of them, admonishing her to look after it and cease her roaring, and makes off to join his fellows in pursuit of other male blacks. Everywhere are children and gins sitting among the bushes, or endeavouring to steal away with all they can muster together. Ordering a trooper to collect them and stand sentry, Blake directs John's attention to a couple of buckets and some tin billies, besides axes and tomahawks, which have been carried away from Lilianfield. One demon-like old woman wears a small shawl tied around

her loins, which John recognises as having belonged to the overseer's wife. Their own dilly-bags have nothing of value or interest in them. Some locks of hair rolled up in thin slips of bark, probably belonging to a deceased friend; a piece or two of crystal for magic purposes; two or three bones and some fat, which the troopers, who, from their own upbringing, are authorities on such things, pronounce human; a primitive-looking bone fish-hook or two, and some string, made of opossums' hair,—that is all.

Shouts of laughter are now heard from the rocks on the opposite side of the river, and John and Blake make their way over to discover the cause. Now and then there is an interval of silence, which is immediately followed by an uncontrollable scream of hearty laughter from several voices.

Just before John and his friend reach the spot, two shots are fired in rapid succession, and on joining the police, they find them standing round the body of a native.

“What were you laughing at, Howard?” demands his officer.

“Oh, Mahmy! we find this one wild fellow lyin' down gammonin' dead. I know that one not dead. I no see hole belongin' to bullet; and Jack and Turkey here” (pointing to two other troopers), “been take a long piece grass, and tickle that one along a inside noss, and then dead black fellow been ‘tsee, tsee’” (imitating sneezing), “and me an' altogether *cabawn* laff. By-and-by that fellow get up an' want to run away, an' me been chewt him.”

Blake turned away, muttering, “It's no use saying anything to them, they wouldn't understand it.” A search resulted in the discovery of eight dead bodies. Some more had probably been wounded, and had escaped.

The slain aboriginals lay in various attitudes. Here was one stretched on his back, his spears in one hand, and his stone tomahawk in the other, the small pupil yet gleaming from amid the yellow whiteness of the half-closed glassy eye—the little hole in his dusky bosom indicating the road which his wild spirit had taken on leaving its earthly habitation. There another on his face, hands and legs spread out; a third had rolled to the bottom of a ravine, where, still clutching his tomahawk, he retained a diabolically hideous and truculent expression of countenance.

All articles of any value were by Blake's orders collected.

A large fire having been lighted, the spoils of the camp were by its means destroyed: spears were broken, and stone tomahawks gathered and carried away, to be thrown into the deepest pool of the river. These arrangements having been carried out, the party returned to where their horses had been turned out, and camped for the night.

With dawn, all hands were once more astir, and again the inexorable sub-inspector continued his chase, and by dint of persevering tracking, and much climbing, he succeeded in discovering and again surprising the encampment, which had been shifted much farther back, in a wild and almost inaccessible part of the mountain-

range,—explaining to John the great necessity there was for convincing the natives that it was possible to follow and harass them in their most formidable strongholds.

In rushing this camp one of the boys was wounded by a spear, which, penetrating the thick part of the leg, nearly cut the main artery; another received a large gash on the thigh from a boomerang; and John himself narrowly escaped death at the hands of a big black fellow, who was shot by Blake. Blucher behaved with much pluck, and earned great praise for coolness from his companions. Once more the camp was sacked, and the spoil destroyed, and mounting their horses, the avenging band began their homeward march, and next evening, about sundown, came in sight of Lilianfield. As soon as the buildings were observed, the corporal rode up to Blake, saying, "Please, sir, boy want to sing out."

"Very well, Howard, they may do so," answered the former.

Presently arose in concert a tremulous cry, gradually increasing in intensity, and winding up with fierce whoops. It had a horrible blood-curdling effect, and the black horsemen kept it up until their arrival—such being the customary announcement made by them and their fellows of having returned covered with the blood of the slain.

CHAPTER XXXII.—LOVE IN THE BUSH.

We must hurry rapidly over the next few years of John West's bush experience, which, though years of toil and struggle, were marked by few incidents that would interest our readers. His friend Stone again took wing, and disposed of Lilianfield to a squat-

ter from Riverina in New South Wales, who had been charmed by the glorious extent of downs and plains in the new country. The departure of the Stones was a great loss to John. Their kindness and society had endeared them much to him; and had they been of his own

blood, he could not have loved them better. He was also disheartened at the failure of all his attempts to reopen a correspondence with Ruth. He had never received an answer to his letter; and although he made strenuous exertions through Fitzgerald, he could not discover any trace of her whereabouts.

His attention, however, was soon directed to affairs more immediately pressing. His partner, the elder Mr Fitzgerald, made up his mind to transform John's station into a sheep-run; and no arguments of West could induce him to alter his purpose. The cattle were mustered and sold, and John viewed their departure with a full heart. Once more came days of lost sheep, of anxious care and uncertainty. And his toil was soon turned into trouble. The country upon which his hardy cattle had thriven so well was not suited to the delicate merino. The constantly falling prices in the English and Continental wool-markets were reducing sheep-owners to the verge of despair, and John's charge and interest suffered with those of the rest. When it was too late Mr Fitzgerald became convinced of the mistake which he had made; but it would have involved too heavy a sacrifice now to have repaired the error, and John consented to hold on if possible, and await better times.

But it was heartless-work. After the wet season the long grass sprang up, and quickly seeding, caused the sheep to resemble pin-cushions. The sharp needle-like seeds stuck all over their bodies, injuring the skin, and when piercing to the heart, occasioned death. The swampy pastures caused foot-rot. In short, there was no end to the calamities against which he had to contend. The lambing seemed to be a farce, which custom alone rendered it necessary to ob-

serve. The bleating of a lamb jarred painfully on John's ears, its plaintive cry too surely foreboding the end awaiting it.

He had parted with the cattle about two years, and was in the middle of his sheep struggles when the mailman one day rode up, bringing him a letter from the younger Fitzgerald. Expecting to find it as usual relating to station affairs, he threw it aside to peruse at leisure, and continued the work he had in hand. That evening, drawing his correspondence towards him with a sigh, he tore open his friend's letter first, and commenced to master its details, much after the fashion of a boy learning his lesson. But his stolidity passed away; he gradually became excited; and eventually, passion overcoming his accustomed composed and self-reliant manner, he started up, dashed the letter to the ground, and stamping on it furiously, he stormed up and down the room, raving out incoherent threats and wild upbraidings.

What was the cause of his emotion? Simply this: The letter from his friend contained the announcement that Mr Cosgrove had returned to Cambaranga, and that, in the person of his step-daughter, Fitzgerald had discovered Miss Bouverie, the lady to whom he had lost his heart in Sydney, and whom he was now determined, if possible, to make his wife.

To account for John West's surprise, we must now give a brief summary of events at Cambaranga and Betyammo during the years that he had been struggling in the new country.

The old house was again occupied, and had assumed a look of cheerfulness which it had not worn for many a day. Cosgrove himself took little interest in anything. He

had changed greatly within the last two years. His figure had lost its elasticity, and his voice was no longer cheery and loud; while his hair had grown grey—almost white. His son's frightful crime had given him, with the discovery of his other misdemeanours, a shock from which he never recovered. Soon after Ralf's flight he had left Cambaranga for Melbourne, where he was joined by Ruth. She had been staying during his visit to Cambaranga with Mr and Mrs Berkeley, relatives of her mother and her own, who gladly would have kept her altogether, for they were childless, and both were proud of their young kinswoman's beauty and accomplishments.

When the details of the murder first became known, Mr Berkeley instantly made preparations for leaving Sydney for some time, to escape the disagreeable scandal to which his relationship with the reputed sister of the murderer might give birth.

Ruth was happy with her friends, and grew to love them much; but when she saw Cosgrove haggard and miserable, cursing the fate which had left him a childless man, she could not bear to desert him,—he had always been good to her,—and she determined (to her friends' great indignation) to make her home with her step-father. He now began to value her companionship. He did not talk to her much, but he took pleasure in being near her, and would remain for hours wrapped in thought while she sat at her work or her studies.

Cambaranga was being managed by a superintendent, and Cosgrove and his daughter were consequently free to roam where they liked. Part of their time was spent in Tasmania and part in New Zealand, for Mr Cosgrove had given up all intentions, if he ever had any, of return-

ing to England; and although he never spoke on the subject to Ruth, it seemed to her as if he wanted to be near his son, should his aid ever be required. The fall in wool had compelled him, with many others, to return and look after his business himself, and he found that owing to the incompetence of his manager he had suffered severely in his means.

In fact, it was a toss up whether or not he could weather through the storm. His mind, formerly so clear, had become clouded and hazy, and the difficulties out of which at one time he would have threaded his way with ease, threatened to overwhelm him.

Ruth had not been long at Cambaranga when Phœbe Gray, who felt much for the lonely girl, rode over to make a call, and conceived a strong liking for her. She contrived to excite an equal amount of enthusiasm in the breasts of her father and mother; and notwithstanding the dislike of the former for Mr Cosgrove, she induced him to drive over with her to Cambaranga in order to bring Ruth back on a visit. Her step-father, although demurring at first, yielded eventually to Mr Gray's representations, that so continual a life of solitude would prove injurious to her health, and she returned with them to Betyammo, where her unaffected gentle ways and ladylike manners speedily made her the favourite of all.

Willy Fitzgerald had, since his friend's departure, thought much on what he had said in reference to Phœbe Gray, and during the many opportunities which he had of watching her, he was forced to admit that she was all John had described her to be; but he could not forget the face or conversation of his unknown love, and were it not for his eminently practical nature, he might have been tempted to

start on an expedition in search of her. Time, however, had weakened the impression, and of late he had been a more frequent visitor at Betyammo, and had begun to take much pleasure in the time spent there. His visits to all were most acceptable, and to none more so than demure little Phœbe, whose fluttering heart told her the reason why whenever she heard his manly voice exchanging greetings with her father, or his firm quick step on the verandah. Her fancy for Ruth amused him much, and he was accustomed to tease her about the enthusiasm with which she spoke of her new friend. He himself had not as yet ridden over to Cambaranga, partly from his old detestation of its owner, and partly from a delicacy connected with the dreadful career of his son. He had consequently had no opportunity of seeing Ruth.

It happened one evening that Ruth, who was staying for a few days with her new friends at Betyammo, was standing in the doorway at the back of the picturesque old cottage. She leant slightly against the sidepost of the door, and mused quietly with bent head, as she traced lines on the sandy floor with her little foot. The setting sun was bathing everything in a sea of golden mellow light, and the heavy bunches of grapes glowed under their leafy shade. The calm stillness of evening was unbroken, save for the murmured cooing notes of the squatter pigeons, as they followed each other down to their favourite water, and the happy utterances of the bright-winged little parrots, half-a-dozen of whom had nests far down in the hollow trunk of the gnarled old monarch of the forest, from whose branches the gigantic convolvulus hung in richer and more graceful festoons than ever. Occasionally the lowing of cattle fell faintly

upon the ear, and the smell of wild-flowers became perceptible. Ruth was suddenly awakened from her reverie by hearing the peculiar warning cry of Bessie's old pet, the Native Companion, who came dancing along with outspread wings, uttering a startled coo'oorrrroor, coo'oorrrroor. On looking up hastily she became aware of the presence of a gentleman who had dismounted from his horse, and who was gazing eagerly upon her with an earnest wondering expression.

"Good God, Miss Bouverie!" he said, "when did you come here?"

For a moment she started. She remembered having seen a face somewhere like the one now before her, but she could not recall where. It was a pleasant but a faint memory, yet she failed to recollect the circumstances. "I came here to-day from Cambaranga," she replied; "but who are you?"

"From Cambaranga!" uttered Fitzgerald—for it was he—still more perplexed and somewhat piqued at not being recognised. "Is it possible, Miss Bouverie, that you do not remember me at Mrs Berkeley's in Sydney?"

She smiled; she knew him now,—his voice had been recalling him. It was her turn now to be surprised and glad, for she had liked the young man whose visit had been driven out of her memory by subsequent painful events. One other explanation, which Fitzgerald scarcely needed, unravelled the whole story. Ruth's father's name was Bouverie, and in consequence, the misapprehension had arisen which had mystified him.

The sun of nature was sinking to rest amid its opal and golden glories; but Fitzgerald's sun had appeared, and blazed with a splendour and brilliancy only the more intense for the long night of dark-

ness which had preceded it. While he gazed on Ruth's beautiful animated features as she spoke of her childhood's days and of the grateful affection with which she had ever treasured up the kindness he had shown to her when a little bereaved orphan, Willy Fitzgerald felt intoxicated with love. The dark shaded eyes glistened with a moisture which deepened their soft earnestness, and the innocent child-like lips trembled as they returned the thanks of the maiden for service rendered to the child.

Phœbe coming out of the house at this moment, curious to know what could have loosened the strings of Ruth's quiet tongue, took in the situation at a glance, and a bitter pang filled her straightforward honest little heart. She little guessed how deeply Ruth's memory had been graven on Fitzgerald's heart; but she had heard John West, a day or two before his departure, make a laughing allusion to some Sydney lady, whose beauty had exercised a magic influence over him, and she had ever since cherished a secret desire to know more of her. She knew now. Unconsciously she began to hate her friend. A tearing, burning, horrible feeling took possession of her breast, which was not lessened when the squatter, after greeting her kindly, turned once more to Ruth with an evident admiration which betrayed too truly how he hung upon every word her lips uttered. Poor Phœbe struggled hard to suppress the anger which had taken possession of her.

During the evening meal, instances of blind adoration were multiplied before Phœbe's understanding eyes, and what appeared to her father and mother as only the natural interest in a pretty girl whom he had known as a child, bore a very different significance to

her. She passed a miserable evening, and when she retired to her room she struggled for hours in prayer against the horrible feelings which she was amazed to find deep-rooted in her breast. She slept but little that night, and awoke next morning to endure a fresh series of mortifications and unintentional slights, which lacerated her wounded spirit. And yet in honesty she could not charge Ruth with behaviour unbecoming her self-respect. She made no advances unworthy of maidenly modesty, and adopted none of the little artifices or tactics calculated to excite a lover's admiration. Her manner, after the first moments of surprise had passed away, returned to its accustomed quiet and repose. Unconscious of the admiration she excited she could not have been; but whether it was that she was accustomed to the effects of her own beauty, or that she valued not the conquest she had made, Ruth sought not to improve her triumph. Phœbe observed all this, and still found it a hard matter not to detest one whose very indifference was prized by the man she herself best loved in the world.

Phœbe herself seemed to have faded out of Fitzgerald's memory, for during the two days that he spent at Betyammo he was seldom absent from Ruth's side. Inspired by her presence, he became brilliant, sometimes even witty; his bearing grew more erect, and his gallantry more marked. It was with difficulty that Phœbe restrained herself from allowing the state of her soul to become apparent. These were hours of the acutest agony; but after much fierce wrestling with herself, she subdued the wild torment, and schooled herself to bear her lot in silence at least. It was, however, unavailing. Ruth soon discovered a difference in her, and for some

little time was at a loss to guess its cause. Phœbe's eyes occasionally bore traces of weeping, and the calm, well-regulated mind betrayed signs of an unaccustomed agitation.

A few evenings after the owner of Ungahrun left Betyammo, the Gray family had separated to retire for the night, and Ruth, who had sought her own room, felt impelled to seek out Phœbe, and if possible discover the cause of her unhappiness. Entering the little bright chamber, so neat and trim, and suggestive of maidenly purity, she saw Phœbe kneeling by the side of the little white-curtained bed, her head buried in her hands. Her knock had not been heard, and she could plainly distinguish the sobs of the kneeling girl, as she poured out supplications for aid and guidance.

Ruth's first impulse was to return as quickly as she had advanced; but yielding to second thoughts, she moved forward, and, sinking beside her friend, she stole her arm around her waist silently, offering up her own requests for the direction and assistance of the suppliant. Together they knelt for some time in silence; then rising, Ruth led the agitated girl to a seat, and sitting down beside her, commenced, without exactly knowing why, to tell the story of her own griefs and sorrows. She became aware, as the history advanced, of an increased interest on the part of Phœbe when she spoke of John's kindness and the affection she had entertained for him, and intuitively she began to suspect the origin of her friend's distress. Delicately she enlarged upon her own feelings, and gave utterance to hopes and thoughts which till then had never shaped themselves in words; and she felt, as Phœbe drew closer to her, and laid her sobbing head trustfully upon her shoulder, that she had been enabled to administer a

degree of consolation which acted in some measure as a healing balm to the stricken girl.

After this evening they became firmer friends than ever, but a tacit understanding forbore further approach to the delicate topic. Fitzgerald was a constant visitor, but his devotion awakened no response in Ruth's breast. She endeavoured to time her visits to Betyammo when business was most likely to keep her adorer at home; so that, if possible, Phœbe should be spared the sight of what could not be otherwise than painful to her.

Fitzgerald himself was at a loss to account for Ruth's behaviour. He knew that she was intelligent, and gifted beyond the average, but her brightest moods were reserved for others; and exert himself to please her as he might, he was unable to obtain the smallest encouragement. Indeed he could not help suspecting sometimes a desire on her part to avoid his notice; but he had been so general a favourite, and so much sought after, that he never for a moment contemplated rejection.

Stone's search for a home had terminated in the purchase of a very fine freehold property of over seven thousand acres in extent, about one hundred miles distant from Brisbane, and contiguous to a growing country town. He and Bessie established themselves here, surrounded by pleasant neighbours; and the ex-pioneer devoted his time to the fattening of store cattle purchased from stations at some distance up-country, combined with the formation of a pure-bred herd of shorthorn cattle,—in which pursuit he took much interest, and which promised him a most profitable return on the money invested in it.

A visit from Bessie assisted greatly in keeping matters straight,

and a few whispered words of encouragement in Ruth's ear were a sufficient reward for her self-control. The latter had feared lest the stigma attached to the crime committed by her step-father's son might have included her within its withering shade, and she felt that, without further evil, enough had befallen John through his connection with Mr Cosgrove. On this account she had refrained from answering his last letter, which, notwithstanding, she prized as one of her greatest treasures; and it pained her to think that he might ascribe to disinclination and ingratitude a reticence which resulted from a desire for his welfare. But John West had no such ideas; and at the moment when Fitzgerald's letter had roused all the latent passion within him, he loved her with an intensity which surprised himself. It was a strange, faithful love—imaginative indeed, but not the less pure and sincere. Seeing few of the opposite sex, his mind ever reverted to the one bright type of it which had captivated his boyish fancy. His dreams revealed the child-maiden tripping along, books in hand, as he first saw her—or issuing from her room to say once more that sweet good-bye, the memory of which had cheered many a lonely hour. Strong, practical man that he was, that one shadow grew to his inmost soul. The realising of his dreams one day was his greatest incentive to struggle through his hard life. Lying down or rising up, his most secret and cherished thoughts were of Ruth. It was therefore he rejoiced in his early successes; they brought him nearer to her: on her account he fretted over his disasters; they removed from him his hope.

Days elapsed after the receipt of the news which had affected his peace of mind so violently, before

he recovered any degree of serenity. In vain he argued with himself; in vain he compared his prospects with those of his more fortunate friend. The latter was everything she could desire. What had he himself to offer? Even supposing that her love still remained his—and he laughed bitterly as the thought struck him—what would he do with her? He had no home to offer; and were he indeed to obtain a situation as manager of a station (a very remote contingency at this time, when the ruin of hundreds filled each journal with advertisements from well-known and capable men, clamorous for employment), what kind of home would it be to her, brought up in luxury, and accustomed to refinement? How could she, tender and inexperienced, encounter the coarse everyday realities of hard practical life, which were the portion of an underpaid and overworked superintendent's wife? He might at any moment be thrown out of his situation at the caprice of some arrogant, self-made, vulgar rich man; and Ruth's delicate susceptibilities might be shocked at having perforce to mingle with coarser and baser natures. No; it was all a folly. He was mad to think of her at all. He was worse than mad to feel as he did towards the friend who had shown him kindness of the most disinterested kind. What a dog in the manger would he be to stand between her and that comfort which goes so great a way in promoting the happiness of married life!

With these feelings he turned once more desperately to work, and strove, by the violence of his exertions, to blunt the sharpness of his reflections; but little satisfaction could be derived from the contest in which he was engaged. It seemed as if the very forces of nature

were arrayed against him; for the season proved one of the driest which it had been his fate to witness. A scorching heat withered up all green-feed, bringing numberless miseries in its train. The wretched condition of the sheep betrayed their unhappy state, and their fast-decreasing numbers were only too sure an index of the utter unfitness of the country on which they depastured. Scarcely three-fourths remained of the original number which had been delivered to John. Vast bush-fires sprang up in all directions, devouring the dry tinder-like grass, and filling the air with a smoky haze. The water-holes dried one by one. In some there remained a small quantity of thick, green, watery slime, encircled by tenacious fathomless mud, out of which the weakened limbs of the animals, who were attracted by the smell of the precious liquid, failed to draw their water-swollen bodies; and around most of these water-traps (for they were nothing else) lay embedded helplessly a ring of slowly-perishing, despairing-eyed creatures, famishing with hunger and dying with thirst under a blazing sun.

Sheep were lost daily, and wandered about at their will, all the efforts of the worn-out shepherds failing to keep them together; and indeed, in most instances, it was as a great personal favour to John himself that the men remained with him during the fearful drought. Lean, disease-stricken native dogs dragged their mangy bodies along beside gaunt tottering kangaroos, without strength or courage to assail them, and dead wallabies and other animals lay about everywhere.

What misery it was! Exertions were fruitless to alleviate suffering or prevent loss, and John felt his

heart hardening; his soul began to rebel, and bitterness to flow from that inward fount from which had welled a spring of love to all.

He had returned to his hut after an unusually fatiguing day of useless labour. He ate his lonely meal of salt junk and damper, and lighting his pipe, he paced up and down in front of his solitary abode. It was one of those beautiful moonlit nights, which were without beauty to the owners of the parched, waterless pieces of territory, on which they could behold their stocks dying without being able to assist them in the slightest. The heaven was without a single cloud. The sweet influences of Pleiades had no power to modify the sufferings on earth, and the red Aldebaran looked pitilessly with an eye of fire upon a fiery world. All around, the horizon glared with the reflected glow of huge conflagrations. As he strode up and down in his bitterness of soul, he realised more acutely the great weight of the burden which bowed him down. Descending from the branches of an iron-bark tree beside him, a beautiful little mangaroo* floated downwards on outstretched wings to the foot of a tall sapling at a little distance away, and nimbly ascending it, was followed by his mate, who, quickly imitating the example set her, perched herself on a branch adjoining. There they chattered and played, frolicking among the branches, through which the white moon shone with cold, hard loveliness. As John watched their merry gambols, some sympathetic chord of his nature was touched. How gladsome and joyous they looked! They were content with their humble lot. Some degree of their happiness radiated into his own heart, and

* A description of the small flying squirrel, with exquisitely fine fur.

“he blessed them unawares.” A feeling of hope sprang up in his soul, and his fast-waning faith and trust in the good providence of God struck a deeper root and found a richer soil. He went about his cheerless work with a renewed strength; and shortly afterwards, to his great joy, a change in the weather brought back with it a cessation from his hardest toil.

Not very long after the drought had passed away, John received a letter from young Fitzgerald, enclosing one from his father, which intimated that arrangements had been made for selling the run for what it would bring by auction. The letter went on to state that, as the speculation had proved disastrous to all concerned, and as John had lost the capital which he had invested in it, he was authorised to draw the sum of £300 as some compensation for the exertions he had made when in charge.

The younger Fitzgerald's letter merely congratulated his friend on having ended his slavery, and, apparently taking it for granted that he would make his way straight to Ungahrun, concluded by saying that they would there talk over his future plans. These Fitzgerald had already arranged in his own mind. John was to manage Ungahrun at a liberal salary, which would be some indemnification for what he had already gone through; while he himself would marry Ruth, and with her visit the much-talked-of Europe.

The sale was concluded; John had given delivery; and he and his faithful Blucher, now almost out of his senses with joy at the thought of returning to his tribe, were on their way down to Ungahrun. The undertaking of the journey had been a subject of much inward conflict with John. He told himself how much better it would be to

keep away, and never look upon Ruth again; but with curious inconsistency he brought forward stronger arguments, which proved how ungrateful he would appear to his other friends should he not return amongst them, if only for a short visit; and at last he started with an uneasy conscience.

Many a well-known spot he remembered as he travelled along. Here he had camped with his cattle during the rain. Into these lagoons they rushed when parched with thirst. This is the identical gully into which he and his horse fell headlong during the stampede of his cattle. Now he is on the Cambaranga run. He is strong still in his resolution to keep from temptation, but one look at the homestead and the house she lives in he must have, if it costs him his life.

They come to a spot where a short cut strikes off for Ungahrun, and sending Blucher with the pack-horses along it, John keeps towards his own early home. He experiences somewhat of the feeling which may torture a condemned spirit roaming in the vicinity of Paradise.

As he rides through the thick wattles which line the road, he meets a man with a pack-horse. It is the station ration-carrier. John has too often performed the same work not to know his appearance. A few hasty questions are answered in a manner which relieve and yet disappoint him. Mr Cosgrove is at home, but his daughter is not. She is staying at Betyammo, and the man does not know when she will return.

John rides on with less interest and a slight attack of his old gnawing pain. Fitzgerald is doubtless at Betyammo. Now he is in view of the well-known head-station. There is the well-remembered woadshed. It seems only yesterday

since he and Stone visited it for the first time. There lies the garden, and the little creek which joins its waters with the main stream. Can so many years have flown by since his eyes first rested on the scene? Yonder is Ruth's mother's grave,—she must often go there. He will for once kneel where she has knelt, and then he will depart. He will risk his peace of mind no further. Quietly he crosses over to the spot which his memory inseparably connects with her he loves. It is much the same as when he left it. The railing and headstone which Fitzgerald had put up about her mother's grave are still there, but there is a look of trim neatness about it which shows that loving hands have been lately at work. How rapidly his heart is beating! His boyhood's memories flow over him. He remembers how fervently his own father strove to ward from him the ills of life, and as he kneels under the great currajong-tree his mind becomes absorbed in the past.

Fitzgerald had in vain sought an opportunity to converse with Ruth in private, for with an amount of clever tact and skilful manœuvring which astonished herself, she had hitherto managed to evade and put off the scene which she felt was inevitable. She liked the Ungarun squatter much as a friend, and the thought of the pain which she knew was in store for him distressed her greatly. Day by day she felt that the approach of the dreaded hour was drawing nearer, and that the crisis was alone postponed by herself.

She had one day taken advantage of a rumoured absence of Fitzgerald from home to canter over and visit her Betyammo friends, when to her surprise she found her

lover there before her. He had turned up in some unaccountable way, as he often did about that time. Strange coincidences seemed to multiply themselves in connection with him. This time, his face wore a look of resolution, and his general air gave so much evidence of determination, that Ruth trembled. She felt sure the time for an explanation had come. Still she struggled to delay it. Insisting that her step-father could not spare her, she announced her intention next morning of returning to Cambaranga; and waylaying Mr Gray privately, she begged that he would accompany her back. It was, however, no use. Fitzgerald saddled his horse, deaf to all hints, and joined the party. Ruth resolutely kept by Mr Gray's bridle-rein most of the way, and it was not until within a short distance from the station that the casual encounter of an intimate and loquacious friend of the old squatter's gave Fitzgerald the opportunity he sought for. In a few straightforward and manly words he said all he had to say; and earnestly he made offer of his love, and promised to shield and guard her, as his heart's most sacred treasure, through life. His utterance had been so rapid that Ruth, whose tears fell fast, was quite unable to stem its torrent. She shook her head, and was endeavouring to decline the offer as gently as she could, when the loud greeting whinny of a horse startled them both. It stood tied up to a sapling near her mother's grave, and the sound had the effect of causing its owner to rise hastily from where he had been kneeling and gaze at the newcomer.

He stood bareheaded—a tall, muscular, well-built figure, in rough bush-attire, his auburn beard and hair powdered with the dust of

travel, gazing at them with a frightened stare on his bronzed aquiline features.

“John West!” cried Fitzgerald, in delighted surprise.

Darkly red flushed the weather-beaten face, a tempest of rage for an instant seemed to pass over the strongly-marked countenance, but only for a moment. The next minute he had sprung on his horse and was galloping away, excitedly waving his hands. Whither?—he knew and cared not.

Ruth's tears had stopped with the surprise, but now they welled faster than ever; and Fitzgerald's surprise at his friend's strange conduct but increased their flow. Attributing her emotion to the same cause which had first occasioned it, Fitzgerald would have renewed his suit, but was excitedly, almost passionately, interrupted by Ruth, who incoherently begged him to desist; and on reaching the head-station she hurried to her chamber, in which she shut herself up, resolutely refusing to see any one, not excepting her step-father and old Mr Gray, who feared that she had been attacked by a sudden indisposition.

Fitzgerald wandered about in a

maze of astonishment, at one time canvassing his friend's behaviour, and next moment that of his mistress.

Night, however, brought counsel, and in the morning Ruth met him with a calm face; and while stating her appreciation of the proposal he had made to her, and her own deep sense of his private worth, firmly declined accepting it, causing that gentleman's visage to assume an expression of more puzzled amazement than it had ever worn before. In vain he would have expostulated. Mildly, but decidedly, she put an end to further entreaties by informing him that to her the subject was of so painful a nature that its further discussion could only wound without changing her feelings.

In desperation Fitzgerald applied for advice, first to Mr Gray, and then to Mr Cosgrove, the latter appeal to him a most distasteful proceeding.

Both shrugged their shoulders helplessly, and Fitzgerald rode home by himself that afternoon, a very much sadder man than when he left it, vainly seeking some explanation of so bewildering a state of things.

NEW NOVELS.

It is common in the literary world to call this time of general holiday and locomotion "the silly season." The word is not a word—however applicable to other periodical productions—which has ever been involved in any of the calculations of 'Maga,' to whose kind hands summer and winter, and autumn as well, bring a supply of all the good things of this world. But if not in writing, we may at least be allowed to suggest that in reading, the common holiday is the silly season. "Books for the seaside," such as we see constantly advertised, are not those books of serious import which no doubt occupy our thoughts during the rest of the year. Those high speculations upon the antecedents of the human race which begin to make us so much better acquainted with our distant ancestors the Ascidiæ than we are with those intervening races, the Picts, for instance, who must be much nearer to us in blood; and even those speculations which are, we suppose, the last novelty in science, as to whether Evolution may not involve Degeneration, and Humanity be on the fair way back again to Ascidianism—a hypothesis which will suit a great many minds and ought to have a great success in the Low Church: such studies are the occupation of home, to be pursued in the steady dusk of winter days, or under the stimulating irritation of the east winds in spring. But with a sweep of breezy country, or still more breezy sea, before our eyes and our windows; or a snowy mountain inviting our regard with its folds of gloom and shadow, its pinnacles of silver; or after the laborious pleasure of a day upon the moors,—our minds, let us allow, are

not strung for such inquiries. Then the gravest reader may confess without shame that it is "only novels" which he has brought with him; and that so much energy as he can command from the outdoor refreshment which need or fashion prescribes, and which is to strengthen his mind for all such inquiries, and his nerves for all their consequences, not to speak of more immediate necessities—is fit for no greater exertion than to follow the fortunes of a pretty heroine, or a muscular son of the gods, through the orthodox three volumes. Muscular heroes and pretty heroines are as necessary to our comfortable existence during this period of supposed retirement from the occupations of ordinary life, as they are to some of us for the other part of the year. It is true that of all the expedients of amusement none are so well worn; but they have outlasted the greater part of those inventions for occupying the listless, and distracting the weary, of which the world is full. And as there must be something for the mind to do now and then, as well as for the body, even in holiday-time, there can be few better occupations for the critic—himself snatching a breath of fresh air, and never, of course, during his more gravely inspired moments, troubling himself with anything so frivolous—than to indicate a few of the works with which his beloved public may with advantage occupy itself in the leisure of its yearly holiday, in the well-bred languor of country-house visiting, or among the invigorating yet somewhat tedious pleasures of the seaside.

"Only Novels!" If it were but in consideration of one of the most flourishing branches of trade, these

articles might claim a less contemptuous mention. It is true that the students of such mysteries are invariably informed that the great proportion of them do not pay,—from which it may be inferred that of all generous and self-denying professions, there are none so magnanimous as those which have to do with the printing and issuing of light literature. But whether they pay or not, it is evident that they employ as large a staff of workmen (to look at the matter from an economical point of view) as many more dignified kinds of traffic. We do not speak of the solitary man or woman somewhere in a study or parlour, or even garret, who sets the whole agoing; but of the paper-makers, the printers, the noble mechanic, the bookbinding girls, the ingenious compositor, who all get their bread out of these ephemera at which everybody smiles. This consideration should make us pause when we speak with a scoff about only novels. Nails and needles, which, though insignificant articles, are always spoken of with respect, do not employ a more respectable band of workmen. Novels are a part of the industrial system of England. They are wares which are largely exported, and still more largely stolen from us. They have indeed every external title to respect—but yet, somehow or other, they do not receive it. A novel is a book which some people are ashamed of reading, and most people speak of apologetically as an exception to their usual studies—as a trifle taken up, don't you know, when one has nothing better to do. Reading for the seaside! Under this description figure books in which the secrets of human life are sounded, sometimes with power, and often with sincerity as great as, or greater than, that of any of your philosophers, with gleams of

natural insight, and sparkles of that perception which approaches genius. After all, when one comes to consider it, there are few greater achievements than that of creating before our eyes one distinct human being who is, yet is not, whose face we shall never see, who can no more be touched or identified than a mist, yet whom we know as well as we know our brother. That the power to do so should be, is of itself a sufficiently great wonder; but it becomes still more remarkable when we reflect that the gift in greater or less development is scarcely even uncommon, and that, when it is exercised largely, it is always more or less despised. The “distinguished novelist” is good-naturedly bantered by his friends upon his distinctions. He laughs at them himself, in or out of his sleeve; perhaps laughing a little all the same at those who are so jocular about his reputation. Such was not the case in the days of the Wizard of the North; though, to be sure, there are a hundred novels in existence now for one then.

However, let it be some consolation to those who profess this trade, that it is the most inexhaustible, the most indispensable of arts. No other is so old—no other so universal. If Eve did not tell stories outside of Eden, among all that crop of thistles, to Abel and Cain before they had learned how to quarrel, our first mother was not the woman we take her for. From the nursery to that sick-room at the other end of time which, painful and languid as it must be, we all hope to pass through, none of us can do without our story. It is a poor soul that never has lost a night's sleep, or wasted half a summer's day, on a novel. It may be doubtful, indeed, whether any of us have learnt to conduct ourselves better through the difficulties of life in consequence

of the experiences of the numberless heroes and heroines whom we have followed with interest through the same; but at all events our interest has been quickened in their experiences by the similarity of our own. It has been claimed by one of the chief novelists of the day, we think Mr Trollope, who certainly has a right to be heard on the subject, that novels teach people, and especially young people, how to talk, and have had a distinct influence in shaping the stream—not a very brilliant one—of English conversation. Perhaps this is rather a strong statement, and it would be more true to say that English novels influence English conversation as the 'Times' leads popular opinion, by divining and echoing it—occasionally with a clever semblance of forestalling and originating. It is somewhat curious, by the way, when we come to think of it, and by no means complimentary to the novelists, that they, as we have just said, do so little to guide or help those who may have complications of life to go through very similar to the complications which form the subjects of modern romance. This is a question which writers of fiction would do well to ponder. Who has been helped through one of these difficulties by the example of the last study of life which even the most potent of contemporary magicians has set before him? Perhaps the reason is, that a scarcely appreciable portion of humanity are those who are troubled by the special problems which the novelist prefers to investigate and fathom. For example, there are curiously few bigamists in good society, yet bigamy is perhaps more popular than any other subject with some novelists. And few of us, after all, very few, make eccentric wills, which are still more largely used. As for the one grand

problem of which all the novels are full, which is how to get ourselves beloved and married, that, it is proverbial, is a question in which nobody will take any advice or profit by any example. Here human nature always feels its situation unique and its circumstances unexampled. If there ever was a silly maiden like Lydia Languish in real life, demanding to be wooed fantastically and mysteriously, to be run away with and flattered by clandestine vows, in imitation of her favourite heroine, we are very sure there never was any who learned prudence and patience from the most exemplary of fictitious women. No doubt it pleases the young couple who have to wait for each other through a lingering engagement, to read of others in the same circumstances; but we doubt if man or woman ever got a hint for the speedier termination of their embarrassments through those of their contemporaries in fiction. It is by no means to be desired that novelists should give up this subject which is sacred to them, but in which nobody will ever be guided by any experience save their own; yet it would be well for them in other points to consider this deficiency. They are the recognised exponents of social life; it is their task to exhibit men and women in the midst of all its complications: and it is a reproach to them that they do nothing to help their fellow-creature who may have similar trials to go through. An instance strikes us in the work of one, who without question stands at the head of this branch of literature at the present moment in England. When Mary Garth is in attendance upon the old miser in 'Middlemarch,' she prevents him from burning an unjust will which he has made in a fit of ill-temper and which disinherits her lover. Why does she prevent

him from carrying out his remorseful wish at the last moment? Because it would be to her own advantage through her lover. Now, to hinder a man from doing what he wishes, the thing being rather right than wrong, when he has only a few minutes to do anything in, because it is to your own advantage, is almost as revolting to good sense and natural justice as to force him in the same circumstances to do something for your advantage—and extremely silly in its superiority to boot. This is putting the vanity of fanciful disinterestedness above both justice and charity, for the only right in the case was that of the dying man to burn the paper for which he was alone responsible, if he chose. Here is one of the cases in which fiction fails of its mission and is of use to no one; and if George Eliot fails, who is likely to succeed?

These are not the days, however, of exemplary romances, and we have ceased to understand the necessity for a moral. Novels with a purpose, indeed, are universally scouted, although one of the most powerful of contemporary storytellers, Mr Charles Reade, never takes pen in hand without some moral object, some abuse to assail or good cause to advance; (and, alas! are there no more windmills looming against the sky, no rattle of chains upon any prison band to make that champion take the road again?) We have said that no suggestion even of a desire that the novelist should resign that subject which is his from time immemorial, the great theme of story and of song, love, which is one of the few things as old and as continual as story-telling, has ever entered our mind. To tell the truth, though we have heard our contemporaries give heaven thanks for a novel without love, we have never shared that cruel

sentiment. Sometimes, we confess to having been a little weary of the pretty young couples in Molière, who come in and occupy the stage when we want Harpagon or Sganarelle. But that is only because the great French dramatist did not understand, any more than the majority of his countrymen, the charm of honest and pure young love. To this moment it is old love, full of complications and per-adventures, the love of the experienced and world-worn, the *secondes noces*, which most occupies the imagination of our neighbours. The greatest of living Frenchmen, and, we think, of living romancers, has indeed been able to do without the sentiment altogether, notably in his last great work, where the nearest approach to a heroine has attained the age of twenty months only (not years); but few people have the force of Victor Hugo. Generally, however, a novel in which there is not a pair of lovers is a mistake, and undesirable in art as well as unacceptable to the majority of readers; but when we say this we must also add, that scarcely any great writer has made love his sole theme, any more than love is the chief agency in the world. Shakespeare, who never, or at least in very rare instances, omits it altogether, has given it the chief place only in one pre-eminent picture of youthful passion and enthusiasm, done all in the glow of sudden inspiration, the story of that moment which is for ever, the breathless ecstasy which is instantaneous and immortal, born of its own divine caprice, and saved by death as sweet as love from any ending. We have heard from the lips of ineffable critics that Juliet was a very forward young woman, and her doings quite inconsistent with the rules of good society, which no doubt is perfectly true; and had our great poet given us

nothing but a succession of Juliets he would not have been so great a poet. This, however, is what the present school of story-tellers cannot understand. It was, we think, with 'Jane Eyre' that it began to be supposed that the hot encounter of two lovers, with all their juxtapositions and all their quarrels, heats, and coolnesses, was the only object of fiction—a disastrous discovery which has done more damage in the world than many a more important mistake. Taking Shakespeare's example, however, we may say that a story which is pure love and nothing else must end in a catastrophe. It is an intolerable state, not to be supported by the great mass of human beings who are not in love; and its suddenness, and the overpowering brief current of its potency, the pity of the strange and tragic conclusion, the bitter-sweet of that union which is ending, are component parts of its power over us, and justify its acceptance as the supreme romance, the one typical tale of youth and passion. There is no looking behind or after in that sudden rapture—it is all concentrated in the moment, the hour, the one point of everlasting duration, which to ordinary mortals is beat out upon the clock in the shortest spell of time. But when the youthful pair occupy their real position in a real world, the interest of their story not only gives zest to the study of more ordinary existence, but it gives the indispensable composition, the necessary beginning and ending which every tale requires. Real life has no ending save in death,—it is a tangle of breakings off and addings on, of new beginnings overlapping the old, of ties arbitrarily cut and arbitrarily pieced together again, and nothing to make the picture, as

painters say, "compose." Sometimes a bold artist will take this very imperfection for his rule, and make a story with as little purpose as life itself, and as destitute of shape and sequence, which is wonderfully taking and attractive to the cultivated imagination—for a time. But it needs a singular gift, and the method requires to be very sparingly used.

Miss Broughton has hitherto occupied a very good position among the writers of the impassioned school. Nobody has sinned more than she has done against the reticences of love. She has left very little indeed to the imagination, and insisted upon every detail of long-drawn and passionate interviews with a vehemence which has confused the modest reader, but always with a vigour and spirit which have covered a multitude of sins. There has generally been just impropriety enough in her situations to make the extreme virtue of her heroines more ostentatiously palpable than the virtue of honest English girls whom nobody suspects, has any business to be—which is a coarse way of promoting purity and exhibiting fine sentiment. But either the unanimity of virtuous critics has been for once of some moral use, or else other influences have persuaded Miss Broughton that this is not the best course for a writer whose aim is at something higher than the applause of the frivolous or light-minded; and in the novel which she has called 'Second Thoughts,'* perhaps with a double meaning and intention of expressing her own changed ideas as well as her heroine's, she has "turned over a new leaf," according to the usual formula. 'Second Thoughts' deals only with virtuous persons. There is not in it a touch

* Second Thoughts. By Rhoda Broughton. Bentley.

of illegitimate love from end to end, and there are few if any violent embraces, and only a few references to the "sweet body," which has occupied in recent fiction more than the part which used in more reserved times to be appropriated to the sweet heart. But when she had made up her mind to go so far, we think Miss Broughton would have done well to go a little further. Love is still the sole question, or almost the sole question, in the book. To be sure, there is a matter of domestic government which is very amusingly treated, and which gives a little human variety to the monotonous and long-winded conflict between the lovers; for it is a duel of mutual pride, self-denial, and sacrifice which occupies the two volumes, and might, had not the writer been merciful, have occupied three, for any reason that can be seen to the contrary. The story is, we are sorry to say, a very well-worn and antiquated story, and its little contrivances of difficulty such as the accustomed novel-reader will dismiss with a smile, seeing through them from the first word. There is a gruff and rude, but benevolent and admirable, young doctor, whose action, entirely on her behalf and in her interest, rouses the fierce resentment and dislike of Gillian the heroine, until the sudden discovery of his proud disinterestedness makes her find out at the same time, that while she supposed she was hating, she had been learning to love him. He is made her guardian, and she is compelled to live in his house; and while they bite and scratch, the mutual attraction increases. This kind of struggle is one which has been dear to romance in recent years. It has been repeated over and over again, the man invariably being in the right and the woman in the wrong, with much edifying discovery of

her feminine imperfections on one side, and glorification of his strong and noble and superior qualities on the other. This is one peculiarity of female novelists upon which critics, so fond of dwelling upon their characteristics, have rarely hit. In the old times when literature was chiefly in the hands of men, women were elevated to a visionary pinnacle; but now it is the turn of the stronger sex, and there are few things which more surprise the male reader than the flattering picture which he finds presented to him of his own species in the shape of heroes who to him are very questionable specimens of the race. Once more it is 'Jane Eyre' who sets this fashion. Her brutal yet captivating lover has been the father of hundreds—might we not say thousands?—of unmannerly fellows, who have been worshipped by perverse, yet at bottom most submissive, young women, through volume after volume of mutual controversy, in which they have always the best of it. This unconscious homage ought to soften the gentlemen of the newspapers; but here, we fear, another principle comes in, and your critic, who feels himself in every way a more desirable specimen of humanity than the much-lauded hero, but who knows that no such appreciation awaits him, becomes jealous of his imaginary brother.

Miss Broughton's heroine is very pleasantly introduced to the reader. She is the niece, housekeeper, and absolute sovereign of a mild and somewhat stupid squire, who is her uncle, and over whose motherless children she bears a benevolent but imperious sway. The Christmas party which the lively and energetic Gillian (painful name, by the way, for a heroine—but novelty is everything) organises and arranges is very brightly put before us; and we already see that the too great

self-confidence of the young mistress of the house, so certain that she is indispensable to the comfort of everybody, and that nothing could be done without her, is destined, like every other kind of pride, to have a fall. This humiliation comes swiftly and suddenly, in the person of a very decided and positive visitor, who brings her an order from her father to proceed instantly to him, in company with the messenger, who is her father's doctor, already a celebrated young physician in large practice, and a man, the reader instantly perceives, of most unusual generosity, since he has left that practice and come to the country in the depths of winter, getting a very cold reception for his pains, in order to fetch a rebellious girl to her extremely cranky and disagreeable parent. The only motive for this remarkable act is that the father is rich, and the doctor cannot stand by and see the old man's fortune alienated from his only child. Anything more ungrateful than that child, for his care of her, could not be; and indeed the father, as Miss Broughton represents him, is a very good justification of her unwillingness. Bad fathers are favourites with this writer, and with her imitators—fathers so bad that no family fiction is practicable about them, and their children frankly despise and abhor the domestic tyrants. No worse specimen than Mr Latimer has ever appeared among the group of those gentlemen already known to us. His absolute and undisguised self-occupation, and cruelty to the unwilling victim—his cynicism, his atheism, his lovelessness and hopelessness—make up the most unattractive picture, and add an entirely useless shadow to the story, for there is no advantage gained to it by his introduction; and even Dr Burnet's

extremely disagreeable generosity might just as well have been exercised, had we been only told of the undesirable existence of the testator, who orders his daughter to marry the doctor on pain of losing her fortune—a hardship only avoided by his coarse refusal of the privilege. The original part of the book, however, which is pushed into a corner by this commonplace love-story, made Gillian's absence for a time from home indispensable; and it is this which will most amuse the reader. Here is a picture of her original attitude in her uncle's house. She is endeavouring not only to console that worthy man for the extraordinary hardship of her departure, but in some degree to fortify him against its evil consequences.

“‘I cannot think what you will do without me,’ says Gillian, with unconscious conceit, sadly gazing at the glowing coals, as pictures of the total disorganisation of family, house, and village, consequent on her departure, march gloomily through her mind.

“‘I am sure I cannot think,’ echoes the poor Squire, humbly.

“‘I fear you will all be at sixes and sevens by the time I come back.’

“‘I am sure we shall.’

“‘Try to keep things together, dear,’ in a gently hortatory voice; ‘try to keep a tight hand on the reins.’

“‘I will try, Gill,’ not very confidently.

“‘I am a little afraid of Jane,’ pursues Gillian, thoughtfully. ‘She is a good girl, but rather inclined to be self-willed and masterful’—as if these were the last qualities with which she herself would have any sympathy. ‘Will you try to keep her a little in check?’

“‘If you wish, Gill,’ with less confidence.

“‘Another pause.

“‘Sophia Tarlton has promised to take my drunkards,’ continues the girl, thoughtfully. ‘I have left all my Temperance tracts in the order in which I wish her to read them; I am

anxious that she should make no mistake. Will you remind her?’

“Yes, Gill.”

“Again they are silent, but so is not the wind. Plainly they can hear it raving, and tearing, and hustling outside. Gillian shudders. ‘What have I done to deserve a journey of a hundred and fifty miles on such a night, and in such company?’ she groans with an accent of angry contempt.

“Perhaps, after all, he may not be such bad company,’ says the Squire, consolingly. ‘Perhaps—who knows?—he may turn out quite a pleasant fellow.’

“I shall certainly not give him the chance,’ returns Gillian, with dignity. ‘His proximity is forced upon me, but I may at least be spared his conversation. Nothing will induce me to open my lips to him.’”

With these melancholy previsions of the family ruin which is to follow her withdrawal from the helm of affairs, and her determined prejudice against her new companion, the young lady sets forth to find him as insupportable as she has made up her mind he must be. And she has a very unpleasant time of it in the cheerless, half-furnished house where her father is lying sneering and dying, the most odious impenitent whom we remember to have come across in fiction, where generally there is a charitable sentiment in favour of affording at least an opportunity of final repentance to the sinner. Miss Broughton, however, is not sentimental, and, we fear, she is almost more true in representing her selfish *roué* as consistently selfish, and daringly indifferent to the final act in his wretched tragedy, to the end. Gillian makes the worst of everything consistently, with a spirit which proves her to be worthy of her father, until the climax of naughtiness and fiery opposition is reached, and the proud and furious girl is brought to herself by Burnet's uncompromising and equally angry

refusal of her, in the shock of which contemptuous rejection her eyes are opened to see what a very foolish figure she has been cutting, and how admirable is the noble-minded bear who will have nothing to do with her. We are quite ready to agree with Gillian about herself; but we do not think the reader will share her sentiments in respect to her gruff and uncivil doctor, whose incivility and want of breeding is much more evident throughout the story than the nobleness which his contrite ward attributes to him from the moment he rejects her—another proof of that darling maxim of a certain class of writers of fiction, that women are like dogs, never so affectionate as when they have been well beaten. We may pass over this, however, and over the dreary period of Gillian's incarceration in the house of her lover-guardian, who continues as brutal as he can manage to be, notwithstanding the spell which is beginning to work upon him. A clever but imperfect and hurried sketch of his disagreeable and imperious sister is almost the only enlivening particular in this dreary interval of covert love-making; but when Gillian comes of age and makes her exit very unwillingly from the doctor's drab-coloured house, her return home to the kingdom which she fondly hopes is waiting for her, involves a sacrifice almost more disagreeable than anything that had gone before. The squire had hinted some time before that the household had got “out of gear,” and that he feared the “team would require a good deal of driving”—a very proper and squirely form of comparison. But the warning has altogether passed from Gillian's mind when she goes home in full assurance of triumph, looking out of the window of the railway-carriage “to distinguish”

which of the dear little flock, whose tutelary angel she is now again going to become, is awaiting her with eager tenderness.

"As the train slackens speed, her eye expectantly seeks among the vehicles gathered outside her own ponies and pony-carriage, which she had confidently requested might be sent to meet her. She fails to find them; but no doubt they are hidden behind some bulky omnibus or intervening fly. Nor does she at first see any figure on the platform that strikes her as familiar. Her eye passes, carelessly at first indeed, over a showy-looking young lady pacing up and down with a rather swaggering air; nor is it till she has vainly examined every other form and face that her glance casually alights again on the one first dismissed as unrecognised,—alights to discover that the swaggering young lady is none other than Jane—Jane shot up, dressed up, grown up! For the first moment the shock of this metamorphosis strikes her dumb—the metamorphosis that, in six brief months, has transformed a leggy tomboy, with short petticoats and pigtail hair, into a self-conscious, modish woman of the world. Nor, when she recovers speech, is her greeting such as she had planned it should be. 'Why, child,' in a shocked voice, 'what a hat!'

"'I am sorry you do not like it,' replied Jane, pertly; 'but one cannot please everybody.'

"Gillian does not for the moment make any rejoinder. In a jarred silence she makes her way beside her cousin to the door of exit. Just before reaching it: 'Uncle Marlowe has not come to meet me?' she says, in a subdued voice of disappointment.

"'He said something about it,' replies Jane, carelessly; 'but I persuaded him not to come. You know that he has no command over his feelings, and I thought he might very likely make a scene at the station.'

"They have issued into the open air, and again Gillian's eyes seek expectantly the bay ponies with black points, which again they fail to find. Instead of them a garish little equipage, drawn by a pair of piebald cobs, with florid harness, overdone

with brass ornaments, bells round their necks, and roses at their ears, stops the way.

"'I—I do not understand,' said Miss Latimer, in a bewildered voice. 'What has become of my ponies?'

"'They are sold,' replies Jane. 'I hope you do not mind; but they were such humdrum old things that it was no fun driving them. I persuaded papa to buy me these instead.' . . .

"Is this really she, sitting snubbed and secondary in this gaudy pony-chaise? Is this really Jane—gawky, romping, but thoroughly be-mastered Jane—this off-hand young woman, with rakish get-up and *dégage* mien patronising her from a box-seat? She looks round with a sort of gasp. Shall she find everything—the whole face of nature—equally changed? Will the gentle hills have swelled to Himalayas, and the green meadows turned to torrid deserts?"

This horrible revelation goes on when they reach the house, where Gillian finds herself relegated (we quote the word from Miss Broughton, who is fond of it, as so many other writers are nowadays) to one of the guest-chambers, her former room having been taken possession of by the irrepressible Jane, who likewise takes the head of the table at dinner, and patronises and takes charge of her papa and his opinions, exactly as Gillian once did for her uncle. Gillian's horror and disgust are extreme. She makes a very solemn remonstrance and appeal to the squire, who, poor man, is in a great fright between his late and present tyrant. He anxiously disclaims all idea of having made any revolution in his household. "I am sure I don't know," he cries, "how things have come about, but I assure you I have done nothing."

"'As long ago as at the time of my father's death,' continues Gillian, impressively, 'I remember you telling me that you thought you saw, as you phrased it, "an indication on the part

of my team to kick over the traces." Well, dear, I can only tell you now,' with an accent of austere composure, 'that unless I am very ably seconded and vigorously backed up by you, I shall have to give up the attempt at driving them at all.'

"Awed by this threat, though perhaps to his own secret soul he may confess that it does not convey to him the impression of utter ruin that it would have done a twelvemonth since, the Squire stares hopelessly at the beck. . . . 'I am sure,' he says in an uncertain voice, 'that it is the last thing I should wish; but—but—I give you my word of honour I do not see my way to helping it.'

"'If you ask my advice,' cries his niece, eagerly—he is certainly innocent of having done so,—'if you think my opinion worth having, I have no hesitation in recommending you to send Jane to a good school immediately. You have allowed her,' with an accent of dignified reproof, 'to get completely beyond the control of any governess—so school is the only alternative.'

"The Squire shakes his head—'She would not go.'

"'Would not go!' repeats Gillian angrily, darting a contemptuous glance at the poor gentleman beside her. 'You must be joking—a child of that age—'

"'She is not so *very* young, you know,' replies the Squire, in faint demurrer,—'sixteen this month, and she tells me she is always taken for eighteen.'

"'And you always take everything she says *au pied de la lettre*,' says Gillian; . . . but it seems he holds, with a tenacity to which her experience of him affords no parallel, to his idea.

"'She is old for her age,' he says, almost persistently. 'She is a girl with a great deal of character; knows her own mind, and thinks for herself. Do you know, Gill,' with a deprecating smile, putting his hand on her shoulder—'do you know, Gill, that she often reminds me of you.'"

Thus the niece is utterly routed, and the daughter remains mistress of the field. The second and still

greater revolution by which Jane in her turn is worsted, by the advent of a sovereign of undoubted and unquestionable rights, the new wife whom the poor squire takes refuge in, is vivaciously told, and is an admirable example of poetic justice. And there could not be a finer little bit of nature than Gillian's waking up to the sense that her excellent uncle is not, after all, an old man, and that there is nothing monstrous in the idea that he may marry again. The squire's household altogether is fine comedy, a very admirable essay at a kind of work which always repays the artist. We can only regret that Miss Broughton, when she made up her mind to abandon the hackneyed ground of perpetual love-making in which she has unfortunately set up in trade and provided capital for so many coarse imitators, should not have gone a little further and taken advantage of those infinite humours of human nature for which she has a keen if not very kindly eye. A little less of the love conflict between Burnet and Gillian—which from the beginning we know all about, having been involved in such passages of arms a thousand times before, from our very cradle, so to speak, as novel-readers—and a little more of these pleasant varieties of life, would have been a great advantage to her 'Second Thoughts,' which all the same is a very entertaining and pleasant little book, short as any critic could desire, and full of rare bits of observation and flashes of wit. The curious chintz dressing-gown in which the publisher has thought fit to present it to the world is not in the least appropriate to a production about which there is no languor or slovenliness, but sharp and clean-cut work, and every sign of a faculty thoroughly capable and awake.

We find ourselves in a completely

different atmosphere when we step from Marlow Hall and its thoroughly modern humours to the wild Yorkshire coast and rugged fells where Mr Blackmore* has this time laid his scene. His fine and *pawky* humour, the way he has of planting a sting of wit or satire in the heart of an innocent-looking sentence, and hitting the reader sharply, now on one side, now on the other, with a surprise which makes the blow infinitely more telling; the quaint philosophy which flows forth so spontaneously and is never at a loss; the tender humanity and cordial fun which characterise everything he writes,—are all here in their usual exuberance; though it must be confessed that the long-windedness which is so great a drawback to the rapid reader is here also undiminished: nay, the strain is more lengthy than ever, lingering on in a channel which is always smooth and often sparkling, and through the pleasantest detours and windings, but long, long, undeniably long; so that he who loves a story, and he who snatches up a novel as a distraction, will find themselves defrauded of a good deal more time than they calculated upon, and betrayed into much more intellectual excitement than perhaps they are disposed for. Mr Blackmore is a story-teller of the days in which it was quite unimportant whether the stories told came to any end or not. He would have saved Scheherazade all that trouble and enjoyed the task, though in a different fashion from that of the Eastern improvisatore. He is not a man who can go carelessly through the slightest incident; whenever he pauses it is a necessity of his nature to *approfondir* all his human surroundings, so that if his hero pauses on the road to ask for a glass of water, you may

be sure that you will be made acquainted with the very secret of the inner life going on within the homely door at which he knocks, and understand why the woman who serves him looks sad or glad, and find out afterwards that the mere accident of this glass of water has knitted her and her family, if not her grandchildren to the third or fourth generation, with a subtle thread of connection to the main tissue of the hero's fate. Mr Blackmore is stronger in his heroes than his heroines. In respect to the latter he is of the old-fashioned way of thinking, and furnishes us with a delightful, thorough-going, ideal girl, clad in the prettiest and most appetising flesh and blood, the light of everybody's eyes, always doing the thing she ought to do, and never coming down from that pretty platform which is her right. Naturally such a sweet creature has nothing more to do with the struggles of the story than to suffer patiently and sometimes scheme cleverly for her lover. Mary Anerley satisfies all these old-fashioned needs; but we cannot think she is of sufficient importance in the story to be permitted to give it its name. Indeed we must add that the story itself is of no great importance to the reader. It is that of a little boy who drifts in all by himself in a boat from a wrecked ship, grows into a gallant sailor and smuggler, is found out by means of certain gold buttons which were on his dress to be the son of a great Anglo-Indian personage, goes through innumerable adventures, and at last, declining to have anything to do with the father who has shown something less than perfect faith in him, ends his career, not even adopting his family name, as a navy captain and husband of the

* Mary Anerley. By R. H. Blackmore. Sampson Low & Co.

fresh and blooming heroine who had saved his life when he was a smuggler. The device of the lost child is not original, but few novelists employ it with the frank simplicity which Mr Blackmore has already shown in this respect; for something like the same expedient was adopted in the 'Maid of Sker,' if our memory serves us rightly. Neither does the mystery of the Yordas family with which the book opens, and the discovery of the deed which takes all their property from the two reigning sisters in order to restore it to the supposed disinherited son, Sir Duncan Yordas, father of the miraculously saved Robin, come to much. These sisters are put well on the canvas—one proud and imperious, the other fanciful and fine-ladyish, fond of good dinners, and of an only child who has been pampered and petted into a little coward and tyrant—but we soon lose sight of them, and their occasional reappearance does not excite the interest of the reader, who, on the whole, does not care a bit what becomes of the deed or of Sir Duncan Yordas, and, even when Miss Philippa attempts to destroy the inconvenient parchment, remains singularly indifferent to it. We are bound to admit that we do not think even Robin Lyth a very interesting personage: in short, we do not care for Mr Blackmore's story as a story at all. It is the way in which he tells it that is captivating. His characters are not very distinct, and they have a general resemblance to each other, talk in the same way, and show the same mixture of quaint simplicity and sagacity; but when the author himself steps in and unfolds the web to us, giving to each of his puppets its own little twist, the characteristic obliquity which each possesses, his quips and cranks of genial humour are unsurpassed, if indeed they are

equalled by any living writer. The book is not one to be read through at a sitting from a circulating library, but to be laid up in one's own shelves and turned to on occasion. If Mr Blackmore would a little confine the abundant tide of his richly flowing and leisurely utterances, he would have a better chance of taking his place among English classics, and of sending down that utterance, a perennial and wholesome stream of tender charity and genial wisdom to enrich posterity, than almost any writer we know. But it is difficult to quote from him. Besides that he is too minute and lengthy in his descriptions for our limited space, he is at the same time too equable, too even. The scenes which he intends to be most striking are not those in which he is at his best; he takes as much trouble with the smallest incident as with the greatest, and will somewhat perversely embellish a trifling little corner of his tale, while its principal thread has to take care of itself. Here, however, is a description taken by hazard of a peaceful farmhouse in the Yorkshire wilds eighty years ago—for the time of the story is the "year one."

"A place of smiling hope, and comfort, and content with quietude: no memory of man about it runneth to the contrary; while every ox, and horse, and sheep, and fowl, and frisky porker is full of warm domestic feeling and each homely virtue. For this land, like a happy country, has escaped for years and years the affliction of much history. . . . Here stands the homestead, and here lies the meadow-land; there walk the kine (having no call to run), and yonder the wheat in the hollow of the hill, bowing to a silvery stroke of the wind, is touched with a promise of increasing gold.

"As good as the cattle and the crops themselves are the people that live upon them; or at least in a fair degree they try to be so; though not, of course,

so harmless, or faithful, or peaceful, or charitable. But still, in proportion, they may be called as good; and, in fact, they believe themselves much better. And this from no conceit of any sort, beyond what is indispensable; for nature not only enables but commands a man to look down upon his betters. . . . The present owner was Stephen Anerley, a thrifty and well-to-do Yorkshire farmer of the olden type. Master Anerley was turned quite lately of his fifty-second year, and hoped (if so pleased the Lord) to turn a good many more years yet, as a strong horse works his furrow. For he was strong, and of a cheerful face, ruddy, square, and steadfast, built up also with firm body to a wholesome stature, and able to show the best man on the farm the way to swing a pitchfork. Yet might he be seen upon every Lord's Day as clean as a new-shelled chestnut; neither at any time of the week was he dirtier than need be. Happy alike in the place of his birth, his lot in life, and the wisdom of the powers appointed over him, he looked up, with a substantial faith, yet a solid reserve of judgment, to the Church, the Justices of the Peace, spiritual lords and temporal, and, above all, his Majesty George the Third. Without any reserve of judgment, which could not deal with such low subjects, he looked down upon every Dissenter, every pork-dealer, and every Frenchman. What he was brought up, that he would abide by; and the sin beyond repentance, to his mind, was the sin of the turncoat.

"With all these hard-set lines of thought or of doctrine (the scabbard of thought which saves its edge and keeps it out of mischief), Stephen Anerley was not hard, or stern, or narrow-hearted. Kind, and gentle, and good to any one who 'knew how to behave himself,' and dealing to every man full justice—meted by his own measure—he was liable even to generous acts, after being severe and having his own way. But if anybody ever got the better of him by lies, and not fair bettering, that man had wiser not begin to laugh inside the Riding. Stephen Anerley was slow but sure, not so very keen perhaps, but grained with kerns of maxim'd thought to meet his uses as they came, and to

make a rogue uneasy. To move him from such thoughts was hard, but to move him from a spoken word had never been found possible."

We cannot but find serious fault with Mr Blackmore, that having set forth a man on such powerful lines as these, he does nothing particular with him. Stephen Anerley, with all these faculties, is of no more use in the imbroglions that follow than to make a pithy speech now and then in Mr Blackmore's always pithy language. His daughter, Mary, who is the heroine, makes a prettier picture: we find her here in conjunction with one of those dumb creatures whom our author comprehends so tenderly. She is about to run down upon the beach, in the early morning, to get some shrimps for breakfast, having ridden from home upon the old pony, who meanwhile waits for her above high-water mark.

"Mary has brought him down the old 'Dane's Dyke,' for society rather than service, and to strengthen his nerves with the dew of the salt. . . . He may do as he likes—as he always does. If his conscience allows him to walk home, no one will think the less of him. Having very little conscience at his time of life (after so much contact with mankind), he considers convenience only. To go home would suit him very well, but his crib would be empty till his young mistress came: moreover, there is a little dog that plagues him when his door is open; and in spite of old age it is something to be free; and in spite of all experience, to hope for something good. Therefore Lord Keppel is as faithful as the rocks. He lifts his long heavy head and gazes wistfully at the anchored ships, and Mary is sure that the darling pines for his absent master. But she, with the multitudinous tingle of youth, runs away rejoicing. The buoyant power and brilliancy of the morning are upon her, and the air of the bright sea lifts and spreads her, like a pillow skate's egg. The polish of the wet sand flickers at every quick touch of her dancing feet. Her danc-

ing feet are as light as nature and high spirits made them—not only quit of spindle-heels, but even free from shoes and socks, left high and dry on the shingle. . . . Such a pretty sight was good to see for innocence and largeness. So the buoyancy of nature springs anew in those who have been weary when they see her brisk power inspiring the young, who never stand still to think of her, but are up and away with her, where she will, at the breath of her subtle encouragement.”

Mary is always pretty and fresh and faithful, with those glances of quick perception which, as opposed to reason, are the old-fashioned heroine's right—and her lover is always skilful and daring, and ready for any emergency. Mr Blackmore has made evidently a most careful study of Flamborough and all its humours, and speaks of the boats and the fish and the population as if he loved them. Their slow speech, marked by “that sagacious contempt for all hot haste and hurry (which people of impatient fibre are too apt to call a drawl), may here be found, as in other Yorkshire, guiding and retarding well that headlong instrument the tongue,” he tells us. And the fisher village, with its wild and hardy, yet faithful and kind population; the men at sea or sunning themselves upon the beach; the women out in anxious bands to look for the boats, or tranquilly preparing the supper at home when all is still at sea; the maimed and broken down, yet still jolly tars, about—relics of the wars which seemed at that time England's natural state; the anxious little cutters and heavy coast-guardsmen hungering for prizes, the smart and ubiquitous free-traders whom all the county pets and helps,—rise before us till we learn to know the very rocks, the caves, the fishing-cobles in their brilliant colours, the slow-tongued gossips pouring

out their long vowels on the shore. The parson of the salt-water parish is one of the best sketches in the book, and his first introduction to the reader is in Mr Blackmore's best style.

“Such a man generally thrives in the thriving of his flock, and does not harry them. Because he is a wise man who knows what other men are, and how seldom they desire to be told that same thing more than a hundred and four times in a year. Neither did his clerical skill stop here; for Parson Upround thought twice about it before he said anything to rub sore consciences, even when he had them at his mercy, and silent before him, on a Sunday. He behaved like a gentleman in this matter, where so much temptation lurks, looking always at the man whom he did not mean to hit, so that the guilty one received it through him, and felt himself better by comparison. In a word, this parson did his duty well, and pleasantly for all his flock; and nothing embittered him unless a man pretended to doctrine without holy orders. For the doctor reasoned thus—and sound it sounds—if divinity is a matter for Tom, Dick, or Harry, how can there be degrees in it? He held a degree in it, and felt what it had cost; and not the parish only, but even his own wife was proud to have a doctor every Sunday. And his wife took care that his rich red hood, kerseymere small-clothes, and black silk stockings upon calves of dignity, were such that his congregation scorned the surgeons all the way to Beverley.”

The parson, however, had a thorn in the flesh. Almost every honest man has a nickname, the author tells us: but when this name is acquired, not at school, “but in the weaker time of manhood,” and specially when it is a shaft aimed at a venture, and “meaning no more harm than pepper”—yet smiting him in his tenderest point—how is it to be borne? The circumstances of the blow were as follows:—

“A leading Methodist from Filey town, who owed the doctor half a

guinea, came one summer and set up his staff in the hollow of a limekiln, where he lived upon fish for change of diet, and because he could get it for nothing. This was a man of some eloquence, and his calling in life was cobbling; and to encourage him therein, and keep him from theology, the rector not only forgot his half-guinea, but sent him three or four pairs of riding-boots to mend, and let him charge his own price, which was strictly heterodox. As a part of the bargain, this fellow came to church, and behaved as well as could be hoped of a man who had received his money. He sat by a pillar, and no more than crossed his legs at the worst thing that disagreed with him. And it might have done him good, and made a decent cobbler of him, if the parson had only held him when he got him on the hook. But this is the very thing which all great preachers are too benevolent to do. Dr Upround looked at this sinner, who was getting into a fright upon his own account, though not a bad preacher when he could afford it; and the cobbler could no more look up at the doctor than when he charged him a full crown beyond the contract. In his kindness for all who seemed convinced of sin, the good preacher halted, and looked at Mr Jobbins with a soft, relaxing gaze. Jobbins appeared as if he would come to church for ever, and never cheat any sound clergyman again; whereupon the generous divine omitted a whole page of menaces prepared for him, and passed prematurely to the tender strain which always winds up a good sermon. Now what did Jobbins do in return for all this magnanimous mercy? Invited to dine with the senior churchwarden upon the strength of having been at church, and to encourage him for another visit, and being asked, as soon as ever decency permitted, what he thought of Parson Upround's doctrine between two crackles of young griskins (come straight from the rectory pigsty), he was grieved to express a stern opinion long remembered at Flam-borough. 'Ca' yo yon mon Dr Upround? I ca' un Dr Updown.'

"From that day the rector of the parish was known far and wide as Dr Updown—even among those who loved him best. For the name well

described his benevolent practice of undoing any harsh thing he might have said—sometimes by a smile, and very often with a shilling or a basket of spring cabbages."

Thus our author will ramble on, not troubling himself too much about plot or method, but always with a humorous light illuminating everything he touches, a racy breadth of nature, and many a quaint fling of genial banter at everybody that comes in his way. The laugh that is always lurking somewhere in his sentences does not take away the force of them when there is any deeper question in hand; but it gives an unexpected relief and perpetual originality to the quaint commentary upon the deeds of men. A writer with such a gift may be pardoned if he is an indifferent builder of a tale. And truth to tell, his tale is very badly built and would never hold water. Some of the scenes are absurdly melodramatic, as is, for instance, that in which the murderer is self-convicted,—an elaborate piece of stage effect, fit only for a Surrey theatre, and demanding blue-lights and all the resources of the scene-shifters. So, to a lesser extent, is the almost ludicrous misery of the poor little Carroways when M. Mordacks, the *deus ex machina* of the book, finds them starving, after the murder of their father, notwithstanding the charitable intentions towards them, not carried out, of all their neighbours. Here eccentricity of description is pushed to its furthest limits, though not without a tender touch here and there, and (inevitably) not a few laughable ones, to temper the pain. Here, however, just after this, is a fine bit of homely pathos which it would be hard to surpass. When the suffering family have been fed, and warmed, and restored to comfort, and the poor mother to

her wavering wits, almost gone astray with misery, the kind and officious meddler in every man's business who has rescued them, suggests to the poor widow that she might prefer "some inland house" instead of the seaside cottage, which keeps her husband's fate continually before her eyes:—

"Many people might not like to stop," the widow answered simply; "but to me it would be a worse pain to go away. I sit in the evening by the window here. Whenever there is light enough to show the sea, and the beach is fit for landing on, it seems to my eyes that I can see the boat with my husband standing up in it. He had a majestic attitude sometimes, with one leg more up than the other, sir, through some of his daring exploits; and whenever I see him he is just like that; and the little children in the kitchen peep and say, 'Here's daddy coming at last, we can tell by mammy's eyes;' and then the bigger ones say, 'Hush! you might know better.' And I look again, wondering which of them is right; and then there is nothing but the clouds and sea. Still when it is over and I have cried about it, it does me a little good every time. I seem to be nearer to Charley, as my heart falls quietly into the will of the Lord."

Mr Hamilton Aidé* is not of the calibre of Mr Blackmore, which is no discredit to him—for a man may do very well indeed in the way of fiction, without being able to lift the sword of the author of 'Lorna Doone' and 'Alice Lorraine'—but he is a writer of cultivated and eloquent mind, and he furnishes us with another novel that a man may read without feeling that he has wasted just so much time as it has occupied him, which is, alas! so often the feeling with which we put down the novel which is not from the hand of an acknowledged master of the craft. He is one of those who writes

seldom and carefully, which is a condition dear to all critics, though not so absolutely certain of success as all scientific prognostications declare it to be. A man cannot go beyond his tether, however long he may think about it—and 'Poet and Peer' is not a great work; but it is readable and reasonable, and treats of a world something like the world we know. The character of the hero, however, is not one which can very easily be realised among the rising youth of any period, and in so far it is separated from the easily conceivable hero of most romances. A young man who is such a spoiled child of Providence as not only to possess the ideal position of an English peer, but the still more ideal lot of a successful young poet, is a creature almost too bright and good for human nature's daily food. No young man (in a novel) with such a double crown, but has of course fate against him, and scarcely a chance in his favour, or a loophole by which he may escape to safety and happiness. To be a poet alone (again in a novel) is bad enough, and entails a course of trial and taking down to which the labours of Hercules are a small matter, but rank and genius combined, are too much for any author's toleration. Life indeed, as well as art, finds it hard to permit such a combination of good fortunes. There is but one modern instance in real life, and we do not know who would envy the lot of Byron. Wilfrid, Lord Athelston, however, is not like his noble predecessor in the walks of poetry. He is not a person of violent or unruly passions, but rather a being made up of fancies, going off at a tangent even from the things he most cares for, if the caprice seizes him; unstable as he is brilliant, and cursed with that ability to have most things his own

* *Poet and Peer.* By Hamilton Aidé. Hurst & Blackett.

way, which we all sigh for, and which so few of us attain. It is very bad for us when we do attain it, all the story-books say; but we know nobody old enough or experienced enough to allow this maxim of easy philosophy to be true in his own case at least. Of course, Lord Athelston is a most flagrant example of the evils of having everything one's own way; and yet as a matter of fact it is not he who suffers, but the other people surrounding him, who are involved in his fate, and who are prevented in consequence of his prior claims from having their way. He begins life by falling in love with a very pretty girl in the village, whom he has noticed as a child, and who develops into a pupil-teacher by means of this early notice, and afterwards into a governess, attaining thus brevet-rank as a lady, and being brought by circumstances, almost as an equal, into his sphere. The young lord is altogether a young man of his time. He is astray in his religious beliefs, scoffs at aristocracy, outrages all etiquettes, and writes luscious poetry on the borders of indecency, if it does not cross that ill-defined line. At an early period in his career, we find him startling his pretty village girl by warning her not to "respond so fervently" to the Athanasian Creed.

"I thought I ought to say the responses out loud," she replied, after a momentary hesitation.

"Do you know that you are consigning me, with many millions more, to everlasting punishment?"

"Oh, sir!" She looked unutterably shocked.

"Creeds do a great deal of harm by trying to force those who have naturally religious instincts, but are—well, perhaps unruly—into strait-waistcoats."

"She opened her pretty brown eyes wide. 'But the Creed is in the prayer-book, sir; and if I go to church—'

"I know what you are thinking—that I have no business to go; but I've Scripture authority for it. There's a fellow in the Bible who prayed that it might be forgiven him when he bowed down in the house of Rimmon."

"Oh, sir!" cried Nellie, startled out of all shyness by her distress; 'you don't compare our parish church with the house of Rimmon?'

"Only inasmuch as superstition and human invention have spoilt the simple faith in a Creator of this beautiful world. . . . All that cursing of others only does harm."

"I'm sure I don't mean it," said she, looking contrite. 'I suppose it was only put in to frighten people a little.'

"Fancy frightening people into belief! No, Nellie; I shall teach you some day a better sort of belief than that. Promise not to run away from Ripple till I come down here to stay in August."

This is the young man's beginning. That he turns the head of the sweet little country girl is simple enough: fortunately circumstances, and his parents' prompt action, prevent any further harm, if indeed he meant it, which we are not led to believe. He did not mean anything except to sip all the sweets he could get at. Nellie Dawson, however, is left behind when the young prince goes out into the world, where he meets with many ladies and adventures. In Rome he comes across his fate in the shape of a wonderful Anglo-Italian beauty, Sylvia Brabazon, whom he encounters on Monte Pincio, dressed in "a dark-red robe—it would be sacrilege to call it a gown or frock—trimmed with fur, and made as nearly as possible like that we are accustomed to associate with Faust's Marguerite," with a fur cap upon her head, and hair of reddish brown hanging "in loose coils in a net far down her back." This remarkable young lady is as much gifted in mind as she is imposing in person; and the poet loses not only his heart, which he has already lost

and found again on several occasions, but his head, and can think of nothing else; but he does not find here either the simple worship of Nellie Dawson, or the reluctant but complete submission to his charms of Lady Frances Cope, his second victim. Here is a clever little scene in which Miss Brabazon takes her young admirer down.

“I have known some very good women,” said he, biting his lip.

“Have you? I should not have thought so from your poems.”

“You have read them, then?” He looked pleased.

“I have.”

“He looked less pleased.

“From the tone in which you say that, I fear you liked nothing in the book? Of course I am aware it is not one for a conventionally brought up young lady; but I fancied you were not that.”

“No, I am not that, or I should hardly acknowledge I have read it.”

“Why did you do so?”

“She paused a moment. ‘Because I had some curiosity, having heard of you from my friend.’

“And you hated the book altogether?”

“I thought it showed misapplied talent,—a capacity for doing better things.”

“These poems are meant to illustrate the various phases of a young man’s inner life. Nothing must be hid. His soul’s vicissitudes—the outpourings of his rapturous though transient passions; his discouragements as to this present world; his doubts as to the next. You must take it as a whole, not condemn isolated passages.”

“If I tell you what I really think, you will not mind?” she said, slowly.

“I shall not mind.”

“I do not hear in your verse the throbbing pulse of real passion, any more than I hear the cry of a soul’s real anguish. It seems to me like a clever imitation of both, and leaves me unmoved. As to the doubts expressed, it is the fashion for every young man to have them, and talk about them, now.”

With this very clear conception of the sham young hero by her

side, it is yet perhaps quite true to human nature that Miss Brabazon should fall in love with him all the same. She declines to accept him, however, at the first asking. And Nellie turns up developed from a pretty country girl into a beauty of the angelical order, the much-cherished governess and companion of a kind woman who treats her like a sister, and the beloved of the good, straightforward, trustworthy *contre héros*, a certain Hubert St John, a school-fellow of Lord Athelston, but as honest as the other is shifty. Nellie loves nobody but the enchanter of her youth, and he has no objection after Sylvia’s rebuff to pick up those dropped threads, until at last, having compromised her, the young lord in a pet impulsively marries her, half in indignation, half in pique, though not without a little love too. It is quite according to the canons of art, and also not at all in discord with the older canons of nature, that while Mr Aidé’s hero rouses little more than the impatience and indignation of the reader, he captivates all the women that are brought in contact with him. If it were not, however, that we see it constantly in life, we should be disposed to protest against the sacrifice of two or three fine feminine creatures to one worthless man, or *vice versa*, which is constantly going on in fiction. And here, not only the women who don’t count so much, but the good hero who vindicates mankind, is sacrificed to the selfish, feeble, and frivolous poet, the spoilt child of fortune. We must not complain, for it is very likely the same thing would happen to-morrow had we all the privilege, as the novelist has, of seeing the secret springs of life, and knowing how the events which surprise society were brought about. Those exciting passages of love, vanity, and human trouble

take place in the midst of that Anglo-Roman society which is so curiously conventional and artificial, the very freedom of Continental life making our countrymen more obstinately like themselves in the new atmosphere than in the old. It is a sign, however, of certain novel tendencies in society, that both Miss Broughton and Mr Aidé should give us a sharp sketch of the Apostle of Culture, the melancholy and moonstruck prophet of art, who has lately found a place everywhere, with cadaverous countenance, and distorted pose, and general superiority to everybody and everything. One, at least, of these novelists, along with Mr Punch, our constant critic, have given exaggerated importance to one thinly disguised individual whom many readers will recognise; but Mr Aidé's professor is not so simple. We are happy not to be able to recognise him if he is meant for a portrait: but his presence is significant. And so is that of the clever American, no longer dressed out in coarse Americanisms, who is now a recognised member of society everywhere. Miss Deck is not a lofty specimen, but she is very different from the rudely daubed caricature which used to do duty in novels. Her quick, sharp, cynical observation, only a little vulgar—her acknowledged correspondent-ship and intention of picking everybody's brains for her letters to her newspapers—are quite familiar indications of the new member of all our social circles. If she did not speak of being "vurry dull" and describe her country-folk as "Amurricans," we should scarcely at the first glance know that she came from the other side of the Atlantic; though afterwards the peculiar diction of our cousins evolves itself with chastened force.

Mr Aidé touches this amusing cosmopolitan with a light and skilful hand.

The third volume is of a tragic character—the peer-poet married to the humble little beauty, who trembles at her own blessedness, tortures her to his heart's content; and ultimately drives her, at the last twist of agonised feeling, to the verge of suicide, from which she is saved by the constant watchful care of the lover whom she would not have—but only to die, leaving her utterly heartless and contemptible husband to the love of the woman who had been far too good for him, even in his comparatively innocent youth. This terrible anti-climax might no doubt have happened in fact; but we object to it in fiction, and to poor Nellie's sufferings altogether. We have no right, even in the exigencies of art, to torture the poor lamb which is to be sacrificed. Apart, however, from this unnecessary misery, the book is very much above the usual level of novels. It is written by a man fully acquainted with the society he is describing, both in its higher levels, and among the eccentric and out-of-the-way circles, where apostles of divorce and reformers of dress are to be found among many other kinds of lions.

Mrs Walford's 'Troublesome Daughters'* is a work of a less ambitious type. Here we are taken into no variety of society, and introduced to no out-of-the-way people. A glimpse, vague and general, of the delights of Brighton during its fashionable period—the London out of town, which is always more artificial than London at home—and an equally vague glimpse of the "season" itself, occupies indeed a part of the time and action of the story; but all that is important and characteristic takes place in

* *Troublesome Daughters.* By L. B. Walford. W. Blackwood & Sons.

Wigtownshire, on the breezy sea-coast, or in the manor-house of Carnochan, which is the centre of the tale. Mrs Walford has a freedom and strength when her foot is on her native heath which does not belong to her in other localities. We are inclined, indeed, to believe that there is something in the dictum of a simple critic just suggested to us, that Scotch life answers the novelist's purpose better than corresponding life anywhere else: perhaps because the old principle holds true, and our dear country-folk are still a more unanimous nation than any other; so that one class understands another with a completeness little known elsewhere. Mrs Walford's farmhouse is nearer to us in point of time than Mr Blackmore's — a fact which might naturally cramp the writer in a sketch so close to nature that it might be taken for a portrait. But this is not the case; and the muirland farm may hold its place beside that of Stephen Anerley, though the pen of the younger writer is not the powerful implement which Mr Blackmore wields. The cosy interior, the sage simplicity of the occupants, the old farmer's amused contempt yet admiring awe of the studies of his daughter and her friend, the mother's genial and poetic sympathy in all "trials," are very beautifully described; and if the writer had given a little more time to the working out of this broad and tender study of life, she would have done a great deal better than in concentrating all her reader's attention upon what she will forgive us for calling the extremely absurd and not very honourable conduct of Captain Evelyn, and the suspense and anxiety of her heroine. The first volume opens with great picturesqueness and force, in a stormy night, upon a wild moor, with a young sportsman, who has lost his

way, and is beatifically introduced to the most genial comfort and warmth by the pity of a girl whom he meets in the stormy gloaming, and whose every tone and step proclaim her to be a lady, though it is only a farmhouse to which she guides him. Our curiosity is delightfully roused by this little mystery, which promises a solution much more piquant than it receives. "Miss Kate," the lovely and shy enigma whom the gallant Captain cannot fathom, turns out to be one of the "troublesome daughters" from whom the book takes its title, who has been sent away into banishment at the farm, not because of any inconvenient love affair, or other natural expedient of novels, but because she has been undutifully defiant of a new step-mother, and determined to resist the injustice which has been done to an excellent nursery-governess, the daughter of the farmer who now gives her shelter. This is a strong step for a new step-mother to take; but the young lady is very passionate and determined, and Mrs Walford is bent upon working moral reformation as well as inventing difficulties to carry her through the story. Kate's temper, indeed, is very much insisted on throughout the tale, and gives rise to numberless little lectures and scenes, which, if Mrs Walford did not manage them with a good deal of skill, would approach the character of squabbles. This, however, is not the sole difficulty of the situation. The step-mother turns out to be Captain Evelyn's mother, who has married a second time, and to whose house he is on his way. When he proceeds to Carnochan, however, much mystified and interested by the pretty lodger or penitent in the farmhouse, he learns the whole story without letting it be suspected that he has already made acquaintance with the banished

Kate, and lives at the house in easy intercourse with the rest of the family, who adopt him as brother, without ever betraying himself. Inscrutable as are the ways of women's heroes, we feel that the difficulty which the young man thus creates in his own path is about as unnecessary as any fictitious embarrassment that ever was invented. Lady Olivia Newbattle, his mother, is an excellent study of character—she is a fine lady, full of all the gentle enthusiasm and gushing sympathy which so many fine ladies possess, especially in fiction; and her new husband's daughters have been represented to her friends in the most delightful light as companions such as she has yearned for. But the management of four headstrong girls used to having their own way is no holiday task for a woman who has always taken hers, and does not love trouble or self-sacrifice of any kind. The sisters, excepting Kate, are not of much account. Mrs Walford is tempted by the very common artifice which the majority of novelists give way to, of colouring all the secondary persons with an unpleasant tint in order to throw up the excellence of the favourite—an expedient which Miss Austen herself employs, and which therefore has high warrant, but which is not high art. It is generally improbable, if we could but get writers of fiction to believe it, that one member of a family, fathered and mothered, brothered and sistered by disagreeable people, should be everything that is delightful. Such a freak of nature may occur occasionally, but it is rare; and it requires far more skill, and a finer touch, to bring out the high whiteness of perfection upon a background full of light, than to dash in its uncompromising outline boldly upon the surrounding darkness. Of the sisters, Alice is envi-

ous and insignificant, Bertha spiteful and stupid, and Marjorie a vain and heartless beauty, with all the faults of her kind. Kate, the relief to all this inferiority, is wickeder, while the wickedness lasts, than any of them. She is a little spitfire, a pretty vixen, a creature made up of temper and passion: truth to tell, except now and then in a wicked gleam of her eye, or clench of her small fists, she does very little to justify the character; but Mrs Walford knows best. When Captain Evelyn has heard all the rights or wrongs of the story, he returns to the farm, and there discusses the matter with such wisdom and discretion that the rebellious Kate sees her folly, and comes the length of submission: when lo! this reformer, this missionary of peace in military shape, turns round upon his convert and proposes something entirely different. This is done in a great scene, the most striking in the book, perhaps, which closes the first volume, and the first part of the story—in which Evelyn makes his declaration of love, and succeeds in his wooing: but adds a picture of the life the engaged pair are to lead upon this retired coast, "nobody knowing, nobody dreaming of their happiness," to which the girl listens astonished. "I will take you out on moonlight nights, my wild sea-mew," he says, "when the waves are booming along the shore as they are doing now, and we will take boat with the fishermen, and we will learn their songs, Kate, and sing them to each other. . . . Cheer up, Kate," he adds, "we shall cheat them all."

"While they think your existence is a burden to you under the weight of their displeasure, we, together, will be making merry at their expense. We shall be laughing at them from our hiding-place. Perhaps now and then I may go over and see how they are getting on, walking in as it were from far-off places, when we are actually under their noses all the time.

It would be awkward if you were to be sent for; but I can take care to prevent that, I think. You must not write too contentedly; you must not let them see you are too happy; we must keep up the show of dissatisfaction.'

"And this is to go on," said Kate, slowly, "for how long?"

"Why do you ask? You are already afraid of being tired of me. The prospect wearies you?" He paused for a disclaimer. None came. "Is that it, Kate? . . . At least our little romance will remain our own."

"And you would play a part like that?" said Kate, in a low, unnatural voice; "and you would have me play it too?"

"And who could play it better? You have quite the talent."

It is not wonderful that poor Kate, to whom this proposal is made at great length,—though the proposal, in fact, is of the most meaningless character, for there is not even a clandestine marriage proposed, nothing but a few weeks' foolish philandering under the wing of the farmer's wife, and with no infringement of propriety,—should be indignant, and feel herself insulted: but she need not have broken a blood-vessel. Broken blood-vessels were once considerably in request in novels. How well we recollect the heroine who put her delicate handkerchief to her lips, and brought it away stained with red!—but she has gone out of fashion. It is a very extreme step on Mrs Walford's part, and only could have been justifiable, we think, had the hero been much more naughty than he had any intention of being. Besides, there was no delicacy of chest or throat previously indicated to lead us up to this catastrophe. We wonder if blood-vessels do break like this, quite promiscuously, without any warning? The foolish Guardsman is of course unutterably shocked and horrified, as well he may be, and he has hard ado to

carry her home along the rough coast, with the blood welling from her mouth. The author seems to think that it was a fine thing of him to do this, as if he could have deserted the girl whom he believed himself to have killed. But though Captain Evelyn has a horrible fright, he does not seem on the whole to suffer either in the opinion of the heroine or the writer when all is over. Once more we repeat there is nothing so inscrutable as a woman's hero. Being perfect as he is, he may conduct himself like the basest hound, and nobody thinks any worse of him. He remains to all parties as high-souled and magnanimous as ever, even after this extremely silly and futile attempt to lead the conscientious little heroine astray.

Captain Evelyn behaves very foolishly another time when everything is on the point of being settled, by listening to the coarse story of an odious little Cockney whom the elder sister marries for his money, and who has the assurance to represent Kate as having desired to secure him for herself, and to be under the influence of insane impulses,—a clumsy and brutal tale which Evelyn accepts, going off on the spot to India without a question asked or explanation given. This is giving, in mere wantonness, that occasion to blaspheme for which the enemy, in the shape of the critic, is always lying in wait. It is putting into his very mouth his usual taunt at that third volume which custom demands, and which certainly does stir unfortunate writers of fiction to very strange expedients sometimes. But we must relinquish Captain Evelyn, whose ways and manners are beyond our comprehension. Kate, on the other hand, though unduly tried by that broken blood-vessel and other matters,

and by a hero who is so very sham-heroic, is a sweet little heroine; and the farm folk, in their salt-water landscape, the wholesome fragrant junction of moor and sea, are delightful. Space forbids us to give the reader any glimpse of this kind and genial household. He will do well to take the full benefit for himself. But it shows that Mrs Walford has a great deal of power which she has as yet but little cultivated, and of which she could make a great deal more than of Guardsmen, a species not very interesting, save to young ladies in their first season. We hope to meet her again upon this promising ground.

After discussing the work of so many well-known writers, we must pause to notice a new book by, so far as appears, a new writer, which, though it bears a most unattractive title,* is as entertaining and original a composition as we have met with for a long time. A heroine who is perfectly indifferent to the truth, who spends the money given her in charity upon new gloves and other dainty trifles, who smokes cigarettes and visits young men in their rooms, and gets one in whom she specially confides to visit her in the parlour of an Anglican Sisterhood in the disguise of a Roman Catholic priest, is an original figure certainly, and somewhat startling withal. But Bourbachokátzouli, which is her pretty little name, is with all this a delightful heroine; and we do not know when we have encountered one so captivating and novel. She tells fibs by the dozen; she is idle, fond of dress, fond of pleasure—everything which a good girl should not be; but she is a charming creature, and we can find no fault in her. "She is all right," says the gentle little clergyman's wife,

who goes with her husband to report upon this extraordinary applicant for charity—and we agree with her. At the same time, we cannot but feel that Bourbachokátzouli met with a wonderful deal of kindness, and that everybody was better to her than she had any right to expect. The English sham convent in which she passes some time is a rather coarse caricature, though not without points of truth in its hostile picture; but the luxurious Greek is very amusing among the sisters. We cannot attempt to enter into the book, as all our space is forestalled by the last work on our list; but we advise the reader, if he ever longs, as, weary critic though we be, we do sometimes, for a genuine story which shall bring the heart into one's mouth, and lead us innocently astray into neglect of all our duties, to send at once for 'A Modern Greek Heroine,' and to read all about Miss Vallettas before he goes to bed. We may add, for the encouragement of the innocent, that though this young lady is alarmingly unconventional, there is not a grain of the immodest in her nature. She is perfectly, daringly, innocent so far as this goes, though she tells fibs; and though there is a general tendency in the book to represent the foolish girls who love dress, movement, and pleasure as on the whole the kindest, best, and faithfullest, there is no harm to be got from it. For it is not only the Greek heroine who is of this mind: Ethel, who is represented as a little flirt and frivolous personage, coaxing her mother out of stray pieces of jewellery, and full of schemes for getting her own way, is the one who stands up for the persecuted when trouble comes; while the good and gentle Alice shrinks back in a flutter of moral

* A Modern Greek Heroine. Hurst & Blackett.

apprehension, believing in wickedness with the exaggerated faith of terror, though she knows nothing of it. This is a disagreeable doctrine; but we are by no means sure that it is not true.

The author of 'The Egoist'* holds an exceptional position in literature. He is not a favourite with the multitude, but if that is any compensation, he is a favourite with people who are supposed to know much better than the multitude. His works come before us rarely; but when they do come, there is a little tremor of expectation in the air. The critics pull themselves up, the demigods of the newspapers are all on the alert. It is understood that here is something which, though in all probability caviare to the general, it will be a creditable thing, and a point in a man's favour to admire. Like Mr Rossetti's pictures, there is a certain ignorance, a certain want of capacity involved in the absence of appreciation. Not to know Mr Meredith is to argue yourself unknown; and the 'Egoist' has been regarded with a great deal of respectful admiration. It is a book which sets out with very high pretensions, and claims to represent to us the leading qualities of the human race in an exceptionally clear and animated way. It is "a comedy in narrative," challenging comparison with the masterpieces in that different branch of art; and even among these masterpieces, a certain selection must be made to justify the comparison, for the unity of its sentiment indicates such comedies as the "Avare" and the "Misanthrope," rather than the livelier works of mingled interest with which (not to speak of Shakespeare) Goldsmith and Sheridan have furnished us. This, it will be seen, is rather an appalling ordeal for a

book in three large volumes, with scarcely an incident from beginning to end, all turning upon the question who is to marry Sir Willoughby Patterne, and occupied with the exhibition of that gentleman's character to the world. Mr Meredith informs us in his prelude, which ought to have been called the prologue, that in order to elucidate the Book of Earth, the lore of human self-estimation and wisdom, Art is the specific.

"The chief consideration for us is," he says, "what particular practice of Art in letters is the best for the perusal of the book of our common wisdom, so that with clearer mind and livelier manners we may escape, as it were, into daylight and song from a land of fog-horns. Shall we read it by the watchmaker's eye, in luminous rings, eruptive of the infinitesimal, or pointed with examples and types under the broad Alpine survey of the spirit born of our united social intelligence, which is the comic spirit? Wise men say the latter. They tell us that there is a constant tendency in the book to accumulate excess of substance; and such repletteness obscuring the glass it holds to mankind, renders us inexact in the recognition of our individual countenances: a perilous thing for civilisation. And these wise men are strong in the opinion that we should encourage the comic spirit, who is after all our own offspring, to relieve the book. Comedy, they say, is the true diversion, as it is likewise the key of the great book, the music of the book. They tell us how it condenses whole sections of the book in a sentence, volumes in a character; so that a fair part of a book, outstripping thousands of leagues when unrolled, may be compassed in one comic sitting."

After this prelude and promise the author goes on, as we have said, to three huge volumes, made up of a thousand conversations, torrents of words in half lines, continued, and continued, and continued, till every sentiment contained in them is

* The Egoist. By George Meredith. Kegan, Paul, & Co.

beaten to death in extremest extenuation, and the reader's head aches, and his very bones are weary. The first volume is fine, the second tedious, the third beyond all expression wearisome. Sir Willoughby Patterne is an egotist of the sublimest type. How he makes everybody and everything subservient to him, keeping in hand a mild and gentle worshipper who lives close by, and is always ready to burn incense to him, while he engages himself to marry, one after the other, two younger, richer, more beautiful heroines; how he pets and applauds a humble hero in the Marines, who has glorified the name of Patterne in a far-off war, but says "not at home" when that hero appears in the shape of an elderly and shabby lieutenant; how he permits his poor cousin to take the expenses of that lieutenant's boy, and himself administers half-crowns and crowns, but will take no responsibility for the little dependant; how he disgusts the beautiful young heroine who has hastily pledged herself to accept him, so that she struggles through two long volumes in her attempts to get free from him before the eyes of his worshippers, till one by one they fall away, and even the romantic and poetical Letitia has her eyes opened; how at last he is cast upon the compassion of this first love, a poor diminished creature, found out on all sides; and how even Letitia refuses, and will only consent to have him on the most unrelenting and continued pressure. This is the story. If it had been made a comedy of, in three moderate Acts, instead of three large volumes, it might have been, with the amount of power expended, a fine one. But to tell us of an art which "condenses whole sections into a sentence," and volumes in a character, and afterwards to serve up this slender story in about a thousand pages of long-

winded talk, is the most curious and barefaced contradiction. We do not think we ever found ourselves astray in such a tangle of conversation in all our experience: true, the action of a comedy is conducted by conversation, but not, ye gods! in such bucketsful. To have the lively successions, the rapid movement, the clear-cut lines of a good comedy suggested to us, and then to read, and read, and read, till the brain refuses further comprehension, and only a spectrum of broken lines of print remains upon its blurred surface, is cruel. For a week or two after we complete the book we find ourselves haunted with that shadow of conversations, thus—

"She will not be bridesmaid to me."

"She declines? add my petition, I beg."

"To all? or to her?"

"Do all the bridesmaids decline?"

"The scene is too ghastly."

"A marriage?"

"Girls have grown sick of it."

"Of weddings?—We'll overcome the sickness."

"With some——"

"Not with Miss Darleton? You tempt my eloquence."

"You wish it?"

"To win her consent? certainly."

"The scene?"

"Do I wish that?"

But this is an easy specimen. It is like silly verse without the rhyme; the talk in which each speaker occupies a line and a half is more painful still. Even now, at a happy distance from our first reading, we have but to think of the book, and lo! the air is marked all over with those adumbrations, with all manner of jerks and dashes, and notes of interrogation added on.

At the same time, we cannot but allow that the entire self-absorption of Sir Willoughby Patterne has a certain sublimity in it. If there was but half of it, and still better if there was but a third part, it

would be powerful. A man who is his own law, and who never deviates from one magnificent principle of self-reference, can scarcely be without a certain force. The incident of the lieutenant's visit referred to above, will be as good a specimen as any of the manner of man. Sir Willoughby, on hearing of the marine's gallantry, had sent him a present and a complimentary letter, being intent on taking for himself and his name all the credit possible. He went so far as to invite the unknown cousin to Patterne Hall. But one day, while he is walking on the stately terrace with his betrothed and various other fine people, he sees in the distance "a thickset stumpy man" advancing to the door of the hall.

"His brief sketch of the creature was repulsive. The visitor carried a bag, and his coat-collar was up, his hat was melancholy. He had the appearance of a bankrupt tradesman absconding: no gloves, no umbrella. As to the incident we have to note, it was very slight. The card of Lieutenant Patterne was handed to Sir Willoughby, who laid it on the salver, saying to the footman, 'Not at home.'

"He had been disappointed in the age, grossly deceived in the appearance, of the man claiming to be his relation in this unseasonable fashion; and his acute instinct advised him swiftly of the absurdity of introducing to his friend a heavy unrepresentable senior as the celebrated gallant Lieutenant of Marines, and the same as a member of his family. He had talked of the man too much, too enthusiastically, to be able to do so. A young subaltern, even if passably vulgar in figure, can be shuffled through by the aid of the heroic story, humorously exaggerated in apology for his aspect. Nothing can be done with a mature stumpy marine of that rank. Considerateness dismisses him on the spot without parley. It was performed by a gentleman supremely advanced at an early age in the art of cutting. Young Sir Willoughby spoke a word of the rejected visitor to Miss Durham

in response to her startled looks. 'I shall drop him a cheque,' he said, for she seemed personally wounded, and had a face of crimson. The young lady did not reply."

This is Sir Willoughby at the sublime point; but by-and-by, when he quotes page upon page in a wordy attempt to convince his second betrothed lady (Miss Durham having saved herself abruptly by a run-away match) that the release she asks is impossible, all the grandeur of his attitude is lost, and the merest stupidity of unreason takes hold upon the self-seeker. Even his pride does not take fire. It is roused by the revolting idea that any one should wish to be free from him, but only into exasperating attempts to ignore the lady's meaning, or endless adjurations on the subject of fidelity. As for Clara Middleton, his *fiancée*, she is almost equally wearisome in the perpetual twitter and flutter of her wings, as she struggles for the release which he will not give: she half runs away, then returns again, and talks, talks—in the library, in the laboratory, to half-a-dozen confidants, to her father, and to Sir Willoughby himself, protesting that she will not marry him, but never venturing to break the bond for herself. The first effort for freedom is made in the first volume; but it is not till the very end of the third, and after arguments and discussions innumerable, that the bond is broken and Clara is allowed to go free. All the devices of the man who will not acknowledge to himself that he is not the idol of all his world, to save his own pride, fatigue us hugely before we are done with them. Mr Meredith has fallen into the reverse error from that of those novelists who blacken all their secondary characters in order to have an intense white light of perfection upon their hero or heroine. All the people surrounding Patterne House and all

the guests in it, and even the two meek aunts, Eleanor and Isabella, see through the hero and all his little motives, and the centre of self in which he lives and moves, before we are done with him. His dependants are not taken in by his profound self-worship. He is "jilted" twice. Letitia Dale, who began by worshipping, accepts his hand, only, so to speak, by force, declaring that she does not and cannot love him. This seems to us as little true to nature as the existence of one black swan among a multitude of crows. The Egoist who takes nobody in is a most feeble specimen of his kind. In a general way, even the worst specimens impose more or less upon their surroundings, and it is very rare indeed where there is not one out-and-out believer to keep the self-worshipper in countenance. But Sir Willoughby has not a creature left to stand by him. The stupidest of his retainers sees through him—even his old aunts. Mr Meredith, indeed, partly justifies this by promising us, in his high-flown prelude, the pathos without which he says "no ship can now set sail." The Egoist surely inspires pity," he says. But the universal abandonment of the hero is too much. A man who makes so ineffable a fool of himself, who disgusts everybody, and exposes himself to be kicked all round by every humiliating toe that chooses to point itself at him, is by far too poor a creature to be raised to the eminence of a pattern egoist. He is in reality, after the first volume, a very poor counterfeit, not worthy in any way of his rôle.

And it is hard to have to repeat

to a writer of such reputation as Mr Meredith, and one who is the favourite of the clever, the pet of the superior classes, *gouté* above all by those who confer fame,—what it is so common to say to all the poor little novelists (chiefly female) who are rated in the newspapers about the devices to which they are driven to furnish forth their third volume,—but unpleasant as the duty is, we must fulfil it. Had the author of the 'Egoist' been superior, as he ought to be, to that tradition, his book would have been infinitely better. Had he confined it to one volume, it might have been a remarkable work. As it is, it will do no more than hang in that limbo to which the praise of a coterie, unsupported by the world, consigns the ablest writer when he chooses to put forth such a windy and pretentious assertion of superiority to nature and exclusive knowledge of art. Weakness may be pardonable, but weakness combined with pretention is beyond all pity. Mr Meredith's fault, however, is perhaps less weakness than perversity and self-opinion. He likes, it is evident, to hear his own voice—as indeed, for that matter, most of us do. If "the water were roasted out of him," according to the formula of the great humorist whom he quotes in his prelude, there might be found to exist a certain solid germ of life and genius; but so long as he chooses to deluge this in a weak, washy, everlasting flood of talk, which it is evident he supposes to be brilliant, and quaint, and full of expression, but which, in reality, is only cranky, obscure, and hieroglyphical, he will do that genius nothing but injustice.

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DR WORTLE'S SCHOOL.—PART VI.

CHAPTER XVI.—“IT IS IMPOSSIBLE.”

THE absence of Dr and Mrs Wortle was peculiarly unfortunate on that afternoon, as a visitor rode over from a distance to make a call, —a visitor whom they both would have been very glad to welcome, but of whose coming Mrs Wortle was not so delighted to hear when she was told by Mary that he had spent two or three hours at the rectory. Mrs Wortle began to think whether the visitor could have known of her intended absence and the Doctor's. That Mary had not known that the visitor was coming she was quite certain. Indeed she did not really suspect the visitor, who was one too ingenuous in his nature to preconcert so subtle and so wicked a scheme. The visitor, of course, had been Lord Carstairs.

“Was he here long?” asked Mrs Wortle, anxiously.

“Two or three hours, mamma. He rode over from Buttercup, where he is staying for a cricket-match, and of course I got him some lunch.”

“I should hope so,” said the Doctor. “But I didn't think that Carstairs was so fond of the Mommson lot as all that.”

Mrs Wortle at once doubted the declared purpose of this visit to Buttercup. Buttercup was more than half-way between Carstairs and Bowick.

“And then we had a game of lawn-tennis. Talbot and Monk came through to make up sides.” So much Mary told at once, but she did not tell more till she was alone with her mother.

Young Carstairs had certainly not come over on the sly, as we may call it, but nevertheless there had been a project in his mind, and fortune had favoured him. He was now about nineteen, and had been treated for the last twelve months almost as though he had been a man. It had seemed to him that there was no possible reason why he should not fall in love as well as another. Nothing more sweet, nothing more lovely, nothing more lovable than Mary

Wortle had he ever seen. He had almost made up his mind to speak on two or three occasions before he left Bowick ; but either his courage or the occasion had failed him. Once, as he was walking home with her from church, he had said one word ;—but it had amounted to nothing. She had escaped from him before she was bound to understand what he meant. He did not for a moment suppose that she had understood anything. He was only too much afraid that she regarded him as a mere boy. But when he had been away from Bowick two months he resolved that he would not be regarded as a mere boy any longer. Therefore he took an opportunity of going to Buttercup, which he certainly would not have done for the sake of the Mommsons or for the sake of the cricket.

He ate his lunch before he said a word, and then, with but poor grace, submitted to the lawn-tennis with Talbot and Monk. Even to his youthful mind it seemed that Talbot and Monk were brought in on purpose. They were both of them boys he had liked, but he hated them now. However, he played his game, and when that was over, managed to get rid of them, sending them back through the gate to the school-ground.

“I think I must say good-bye now,” said Mary, “because there are ever so many things in the house which I have got to do.”

“I am going almost immediately,” said the young lord.

“Papa will be so sorry not to have seen you.” This had been said once or twice before.

“I came over,” he said, “on purpose to see you.”

They were now standing on the middle of the lawn, and Mary had assumed a look which intended to signify that she expected him to go. He knew the place well enough to get his own horse, or to order the

groom to get it for him. But instead of that, he stood his ground, and now declared his purpose.

“To see me, Lord Carstairs !”

“Yes, Miss Wortle. And if the Doctor had been here, or your mother, I should have told them.”

“Have told them what ?” she asked. She knew ; she felt sure that she knew ; and yet she could not refrain from the question.

“I have come here to ask if you can love me.”

It was a most decided way of declaring his purpose, and one which made Mary feel that a great difficulty was at once thrown upon her. She really did not know whether she could love him or not. Why shouldn't she have been able to love him ? Was it not natural enough that she should be able ? But she knew that she ought not to love him whether able or not. There were various reasons which were apparent enough to her though it might be very difficult to make him see them. He was little more than a boy, and had not yet finished his education. His father and mother would not expect him to fall in love, at any rate till he had taken his degree. And they certainly would not expect him to fall in love with the daughter of his tutor. She had an idea that circumstanced as she was, she was bound by loyalty both to her own father and to the lad's father not to be able to love him. She thought that she would find it easy enough to say that she did not love him ; but that was not the question. As for being able to love him,—she could not answer that at all.

“Lord Carstairs,” she said, severely, “you ought not to have come here when papa and mamma are away.”

“I didn't know they were away. I expected to find them here.”

“But they ain't. And you ought to go away.”

"Is that all you can say to me?"

"I think it is. You know you oughtn't to talk to me like that. Your own papa and mamma would be angry if they knew it."

"Why should they be angry? Do you think that I shall not tell them?"

"I am sure they would disapprove it altogether," said Mary. "In fact it is all nonsense, and you really must go away."

Then she made a decided attempt to enter the house by the drawing-room window, which opened out on a gravel terrace.

But he stopped her, standing boldly by the window.

"I think you ought to give me an answer, Mary," he said.

"I have; and I cannot say anything more. You must let me go in."

"If they say that it's all right at Carstairs, then will you love me?"

"They won't say that it's all right; and papa won't think that it's right. It's very wrong. You haven't been to Oxford yet, and you'll have to remain there for three years. I think it's very ill-natured of you to come and talk to me like this. Of course it means nothing. You are only a boy, but yet you ought to know better."

"It does mean something; it means a great deal. As for being a boy, I am older than you are, and have quite as much right to know my own mind."

Hereupon she took advantage of some little movement in his position, and, tripping by him hastily, made good her escape into the house. Young Carstairs, perceiving that his occasion for the present was over, went into the yard and got upon his horse. He was by no means contented with what he had done, but still he thought that he must have made her understand his purpose.

Mary, when she found herself

safe within her own room, could not refrain from asking herself the question which her lover had asked her. "Could she love him?" She didn't see any reason why she couldn't love him. It would be very nice, she thought, to love him. He was sweet-tempered, handsome, bright and thoroughly good-humoured; and then his position in the world was very high. Not for a moment did she tell herself that she would love him. She did not understand all the differences in the world's ranks quite as well as did her father, but still she felt that because of his rank,—because of his rank and his youth combined,—she ought not to allow herself to love him. There was no reason why the son of a peer should not marry the daughter of a clergyman. The peer and the clergyman might be equally gentlemen. But young Carstairs had been there in trust. Lord Bracy had sent him there to be taught Latin and Greek, and had a right to expect that he should not be encouraged to fall in love with his tutor's daughter. It was not that she did not think herself good enough to be loved by any young lord, but that she was too good to bring trouble on the people who had trusted her father. Her father would despise her were he to hear that she had encouraged the lad, or as some might say, had entangled him. She did not know whether she should not have spoken to Lord Carstairs more decidedly. But she could, at any rate, comfort herself with the assurance that she had given him no encouragement. Of course, she must tell it all to her mother, but in doing so could declare positively that she had given the young man no encouragement.

"It was very unfortunate that Lord Carstairs should have come just when I was away," said Mrs Wortle to her daughter as soon as they were alone together.

"Yes, mamma; it was."

"And so odd. I haven't been away from home any day all the summer before."

"He expected to find you."

"Of course he did. Had he anything particular to say?"

"Yes, mamma."

"He had? What was it, my dear?"

"I was very much surprised, mamma, but I couldn't help it. He asked me——"

"Asked you what, Mary?"

"Oh, mamma!" Here she knelt down and hid her face in her mother's lap.

"Oh, my dear, this is very bad;—very bad indeed."

"It needn't be bad for you, mamma; or for papa."

"Is it bad for you, my child?"

"No, mamma,—except of course that I am sorry that it should be so."

"What did you say to him?"

"Of course I told him that it was impossible. He is only a boy, and I told him so."

"You made him no promise."

"No, mamma; no! A promise! Oh dear no! Of course it is impossible. I knew that. I never dreamed of anything of the kind; but he said it all there out on the lawn."

"Had he come on purpose?"

"Yes;—so he said. I think he had. But he will go to Oxford, and will of course forget it."

"He is such a nice boy," said Mrs Wortle, who, in all her anxiety, could not but like the lad the better for having fallen in love with her daughter.

"Yes, mamma; he is. I always liked him. But this is quite out of the question. What would his papa and mamma say?"

"It would be very dreadful to have a quarrel, wouldn't it?—and just at present when there are so many things to trouble your papa."

Though Mrs Wortle was quite honest and true in the feeling she had expressed as to the young lord's visit, yet she was alive to the glory of having a young lord for her son-in-law.

"Of course it is out of the question, mamma. It has never occurred to me for a moment as otherwise. He has got to go to Oxford and take his degree before he thinks of such a thing. I shall be quite an old woman by that time, and he will have forgotten me. You may be sure, mamma, that whatever I did say to him was quite plain. I wish you could have been here and heard it all, and seen it all."

"My darling," said the mother, embracing her, "I could not believe you more thoroughly even though I saw it all, and heard it all."

That night Mrs Wortle felt herself constrained to tell the whole story to her husband. It was indeed impossible for her to keep any secret from her husband. When Mary, in her younger years, had torn her frock or cut her finger, that was always told to the Doctor. If a gardener was seen idling his time, or a housemaid flirting with the groom, that certainly would be told to the Doctor. What comfort does a woman get out of her husband unless she may be allowed to talk to him about everything? When it had been first proposed that Lord Carstairs should come into the house as a private pupil, she had expressed her fear to the Doctor,—because of Mary. The Doctor had ridiculed her fears, and this had been the result. Of course she must tell the Doctor. "Oh dear," she said, "what do you think has happened while we were up in London?"

"Carstairs was here."

"Oh yes, he was here. He came on purpose to make a regular declaration of love to Mary."

"Nonsense."

"But he did, Jeffrey."

"How do you know he came on purpose?"

"He told her so."

"I did not think the boy had so much spirit in him," said the Doctor. This was a way of looking at it which Mrs Wortle had not expected. Her husband seemed rather to approve than otherwise of what had been done. At any rate, he had expressed none of that loud horror which she had expected.

"Nevertheless," continued the Doctor, "he's a stupid fool for his pains."

"I don't know that he is a fool," said Mrs Wortle.

"Yes, he is. He is not yet twenty, and he has all Oxford before him. How did Mary behave?"

"Like an angel," said Mary's mother.

"That's of course. You and I are bound to believe so. But what did she do, and what did she say?"

"She told him that it was simply impossible."

"So it is,—I'm afraid. She at any rate was bound to give him no encouragement."

"She gave him none. She feels quite strongly that it is altogether impossible. What would Lord Bracy say?"

"If Carstairs were but three or four years older," said the Doctor, proudly, "Lord Bracy would have much to be thankful for in the attachment on the part of his son, if it were met by a return of affection on the part of my daughter. What better could he want?"

"But he is only a boy," said Mrs Wortle.

"No; that's where it is. And Mary was quite right to tell him that it is impossible. It is impossible. And I trust, for her sake, that his words have not touched her young heart."

"Oh no," said Mrs Wortle.

"Had it been otherwise, how could we have been angry with the child?"

Now this did seem to the mother to be very much in contradiction to that which the Doctor had himself said when she had whispered to him that Lord Carstairs's coming might be dangerous. "I was afraid of it, as you know," said she.

"His character has altered during the last twelve months."

"I suppose when boys grow into men it is so with them."

"Not so quickly. A boy when he leaves Eton is not generally thinking of these things."

"A boy at Eton is not thrown into such society," said Mrs Wortle. "I suppose his being here and seeing Mary every day has done it."

"Poor Mary!"

"I don't think she is poor at all," said Mary's mother.

"I am afraid she must not dream of her young lover."

"Of course she will not dream of him. She has never entertained any idea of the kind. There never was a girl with less nonsense of that kind than Mary. When Lord Carstairs spoke to her to-day, I do not suppose she had thought about him more than any other boy that has been here."

"But she will think now."

"No;—not in the least. She knows it is impossible."

"Nevertheless she will think about it. And so will you."

"I!"

"Yes,—why not? Why should you be different from other mothers? Why should I not think about it as other fathers might do? It is impossible. I wish it were not. For Mary's sake, I wish he were three or four years older. But he is as he is, and we know that it is impossible. Nevertheless it is natural that she should think about him. I only hope that she will not think about him too much."

So saying, he closed the conversation for that night.

Mary did not think very much about "it" in such a way as to create disappointment. She at once realised the impossibilities, so far as to perceive that the young lord was the top brick of the chimney as far as she was concerned. The top brick of the chimney may be very desirable, but one doesn't cry for it, because it is unattainable. Therefore Mary did not in truth think of loving her young lover. He had been to her a very nice boy; and so he was still. That;—that, and nothing more. Then had come this little episode in her life which seemed to lend it a gentle tinge of romance. But had she inquired of her bosom she would have declared that she had not been in love. With her mother there was perhaps something of regret. But it was exactly the regret which may be felt in reference to the top brick. It would have been so sweet had it been possible; but then it was so evidently impossible.

With the Doctor the feeling was somewhat different. It was not quite so manifest to him that this special brick was altogether unattainable, nor even that it was quite the top of the chimney. There was no reason why his daughter should not marry an earl's son and heir.

No doubt the lad had been confided to him in trust. No doubt it would have been his duty to have prevented anything of the kind, had anything of the kind seemed to him to be probable. Had there been any moment in which the duty had seemed to him to be a duty, he would have done it, even though it had been necessary to caution the Earl to take his son away from Bowick. But there had been nothing of the kind. He had acted in the simplicity of his heart, and this had been the result. Of course it was impossible. He acknowledged to himself that it was so, because of the necessity of those Oxford studies and those long years which would be required for the taking of the degree. But to his thinking there was no other ground for saying that it was impossible. The thing must stand as it was. If this youth should show himself to be more constant than other youths,—which was not probable,—and if, at the end of three or four years, Mary should not have given her heart to any other lover,—which was also improbable,—why then, it might come to pass that he should some day find himself father-in-law to the future Earl Bracy. Though Mary did not think of it, nor Mrs Wortle, he thought of it,—so as to give an additional interest to these disturbed days.

CHAPTER XVII.—CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE PALACE.

The possible glory of Mary's future career did not deter the Doctor from thinking of his troubles,—and especially that trouble with the Bishop which was at present heavy on his hand. He had determined not to go on with his action, and had so resolved because he had felt, in his more sober moments, that in bringing the Bishop to disgrace, he would be as a bird soiling

its own nest. It was that conviction, and not any idea as to the sufficiency or insufficiency, as to the truth or falsehood, of the editor's apology, which had actuated him. As he had said to his lawyer, he did not in the least care for the newspaper people. He could not condescend to be angry with them. The abominable joke as to the two verbs was altogether in their line.

As coming from them, they were no more to him than the ribald words of boys which he might hear in the street. The offence to him had come from the Bishop,—and he resolved to spare the Bishop because of the Church. But yet something must be done. He could not leave the man to triumph over him. If nothing further were done in the matter, the Bishop would have triumphed over him. As he could not bring himself to expose the Bishop, he must see whether he he could not reach the man by means of his own power of words;—so he wrote as follows:—

“MY DEAR LORD,—I have to own that this letter is written with feelings which have been very much lacerated by what your lordship has done. I must tell you, in the first place, that I have abandoned my intention of bringing an action against the proprietors of the scurrilous newspaper which your lordship sent me, because I am unwilling to bring to public notice the fact of a quarrel between a clergyman of the Church of England and his bishop. I think that, whatever may be the difficulty between us, it should be arranged without bringing down upon either of us adverse criticism from the public press. I trust your lordship will appreciate my feeling in this matter. Nothing less strong could have induced me to abandon what seems to be the most certain means by which I could obtain redress.

“I had seen the paper which your lordship sent to me before it came to me from the palace. The scurrilous, unsavoury, and vulgar words which it contained did not matter to me much. I have lived long enough to know that, let a man's own garments be as clean as they may be, he cannot hope to walk through the world without rubbing against those who are

dirty. It was only when those words came to me from your lordship,—when I found that the expressions which I had read in that paper were those to which your lordship had before alluded, as being criticisms on my conduct in the metropolitan press—criticisms so grave as to make your lordship think it necessary to admonish me respecting them,—it was only then, I say, that I considered them to be worthy of my notice. When your lordship, in admonishing me, found it necessary to refer me to the metropolitan press, and to caution me to look to my conduct because the metropolitan press had expressed its dissatisfaction, it was, I submit to you, natural for me to ask you where I should find that criticism which had so strongly affected your lordship's judgment. There are perhaps half a score of newspapers published in London whose animadversions I, as a clergyman, might have reason to respect,—even if I did not fear them. Was I not justified in thinking that at least some two or three of these had dealt with my conduct, when your lordship held the metropolitan press *in terrorem* over my head? I applied to your lordship for the names of these newspapers, and your lordship, when pressed for a reply, sent to me—that copy of ‘Everybody's Business.’

“I ask your lordship to ask yourself whether, so far, I have overstated anything. Did not that paper come to me as the only sample you were able to send me of criticism made on my conduct in the metropolitan press? No doubt my conduct was handled there in very severe terms. No doubt the insinuations, if true,—or if of such kind as to be worthy of credit with your lordship, whether true or false,—were severe, plain-spoken and damning. The language was so abominable, so vulgar, so nauseous,

that I will not trust myself to repeat it. Your lordship, probably, when sending me one copy, kept another. Now I must ask your lordship,—and I must beg of your lordship for a reply,—whether the periodical itself has such a character as to justify your lordship in founding a complaint against a clergyman on its unproved statements; and also, whether the facts of the case, as they were known to you, were not such as to make your lordship well aware that the insinuations were false. Before these ribald words were printed, your lordship had heard all the facts of the case from my own lips. Your lordship had known me and my character for, I think, a dozen years. You know the character that I bear among others as a clergyman, a schoolmaster, and a gentleman. You have been aware how great is the friendship I have felt for the unfortunate gentleman whose career is in question, and for the lady who bears his name. When you read those abominable words, did they induce your lordship to believe that I had been guilty of the inexpressible treachery of making love to the poor lady whose misfortunes I was endeavouring to relieve, and of doing so almost in my wife's presence?

“I defy you to have believed them. Men are various, and their minds work in different ways,—but the same causes will produce the same effects. You have known too much of me to have thought it possible that I should have done as I was accused. I should hold a man to be no less than mad who could so have believed, knowing as much as your lordship knew. Then how am I to reconcile to my idea of your lordship's character the fact that you should have sent me that paper? What am I to think of the process going on in your lordship's mind when your lordship

could have brought yourself to use a narrative which you must have known to be false, made in a newspaper which you knew to be scurrilous, as the ground for a solemn admonition to a clergyman of my age and standing? You wrote to me, as is evident from the tone and context of your lordship's letter, because you found that the metropolitan press had denounced my conduct. And this was the proof you sent to me that such had been the case!

“It occurred to me at once that, as the paper in question had vilely slandered me, I could redress myself by an action of law, and that I could prove the magnitude of the evil done me by showing the grave importance which your lordship had attached to the words. In this way I could have forced an answer from your lordship to the questions which I now put to you. Your lordship would have been required to state on oath whether you believed those insinuations or not; and if so, why you believed them. On grounds which I have already explained, I have thought it improper to do so. Having abandoned that course, I am unable to force any answer from your lordship. But I appeal to your sense of honour and justice whether you should not answer my questions;—and I also ask from your lordship an ample apology, if, on consideration, you shall feel that you have done me an undeserved injury.—I have the honour to be, my lord, your lordship's most obedient, very humble servant,

“JEFFREY WORTLE.”

He was rather proud of this letter as he read it to himself, and yet a little afraid of it, feeling that he had addressed his Bishop in very strong language. It might be that the Bishop should send him no answer at all, or some curt

note from his chaplain in which it would be explained that the tone of the letter precluded the Bishop from answering it. What should he do then? It was not, he thought, improbable, that the curt note from the chaplain would be all that he might receive. He let the letter lie by him for four-and-twenty hours after he had composed it, and then determined that not to send it would be cowardly. He sent it, and then occupied himself for an hour or two in meditating the sort of letter he would write to the Bishop when that curt reply had come from the chaplain.

That further letter must be one which must make all amicable intercourse between him and the Bishop impossible. And it must be so written as to be fit to meet the public eye if he should be ever driven by the Bishop's conduct to put it in print. A great wrong had been done him;—a great wrong! The Bishop had been induced by influences which should have had no power over him to use his episcopal rod and to smite him,—him, Dr Wortle! He would certainly show the Bishop that he should have considered beforehand whom he was about to smite. "Amo in the cool of the evening!" And that given as an expression of opinion from the metropolitan press in general! He had spared the Bishop as far as that action was concerned, but he would not spare him should he be driven to further measures by further injustice. In this way he lashed himself again into a rage. Whenever those odious words occurred to him, he was almost mad with anger against the Bishop.

When the letter had been two days sent, so that he might have had a reply had a reply come to him by return of post, he put a copy of it into his pocket and rode off to call on Mr Puddicombe. He had thought of showing it to Mr Puddi-

combe before he sent it, but his mind had revolted from such submission to the judgment of another. Mr Puddicombe would no doubt have advised him not to send it, and then he would have been almost compelled to submit to such advice. But the letter was gone now. The Bishop had read it, and no doubt re-read it two or three times. But he was anxious that some other clergyman should see it,—that some other clergyman should tell him that, even if inexpedient, it had still been justified. Mr Puddicombe had been made acquainted with the former circumstances of the affair; and now, with his mind full of his own injuries, he went again to Mr Puddicombe.

"It is just the sort of letter that you would write as a matter of course," said Mr Puddicombe.

"Then I hope that you think it is a good letter?"

"Good as being expressive, and good also as being true, I do think it."

"But not good as being wise?"

"Had I been in your case I should have thought it unnecessary. But you are self-demonstrative, and cannot control your feelings."

"I do not quite understand you."

"What did it all matter? The Bishop did a foolish thing in talking of the metropolitan press. But he had only meant to put you on your guard."

"I do not choose to be put on my guard in that way," said the Doctor.

"No; exactly. And he should have known you better than to suppose you would bear it. Then you pressed him, and he found himself compelled to send you that stupid newspaper. Of course he had made a mistake. But don't you think that the world goes easier when mistakes are forgiven?"

"I did forgive it, as far as foregoing the action."

"That, I think, was a matter of course. If you had succeeded in putting the poor Bishop into a witness-box you would have had every sensible clergyman in England against you. You felt that yourself."

"Not quite that," said the Doctor.

"Something very near it; and therefore you withdrew. But you cannot get the sense of the injury out of your mind, and therefore you have persecuted the Bishop with that letter."

"Persecuted?"

"He will think so. And so should I, had it been addressed to me. As I said before, all your arguments are true,—only I think you have made so much more of the matter than was necessary! He ought not to have sent you that newspaper, nor ought he to have talked about the metropolitan press. But he did you no harm; nor had he wished to do you harm;—and perhaps it might have been as well to pass it over."

"Could you have done so?"

"I cannot imagine myself in such a position. I could not, at any rate, have written such a letter as that, even if I would; and should have been afraid to write it if I could. I value peace and quiet too greatly to quarrel with my bishop,—unless, indeed, he should attempt to impose upon my conscience. There was nothing of that kind here. I think I should have seen that he had made a mistake, and have passed it over."

The Doctor, as he rode home, was, on the whole, better pleased with his visit than he had expected to be. He had been told that his letter was argumentatively true, and that in itself had been much.

At the end of the week he received a reply from the Bishop, and found that it was not, at any rate, written by the chaplain.

"MY DEAR DR WORTLE," said the reply; "your letter has pained me exceedingly, because I find that I have caused you a degree of annoyance which I am certainly very sorry to have inflicted. When I wrote to you in my letter,—which I certainly did not intend as an admonition,—about the metropolitan press, I only meant to tell you, for your own information, that the newspapers were making reference to your affair with Mr Peacocke. I doubt whether I know anything of the nature of 'Everybody's Business.' I am not sure even whether I had ever actually read the words to which you object so strongly. At any rate, they had had no weight with me. If I had read them,—which I probably did very cursorily,—they did not rest on my mind at all when I wrote to you. My object was to caution you, not at all as to your own conduct, but as to others who were speaking evil of you.

"As to the action of which you spoke so strongly when I had the pleasure of seeing you here, I am very glad that you abandoned it, for your own sake and for mine, and for the sake of all us generally to whom the peace of the Church is dear.

"As to the nature of the language in which you have found yourself compelled to write to me, I must remind you that it is unusual as coming from a clergyman to a bishop. I am, however, ready to admit that the circumstances of the case were unusual, and I can understand that you should have felt the matter severely. Under these circumstances, I trust that the affair may now be allowed to rest without any breach of those kind feelings which have hitherto existed between us.—Yours very faithfully,
C. BROUGHTON."

"It is a beastly letter," the

Doctor said to himself, when he had read it,—“a beastly letter;” and then he put it away without saying any more about it to himself or to any one else. It had appeared to him to be a “beastly letter,” because it had exactly the effect which the Bishop had intended. It did not eat “humble pie;” it did not give him the full satisfaction of a complete apology; and yet it left no room for a further rejoinder. It had declared that no censure had been intended, and expressed sorrow that annoyance had been caused. But yet to the Doctor’s thinking it was an unmanly letter. “Not intended as an admonition!” Then why had the

Bishop written in that severely affectionate and episcopal style? He had intended it as an admonition, and the excuse was false. So thought the Doctor, and comprised all his criticism in the one epithet given above. After that he put the letter away, and determined to think no more about it.

“Will you come in and see Mrs Peacocke after lunch?” the Doctor said to his wife the next morning. They paid their visit together; and after that, when the Doctor called on the lady, he was generally accompanied by Mrs Wortle. So much had been effected by ‘Everybody’s Business,’ and its abominations.

CHAPTER XVIII.—THE JOURNEY.

We will now follow Mr Peacocke for a while upon his journey. He began his close connection with Robert Lefroy by paying the man’s bill at the inn before he left Broughton, and after that found himself called upon to defray every trifle of expense incurred as they went along. Lefroy was very anxious to stay for a week in town. It would, no doubt, have been two weeks or a month had his companion given way;—but on this matter a line of conduct had been fixed by Mr Peacocke in conjunction with the Doctor from which he never departed. “If you will not be guided by me, I will go without you,” Mr Peacocke had said, “and leave you to follow your own devices on your own resources.”

“And what can you do by yourself?”

“Most probably I shall be able to learn all that I want to learn. It may be that I shall fail to learn anything either with you or without you. I am willing to make the attempt with you if you will

come along at once;—but I will not be delayed for a single day. I shall go whether you go or stay.” Then Lefroy had yielded, and had agreed to be put on board a German steamer starting from Southampton to New York.

But an hour or two before the steamer started he made a revelation. “This is all gammon, Peacocke,” he said, when on board.

“What is all gammon?”

“My taking you across to the States.”

“Why is it gammon?”

“Because Ferdinand died more than a year since;—almost immediately after you took her off.”

“Why did you not tell me that at Bowick?”

“Because you were so uncommon uncivil. Was it likely I should have told you that when you cut up so uncommon rough?”

“An honest man would have told me the very moment that he saw me.”

“When one’s poor brother has died, one does not blurt it like that all at once.”

"Your poor brother!"

"Why not my poor brother as well as anybody else's? And her husband too! How was I to let it out in that sort of way? At any rate, he is dead as Julius Cæsar. I saw him buried,—right away at 'Frisco."

"Did he go to San Francisco?"

"Yes,—we both went there right away from St Louis. When we got up to St Louis we were on our way with them other fellows. Nobody meant to disturb you, but Ferdy got drunk, and would go and have a spree, as he called it."

"A spree, indeed!"

"But we were off by train to Kansas at five o'clock the next morning. The devil wouldn't keep him sober, and he died of D.T. the day after we got him to 'Frisco. So there's the truth of it, and you needn't go to New York at all. Hand me the dollars. I'll be off to the States; and you can go back and marry the widow,—or leave her alone, just as you please."

They were down below when this story was told, sitting on their portmanteaus in the little cabin in which they were to sleep. The prospect of the journey certainly had no attraction for Mr Peacocke. His companion was most distasteful to him; the ship was abominable; the expense was most severe. How gladly would he avoid it all if it were possible! "You know it all as well as if you were there," said Robert, "and were standing on his grave." He did believe it. The man in all probability had at the last moment told the true story. Why not go back and be married again? The Doctor could be got to believe it.

But then if it were not true? It was only for a moment that he doubted. "I must go to 'Frisco all the same," he said.

"Why so?"

"Because I must in truth stand

upon his grave. I must have proof that he has been buried there."

"Then you may go by yourself," said Robert Lefroy. He had said this more than once or twice already, and had been made to change his tone. He could go or stay as he pleased, but no money would be paid to him until Peacocke had in his possession positive proof of Ferdinand Lefroy's death. So the two made their unpleasant journey to New York together. There was complaining on the way, even as to the amount of liquor that should be allowed. Peacocke would pay for nothing that he did not himself order. Lefroy had some small funds of his own, and was frequently drunk while on board. There were many troubles; but still they did at last reach New York.

Then there was a great question whether they would go on direct from thence to San Francisco, or delay themselves three or four days by going round by St Louis. Lefroy was anxious to go to St Louis,—and on that account Peacocke was almost resolved to take tickets direct through for San Francisco. Why should Lefroy wish to go to St Louis? But then, if the story were altogether false, some truth might be learned at St Louis; and it was at last decided that thither they would go. As they went on from town to town, changing carriages first at one place and then at another, Lefroy's manner became worse and worse, and his language more and more threatening. Peacocke was asked whether he thought a man was to be brought all that distance without being paid for his time. "You will be paid when you have performed your part of the bargain," said Peacocke.

"I'll see some part of the money at St Louis," said Lefroy, "or

I'll know the reason why. A thousand dollars! What are a thousand dollars? Hand out the money." This was said as they were sitting together in a corner or separated portion of the smoking-room of a little hotel at which they were waiting for a steamer which was to take them down the Mississippi to St Louis. Peacocke looked round and saw that they were alone.

"I shall hand out nothing till I see your brother's grave," said Peacocke.

"You won't?"

"Not a dollar! What is the good of your going on like that? You ought to know me well enough by this time."

"But you do not know me well enough. You must have taken me for a very tame sort o' crittur."

"Perhaps I have."

"Maybe you'll change your mind."

"Perhaps I shall. It is quite possible that you should murder me. But you will not get any money by that."

"Murder you! You ain't worth murdering." Then they sat in silence, waiting another hour and a half till the steamboat came. The reader will understand that it must have been a bad time for Mr Peacocke.

They were on the steamer together for about twenty-four hours, during which Lefroy hardly spoke a word. As far as his companion could understand he was out of funds, because he remained sober during the greater part of the day, taking only what amount of liquor was provided for him. Before, however, they reached St Louis, which they did late at night, he had made acquaintance with certain fellow-travellers, and was drunk and noisy when they got out upon the quay. Mr Peacocke bore his position as well as he could, and

accompanied him up to the hotel. It was arranged that they should remain two days at St Louis, and then start for San Francisco by the railway which runs across the State of Kansas. Before he went to bed Lefroy insisted on going into the large hall in which, as is usual in American hotels, men sit and loaf and smoke and read the newspapers. Here, though it was twelve o'clock, there was still a crowd; and Lefroy, after he had seated himself and lit his cigar, got up from his seat and addressed all the men around him.

"Here's a fellow," said he, "has come out from England to find out what's become of Ferdinand Lefroy."

"I knew Ferdinand Lefroy," said one man, "and I know you too, Master Robert."

"What has become of Ferdinand Lefroy?" asked Mr Peacocke.

"He's gone where all the good fellows go," said another.

"You mean that he is dead?" asked Peacocke.

"Of course he's dead," said Robert. "I've been telling him so ever since we left England; but he is such a d—— unbelieving infidel that he wouldn't credit the man's own brother. He won't learn much here about him."

"Ferdinand Lefroy," said the first man, "died on the way as he was going out West. I was over the road the day after."

"You know nothing about it," said Robert. "He died at 'Frisco two days after we'd got him there."

"He died at Ogden Junction, where you turn down to Utah city."

"You didn't see him dead," said the other.

"If I remember right," continued the first man, "they'd taken him away to bury him somewhere just there in the neighbourhood. I didn't care much about him, and I

didn't ask any particular questions. He was a drunken beast,—better dead than alive.”

“You've been drunk as often as him, I guess,” said Robert.

“I never gave nobody the trouble to bury me, at any rate,” said the other.

“Do you mean to say positively of your own knowledge,” asked Peacocke, “that Ferdinand Lefroy died at that station?”

“Ask him; he's his brother, and he ought to know best.”

“I tell you,” said Robert, earnestly, “that we carried him on to 'Frisco, and there he died. If you think you know best, you can go to Utah city and wait there till you hear all about it. I guess they'll make you one of their elders if you wait long enough.” Then they all went to bed.

It was now clear to Mr Peacocke that the man as to whose life or death he was so anxious had really died. The combined evidence of these men, which had come out without any preconcerted arrangement, was proof to his mind. But there was no evidence which he could take back with him to England and use there as proof in a court of law, or even before the Bishop and Dr Wortle. On the next morning, before Robert Lefroy was up, he got hold of the man who had been so positive that death had overtaken the poor wretch at the railway station, which is distant from San Francisco two days' journey. Had the man died there, and been buried there, nothing would be known of him in San Francisco. The journey to San Francisco would be entirely thrown away, and he would be as badly off as ever.

“I wouldn't like to say for certain,” said the man when he was interrogated. “I only tell you what they told me. As I was passing along, somebody said as Ferdy

Lefroy had been taken dead out of the cars on to the platform. Now you know as much about it as I do.”

He was thus assured that at any rate the journey to San Francisco had not been altogether a fiction. The man had gone “West,” as had been said, and nothing more would be known of him at St Louis. He must still go on upon his journey and make such inquiry as might be possible at the Ogden Junction.

On the day but one following they started again, taking their tickets as far as Leavenworth. They were told by the officials that they would find a train at Leavenworth waiting to take them on across country into the regular San Francisco line. But, as is not unusual with railway officials in that part of the world, they were deceived. At Leavenworth they were forced to remain for four-and-twenty hours, and there they put themselves up at a miserable hotel in which they were obliged to occupy the same room. It was a rough, uncouth place, in which, as it seemed to Mr Peacocke, the men were more uncourteous to him, and the things around more unlike to what he had met elsewhere, than in any other town of the Union. Robert Lefroy, since the first night at St Louis, had become sullen rather than disobedient. He had not refused to go on when the moment came for starting, but had left it in doubt till the last moment whether he did or did not intend to prosecute his journey. When the ticket was taken for him he pretended to be altogether indifferent about it, and would himself give no help whatever in any of the usual troubles of travelling. But as far as this little town of Leavenworth he had been carried, and Peacocke now began to think it probable that he might succeed in taking him to San Francisco.

On that night he endeavoured to induce him to go first to bed, but in this he failed. Lefroy insisted on remaining down at the bar, where he had ordered for himself some liquor for which Mr Peacocke, in spite of all his efforts to the contrary, would have to pay. If the man would get drunk and lie there, he could not help himself. On this he was determined, that whether with or without the man, he would go on by the first train;—and so he took himself to his bed.

He had been there perhaps half an hour when his companion came into the room,—certainly not drunk. He seated himself on his bed, and then, pulling to him a large travelling-bag which he used, he unpacked it altogether, laying all the things which it contained out upon the bed. "What are you doing that for?" said Mr Peacocke; "we have to start from here to-morrow morning at five."

"I'm not going to start to-morrow at five, nor yet to-morrow at all, nor yet next day."

"You are not?"

"Not if I know it. I have had enough of this game. I am not going further west for any one. Hand out the money. You have been told everything about my brother, true and honest, as far as I know it. Hand out the money."

"Not a dollar," said Peacocke. "All that I have heard as yet will be of no service to me. As far as I can see, you will earn it; but you will have to come on a little further yet."

"Not a foot; I ain't a-going out of this room to-morrow."

"Then I must go without you;—that's all."

"You may go and be——. But you'll have to shell out the money first, old fellow."

"Not a dollar."

"You won't?"

"Certainly I will not. How often have I told you so?"

"Then I shall take it."

"That you will find very difficult. In the first place, if you were to cut my throat——"

"Which is just what I intend to do."

"If you were to cut my throat,—which in itself will be difficult,—you would only find the trifle of gold which I have got for our journey as far as 'Frisco. That won't do you much good. The rest is in circular notes, which to you would be of no service whatever."

"My God!" said the man suddenly, "I am not going to be done in this way." And with that he drew out a bowie-knife which he had concealed among the things which he had extracted from the bag. "You don't know the sort of country you're in now. They don't think much here of the life of such a skunk as you. If you mean to live till to-morrow morning you must come to terms."

The room was a narrow chamber in which two beds ran along the wall, each with its foot to the other, having a narrow space between them and the other wall. Peacocke occupied the one nearest to the door. Lefroy now got up from the bed in the further corner, and with the bowie-knife in his hand, rushed against the door as though to prevent his companion's escape. Peacocke, who was in bed undressed, sat up at once; but as he did so he brought a revolver out from under the pillow. "So you have been and armed yourself; have you?" said Robert Lefroy.

"Yes," said Peacocke;—"if you come nearer me with that knife I shall shoot you. Put it down."

"Likely I shall put it down at your bidding."

With the pistol still held at the other man's head, Peacocke slowly extricated himself from his bed.

"Now," said he, "if you don't come away from the door I shall fire one barrel just to let them know in the house what sort of affair is going on. Put the knife down. You know that I shall not hurt you then."

After hesitating for a moment or two, Lefroy did put the knife down. "I didn't mean anything, old fellow," said he. "I only wanted to frighten you."

"Well, you have frightened me. Now, what's to come next?"

"No, I ain't;—not frightened you a bit. A pistol's always better than a knife any day. Well now, I'll tell ye how it all is." Saying this, he seated himself on his own bed, and began a long narration. He would not go further west than Leavenworth. Whether he got his money or whether he lost it; he would not travel a foot further. There were reasons which would make it disagreeable for him to go into California. But he made a proposition. If Peacocke would only give him money enough to support himself for the necessary time, he would remain at Leavenworth till his companion should return there, or would make his way to Chicago, and stay there till Peacocke should come to him. Then he proceeded to explain how absolute evidence might be obtained at San Francisco as to his brother's death. "That fellow was lying altogether," he said, "about my brother dying at the Ogden station. He was very bad there, no doubt, and we thought it was going to be all up with him. He had the horrors there, worse than I ever saw before, and I hope never to see the like again. But we did get him on to San Francisco; and when he was able to walk into the city on his own legs, I thought that, might

be, he would rally and come round. However, in two days he died;—and we buried him in the big cemetery just out of the town."

"Did you put a stone over him?"

"Yes; there is a stone as large as life. You'll find the name on it, —Ferdinand Lefroy of Kilbrack, Louisiana. Kilbrack was the name of our plantation, where we should be living now as gentlemen ought, with three hundred niggers of our own, but for these accursed Northern hypocrites."

"How can I find the stone?"

"There's a chap there who knows, I guess, where all them graves are to be found. But it's on the right hand, a long way down, near the far wall at the bottom, just where the ground takes a little dip to the north. It ain't so long ago but what the letters on the stone will be as fresh as if they were cut yesterday."

"Does no one in San Francisco know of his death?"

"There's a chap named Burke at Johnson's, the cigar-shop in Montgomery Street. He was brother to one of our party, and he went out to the funeral. Maybe you'll find him, or, any way, some traces of him."

The two men sat up discussing the matter nearly the whole of the night, and Peacocke, before he started, had brought himself to accede to Lefroy's last proposition. He did give the man money enough to support him for two or three weeks and also to take him to Chicago, promising at the same time that he would hand to him the thousand dollars at Chicago should he find him there at the appointed time, and should he also have found Ferdinand Lefroy's grave at San Francisco in the manner described.

MEMORY.

It is one of Lord Bacon's apothegms that the brains of some creatures taken in wine, as hares, hens, deer, are said to sharpen memory. This opinion must have broken down under experiment, or no dishes would be more in request than those in which brains were the principal ingredients; nor would there be any incivility in setting these savoury remedies before our guests, for defective memory is a fashionable complaint no one is ashamed to accuse himself of. La Bruyère indeed regards the confession or claim to one as a resource of egoism, under cover of which men arrogate to themselves superior qualities. "Men talking of themselves avow only small defects and those compatible with great talents and noble qualities. Thus they complain of bad memory; inwardly satisfied, and conscious of good sense and sound judgment, they submit to the reproach of absence of mind and reverie as though it took for granted their *bel esprit*." It is, in fact, the one question about our intellectual selves we may discuss in a mixed company. It involves no real self-depreciation to accuse ourselves of bad memory; for defective memory, in social popular discourse, is regarded as an accidental disadvantage outside the higher faculties, and with little more to do with the thinking part of us than shortsightedness, or the broad face attributed to himself by the Spectator. This prevalent indulgent tone in no way falls in with philosophical language towards this deficiency. "Memory," to recall Locke's judgment to our readers, "is subject to two defects: *first*, that it loses the idea quite, and so far it produces perfect

ignorance; *secondly*, that it moves slowly, and retrieves not the ideas that it has, and are laid up in store, quick enough to serve the mind upon occasion. This, if it be to a great degree, is stupidity; and he who through this default in his memory has not the ideas that are really preserved there, ready at hand when need and occasion calls for them, were almost as good be without them quite, since they serve him to little purpose. The dull man who loses the opportunity whilst he is seeking in his mind for those ideas that should serve his turn, is not much more happy in his knowledge than one that is perfectly ignorant. It is the business, therefore, of the memory to furnish the mind with those dormant ideas which it has present occasion for; in the having them ready at hand on all occasions, consists that which we call invention, fancy, and quickness of parts." In fact, however, it is only the small change of memory that people willingly proclaim themselves short of: by the very act of owning it, taking for granted the store of gold laid up and ready for the intellect's greater needs.

The truth is, it is not a personal topic that particularly interests any one but the man's self. Men trouble themselves very little about the memory of their friends, except when some lapse interferes with their own convenience. They take him as he is, without speculating on the difference a better memory would have made in him. He is viewed as a whole. What he can recall—in what order his mind stands in its innermost recesses—is nothing to other men, however much it may affect his place in the

world. Regrets on this head pass as so many words of course. And yet, if there is truth in them, they mean a great deal—they account for a great deal. Nobody can do much in the department he has chosen without having tenacity of memory in it. A man may forget what he pleases out of his own sphere of thought and practice, but he must have a ready, clear memory in that sphere, or he will make no way; and for this reason, that if he forgets in that sphere, there has been defect in the great preliminary of attention. In the way most men have learned what they are assumed to know, they have no right to expect to remember it. A good memory, as a rule, represents much more than itself. It indicates a mind capable of a keener, more fixed, more single attention than ordinary men can bestow on anything beyond their immediate personal interests—a mind open to receive, a judgment ready to weigh what is worth retaining, a capacity for quick selection and concentration of thought.

Are really strong, vivid impressions ever forgotten? and does not a generally treacherous memory imply a universal defect and want of stamina, either congenital or due to self-neglect? We read of the great memories of great men; but does not this mean that what they have once seen, done, learned, was welcomed with a warmer reception, scored at the time with a deeper incision, engraved in larger, stronger characters than is the case with ordinary men—and in this way made their own? Most people receive facts and knowledge into their minds, not as permanent inhabitants, but as lodgers. If only they heard with all their ears, saw with an undistracted gaze, listened with an undivided attention, took all in with resolute apprehension at the

time, they would be providing a home for new ideas. Everybody who does all this remembers—can recall at will. The habit of such attention is the building of an edifice where everything is assigned its proper place, and can be found when wanted.

We believe that all minds have a sort of lumber-room wherein toss the past events of life, fragments and tatters of the knowledge once acquired and the facts once familiar. For want of active measures for storing them on their first reception, these lie irrecoverable, or at best unavailable, for present need. And if persons put themselves to the question, they need be at no loss to account for this. Probably of all habits of mind, inattention is earliest contracted and most difficult to dislodge. Where it has gained a firm footing, even the will cannot cure it. We believe nothing is so rare as a power of unbroken attention. The seductive pleasures of wool-gathering insinuate themselves, fasten themselves, offer themselves like an easy cushion, assert themselves as originality and invention,—divert, amuse, take prisoner, lap in Elysium before the victim is aware of his lapse or can rally his powers to the immediate demands of the hour. Wherever there has been this sort of bargain between duty and indolence, to attend no more than is necessary for the present occasion, drifting off into dreamland as a relaxation, there the memory has been incurably weakened. There should be a surplus of attention, a concentration beyond the necessities of the hour, to form a memory.

This formation of memory starts with consciousness, and has its moral aspect. Where the interests centre in self and its immediate surroundings, the memory cannot

be laying up treasures for the future. We see the difference in the youngest children. It is a great thing, of course, to teach in an interesting way so as to make attention as little painful an effort as possible. The child so taught starts at an advantage; but there is a subtle form of selfishness that eludes all benevolent aims to enlarge the range of interests, that refuses to see beyond the charmed circle, and shackles and confines the memory at the outset. We may almost foretell of some children that they will remember what now occupies them so deeply, because we see no undercurrent of self at work interfering with the free reception of new congenial ideas; while others take in new thoughts with a reserve; half occupied with themselves, if they attend, turning the new acquirement into an occasion for present show and self-glory. The phrase "hits the fancy," explains the posture of mind. Nothing hits the fancy of some children apart from self; with others, the object which hits and seizes the attention stands single, and takes them out of themselves. Sir Walter Scott owns to this memory. "I had always a wonderful facility in retaining in my memory whatever verses pleased me:" quoting the old Borderer who had no command of his memory, and only retained what hit his fancy. "My memory was precisely of the same kind; it seldom failed to preserve most tenaciously a favourite passage of poetry, a play-house ditty, or, above all, a Border-raid ballad; but names, dates, and the other technicalities of history escaped me in a most melancholy degree." Of course this early passion of interest implies a bias. The memory here came by nature, was not cultivated by self-mastery; but, while following a bent, it carried him out of himself

and beyond himself, which it is an important function of memory to do. All people have not only a memory, but a tenacious memory for some things. If for nothing useful, if not for things observed, for things learnt, for thought, for events, for persons, for the outsides of things, for words, for names, for dates,—yet for follies, vanities, trifles, grudges connected with self; and especially for losses, wrongs, slights, snubs, disparagements, injuries, real or fancied, inflicted in the course of a lifetime on that dear self. If memory is not put to its legitimate uses, subjected to rule, given work to do, it degenerates into a mere deposit, a residuum of worthless refuse, degrading the nature it should elevate, supplying the mind with unwholesome food, on which it largely broods and ruminates. Of the same class is the memory roused out of its lethargy by the presence of others—as, for example, on the revival of former acquaintance—into a sort of malignant activity; a memory dissociated from sympathy, recalling precisely the things which ought to be forgotten—misfortunes, humiliations, and the like—and forcing on reluctant ears with unflinching accuracy of detail, facts long erased from busier, fuller, better-trained memories, as though inspired by a sort of necessity to let loose the unmannerly crowd of revived images where it gives most annoyance. How often we wish for others the reverse of what we desire for ourselves! If they could only forget!

There are memories that seem self-acting instruments, stimulated neither by feeling nor intellect; as though eye and ear stamped words and characters on the brain independent of thought and will, and with no relation to the idiosyncrasy of the owner. Something

in the signs of time, number, name, gets a mysterious hold. These associate themselves with some quality in the man in a way incomprehensible to the observer. Memories, average and fallacious on general topics, have an unfailing accuracy in retaining rows of figures and arbitrary combinations of letters. Nor can the possessor of these fixed impressions account any better than another for this speciality. What comes to us by nature we regard as proper to man. It is the absence or failure of it that takes us by surprise. Again, there are memories where the intellect is conspicuously below par, which expend themselves with marked success on trivial, minute matters, removed from any reasonable connection with themselves. Thus they regard their fellow-creatures perhaps on the side of age: how old they are; on what day their birthday falls. It is on this point that they bring themselves into relation with their fellow-men, on which they can draw comparisons and find affinities. Or it may be the expenditure of money: what things cost; what people died worth; and so on. Whatever the subject of recollection, it is connected with anything rather than the inner self of the object dwelt on.

However, these are the curiosities of our subject. It is this view of memory as something arbitrary that makes it easy for people to accuse themselves of the want of it: great feats of recollection of this class serving the ordinary loose defective memory a good turn. It cannot be said of any natural power that it is without legitimate purpose or use; but no reasonable man regrets that he does not know everybody's birthday, or that he cannot reproduce a dozen figures in a line that have once met his eye.

What men do need for themselves is the memory that puts them in a position to cultivate and use their other gifts; that makes a judicious selection at starting; that stores what is worth keeping; that lets nothing slip that belongs to the development of their aptitude or genius; that arranges its treasures in order, for use; that can meet a sudden occasion; that retains whatever it is desirable to keep. Such a memory is not a faculty in itself—it is the indication, and, indeed, proof of many other faculties, and also of self-management. Some new ideas find such congenial soil that it is no merit to make them welcome; but how many must own to themselves that the will failed rather than the understanding, when what was uncongenial and difficult was first presented to them, and the choice given of acceptance or passive rejection? Then was their opportunity; then memory was open and receptive; but they indolently suffered knowledge to pass over their minds like the shade of a cloud, which they might have made their own by a resolute effort of sustained, however painful attention. So far as a strong will directed to good ends is a virtue, memory of this character seen in its function is a virtue, and tells for the man, morally as well as intellectually. In this view of things, in proportion to the man's natural powers, his confession of bad or defective memory is a serious avowal, to which his hearers may attach more importance than he himself is willing to give it.

While a strong and vast memory is an object of vague longing with us all, as a fact, people often wish for it who have already as much as is good for them—as much as they can make good use of; that is, they have it in proportion to their other gifts. Their grasp of thought,

of the deep and abstract, could never have been a powerful one; their interest in large subjects never keen or sustained: and a disproportionate memory is a property unmanageable in weak and indiscreet hands; it imprisons the mind within its own range and lends itself to display. People so gifted, in sober truth, require an excess of modesty, sympathy, and discretion, to keep the gift from being obtrusive and troublesome. To employ the memory in *tours de force*, which is the very natural and indeed excusable temptation, often defeats its object; impressing the hearer rather with the exhibitor's vanity or want of judgment than with the wonder or splendour of the display. Society would not be the better for a large accession of memories of the class of Mrs Tibbs in the "Citizen of the World." Our readers will recall the scene at Vauxhall, where the city widow on her good behaviour, and unwilling to forfeit all pretensions to politeness, has to sit and listen to that lady's song of portentous length, of which she would not spare her party a single verse: "Mrs Tibbs therefore kept on singing, and we continued to listen; till at last, when the song was just concluded, the waiter came to inform us that the water-works (which the widow had gone to see) were over!"

A good memory of the social order, stimulated by companionship and conversation, is indeed a delightful faculty when it is supported by wit and observation; but the people who long for it might not be equal to the charge of such an engine, and indeed persons largely gifted this way sometimes make us realise that there are things it is good to forget. They are apt to run off into surplusage of detail and the like. Their

memory rather obeys some inner law than is guided by sympathy with the general mind. People with exact memories of scenes in which they have played a part, do not always consider how far this minuteness and exactness are worth the hearer's attention, or are likely to suit his turn of mind. A strong hold of self, an intense sense of the *Ego*, is almost a necessary accompaniment of great memories that show themselves in social intercourse. Whatever touches this, whether through pain or pleasure, makes an impression beyond the ordinary measure. A man's self may be said to be all he has, and every man has this; but the difference is surprising between one man and another in the hold and realising of this possession. It is an intellectual, not a moral difference. It is strength. But it occasionally puts the man of strong memory a little out of step with his auditors. He finds himself listened to with interest while his memory runs in the groove of his hearers' tastes and likings; while it supplements theirs; while he reveals stores which are of the quality they can value and would willingly make their own; while he is the channel of communication with noted persons and eventful doings not otherwise approachable;—and he does not always understand the grounds of his power of sustaining the attention of others, and reckons on taking it along with him farther than it willingly would go;—into occasions which only concern his private interests and merely personal matters. We hope to hear—what his powers allow us a right to expect—a reproduction of some vivid scene, some occasion appealing to the general sympathies, some touch of human nature given with verbal truth of word and tone, some trait of humour, wit, or wisdom, of which

his memory is the sole chronicler; or, at least, to be enlightened, cleared up, set right on some point that concerns us. Instead of this we find ourselves involved in some dull narrative, some incident, some intricate dispute, either out of the hearer's line of interest and comprehension, or in its nature trivial, and the proper prey of oblivion. If it occupies his mind, he does not always see why it should not charm other ears, and hold them in the willing bondage his clear, sustained, vivid narrative is used to do on subjects not more interesting or important to himself.

Great memories in all but great men are, it may be observed, apt to be infested by hobbies. Mankind, as such, has its infatuations, taken up with eagerness, but presently laid down again out of mere incapacity to secure the attention of others; a condition necessary to the permanent existence of hobbies, which are essentially sociable things. Even while they are in full force in unretentive minds, the facilities for escape prevent their being the tax and infliction upon others which a hobby in the hands of a powerful memory and practised delivery is felt to be;—a memory that never loses its thread or relaxes its hold of a forced, unwilling attention. There is an alliance between voice and the propensity under discussion. Either the social memory cultivates the voice to sustained effort, or the voice, strong and sounding, stimulates the talking power. It may be some benevolent scheme, some view, some discovery, some grievance, some panacea, some standing quarrel, some political or religious theory; but whatever it is, it is unwelcome—the speaker is known for this flaw. We are in for a repetition of what we have heard before without interest; there is no freshness of handling. He is excel-

lent, delightful, edifying—the best company—the past is quickened into life under his spell; what he has seen, what he has read, is still an open page into which he will initiate you and hold you enthralled, if you can only keep him clear of this pitfall; but he drifts into it by a sort of fatality, and prefers to be a bore. An inexorable memory, incapable of letting slip the minutest point—a memory where nothing fades into indistinctness—holds him and his hearer in hopeless prolixity of detail.

With all its temptations, social memory, as dependent on other gifts for its success, is yet the memory that confers most pleasure, whether on him who exercises it, or on those who profit by it. A sort of security attaches to it; things seem more real in its presence; the land of shadows assumes outline; we know where we are; we stand on firmer ground. But when memory is discussed in ordinary talk, it is more commonly tested by what are called its feats. A good talker is never at his best when his memory comes in for much commendation. And here general ability may be quite dissociated from it. Memory may be a man's sole distinguishing gift, as possibly it is of that native scholar commended by Professor Max Müller, who, "almost naked and squatting in his tent, knows the whole Samhitâ and Pada text by heart;" and those Brahmans who, the same authority tells us, can repeat the whole Rig Veda—twice as long as 'Paradise Lost.' Or, to shift our ground, of a certain William Lyon, a strolling player commemorated in the magazines of the last century, who, one evening over his bottle, wagered a crown bowl of punch—a liquor of which he was very fond—that next morning at the rehearsal he would repeat a Daily Advertiser from beginning

to end. "At this rehearsal his opponent reminded him of his wager, imagining, as he was drunk the night before, that he must certainly have forgot it; and rallied him on his ridiculous bragging of his memory. Lyon pulled out the paper, and desired him to look at it and be judge himself whether he did or did not win his wager. Notwithstanding the want of connection between the paragraphs, the variety of advertisements, and the general chaos that goes to the composition of any newspaper, he repeated it from beginning to end without the least hesitation or mistake." "I know" (continues the narrator) "this to be true, and believe the parallel cannot be produced in any age or nation." This, no doubt, is going too far; but it is a feat which may take its place amongst the achievements of Brahmans and rhapsodists; though we would not put it on an equality with Mr Brandram's wonderful faculty. Of the quality of that memory which, in the case of George Bidder, who at ten years old could add two rows of twelve figures, give the answers immediately, and an hour after retain the two rows in his memory, it is not within our scope to pronounce.

But feats of this sort also adorn the memory of men, on whom they hang as mere ornaments, accidental graces, adding little to their prestige. Biographies of a past date delight in eccentric exercises of the faculty. Thus of Fuller we are told,—“That he could write *verbatim* another man's sermon after hearing it once, and that he could do the same with as many as five hundred words in an unknown language after hearing them twice. One day he undertook to walk from Temple Bar to the furthest end of Cheapside and to repeat, on his return, every sign on either side

of the way, in the order of their occurrence, a feat which he easily accomplished." And what has lately been reported of the Rev. Orlando Hyham, as an example of his most distinctive faculty, "that his memory was such that as he read Liddell and Scott's Greek Dictionary he destroyed the successive pages, content with having mastered their contents," is told of Bishop Bull, at the end of a masterly array of intellectual powers: "And as his reading was great, so his memory was equally retentive. He never kept any book of references of commonplaces, neither did he ever need any;" the writer adding that, "together with this happy faculty he was blessed with another that seldom accompanied it in the same person, and that was an accurate and sound judgment." Memory was in a past day more systematically cultivated than with us. People set themselves tasks. Thus Thomas Cromwell of the Reformation period, as a travelling task, committed to memory the whole of Erasmus's Paraphrase on the New Testament. Bishop Sanderson could repeat all the Odes of Horace, all Tully's Offices, and much of Juvenal and Persius without book. Bacon alludes to receipts for its improvement, as well as what herbs, in the popular mind, tend to strengthen imperfect memory, as onions, or beans, or such vaporous food. Again, he writes, "we find in the art of memory that images visible work better than conceits" in impressing things on the mind. A fact which finds modern illustration in the case of the Fifth Avenue Hotel waiter, who daily receives some five hundred hats from chance persons dining together in one room, and without any system of arrangement promptly returns each hat to its owner, explaining that he forms a mental picture of the wearer's face

inside his hat, and that on looking into the hat, its owner is instantly brought before him. Again, to recur to Bacon's speculations, he finds that "hasty speech confounds memory." Again—as writing makes an exact man, so—"if a man writes little he had need of a great memory." And he criticises the exercises used in the universities as making too great a divorce between invention and memory, in their cultivation of both faculties.

Progress would seem to discourage the feats of memory that once gave such simple ingenuous self-forgetting pleasure in social circles. People are more impatient for their turn; the attitude of admiration is less congenial to modern society than in the days we read of; hence there is less encouragement for people to cultivate this gift as a social accomplishment. Those were the days when men listened to quotations,—delighted with their aptitude to the occasion,—content even though they could not cap them with something equally well fitting. Of Burton, the author of the 'Anatomy of Melancholy,' Wood writes: "I have heard some of the ancients of Christ Church often say that his company was very merry, facetious, and juvenile; and no man in his time did surpass him for ready and dexterous interlarding his common discourses among them with verses from the poets or sentences from classic authors—which being then all the fashion in the university, made his company the more acceptable." In our day we prefer the habit of quotation, if a strong and pertinacious one, as interlarding imaginary discourse. Even Dick Swiveller, incomparable in resource, and master of the art of linking the poet's thought with the homely needs of daily life, might sometimes weary mankind's

growing impatience in actual intercourse, however refreshing and suggestive in the page are these indications of an inexhaustible memory,—as, for example, in that interview with the mysterious lodger who obstinately withholds his name:—

"'I beg your pardon,' said Dick, halting in his passage to the door, which the lodger prepared to open. 'When he who adores thee has left but the name—'

"'What do you mean?'

"'—But the name,' said Dick—'has left but the name—in case of letters or parcels.'

"'I never have any,' returned the lodger.

"'Or in case anybody should call.'

"'Nobody ever calls on me.'

"'If any mistake should arise from not having the name, don't say it was my fault, sir,' added Dick, still lingering.—'Oh, blame not the bard!'"

A summary ejection stops a flow which nothing else would have brought to an end. Perhaps it is because the effusions of our own poets offer more difficulties to the memory than Moore's flowing lines, but we do not imagine that the verse-loving youth of the present day are charged with the same amount of quotable verse as when Dickens wrote his early works. It should be a regret to Mr Browning that the human memory is incapable of retaining even specimens of the vast mass of his poetry, so to call it. The poems of his (for we grant some very few noted exceptions to our rule) that can be learned, that can live as music does in the mind, are as the halfpenny-worth of bread to the huge bulk of what cannot be assimilated by memory, of verse which relies solely on the printed page, solely on the eye of the reader, for its prolonged existence.

No memory has had finer things said of it than Lord Bolingbroke's. Spence quotes Pope on it:—

“There is one thing in Lord Bolingbroke which seems peculiar to himself. He has so great a memory, as well as judgment, that if he is alone, and without books, he can sit down by himself and refer to the books, or such a particular subject in them, in his own mind, and write as fully on it as another man would with all his books about him. He sits like an Intelligence, and recollects all the questions within himself.”

And in one of the records of the time we find a letter dwelling on the same faculty:—

“Whatever he read he retained in a very singular manner, for he made it entirely his own; and whether he was to speak or to write on any subject, all he had ever read in his favourite authors occurred to him just as he read it, so that he delivered this in conversation, or threw it upon paper, as if he had the book in his hand,—a circumstance that it imports you to know, for otherwise you will take for studied affectation what was to him, and perhaps only to him, perfectly natural. In the earlier part of his life he did not read much, or at least many books, for which he sometimes gave the same reason that Menage did for not reading Moreri's Dictionary, that he was unwilling to fill his head with what did not deserve a place there, since, when it was once in, he knew not how to get it out again.”

This fear is surely unique—that is, of books as a whole, though every memory is more retentive than its owner cares for in particular cases. We find in all the social records of this period great mention made of the faculty, with warnings against the habits that spoil it, such as “large commonplacing,” which teaches one to forget, and spoils one for conversation, or even for writing. Pope's memory is a subject with himself and others. It was good in its way; he could use it for books and reference; but his nerves—those disorganisers of the mind's system and order—stood in its way

in general intercourse. He never could speak in public:—

“I don't believe,” he said, “that if it was a set thing, I could give an account of any story to twelve friends together, though I could tell it to any three of them with a great deal of pleasure. When I was to appear for the Bishop of Rochester in his trial, though I had but ten words to say, and that on a plain point (how the Bishop spent his time while I was with him at Bromley), I made two or three blunders in it, and that notwithstanding the first row of lords—which was all I could see—were mostly of my acquaintance.”

It need not surprise us, therefore, to find that he does not give a high place to the faculty, and quenches its pretensions in a neat simile:—

“In the soul where memory prevails,
The solid force of understanding fails;
Where beams of warm imagination play,
The memory's soft figures fade away.”

He had had unpleasant experience of Wycherley's eccentric memory, who, whether owing to disposition or a fever in his youth, did not remember a kindness done him from minute to minute.

“He had the same single thoughts, which were very good, come into his head again that he had used twenty years before, his memory not being able to carry above a sentence at a time. These single sentences were good, but without connection, and only fit to be flung into maxims. He would read himself asleep in Montaigne, Rochefoucault, or Seneca, and the next day embody these thoughts in verse, and believe them his own, not knowing that he was obliged to any one of them for a single thought in the whole poem.”

Good—*i.e.*, tenacious—memories, we may observe, sometimes serve their owner the same trick. They cannot always distinguish foreign ideas, which have got a fixed place in their minds, from native produce. A notable instance of this

fact is the unconscious repetition by Shelley, in some verses in his prose romance of *St Irvyne*, of whole lines of Byron's 'Dark Lachin-y-gair.'

Neither Bolingbroke, nor any of the unlettered examples whose memories were the more powerful, because,—like the Hermit of Prague, who never saw pen and ink,—they had nothing else to trust to, can be set above Lord Macaulay in this question of memory. It was a memory of stupendous feats, and also an intelligent instrument and servant. He could not only remember what was useful, what he wanted to remember, but what was utterly worthless; what entered his mind by accident; what was read by the eyes only, scarcely entering into the mind. If, on one occasion, he repeated to himself the whole of 'Paradise Lost' while crossing the Irish Channel, on another, waiting in a Cambridge coffee-house for a post-chaise, he picked up a country newspaper containing two poetical pieces—one "Reflections of an Exile," and the other "A Parody on a Welsh Ballad"—looked them once through, never gave them a further thought for forty years, and then repeated them without the change of a single word. The readers of his *Life* will remember that his memory retained pages of trashy novels read once in his youth. In fact, in a way of speaking, he forgot nothing. As has been well said, "his mind, like a dredging-net at the bottom of the sea, took up all that it encountered, both bad and good, nor ever seemed to feel the burden,"—in this differing from Bolingbroke. We have spoken of disproportionate memories. His we cannot but think a case in point. He would have been a fairer historian if he could have forgotten some things—if his early impres-

sions had so faded that they could have given place to, or at least been modified by, new ones. In their vivid strength they stood in the way of judgment. To quote again from the same source:—

"There have been other men, of our own generation, though very few, who, if they have not equalled, have approached Macaulay in power of memory, and who have certainly exceeded him in the unflinching accuracy of their recollections. And yet not in accuracy as to dates, or names, or quotations, or other matters of hard fact, when the question was simply between ay and no. In these he may have been without a rival. In a list of kings or popes, or Senior Wranglers, or Prime Ministers, or battles, or palaces, or as to the houses in Pall Mall, or about Leicester Square he might be followed with implicit confidence. But a large and important class of human recollections are not of this order; recollections, for example, of characters, of feelings, of opinions—of the intrinsic nature, details, and bearings of occurrences. And here it was that Macaulay's wealth 'was unto him an occasion of falling;' and that in two ways. First, the possessor of such a vehicle as his memory could not but have something of an overweening confidence in what it told him. . . . He could hardly enjoy the benefit of that caution which arises from self-interest and the sad experience of frequent falls. But what is more, the possessor of so powerful a fancy could not but illuminate with the colours it supplied the matters which he gathered into his great magazine, wherever the definiteness of their outline was not so rigid as to defy or disarm the action of the intruding or falsifying faculty. Imagination could not alter the date of the battle of Marathon, of the Council of Nice, or the crowning of Pepin; but it might seriously, or even fundamentally, disturb the balance of light and dark in his account of the opinions of Milton or of Laud, or his estimate of the effects of the Protectorate or the Restoration.*"

* Gladstone's *Gleanings*, vol. ii.

Wonders are told of Lord Brougham's memory for trifles as well as for important things: in his case certainly dissociated from judgment as a pervading influence. George Ticknor, calling upon him in 1838, after saying what a disagreeable disposition he found in him when he spoke of Jeffrey and Empson, adds:—

“What struck me most, however, was his marvellous memory. He remembered where I lodged in London in 1819, on what occasions he came to see me, and some circumstances about my attendance in the Committee of the House of Commons on Education, which I had myself forgotten till he recalled them to me. Such a memory for such mere trifles seems almost incredible. But Niebuhr had it; so had Scott, and so had Humboldt—four examples which are remarkable enough. I doubt not that much of the success of each depended on this extraordinary memory, which holds everything in its grasp.”

Sir James Mackintosh's memory was one of the same gigantic order, and no doubt served him well. The more that, of him it was said, he so managed his vast and prodigious memory, as to make it a source of pleasure and instruction rather than that dreadful engine of colloquial oppression into which it is sometimes erected. This allusion serves to prove that prodigious memories afford others more wonder than delight, as generally applied, whether in exhibiting their power by ill-timed display, or by giving the impression of a more complete knowledge of what concerns ourselves than suits with human reserve; for it would not be comfortable to live with a person who never forgets our own small sayings and doings. Indeed it is sometimes very disagreeable to be reminded of things about ourselves that we have forgotten or would willingly dispute, but

that the remembrancer is held infallible. For social purposes, the memory that has its specialities is a more congenial element—it puts us more on an equality—a memory that while it even boasts its powers makes confession of failures. Thus Horace Walpole mingles the two conditions of feeling in speaking of his especial turn. “In figures I am the dullest dunce alive. I have often said of myself, and it is true, that nothing that has not a proper name of a man or a woman to it affixes any idea upon my mind. I could remember who was King Ethelbald's great aunt, and not be sure whether she lived in the year 500 or 1500.”

We have spoken of the unsympathetic memory: but there is a memory, the growth and result of sympathy; the memory of the listener too actively and unselfishly interested to lose the first impression received by a disengaged attention. There are memories charged with innumerable confidences; for who has not at one time or another occasion for a confidant at once secret and sympathetic, of whom the confider can feel sure when he resumes his revelations that no reminders are necessary—that what has gone before, the story as he told it, lives clear and distinct? Again, there is the memory of the affections, confining itself to the ties of consanguinity, of family, and domestic life; where alike live what are called memorable scenes in all their circumstances, minute details—the sayings of childhood, the small joys and sorrows, the gaieties, the engagements, the changes, dates, times, seasons, birthdays, journeys, visitings, successes, crosses, of those who constitute, or have ever constituted, home. These, on the whole, are comfortable memories, kindly referees, who know how to keep unwelcome recollections to

themselves—who rouse no ghosts by unseasonable revelations. Akin with this is the memory that connects long periods of time, belonging to a vigorous organisation, to a receptive childhood, early open to the stimulus of exciting events passing around it. Sir Walter Scott's mother, who died December 1819, had such a one. Of whom, he writes, "she connected a long period of time with the present generation, for she remembered, and had often spoken with, a person who perfectly remembered the battle of Dunbar, and Oliver Cromwell's subsequent entry into Edinburgh." There is the memory for what meets the eye, and strictly confined as a speciality to some taste or pursuit. Some people can retain the details of scenery, the outlines of mountains, the exact place of a particular passage on the page of a book, &c., with an accuracy that refuses to be puzzled or misled. What they have once seen they see still, in all its changing aspects, while the faces of their friends and acquaintances refuse to be conjured up in absence. There is the memory connected with self-glorification that should be checked by its owner—for memory may cultivate certain habits of mind as it may be cultivated by them; the memory that preserves polite no-meaning speeches and fine compliments, and by mere repetition gives them a point and value. There is the memory that plays its owner false, that remembers and forgets at the same time—a memory familiar to us all by example, and even perhaps by some nearer touch of it—of which, not to wound living susceptibilities we will borrow our illustration from an essayist of the last century discussing the same habit. He in his turn goes back to a previous age, recording an "ob-

servation made by that celebrated reprobate, the Earl of Rochester, on Charles II.," who lives, in the general notion at least, as a wit and good company:—

"That monarch had a custom of telling every day in the circle a thousand trifling occurrences of his youth, and would constantly repeat them over and over again, without the smallest variation, so that such of his courtiers as were acquainted with his Majesty's foible would instantly retreat whenever he began any of his narrations. My Lord Rochester, being with him one day, took the liberty of being very severe upon that head. 'Your Majesty,' says he, 'has undoubtedly the best memory in the world. I have heard you repeat the same story, without the variation of a syllable, every day these ten years; but what I think extraordinary is, that you never recollect that you generally tell it to the same set of auditors.'"

This memory of the "Merry Monarch" was clearly a drawback to the mirth of his company, and set his courtiers on rueful speculation. Lord Halifax says of it: "A very great memory often forgetteth how much time is lost by repeating things of no use. It was one reason of his talking so much; since a great memory will always have something to say, and will be discharging itself, whether in or out of season, if a good judgment doth not go along with it and make it stop and turn. Sometimes he would make shrewd applications, at others he would bring things out that never deserved to be laid in it." Persons beyond the reach of checks and snubs should always receive compliments on their memory with suspicion. For the want of such rude lessons, the memory of royal personages has played them strange tricks, and led them to assert as their own, with persistent repetitions and in good faith, the feats

and successes of their victorious generals.

There is, again, the verbal memory—a delightful and enviable gift in good hands, though not inconsistent with the misuse of it in the manner just recorded. Some persons can recall the very words used by others, and can give life and truth to any remembered scene by a faithful reproduction of language and tone; while others are so totally wanting in the power of repeating words in the order in which they have heard them, though believing themselves fully possessed of their purport, that they are incapable of the most trifling task. A story bearing upon this infirmity was told of Hogarth:—

“With Dr Hoadley (son of the latitudinarian bishop), the late worthy chancellor of Winchester, Mr Hogarth was always on terms of the thickest friendship, and frequently visited him at Winchester, St Cross, and Alresford. It is well known that the Doctor’s fondness for theatrical exhibitions was so great that no visitors were ever long at his house before they were solicited to accept a part in some interlude or other. He himself, with Garrick and Hogarth, once personated a laughable parody on the scene in ‘Julius Cæsar,’ where the ghost appears to Brutus. Hogarth personated the spectre; but so unretentive was his memory, that, although his speech consisted only of two lines, he was unable to get them by heart. At last they hit on the following expedient in his favour: the verses he was to deliver were written in such large letters on the outside of an illuminated paper lantern that he could read them when he entered with it in his hand on the stage.”

Is there any connection between this inability literally to follow the course of another man’s thought, and the painter’s declaration “that no other man’s words could completely express his own ideas”? No person successful in the pursuit he has

chosen can be without memory good for the work he especially needs for it. We do not therefore question Hogarth’s memory for art, though he could not commit to it two successive lines of verse. People constantly accuse themselves of bad memories who are less deficient in the faculty than they believe. There are two ways of forgetting: there is the clean sweep of matter received into the brain—a process which, when it takes place, follows very early after its reception; and there is the latent unconscious retaining of it in the mind where it effects some functions of culture. One must hope so at least, or where lies the difference between the reader of the ordinary type and the man who never opens a book? This is the forgetfulness Cowper owns to: “What I read to-day I forget to-morrow. A bystander might say this is rather an advantage, the book is always new; but I beg the bystander’s pardon. I can recollect though I cannot remember; and with the book in my hand I recognise those passages which, without the book, I should never have thought of more.”

In truth, forgetfulness has a very important part to play in placing men in their proper standing, whether intellectually or morally, as the maxim forget and forgive teaches us. Forgiveness is easy where the other comes first, and submission stands in the same relation—

“For we are more forgetful than resigned.”

And those whose lives lead them into contact—often clashing, difficult contact—with others, feel the same benefit from a capacity for letting, or finding, things slip out of recollection. Vexations, disappointments, provocations, worries, do

not accumulate. Each day brings its own; but what yesterday seemed a serious trial, with qualities for sticking and making itself lastingly unpleasant, through a benign relaxation of the memory is cleared off like a cloud. Pascal, "that prodigy of parts," of whom it was said that till the decay of his health he forgot nothing of what he had done, read, or thought, in any part of his rational age, yet derives a valuable lesson from an occasional lapse, not unfamiliar to lesser intelligences: "En écrivant ma pensée elle m'échappe quelques fois. Mais cela me fait souvenir de ma faiblesse que j'oublie à toute heure; ce qui m'instruit autant que ma pensée oubliée, car je ne tends qu'à connoître mon néant." The trial of failure in the matter of memory is better adapted for pious meditation or for speculation, pen in hand, than for conversation. It is troublesome enough to all concerned not to remember what we ought, when the occasion demands it; it makes matters worse to detain the company with regrets and ejaculations. Self-interest ought to teach a man not to dwell on a proper name that eludes him. For when it comes to forgetting these arbitrary signs the faculty has lost some of its edge. By beating the brains for a word that will not come, he is only making the world acquainted with the deterioration.

By comparison with others, we may talk of perfect memories; but in truth there can be no really retentive memory—none that does not let slip infinitely more than it remembers. Men would be something beside men if they did not forget. Indeed, in so far as Bolingbroke approached universality, he suggested this idea; for Pope thought so highly of him, we are told, that to him he seemed in this world by

mistake, and fancied the comet then visible had come to take him home. Cardinal Newman, in his 'Grammar of Assent,' has written on the one-sidedness of the best memory:—

"We can," he says, "form an abstract idea of memory, and call it one faculty which has for its subject-matter all past facts of our personal experience; but this is really only an illusion; for there is no such gift of universal memory. Of course we all remember in a way, as we reason, in all subject-matters; but I am speaking of remembering rightly as I spoke of reasoning rightly. In real fact, memory, as a talent, is not one indivisible faculty, but a power of retaining and recalling the past in this or that department of our experience, not in any whatever. Two memories, which are both specially retentive, may also be incommensurate. Some men can recite the canto of a poem, or good part of a speech, after once reading it, but have no head for dates. Others have great capacity for the vocabulary of languages, but recollect nothing of the small occurrences of the day or year. Others never forget any statement which they have read, and can give volume and page, but have no memory for faces. I have known those who could, without effort, run through the succession of days on which Easter fell for years back; or could say where they were, or what they were doing, on a given day in a given year; or could recollect the Christian names of friends and strangers; or could enumerate in exact order the names on all the shops from Hyde Park Corner to the Bank; or had so mastered the University Calendar as to be able to bear an examination in the academical history of any M.A. taken at random. And I believe in most of these cases the talent, in its exceptional character, did not extend beyond several classes of subjects. There are a hundred memories as there are a hundred virtues."

As we have said, it needs qualities and faculties in proportion to make a vast memory a desirable gift. Nobody can hope by pains

and cultivation to acquire one, and the attempt would be misspent time. What a man wants for himself in memory is not a master-power but a servant: the memory that keeps his past of learning and experience alive in him, one recognised not as itself but by results. In society the memory that gets itself talked about often wearies, but conversation can never be at its best without the play of memory upon it. Every circle should have some member whose age leads him naturally, or whose temper inclines him to look back; who has a store to turn to where the first treasures were laid in a receptive inquiring childhood. It is the want of this infusion of a past which—all-engrossed in the present—makes the talk of the young among themselves, however bright and clever they may be, of so thin a quality; its liveliness so evanescent—so mere a flash of youthful spirits—so flat if there is an attempt to revive its sallies. The resources of memory give a

form to vivacity and a body to wit. The cheerfulness that has its minor harmonies, that has known sorrows, and through a native spring of spirits surmounted them, has more intellectual satisfying value than any mere effervescence of natural gaiety. It is Dr Johnson's view that solitary unsocial spirits amuse themselves with schemes of the future rather than with reviews of the past, which, in fact, are pleasanter to talk of with a large liberty of expression than to think over in every detail. But these are reveries very well to entertain self with, though never suggesting themselves to common-sense as a topic for conversation. Time, however, drives all men to their past at last,—the time when "we have no longer any possibility of great vicissitudes in our favour, and the changes which are to happen will come too late for our accommodation,"—that time, the description of which more properly belongs to the moralist and the preacher.

THE ENCHANTED BRIDLE.

A LEGENDARY BALLAD.

[THE legend upon which this ballad is founded is well known in Ayrshire. It is briefly as follows: Sir Fergus of Ardrossan, otherwise known as the "deil o' Ardrossan," procured, through Satanic agency, a bridle which enabled him to perform wonderful feats on horseback. Having on one occasion to go from home, he charged his wife not to allow their son to use the enchanted bridle; this injunction, however, was not obeyed. The wayward youth mounted his father's steed, rode off, and was afterwards thrown from the saddle and killed on the spot. On his return, Sir Fergus slew his wife in a fit of rage, and subsequently retired to Arran, where he passed the remainder of his days in solitude.]

I.

"Get up, get up, my merrie young men,
And saddle my guid bay steed;
For I maun ride to St Mirren's Kirk,
And the time draws on wi' speed."

Then up and spak his bonnie young wife:
"What for suld ye gang there?
'Tis past the hour for vesper sang,
'Tis past the time for prayer."

Then up and spak his only son:
"I hear the sad sea's maen;
O think on the mirk and eerie night,
O think on the wind and rain.

The shore is wild, the glen is deep,
The moor is rough and hie;
And he who rides on sic a night
Suld hae guid companie."

"Ye speak but true, my bonnie young wife,
The time o' prayer is bye;
Ye speak but true, my only son,
The wind and waves are high.

The shore is wild, the glen is deep,
The moor is cauld and wide;
But I hae a tryst at St Mirren's Kirk,
And I trow I downa bide."

He mounted on his strang bay steed,
Nor dreamed o' rain or wind;
The lanesome whaup cried on before,
The houlet screamed behind.

“Speed on, speed on, my guid bay mare,
 Nor heed that melodie ;
 ’Tis but the sang o’ the lone mermaid,
 As she sings to the wintry sea.

Haud up, haud up, my bonnie bay steed,
 Till ye wun to bank or brae ;
 For the wan water o’ Fairlie burn
 I trow has tint its way.”

The thunder brattled wi’ eerie thud,
 As he rade ower the moor o’ Kame ;
 But when he cam to the Baidland hill,
 The lichtnin’ spell’d his name.

When he gaed by the mountain tarn,
 And through the Biglee moss,
 He saw a lowe on St Mirren’s Kirk,
 Abune the guid stane cross.

And when he cam to the auld kirkyaird,
 Wow ! but he shook wi’ dread ;
 For there was a ring o’ seven witches
 A’ dancin’ abune the dead.

There were twa grim hags frae Saltcoats toon,
 And twa frae the Kirk o’ Shotts,
 And twa cam ower frae the Brig o’ Turk,
 And ane frae John o’ Groats.

O wha was he in that hellish ring
 Wi’ buckles abune his knee ?
 He was clad in a garb o’ guid braidclaith,—
 I’se warrant the Deil was he !

And aye he keckled, and aye he flang,
 As the hags gaed merrilie round,
 Till the frightened banes i’ the kirkyaird mool
 Lap up through the quaking ground.

Then by cam a muckle cormorant,
 And it jowed the auld kirk bell ;
 The lowe gaed out, the witches fled,
 And the Deil stood by himsel’.

The wind blew up, and the wind blew doon,
 Till it fell’d an auld ash-tree ;
 And the Deil cam ower to the kirkyaird yett,
 And he bow’d richt courteouslie.

“O cam ye here to be purged or shriven,
 Or cam ye here to pray?”
 “O I cam here for the bonnie bridle
 Ye promised me yesterday.

I wad ride on the back o' the nor'-east wind;
 I wad prance through driving storm;
 And I wad own the guid bridle
 That wad keep me aye frae harm.”

“Gin I gie you the gift ye seek,
 O what will you gie me?
 Gin I gie you the bonnie bridle,
 O what sal be my fee?”

“I am chief o' the knights o' Cunninghame;
 I am laird o' the green Cumbray;
 And I'll gie you a bonnie white doo
 When ye pass by that way.”

He is aff on the wings o' the nor'-east wind,
 Wi' a speed that nane may learn;
 He has struck red fire frae the black Kame hill,
 And flash'd ower the Baidland cairn.

And aye he shook his strange bridle,
 And aye he laughed wi' glee,
 As his wild steed danced doon the mountain-side
 Uncheck'd by rock or tree.

“O up and see this eerie sicht!”
 Cried a shepherd in Crosby glen;
 But as he spak the swift bay steed
 Had pass'd ayont his ken.

“O up and see this wild horseman,
 And his horse wi' the clankin' shoon!”
 But ere the eye could be turned to look
 He had clanged through Ardrossan toon.

And aye he rade, and aye he laughed,
 And shook his bridle grim;
 For there wasna a rider in a' the land,
 Could ever keep sicht o' him.

II.

“Get up, get up, my merrie young men,
 Get up my sailors gay;
 For I wad sail in my bonnie white boat,
 To the shores o' fair Cumbray.”

He set his face to the saut, saut sea,
 He turned his back to land;
 And he sang a lilt o' a guid luve-lay,
 As he gaed doon the strand.

He hadna been a league frae shore,
 A league but barely three;
 When oot and spak his only son:
 "Send my guid page to me.

Now saddle me fast my father's steed,
 Put his new bridle on:
 For I maun ride to Portincross
 Before the licht is gone."

Then up and spak his young mother:
 "My son, that maunna be;
 The rocks are high; the steed is wild,
 And I fear the gurly sea.

I dream'd a dolefu' dream yestreen,
 And grat till my een were blin';
 O if ye ride that wild bay steed,
 I fear ye'll ne'er come in."

"Come cheer ye up, my mother dear,
 Fause dreams ye maunna dree;
 What gies sic joy to my father's heart,
 Will no bring grief to me."

Now he has mounted the bonnie bay steed,
 And he has seized the rein;
 "Cheer up, cheer up, my sweet mother,
 Till I come back again."

The first mile that he rade alang,
 His een were lit wi' glee;
 The second mile that he rade alang,
 His heart beat merrilie.

The third mile that he rade alang,
 His feet danced in his shoon;
 And ere the fourth mile he had rade
 His brain gaed whirling roon'.

He flang the reins frae oot his han'—
 The steed gaed briskly on,
 Ower rock and fen, ower moor and glen,
 By loch and mountain lone.

The sun blink'd merrily in the lift ;
 Pearls gleam'd on ilka tree ;
 The bonniest hues o' rainbow licht
 Were flickerin' on the sea.

O sweet is the smile o' the opening rose,
 And sweet is the full-blawn pea ;
 And sweet, sweet to the youthfu' sense,
 Were the ferlies he did see.

Fair forms skipped merrily by his side,—
 The gauzé o' goud they wore ;
 But the blythest queen o' a' the train
 Danced wantonly on before.

“Come here, come here, my bonnie young May,
 Sae sweet as I hear ye sing ;
 Come here, come here, my ain true luv,
 And I'll gie ye a pearl ring.”

He urged the steed wi' his prickly heel,
 Till the red blude stained her side ;
 But he ne'er could reach that fause young May
 Sae fast as he might ride.

He rade and rade ower the wide countrie,
 Till mirth gave place to pain ;
 The sun dropp'd into the cauld, cauld sea,
 And the sky grew black wi' rain.

“Haud in, haud in, my guid bay steed,
 Sae fast as ye seem to flee ;
 I hear the voice o' my dear mother,
 As she greets at hame for me.

O halt ye, halt ! my bonnie bay steed,
 There's dule by the sounding shore ;
 Nae pity dwells in the bleak, bleak waves,
 Sae loud as I hear them roar.

O help me, help ! my sweet mother ;
 Come father and succour me !”
 But the only voice in the lone mirk nicht
 Was the roar o' the grewsome sea.

He has lookit east, he has lookit wast,
 He has peer'd through the blinding hail ;
 But the only licht on the wide waters,
 Was the gleam o' his father's sail.

He has lookit north, he has lookit south,
 To see where help might be;
 But the wild steed leapt ower the black headland
 And sank in the ruthless sea!

* * * * *

O when his father reached the shore,
 Sair did he greet and maen,
 When he thought on the fair young face
 He ne'er might see again.

“Come back, come back my bonnie young son,
 Come back and speak to me!”
 But he only heard thro' the grey, grey licht
 The sough o' the pitiless sea.

“O gie me a kiss o' his red, red lips,
 Or a lock o' his gouden hair!”
 But the heartless wind, wi' an eldritch soun',
 Aye mocked at his despair.

O cauld was the bite o' the plashing rain,
 And loud was the tempest's roar;
 And deep was the grief o' the father's heart
 As he stood by the hopeless shore.

“Wae, wae on my tryst at St Mirren's Kirk,
 That bargain I sairly rue,
 When I took ower the Deil's bridle
 And sold my bonnie white doo!”

BUSH-LIFE IN QUEENSLAND.—CONCLUSION.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—TRYING THE DIGGINGS.

VARIED as has been the life and hazardous the adventures through which our readers have accompanied John West in his experiences, we have now to introduce them to another and wilder phase in the career of a Queensland settler. The scene is changed to a dark, little, uninteresting valley far into the Bush, through which runs a chain of shallow water-holes and small sandy creeks. On a little flat are pitched a few tents, and the banks of the creek are being broken into by a number of stalwart diggers armed with picks and shovels. Here and there are seen men sitting at the edge of water-holes, tin dish in hand, swilling the wash-dirt round and round to allow the golden particles from their weight to sink to the bottom, and thus get separated from the earthy matter which was permitted to escape over the side of the dish. One of these is already known to the reader, and we shall now introduce the other, and explain the cause of their presence on this scene.

The mixed feelings with which John West had ridden away from the scene of his meeting with Ruth and Fitzgerald may be readily imagined. He had at last met with his love, after long years, only to find her, as he imagined, the destined bride of his dearest friend. Instinctively he took the road for Ungahrun, but he felt that it would no longer be the home that he had looked forward to. A whirlwind of various emotions swept over him, and revealed to him on its departure that peace of mind was only to be obtained by flight. He could not stay; he could not bear to look

upon Fitzgerald's happiness without a more confident assurance that he could keep his mind free from jealousy and ill-will. As he rode along, he overtook a young man on horseback driving a couple of pack-horses before him in company with Blucher. He had no wish for conversation, and calling to the latter, was about to pass on with a quiet "Good-day," when Blucher said, "This one white fellow been known you along o' England, Missa Wess."

John looked at the stranger, but failed to recognise him.

"It is so long ago," said the traveller, "that I don't wonder at you forgetting me, and, indeed, but for your blackboy I would not have known you. Don't you remember Ned, Mr West, the boy in Mr Cosgrove's service in England, whom you used to protect from that bully Cane, the stable-lad? I've been round here, sir, to ask for you, sir, two or three times since I came to Australia about five years ago, for I kept thinking of you and wishing I could meet you; but you always happened to be absent when I passed."

John remembered and gladly welcomed his old friend, whose unexpected arrival afforded a great relief from his own dreary thoughts. He gladly seized the opportunity of camping with him in the Bush in order that he might hear his adventures. Ned's story was soon told. He had become a "wandering digger," and had partaken of the varied fortunes that attend that class of gold-seekers, and was now on his way towards a hitherto little known region where a "new rush" was

situated. John had been tempted more than once to visit a gold-field and seek his fortunes in the bowels of the earth, but had hitherto refrained, from the feeling that such a life once begun would be difficult to relinquish. But at present he was not in a condition to reason. He had no ties to keep him back. He had found an experienced and faithful work-fellow. He had a little money for their immediate expenses. He would try digging. He could not be more unsuccessful than he had already been. The upshot of this train of reflection was, that next morning he announced his intention of accompanying Ned; and thus we find the two actively at work in the locality where the chapter opens,—and hard, uncompromising work it was.

The banks of the stream had to be cut away with solid, heavy, pick-and-shovel labour, until the wash-dirt, lying on the clayey substratum containing the gold, was reached. This had to be carefully bagged up and conveyed to the water's edge, after which it had to be washed—a process requiring no little skill and endurance—the whole day's work very often not producing enough to pay for rations.

The gold was found by the newcomers to be very patchy and unevenly distributed; so much so, that the men working in the claim a few feet from their own struck a rich little patch, from which they quickly extracted 60 ounces of metal, while they slaved away hopefully, but nevertheless unsuccessfully.

A succession of weeks of unrewarded labour decided them upon striking their camp and wooing fortune on fresh ground. Their intention was no sooner known in the little camp than the deserted spot occupied by their canvas habitation was measured off and appropriated by some fresh arrivals, who

at once commenced to sink a hole for luck, as they phrased it, on the very site hitherto used by them as a fireplace and where they had sat together night after night discussing their cheerless prospects. Away John and Ned wandered again, without having any definite place of residence in view. Sometimes they tried one locality, anon another, as fancy led them. In one gully success in a limited degree would keep them working for weeks, in the hope that, by dint of persistent work, a reward for their labour would ultimately await them. In another and more likely-looking spot, utter barrenness seemed to prevail.

Among the population with whom their life brought them in contact were many strange characters. Men of education and varied experience could be seen working in company with ignorant, prejudiced navvies. Gentlemen's sons, nurtured in luxury, toiled uncomplainingly, and endured the most adverse fortune with as unyielding a spirit as the day-labourers beside them who had never known a much different life. There were men who looked to digging as a last resource, and some who only occasionally followed it when lured by glowing reports of great finds of the coveted metal. Others there were who had never done anything else. Brought up as miners from their youth, and having lived all their lives amid the excitement of a diggings, they were perhaps less under its influence than most men. Having been constantly their own masters, they were characterised by a kind of sensible, manly independence, which the rag-tag and bobtail who followed in their rear vainly strove to imitate. On the whole, John West found them to represent the most respectable class of manual labourers in the colony. They were honest, intelligent, and hard-working, sober as a rule, firm in their

friendships, and hospitable and generous to all in want.

A stray female or two sometimes found their way out to these scenes—the most unsuitable, surely, of all places in the world for their presence. They were generally old pioneers of the frontier who had braved the dangers and discomforts of many an outside field, and who partook more of the nature of the masculine than of the feminine. They appeared to be well known to all the diggers, and were invariably distinguished by *sobriquets* conferred on them apparently by common consent, instead of their own proper names, which it is questionable whether any one but themselves knew.

The society in which our hero found himself would have had the effect of thoroughly breaking down his spirits had he allowed himself time for reflection; but, setting to work resolutely, he endeavoured as much as possible to forget and ignore his surroundings. His comrade Ned was, under the circumstances, a great comfort to him. Modest and retiring in his manners, he never forgot his own place, and innumerable little acts of attention proved to John that the lad only wanted opportunity to pour out the kindly feelings of his heart. So passed their digging life; sometimes in the middle of a small camp of fellow-miners—at others secluded among the ranges, and isolated from all human beings.

An extract, dated June 8, 1878, taken from the 'Queenslander,'* will illustrate the kind of life they led at this period:—

“ . . . The country itself and the population peculiarly favour the raids of hostile blacks. Geologists tell us that Northern Queensland was once covered by a dense coating of desert

sandstone or conglomerate. On the great watersheds of the Flinders and Cloncurry this overlying mass has been denuded by the currents and atmospheric agencies of bygone ages. Downs which rejoice the heart of the pastoral tenant, nourish on their monotonous surface fat beeves, where once the wallaby and wallaroo coursed through rocky defiles; but the source of the Gilbert more slowly yields to the same influences, and maintains its primeval character of sterile rock and savage grandeur. The river itself is a fit prototype of its innumerable branches. A broad bed of sand winds its tortuous course through overhanging cliffs of conglomerate, falling here and there, where the process of disintegration has been more complete, into low rises, covered with pebbly wash, and intersected by veins of the strata underlying the conglomerate, slate, diorite, &c. Sometimes on the banks of the main river, more frequently in the ravines running therein, nearly always at the heads of the tributaries and lesser creeks, wherever the slate has been exposed, and the auriferous strata are uncovered, the colour of gold is found. Under favourable conditions—that is to say, where the denudation has been complete, the process of removal extensive, and the bars of diorite supposed to contain gold-bearing leaders sufficiently pierced, and the slate fully bared—payable deposits of gold are struck, rarely, if ever, bearing any similarity except in the conditions under which they are found. In size, form, and value, the precious metal within a limited area will present great diversities. Sometimes the leader from which the gold is presumably discharged could be identified if it were not that specimens of entirely opposite character, embedded in distinct forms of quartz, were found lying side by side. Sometimes the gold is free from quartz, sometimes embedded in greenstone, sometimes combined both with greenstone and quartz, sometimes with quartz alone. Often it is as fine as flour; again it will range from 'colours' to nuggets

* Published weekly in Brisbane, Queensland. An ably-conducted journal, of which the population of the colony are justly proud.

of several ounces. It may be worth only £2, 18s. per ounce; it may, and does, assay £3, 18s. and £4. No rule can be laid down; and in one case at least the purchaser has one invariable price, which protects him from much loss on the inferior samples, and leaves an ample margin of profit on the better class. The best patches are got in ravines a few hundred feet in length, where a narrow gutter of two or three feet contains the payable gold. The mouth is not unusually poor; the extreme head of the ravine is also worthless; but occasionally the gold is traced through the exposed slate right up to the conglomerate—in fact, to points where the beetling cliffs have covered the bed with such masses that the labour of removing them could not be paid by the gold won. In no instance has the discovery of gold in the conglomerate *in situ* been authenticated, though careless observers who have got gold in conglomerate *débris* may deny the assertion.

“In this region nature maintains a fitting solitude. The glaring cliffs drop down from a table-land where the cypress-pine surges mournfully in the breeze, half-starved dingoes wake the echoes of the hills by their nightly serenades, and a few blacks roam from creek to creek and gorge to gorge, finding, in the innumerable caves into which the soft substance is excavated, safe harbour and concealment after a raid on the plains below. To this region must one come to see the fossieker in all his miserable state. Traveling in pairs, but usually working separately, the true gambusino of the north is found. Each boils his separate billy and provides his frugal fare; each pitches his solitary tent; each works when and how disposed; each roams the ravines adjacent in search of some hidden store; and only when an abundance of water and cradling dirt convenient points out the mutual benefit do the two combine and share the joint proceeds. Inducement for such a life is hard to find. Every pound of food has to be packed from fifty to a hundred miles. Salt meat is necessarily the sole form in which meat can be provided. Day after day, week after week, the patient fossieker tries creek after creek, gully after

gully, ravine after ravine, with the same result; the monotonous ‘colour,’ or, worse still, the occasional presence of a coarse speck encouraging the delusion of better things. But allow unwonted success to have attended research. The dirt is payable, the site not more than a quarter of a mile from water, and, by unremitting toil, from two pennyweights to a rarely-attained millennium of an ounce a-day can be made. What is the *rationale* of proceeding? No sooner has a permanent camp been pitched than watchful eyes have marked the smoke. Every movement from the camp is noted. Every dish of dirt has to be picked in a hollow admirably adapted to conceal approaching footsteps. Huge masses of rock hang within spear-throw of the unsuspecting miner. The hard and stony ground hides all vagrant tracks except to the most experienced. Every pound of dirt has to be borne on the back over spinifex, or through grasses shedding barbed seeds directly they are touched. It has to be washed beneath a glaring sun, aided by all kinds of winged tormentors; and hour by hour, nay, every second, there is the same uneasy consciousness that bloodthirsty and vengeful eyes are upon you, and that to relinquish your gun for a minute may cost you your life.”

Such was the nature of the arduous unrewarded pursuits which the two companions carried on at this period. They had been nearly twelve months seeking their “fortune” in this manner, and what little gold they had succeeded in obtaining had melted away, along with a large portion of John’s slender capital, in providing rations and in replacing a couple of horses which had fallen victims to the spears of the aboriginals. Our hero about this time had undertaken a journey into the township to purchase a fresh stock of rations and necessary supplies, leaving his mate alone behind him in the desolate wilderness, whither their work had drawn them, to find him on his return

(about ten days afterwards) prostrate, a victim to a severe attack of malarious fever. How miserably wretched everything looked! The fire had been out for nearly a week. The unfortunate man, utterly exhausted by the enervating disease, had been unable to procure a draught of water, after exhausting the quantity which had filled the bucket when he was first taken ill, and had been at least a couple of days tortured by excruciating thirst. Utterly debilitated, he had looked forward to nothing but death as a release to his sufferings, when the arrival of John again restored a spark of hope to his breast. Unable to move or speak, his eyes, dilated by illness to double their natural size, followed the form of his companion with a trustful look of confidence and affection, which revealed that the drooping spirit had once more taken root and was reviving. The next morning he was better, and some doses of fever mixture, together with his friend's society, restored the sick man in a few days so far that he was able to

sit up and partake of a little of "Liebig's extract," a preparation invaluable to those beyond the reach of fresh meat.

During the periodical attacks of delirium which accompanied the fever, Ned had spoken much of a creek beyond the mountains in which he felt sure a rich patch of gold was awaiting them, and which he begged John to join him in prospecting as soon as the weakness which at present prostrated him should allow them to move. West was at first inclined to treat these often-expressed wishes as the whimsical fancies of a sick man which would disappear with renewed health and vigour; but in this he was mistaken. Each day the desire grew stronger in the now convalescent patient; and as the spot in which they were then working offered no great inducement for them to prolong their stay, they started, making towards the distant range of high hills, which were visible from the pallet where Ned had lain during so many weary days alone in his despair and misery.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—PROSPECTING—THE BOWER-BIRD'S NEST.

On all diggings there is a class of men who, impatient of steady, constant labour, devote themselves to the exploring of hitherto unworked and untrodden ground. These men are distinguished by the name of "Prospectors," and to their indefatigable energy and experienced skill has been due, in many cases, the opening up of new and valuable auriferous tracts. Among these men are to be met some of the most intelligent and brave of the hardy miners of the north, and very frequently they earn but a poor reward for the perils and hardships which they undergo. Too often it happens that they act the jackal's

part in pointing out the prey to the lion "population," and that in the rush which follows they come off but second-best, notwithstanding the regulations of the gold-fields, by which the discoverers of a new and payable field are entitled to a certain reward, sometimes in money, and at others in extended claims, or both, according to the ideas of the Government which at the time may be in power. These prospectors go in well-equipped parties of from three to six, horsed, armed, and provisioned at their own expense, and make flying tours over a vast extent of territory, working a day here, another there, settling for a

fortnight at times in one place, and again travelling without intermission for weeks over unlikely-looking ground. Supposing them to have been successful in discovering a tract containing, to the best of their belief, payable gold, it is required of them, in order to obtain the Government reward and protection for the area chosen by them to be worked on their own account, that they shall, on coming in, make a full report to the Gold Commissioner nearest to the spot, whose duty it is at once to start back with them, to examine and report on the field for Government information. An immense number of eager diggers follow the return party, all flushed with the hopes of gain. Should these prove fallacious, and the workings be found poor, an excitement more or less tumultuous generally succeeds, and the unreasoning and disappointed crowd usually turn their thoughts towards hanging, or at least lynching, the unfortunate prospectors, who in all probability have themselves been the greatest losers by the transaction.

Other prospectors there are of a less ambitious nature. They have no desire that their names shall descend to posterity in connection with their discoveries. They are secret and cautious. They confine their explorations within a circle of from fifty to a hundred miles outside the known area of the diggings, and mostly go in pairs. Should they chance to alight upon a payable creek, gully, or ravine, they set to work quietly to extract as much of the precious metal as possible from the soil before they can be discovered, preferring the chance of what they can get to the questionable benefit of a Government reward, with its contingent annoyances. Sometimes it happens that a few of the roughs and horse-thieves,

of whom there are always plenty about every diggings township, make up a party to prospect, in the hope of alighting upon some easily-worked heavy deposit of gold, or discovering a camp of men who have done so, and thus sharing cheaply in the benefits resulting from their skill and research. It does not take this class of prospectors long to equip themselves. They are acquainted with the whereabouts of almost every horse of any value on the field. Their nights are spent in driving them away and hiding them, and their days in bringing them back after a sufficiently large reward has been offered by the anxious owners. They easily get a supply of rations on credit from the various storekeepers, who, fearful of their possible resentment, are glad to get rid of them for a time on any terms. Horses begin to disappear, and all of a sudden the little township is forsaken temporarily by a number of scoundrels who have infested it, and made honest men uneasy about their property. It is impossible to follow them: they are thorough bushmen, and have taken every precaution against pursuit. The white constables, stiff and slow in their movements, are nowhere beside the quick-witted rogues who, once mounted, defy the clumsy horsemen of the law. Now and again reports are brought into camp about them by men who have seen them in various places, and a general uneasiness as to horse-flesh and security of property prevails.

John West and Ned were prospectors of the secret and cautious class. Our hero could not bear the idea of working among the common herd for a bare livelihood. He had set his all upon the hazard of the die, and he felt that on working on the outside there was a chance

which possibly might turn up trumps some day. He was, in fact, leading a gambler's existence; and the expedition on which they had just started, although Quixotic from many points of view, afforded them quite as good an opening for success as any other they might undertake. In this spirit he pursued his way, quietly listening to, though without participating in, the sanguine prophecies of his companion, who, since his attack of fever, appeared to have acquired a double stock of energy. In one or two places they came upon ravines which gave promise of returning a substantial and easy reward for labour, and John began to doubt whether it was wise in him to pass them unheeded. Some one might drop on their tracks, and in following them, discover and profit by their folly and neglect. Any suggestion, however, to halt for a few days produced such an agony of impatience and annoyance, that John, although feeling strongly convinced of the folly of doing so, never failed each time to give way to the imploring entreaties of his comrade, whose great desire appeared to be to get on the other side of the mountains, on whose dark and rugged tops his eyes had dwelt during his recent extremity. Each day as they approached the great range Ned grew more and more silent; and John sometimes felt inclined to think that his mind had become somewhat deranged by his sufferings. With difficulty they surmounted the dark, cypress-clothed, conglomerate hills, and with equal difficulty descended the precipitous rocks on the other side, into a savage, barren, narrow valley, hemmed in between two steep mountain-spurs, the sides of which were covered with stunted palms, grass, trees, and coarse high fern-grass. Making their way slowly, they at last emerged upon the half-

dried channel of a creek, crossed in places by great bars of slate. The bent and twisted ti-tree and river-oak saplings reveal the fierce character of the mountain torrent during the rainy season. At present its bed is but a glaring, burning ribbon, relieved at intervals by a deep water-hole, which some strong eddy has scooped out of the sandy bed. The surface of the country is strewn with quartz pebbles and boulders; and although not as auriferous-looking as some of the places they have passed by, is nevertheless promising.

As they prepare to cross the creek, their attention is attracted by a neat little structure under a few bushes close to them. John recognises it at once, but Ned has never seen one before. It is the bower of the bower-bird. It is a most interesting little building, and Ned dismounts to examine it. In length it is about two feet. It is open at either end. The walls are composed of small twigs beautifully and carefully interlaced, and are three or four inches thick, rising, and becoming gradually thinner as they do, until they almost meet where they arch overhead. The width of the little summer-house is about a foot. It is not a nest for breeding purposes, but simply a playground—a bower for social intercourse; and here a number of the skilful little architects meet together to amuse themselves. With the view of beautifying their retreat, the bower-birds have collected a large quantity of white pebbles, snail-shells, pieces of quartz, crystal, &c., which they have arranged in neat plots at either entrance, and also on the floor in the middle. Suddenly Ned, who has been kneeling down examining the wondrous little edifice, gives a great cry, and starting to his feet, rushes to one of the pack-horses, from the back of which he tears his pick, shovel, and

tin dish, and hastening down to the creek, he commences scraping up the drift which has collected in one of the hollows of the slaty bar which crosses its bed. In another instant he has swilled away the sand in a small pool on the rock close by, and is glaring dazedly upon at least an ounce of bright yellow gold at the bottom of his dish. John, who has remained sitting on his horse in a state of speechless surprise at the unaccountable behaviour of his mate, now dismounts and approaches him. Ned hears him not; he is still gazing stupidly on the yellow heap at the bottom of the dish, one glance at which reveals all to John. Without a word, as if stung by some insect, the bite of which compels frantic exertion, he has rushed to the horses and possessed himself of his implements, and in another instant is washing dish after dish of the golden sand, until he has quite a little heap beside him on a flat stone, and the sun is sinking low in the western sky. He looks up. Ned is hard at work, and the horses are gone. A sudden exclamation to this effect breaks the spell which has bound them, and urged by the necessity of attending to their safety, they both arise and look about them. Their hearts are too full to speak. Their horses are discovered grazing a few hundred yards off, and mechanically the companions unsaddle their animals and fix the camp.

Once more they descend to the scene of their labours. They can hardly believe the evidence of their eyes. Again and again they wash dish after dish, with the same happy result, until darkness compels them to desist. As they sit in their tent after their frugal supper, examining the produce of their day's work, West, who can hardly realise yet that everything is not a dream, suddenly asks: "What made you

so determined to prospect over on this side of the ranges, Ned?"

"I don't know," answered the other—"I can't account for it; but when I was lying on my bunk, slowly perishing with fever and thirst, I kept hearing a voice in my ears saying, 'Over the mountains, there is your luck,' until I felt convinced that, could I but once accomplish the journey, I would at last drop on the spot we have been seeking so long. The weaker I grew the stronger became the belief; and at last, with your return, the hope of gratifying the intense longing enabled me to cast sickness behind me. I had thoughts of nothing else. The voice kept ever sounding in my ears, 'Over the mountains;' and as we made our way here, I felt certain that step by step we were nearing our luck."

"But," said West, "what was it that made you try the creek so suddenly? It was a likely enough place, but we have tried hundreds of similar patches unsuccessfully."

"Well," returned Ned, "as I was examining the bower of those wonderful birds, and remarking their taste in laying out their little play-house just like human beings, I happened to take up some of the quartz-pebbles which ornamented the entrances to the little wicker abode. *Each one, almost, had a few specks of gold in it.* I heard again the voice, 'Over the mountains, there lies your luck,' and then I seized the shovel and dish. I knew I should find it; but it almost took my senses away for all that."

The two friends, excited by their good fortune, continued talking long into the night, and next morning daybreak found them once more working with furious ardour. Day by day the same work, varied with more or less success, caused the hours to pass with the swiftness of minutes, and the little chamouis-

leather bags were filled to bursting. The first week's work had produced upwards of 250 ounces of a very rich sample of gold. The discovery of a rich ravine, debouching upon the river just above the slaty bar they had first set to work upon, proved of the utmost importance. If they could only work it out in quietness, they would have sufficient to satisfy themselves. It had always been a rule of the two comrades, as indeed it is of most diggers, to rest from their labours on the Sabbath; and in accordance with their usual practice, on the first Sunday after their discovery of the golden bar, they had, after resting during the forenoon, strolled out for a walk. Instinctively they bent their steps towards the neat little bower, to whose busy and tasteful builders they owed so much. There it was, a perfect marvel of ingenuity. As he stooped down to examine the shells and quartz collected with so much care and labour, it occurred to John that, where the quartz specimens were found, others were to be met with. The character of the quartz bore a great resemblance to that of much lying on the ground and filling the mountain-gullies around. Breaking the quartz boulders here and there, they soon collected a heap of specimens of a similar character, all indicating that the main reef or vein from which they had been hurled, or from which the gradual process of denudation had washed them, lay at no great distance. Following these evidences up the mountain-slope for about a couple of hundred yards, they came upon a large "blow" or outcrop of quartz, sticking out of the earth, over the surface of which was scattered detached blocks of the same substance. Gold was everywhere embedded in greater or less quantities on the matrix, and large and valuable specimens were picked up by the friends

as they casually explored the ground about.

Returning next morning to the reef, they collected and bagged up the most valuable pieces which they could find, and betook themselves once more to their work in the ravine, determining to return, if spared, at some future period, with the necessary tools and proper appliances for the opening up of the great vein. Nearly three weeks had been passed in uninterrupted labour, and the results of their work had assumed very considerable proportions, when the prospectors were disagreeably disturbed one morning by the presence of natives. They had hitherto been remarkably fortunate in escaping the notice of the denizens of the wilds in which they lived; but on this occasion they received a no less startling than unwelcome notice of trespass in the shape of a spear, which, hurled from behind a few bushes, at a distance of about eighty yards, passed within an ace of Ned's head, as he brought up a bucket of water from the water-hole below the camp. A bullet instantly fired at the treacherous foe, and which struck a tree close to him, causing large pieces of bark to fly off it, had the effect of making him beat a hasty retreat, ducking his head in the most ludicrous way as the reverberations of the report among the ranges assailed him on every side. From this time forward, however, they had no rest; a horrible uncertainty kept them ever on the watch; and even when reassured to a certain extent by a complete cessation of all annoyance for a couple of days, engendering the hope that their bloodthirsty enemies had left the vicinity of their camp, a *cooey* on the mountains, answered in the distance by two or three more, would again awaken the harassing dread which continually haunted them.

The experience of native habits which John had acquired during his squatting life became very useful in this emergency, and enabled them to take measures which had the effect of keeping the blacks at a distance, and of estimating properly their chances of safety and danger. As a matter of precaution, a hole had been dug in the floor of the tent, in which all their treasure had been stowed away, and each night the day's earnings were secretly added to the hoard. Digging became a much more arduous task than formerly. The necessity for being constantly on guard obliged each to take it in turns to act as sentry, day and night, besides which, their horses proved a source of incessant trouble. Some days before the appearance of the blacks, one of the animals, a restless wandering mare, had strayed away, leading the others with her, and about six miles distant had dropped across a patch of young burnt feed, which had ever since remained an irresistible attraction to them. No means adopted to keep them in the neighbourhood of the camp having the desired effect, the searching for them on foot became a really dangerous duty, it being highly imperative that one man should remain to guard the household gods. On discussing their position one evening, after a peculiarly distressing day, and finding that their horses had once more cleared out, the comrades came reluctantly to the conclusion that they could no longer remain in their camp with any degree of safety. The natives might at any moment take it into their heads to spear their horses, in which case they would have but a slender chance of ever reaching civilisation; or an accidental spear might, causing the death of one of themselves, render the escape of the other next to an impossibility. All things considered, then, they resolved

to be contented with what gold they had already secured, and to return as soon as possible, in order to open up the quartz-reef, which they regarded as the most valuable of their discoveries. Next morning therefore, Ned, whose turn it was for that duty, started in order to recover the truant nags, leaving John behind him to guard the camp. Down the rocky creek he took his way, his bridle on his left arm, and his carbine over his shoulder, keeping a sharp look-out for natives. He came to the spot where the horses usually ran; but this time they were not to be seen, although the tracks and manure indicated that they could not have left the place long before. Up and down he searched unsuccessfully, and at length, following the creek some distance down into unknown ground, came upon the junction of a small tributary with it. Fagged and vexed with tramping so many miles over a broken, grass-seedy country, he seated himself to rest for a few minutes on a large granite boulder, but had hardly done so when the approach of a horseman from behind startled him.

"Good day," said the stranger, gruffly. "Prospecting?"

"Yes," returned Ned.

"So ham I. Camp hup the creek?"

"Yes," again replied Ned. "Seen any horses?"

"No," answered the new-comer shortly, turning his horse's head up the little creek which junctioned with the larger one near them.

"I'm looking for some horses," said Ned, "and I'm fairly knocked up over it. If you see any tracks up the way you're going, you might fire off your carbine to let me know, and I'll come up."

The man rode away, and Ned remained where he was, though without expecting much from his meeting with the horseman, who

was evidently a surly-tempered man of few words. Ten minutes had scarcely elapsed, however, when the report of a rifle sounded up the little stream, followed at intervals by half-a-dozen others; and pushing hurriedly along, he caught sight of, and made his way to, his new acquaintance, who was sitting on his horse, on a little knoll some distance above the bank of the creek.

"Where are they?" eagerly inquired Ned, who saw no signs of the wanderers.

"I got two of the —," returned the man, with a grim, self-satisfied sort of air.

"Where?" asked Ned, looking around. "I don't see any."

"There's one," replied the new prospector, pointing with his carbine to the still warm and bleeding body of a black man lying among the long grass beside him; "the other's in the creek."

"I came hacross them hunawares, hand 'ad the first hon 'is back hafore 'e know'd where 'e was; but this un giv' me a good deal of bother hafore I dropped 'im."

Ned had no great sympathy for the blacks; he had suffered too much from their enmity, and, if necessary, would not have hesitated in taking their lives in defence of his own; but this cold-blooded procedure filled him with horror.

"Did they not attack you first?" he asked.

"They didn't get the slant this time. The — wretches halways does when they can, hand I halways serves 'em same way. There's nothing I likes better nor shooting a good hold stinking buck nigger."

Ned looked at the speaker. There was something about him which recalled some vague recollection, some undefined misty memory of bygone times. He was mounted upon an exceedingly handsome chestnut, with a thor-

ough-bred look, which bespoke pedigree and speed. His air and manner proclaimed him a self-reliant, determined man, unaccustomed to control; but a glance at the coarse round head, and repulsive animal features of the face, revealed the presence of the brutal type of mind of which they are the certain indications. Comment on the action would have been as imprudent as useless, so, with a short farewell, he once more started in pursuit of his stray property, not at all relishing the parting words of the black slayer, who shouted after him that he would look him up at his camp. He had not gone far when he fortunately fell in with the fresh tracks of horses, and shortly afterwards, coming upon the stragglers themselves, he started for the camp. The announcement to John West that their whereabouts had been discovered was as unwelcome as startling, upsetting, as it necessarily did, all their previous arrangements. It had been their intention, after securing their gold, and providing the necessary tools required by them in quartz-mining, to proclaim the discovery of the golden region, and secure the advantages of the Government reward and protection. It was a simple plan, and one which could not have failed in obtaining for them every advantage they desired, provided that the knowledge of the auriferous country remained their own. It was not to be expected for a moment that any one with the smallest experience of digging could remain ignorant of the rich nature of the alluvial deposits; and it was equally natural to suppose that the new-comers would endeavour to be the first in announcing the find, and claiming the consequent advantages for themselves. On the other hand, it was just possible that a compromise might be effected, and that by the amalgamation of both parties, all

might participate in the golden harvest.

What was to be done? Ned was strongly against having any connection with the bad-featured stranger, for whom he had imbibed a strong dislike. The question was argued in all its bearings by the excited comrades, whose agitation was by no means allayed on seeing a couple of horsemen, with a spare horse or two, arrive about sundown, and proceed to erect a small tent a couple of hundred yards distant from their own. Uneasily after supper they lay for a couple of hours revolving what plan to adopt under the circumstances. Night had again drawn her dark veil across the dismal gloomy territory, upon whose silence the noisy bustle and activity of a practical, self-seeking, struggling world was about to break.

"I'm uneasy about this gold, Ned," said West. "I think we ought to set to work and bag it up properly, so that we can strike camp and be off the moment we choose."

"I think so too," returned Ned. "The sooner we have it wrapped up the better. I wouldn't like that ugly-looking fellow I came upon to-day to get a look at it."

"Well," proposed John, "let us start to work at once. We can't have a much quieter time."

In a few minutes the precious store was brought forth from its hiding-place, and lay displayed upon the large piece of strong canvas which was intended to envelop it. A noble sight it was, and deeply it stirred the emotions of the men, whose manifold sufferings and labours it but inadequately represented. Silently they gazed for a time, recognising, as they did so, many a well-known piece of coarse metal which had rejoiced their eyes in the finding. Heaving an invol-

untary sigh, West broke the silence.

"What was that fellow like you met this morning, Ned?"

His companion was about to reply when a step was heard outside the tent, and pulling aside the flap the man himself appeared.

"Hi say, mates, you 'ave a nice little 'eap of the right sort there," he remarked, directing a burning look of cupidity towards the yellow pile on the canvas.

Springing to his feet, and grasping his loaded carbine, with jealous rage depicted in his features, John shouted, "Stand back! What do you want?"

"Oh, nothink," said the intruder; "honly I com'd hon a visit."

"Then," sternly rejoined the young man, by whose side Ned now stood, weapon in hand, "back you go to your own camp. If I catch you about mine after night-fall, I'll drive daylight through you. Those are my rules. Away you go."

Cursing deeply, the surprised and discomfited visitor slunk back to his quarters, the friends watching his retiring figure through the trees by the light of the now rising moon.

"Ned," said West, "that man will never rest until he becomes possessed of the gold there by some means or other, if possible. He's a more dangerous enemy than any black fellow among these ranges. I knew it the moment I saw his eyes fixed on the canvas. I don't know how it is," he continued, "but the sight of him set my blood boiling within me. I seem to know his devil's face somehow."

"So do I," returned Ned; "but I can't think where I saw it."

"Well, no matter; there's but one thing to do now," replied John, whose decision always rose to meet any emergency. "We must endeavour to get away from here to-

night, unawares to that fellow. We'll make up the gold and pack the horses (it's lucky you got them to-day), and start back the way we came. We've moonlight; and I'll defy them, or any one else, to track us over the rocky road we made our way here by, without a blackboy, and then they'd have no easy job."

Armed with his carbine, our hero kept careful watch, while his companion hastily completed the necessary preparations, and by a couple of hours after midnight they had started, leaving the tent standing and a good fire burning beside it, to deceive their neighbours. Slowly but steadily they made their way over the stony precipitous mountains, and only halted for a short time next morning in order to partake of a hasty meal. Daylight enabled the travellers to continue their journey with greater comfort, but their rate of speed was much reduced, owing to more than one of their horses having torn off their shoes in the rocky conglomerate defiles. They camped that night, feeling tolerably secure, from the distance accomplished and the difficult nature of the country they had passed over, taking, nevertheless, the precaution of keeping watch; and three days more brought them by mid-day to a little permanent mining camp, where, for the first time since the night of their flight, they experienced a thorough feeling of safety.

With the absence of the sense of danger, and the return of confidence, a suspicion began to creep over John that perhaps he had been too hasty in his conclusions. How absurd it would look should it turn out, after all, that the man was a well-known character, and as honest as himself! He felt ashamed almost of his behaviour, and was taxing himself with a want of coolness, when Ned, who had been get-

ting the horses shod at the forge, came up, almost breathlessly excited.

"Anything wrong?" asked John.

"Only this," answered his mate: "I saw that fellow who found us out over the mountains, a few minutes ago."

"Are you certain, Ned?" inquired John, all his old suspicion flooding on him in a moment.

"Quite sure," returned he. "I had been speaking to an old acquaintance, and on returning to the forge I saw him for an instant, talking to one of the men. I could not be mistaken about the face. The moment I entered he went out the back way, and although I followed him instantly, I could not see which way he took."

"Did you ask at the smithy about him?"

"Yes," said Ned; "but nobody knew. All they could tell me was that he inquired when we intended starting."

"I'm more certain than ever that fellow is after our gold," remarked John. "I wish we had it in the Commissioner's strong-box. Are the horses finished?"

"Very nearly."

"Well," replied John, "wait here. I'll go and fetch them, and perhaps I may get a sight of him up at the camp."

He made his way to the forge and got his animals, but no further information could he glean on the subject which disturbed him. As he left the smithy deep in thought, leading the horses along, the loud hearty "Good evening, mate," of a couple of horsemen awoke him from his meditations. The speakers were a couple of burly, bearded miners, their long Californian hats nearly covering their features from view. Each man was leading a spare horse, packed with a small compact swag, and both, it could be seen at a glance, were on their

road into town. At first sight John failed to remember under what circumstances he had seen the men before; but at last it flashed upon him that these were the miners who had occupied their deserted ground on the first camp they had settled on, and who had started sinking a shaft in their fire-place for luck.

"Holloa!" he cried, his interest becoming awakened. "Is that you? What luck had you with that old claim of ours?"

"Well," returned one of the diggers, "Bill here and me have been mates this many a year, but taking up that old ground was the best day's work ever we done together. We took a couple of hundred ounces out of that fire-place, and ever after we couldn't go wrong somehow. They've given us the name of the 'lucky mates.'"

"Many's the time," broke in the other, "Tom here and me said we wished we could come across you and your mate, in case as how we could give you a bit of a lift, if so be as you wanted it, for we've had plenty ever since."

John thanked the speaker heartily, and informed him that he had done well himself, and was even now on his road to the Commissioner's camp with some gold.

"We are going there ourselves," replied his friends; "we might as well go together. Where's your camp?"

This accession to their strength was a most welcome addition to our prospectors, whose story was listened to with great interest by the off-handed, honest-hearted diggers.

The night passed by quietly, and next morning the travellers prepared to accomplish the remaining distance which lay between them and their destination.

A considerable portion of the road wound through narrow, rocky defiles, hemmed in betwixt precip-

itous cliffs, and was infested by a tribe of savages whose treacherous ferocity had procured for it a reputation of the very worst description. Many a time the spears of the ambuscaded natives had been dyed red in the heart's-blood of the gold-loving invaders of their sterile domains; and notwithstanding all the exertions of the native police stationed in the vicinity, the spot maintained its evil character. The united party, keeping a careful look-out around them, had almost reached the most intricate portion of the stony pass in safety, when wild yells some distance ahead, together with a shot and the shrieks of a white man's voice, warned them that once more the vindictive Myalls were engaged in their bloody work. Drawing their firearms, they pushed rapidly forward, and turning a corner, saw, not far in front of them, a white man rapidly bounding down the rocks on one side of the road, closely pursued by three or four totally naked aboriginals, who, with terrific yells, hurled their spears at their shrieking victim. Several more of the tribe were congregated on a rock a little higher up, clamorously engaged over some object on the ground. The unexpected arrival of the new-comers, together with half-a-dozen well-directed bullets, had the instant effect of dispersing the natives, of whom in less than a minute there was not a vestige to be seen.

Leaving Ned and one of their diggings friends to look after the man to whose rescue they had so opportunely come, and who now lay in a fainting condition on the ground, John, with the other, climbed towards the rocky shelf where they had noticed the group of aboriginals collected. A fearful object met their eyes. It was the grinning head of him whose lust of gold had impelled him to pursue the owners of the golden heap

which had excited his covetousness on the distant creek, and who had evidently selected this difficult gorge with a view of "sticking up" and robbing them, only to fall a prey to the countrymen of the bearings he had himself slaughtered with so little compunction. As John West gazed on the dreadful sight before him, awe-struck at the terrible and swift retribution which had overtaken the hardened villain in the midst of his crimes, the likeness which had so puzzled him in life became explained, and it was with a feeling of the deepest horror that he recognised in the pale and death-stricken face the battered, lowering visage of Bill Cane, the murderer of M'Duff. A thick beard, hiding the lower part of his face, had concealed his identity, and produced the alteration which had hitherto proved an effectual disguise. The mutilated trunk lay some distance off, torn and hacked by blunt weapons; and in spite of the short time at their disposal, the eager cannibals had carried away several portions of the body, for what purpose there was but little doubt. Descending to their companions, they found them engaged in doing what they could for the relief of the unhappy being, who recovered from one fainting fit merely to fall into another. The first glance assured John that it was the miserable Ralf, but so changed, so cadaverous and wretched-looking, that Ned, who had not seen him for several years, entirely failed to remember him.

A spear-head had penetrated his shoulder, but beyond that no wound

could be discovered to account for his prostration. Suddenly, as if recalled by the sound of John West's voice, the eyes of the wounded man opened slowly, and fixing them steadily on the speaker, he seemed animated by a desire to say something. Bending down, West approached his ear to the lips of the miserable creature, and barely distinguished the whisper, "I—did not—want to—kill him," when the relaxed jaw and a rattle in the throat announced that he had passed away,—M'Duff's murder being evidently the subject of his thoughts in this solemn hour. The sudden terror had been too much for him. His enfeebled constitution was unable to bear up against the effects of the shock; and in death, as in life, the brothers in guilt remained unparted.

This awful climax to the lawless lives of the slain men impressed the onlookers greatly, and all felt relieved when the arrival of a body of police, who had been sent for, allowed them to leave the blood-stained pass. But little notice was taken of the event by the public in general. Murder by blacks was too common an occurrence to cause much surprise; and the report of the new field discovered by John West and his mate, together with the amount of gold brought in by them, created an excitement before which everything else paled in interest; and but few days elapsed when, accompanied by the principal Government authorities, and followed by an immense concourse of miners, they returned to the scene of their successful labours.

CHAPTER XXXV.—EXPLAINS MATTERS IN GENERAL—THE END.

Willy Fitzgerald, we have already mentioned, returned to Ungahrun a sadder man than he had left it, and not less sad than puzzled by the

events which had occurred around him. He could not account for Ruth's agitation, or for the abrupt and decisive manner with which she

had intimated her refusal of his offer. Even now he could scarcely realise that his hopes were for ever at end. He had made so certain of success that the probability of rejection even never suggested itself to him. Could it really be the case? He had surely committed some blunder unawares,—perhaps he had offended her womanly sensibilities in some stupid way. He was so utterly deficient in tact. What else could it have been? Then the recollection of her calm, determined manner would rise, bringing with it a sense of hopelessness, and also a touch of bitter indignation and resentment; for poor Fitzgerald had undoubtedly loved honestly and sincerely—and rejection of love is a sore trial to bear. What could have been the matter, too, with John West? He seemed to have gone out of his senses. Everything was at sixes and sevens. He would, however, find his friend at home, and discover that part of the business.

In this, as we know, he was mistaken; and the short note which Blucher handed to him explained nothing; nor could the blackboy, who was as perplexed as himself at his master's disappearance, throw much light on the subject. What could have made him behave in so wild and extraordinary a manner on meeting them the day before? Was it possible—and he started as he remembered Ruth's emotion—that she could have been the cause of the remarkable excitement which had disturbed him? Had there been anything between them previously? The question threw a new light over everything; the place of meeting—the kneeling posture,—everything seemed to point to the fact: and then his sudden departure.

It accounted for all.

But did Ruth love him? Ah!

that question pricked him with sudden, sharp pain. It was true that she had never given himself any great encouragement; and he remembered feeling at a loss for a reason why she should at times appear anxious to avoid his company. He had consoled himself at the time by attributing it to her woman's coquetry, and it had piqued his fancy rather than otherwise. What a blind fool he had been! Gradually it dawned on him that he had been inhabiting a fool's paradise; and the more he thought on it, the wider his eyes opened to the truth, and the surer grew the conviction that his rejection was final. His reflections, however, did him good on the whole, for love cannot exist unless it has love to feed upon; and the knowledge that he had wasted his affection on one whose thoughts were bound up in another, was as gall and wormwood to his self-love.

Ruth, the unwilling cause of his misery, was by no means very happy herself. She was not at all proud of her conquest. It only added to her embarrassments. She was troubled about her step-father, and troubled about John. Each mail brought worse news than the last from Europe; and in proportion as wool fell in value, so did the sheep which produced it. Daily Mr Cosgrove's affairs grew more hopelessly involved, and his health worse. Who could have foreseen a few years ago that such a change could have come over the strong, selfish, hard man of the world? The terrible disappointment which his son's career had wrought had given the first great stroke, and from that date forth he had gradually begun to sink. The question of what she should do in the event of his death not infrequently presented itself to Ruth's dismayed mind with appalling inten-

sity. The Berkeleys, it is true, were her blood-relations, but they had been so incensed with her election to reside with her step-father, that she could hope but for little sympathy from that quarter; and she knew not where else she could look to. As to John West, Ruth wept with vexation when she remembered the pained despairing expression which had swept over his features as he noticed Fitzgerald bending over her in the earnestness of his entreaty. She had longed to see him once more, and what had come of it? She knew somewhat of his struggling life, and how unwearingly he had battled for success; and she trembled as she thought what utter despair might urge him to. She bore her troubles, nevertheless, as she had learned to do long ago, with outward calm. Whatever might have been the conflict and distress of her soul, no one knew it. As for the Grays, they lived very much in the same humdrum style they had done since Bessie's marriage. The fall in sheep considerably affected the old squatter's income; but he had money put by, and owed no man anything, and hoped by strict economy to tide over the crisis which was ruining the money-borrowing sheep-owners all around. Phœbe had seen but little of either Ruth or Fitzgerald since the event which had so greatly disturbed the latter's equanimity; for the former was too busy at home attending to her step-father's ailments, and the latter would rather have gone anywhere at this period than to Bety-ammo. His self-esteem had been wounded, and he fancied himself humiliated in the eyes of the world; and somehow he felt as if he could willingly have faced any one rather than Phœbe. She had come out of the struggles which had tried her so bitterly, as gold comes from the fire. Her unselfish cheery little

spirit arose from the burning flames like a phoenix from the ashes. She had bravely done battle with herself; and although the old wounds rankled and bled afresh now and again, she went about her household duties with a somewhat unreasoning but fixed belief that whatever is best, and that everything is ordered for the best, cheering and comforting her parents, and shedding happiness around her.

Stone and Bessie were very comfortable in their new home, and prosperity still smiled upon them. John's sudden disappearance had perplexed Stone exceedingly; and Bessie's mysterious nods and "I could if I would," served only to mystify him more. "Now, Bessie," he would say, "you're just like all the rest of your sex. I'm sure you think that some love-affair is at the bottom of it; and how on earth was the fellow to fall in love? He hadn't the chance."

Then Bessie would nod her head more sagaciously than ever, and her husband would give up the conundrum in despair. Ruth's rejection of Fitzgerald had by no means taken her by surprise, and, to tell the truth, she rather enjoyed the unexpected discomfiture of her old friend than otherwise. "It won't do him a bit of harm," she frequently told Charley. She was very fond of Ruth, and honoured her for her consistent character and her devotion to her now broken-down step-father, and would willingly have shown her all the kindness that lay in her power, but the distance was too far, and Ruth was tied down to her duties.

At last, however, a day came. On going in to Mr Cosgrove's room one morning to inquire for him, Ruth discovered him sitting by the window-seat, a letter spread before him on his knees. The bed was unpressed. Startled, she approached, and found him a corpse! The

candle by his side was burnt down into the socket. He had evidently been dead some hours. She had long looked forward to the possible occurrence of the event; but still the suddenness took her by surprise, and the shock was a severe one. She had never loved her step-father with the love which most children bestow so unconsciously on their parents; but never having known her own father, and having lived all her life with the dead man, who had treated her even in his successful days with a certain amount of kindness, she could not but grieve for him. Where he was had been a home to her, and latterly he had softened and changed very much in his manner, as he became more infirm and dependent. The letter which had engrossed his latest moments was from his agents, Messrs Bond & Foreclose, and contained an intimation to the effect that the very unsatisfactory nature of his account had compelled them to take the disagreeable step of putting the estate into liquidation; and the dreaded announcement had probably killed him. Mr Gray, who was sent for, came over in the afternoon with Bessie, who had arrived on a visit the day before; and Phœbe and the sisters sympathised with the lonely girl, and carried her off to Betyammo, where Mrs Gray received her like a daughter, and where they made much of her, and consoled her with a hundred womanly little attentions and kindnesses. Mr Gray remained at Cambarang, setting things in order; and Willy Fitzgerald, on hearing the news, mounted his horse and galloped over too, taking care not to go near the house until he ascertained that Ruth had gone away—after which he stayed, assisting Mr Gray in putting things to rights, and in endeavouring to do what they could. Poor Ruth! they soon saw they could not do much for her. The

letter she had herself seen acquainted them with that. There was absolutely nothing left. Both men knew that Mr Cosgrove's affairs had been long in a bad way, but neither had any idea of their being in so deplorable a state; and Willy Fitzgerald implored Mr Gray to accept a sum of money which would at least keep Ruth from present inconvenience. She might be allowed to believe it came from the estate,—"anything she liked," he urged, "provided she had it;" but old Mr Gray would not hear of such a thing.

"No, no, Fitzgerald, my boy; it won't do. It's like your generous nature; but it won't do—won't do. What if she ever came to know about it? No, no—it won't do. We'll see about her; she'll be all right, make your mind easy."

So having nothing more to do, Fitzgerald rode home, and busied himself about his work, and endeavoured to forget the existence of Ruth Bouverie.

When Bessie left Betyammo, she carried Ruth with her in spite of kind old Mr Gray's entreaties to make their house her home; and Ruth, determined not to eat the bread of idleness, put into execution a little scheme which she had evolved when staying with her friends. She qualified as a Government school teacher, and, through Stone's influence, got herself appointed to the little Government school in the township near his property; and on it she expended all her energies, riding in early in the morning, and returning again at sundown, to be a companion to her friend, and gladden the household with her calm, sweet presence.

The public papers had apprised the colony at large of the important discovery which had been made in the shape of a new gold-field, and of the exceedingly rich prizes which

some of the fortunate finders had drawn in the great lottery; but as yet John had kept silence about his share of good fortune. He stood almost alone. He had no one to rejoice with him except Stone and his wife,—and the Grays, perhaps; but they lived too near Ungahrun, and he did not care about going there. He could not bring himself as yet to face Ruth as another man's wife. His success had not come unalloyed by pain. How differently would he have felt a couple of years earlier! Then, perhaps, he might have had a chance against the rich man; but now—now that he cared comparatively little for success, everything went well with him. Ned and he received a considerable money reward from Government, as well as an unusually large area along the line of reef they had opened, and which from the first yielded rich stone. The gold-fields had proved a success; much alluvial gold had been taken out of the ravines and gullies, and many new quartz-reefs had been found out and were being worked. Machinery had been attracted to the field at an early stage, and one of the results of the "crushings" was to fill the pockets of John and his mate over and over again. It was no doubt a great triumph for him, but on the whole he found it wearisome. The excitement was passed away, and he grew sick to death of the bustle and push around him. He sighed once more for the quiet bush-life, the lowing of the peaceful herd, the scent of the trampled sweet marjoram, and the blood-stirring gallop through the pleasant pasture-lands. The memory of his early life grew irresistibly strong. There was nothing to detain him. Ned, who had become a person of considerable importance, undertook the management of the claim; so, saddling his horse one morning, he abruptly took

leave of his friends—including the "lucky mates," whose favouring genius had enabled them to secure the ground adjacent to his own, and who were in a fair way to become independent for life—and started south for Brisbane, whence he made his way up to visit Stone and Bessie.

It was a soft pleasant evening, and Stone, who had been round the stables and outhouse-buildings, superintending personally the feeding and watering of a number of choice young pedigree stock, came up and joined Bessie, as she stood on the grass-plot in front of the house, nursing her baby. It was her second child, and the first, a sturdy little man, ran to meet his father, clamouring for a ride upon his shoulder.

"Come along, then, old fellow," said Stone, lifting him up; "we'll go and meet Ruth, and you shall ride back with her."

As he opened the little garden-gate leading down the road, he became aware of a horseman riding towards the house.

"Holloa, Bessie!" he remarked, calling attention to the fact, "we are going to have company to-night."

"Who can it be, I wonder?"

"No idea: some stranger, I suppose."

Nearer and nearer the horseman drew, until at last, springing from his horse amid loud exclamations of delight and surprise, John West stood beside them, shaking hands and answering a hundred questions.

Indeed, so busy and excited were they all, that no one noticed Ruth as she rode up, and, dismounting, entered the little gate, but Mr Stone, junior, who set up a shout of welcome.

"Do you know who this is?" inquired Bessie.

West turned round, and his heart

stood almost still with the suddenness of the start.

"Don't you remember Ruth Bouverie?" said Stone, hastily.

"Ruth *Bouverie*?" returned John, with an unmistakable emphasis on the surname, and an ashen face, which caused that of the person in question to grow a deep crimson.

"Yes, of course; what else?" answered the settler, going over to his wife, who had been making a series of telegraphic signals to him, and accompanying her inside the house, leaving Ruth and John standing together on the grass-plot.

"What is the matter, Bessie?" asked the mystified man. "Anything wrong?"

"No," she said, laughing; "only you are such a great stupid, and can't see one inch before you. I always told you I knew more than I cared to tell about the cause of John's disappearance, didn't I?"

"Whew!" whistled Stone. "Oh! that's it, is it? and my lord here was jealous of Fitzgerald and——"

"Something of that sort," returned Bessie. "That's all right now, though, thank goodness; and mother says that Willy has got over the disappointment completely, and is more there than ever. Now you know, and just leave them to themselves. They'll be all right directly."

And apparently knowing, shrewd-witted Bessie was right; for that evening at supper John West's face wore a beaming look of happiness, such as had not lighted it for many a day; while Ruth, filled with sweet content, listened to the narrative of his adventures with mingled pity and amazement, weeping at the last tears of sorrow over the fate of the unhappy Ralf, with a sincerity of grief which was undeserved.

But little now remains to be told.

Yielding to his inclinations, John West purchased a compact, well-grassed cattle station in a favourite part of the country, where, surrounded by pleasant neighbours, he literally lives under the shade of his own fig-tree, and drinks the juice of his own grape. Ruth, now his wife, moves about, imparting to everything a feminine grace and elegance, with a magical touch, which to her husband is simply marvellous; and as he rests his eye on her figure, and the fragrant blossoms of the flower-garden which it is her especial delight to tend, the recollection of days of unrewarded toil, and misery, and danger, fades away as does an unsubstantial dream of the night before the brightness of the golden morning.

As already related, Fitzgerald recovered his soundness of heart, but not for long. His renewed intercourse with the Grays brought him once more into contact with Phoebe, and day by day he became more and more impressed with her charming character and sterling qualities, until at last, wondering how he could have been so blind as to prefer any one before her, he begged her to become his wife. For some months Phoebe held out, in order, as she said, to give him time to know his own mind; but eventually yielding to his repeated solicitations, she consented, and the new house at Ungahrun opened its doors to receive a throng of rejoicing friends and neighbours eager to welcome the advent of its new mistress.

Desnard is succeeding well as a squatter out west, his father having advanced a sufficient sum to purchase a share in what will with time become a valuable station.

Ned has developed into a machine-owner, and bids fair to become one of the largest mining capitalists in the colony.

THE ROOF OF THE WORLD.

IN February 1838, Lieutenant Wood, of the Indian Navy, rode across the level summit of the Kotal of Ish-kashm—the only pass across that long and lofty offshoot from the Hindu Kush which forms the eastern frontier of Badakhshan; and from thence, at a height of nearly 11,000 feet above the sea, he looked down into the narrow mountain-valley wherein, undiscernible beneath the snow, flowed the infant stream of the Oxus. For long centuries no European had beheld that river in its upper course; and the brief narratives of Marco Polo and one or two other early adventurers, were still received in Europe with scepticism, and even with incredulity. That is the way in which the world receives the narratives of all first explorers. Bruce's 'Travels in Abyssinia,' with its true story of a strange land and strange peoples, were treated as purely mythical; and the 'Tales of Baron Munchausen,' which have delighted the children of subsequent generations, were originally published in derision of Bruce's narrative. For some days before we here meet him, Lieutenant Wood had been on the actual track of Marco Polo; and his brief, memorable, and interesting expedition which we are about to recount, shows how accurate is the simple narrative of the daring Venetian, whose tidings of the great empire of China and of the Indies fired Columbus with the desire to find a way thither across the wild wastes of the Atlantic.

More than a twelvemonth had elapsed since Lieutenant Wood started from the mouths of the Indus, making his way slowly up that most unnavigable of large rivers;

and when at length baffled by the rapids at the Salt Range, he made his way overland, by Kohat and the Khyber Pass, to Cabul. His special object was to visit the unknown region of the upper Oxus, and, if possible, to track the river to its source. Taking the most direct route, he endeavoured to surmount the Hindu Kush by one of the passes immediately to the north of Cabul; but he found the Parwan Pass impracticable so late in the year, and wisely turning back, he escaped the fate of another party which had started from Cabul along with him, and whose members perished in the snow in an adjoining pass. Back, down the long valley again, he had to go to Cabul; from thence he made for Bamean, the best known and most westerly of the passes over the Hindu Kush; and thence he descended northward towards the Oxus until he came to the sultry and unhealthy lowlands of Kunduz. The Oxus was there within a day's ride; but his object was to strike the river much further up; and as the course of the Oxus above Kunduz projects northwards in a semicircle, he resolved to proceed along the chord of the arc, through Badakhshan, and over the Kotal of Ish-kashm.

Standing upon the summit of the pass, an unbroken expanse of snow spread around. Far as the eye could reach, white mountains towered aloft into the cold sky. Behind were the narrow mountain-valleys of the eastern part of Badakhshan, in one of which lie the lapis-lazuli mines, famous from the earliest times, and which Wood had just visited. In front, and 2000 feet below him, flowed the snow-covered Oxus, coming down a long

narrow valley from the east — an opening between precipitous parallel mountain-chains, on whose summits, and far down their sides, lay the unmelted snow of countless centuries. To the right, as he thus looked eastward, the Hindu Kush towered above the narrow vale; while to the left, the mountain-chain on which he stood ran north by west beyond the range of vision,— a mighty barrier, which causes the Oxus to turn at right angles to its previous course, curving northward round Badakhshan.

There, then, was the infant Oxus, only a hundred feet in width; and he was the only European of modern times who had seen the sight. Descending the pass, Wood and his small party (himself the sole European) crossed the river on bridges of hardened snow; for the ice was ruptured by the rise of the river, which begins early in spring. He had a great desire to visit the world-renowned Ruby Mines, which had been famous when Europe was still in its infancy. They lay only twenty miles down the river, and he could see the mountain into whose sides the galleries were quarried in search of the gem which rivals even the diamond in value. Only twenty miles; but he could not reach the spot! And yet the route to the mines from where he stood is actually the only one by which the people of mountain-girdled Badakhshan can communicate with the provinces of Darwaz, Roshan, and Shaguan opposite to them on the north or right bank of the Oxus. Throughout these twenty miles the mountains on the left bank descend in lofty precipices to the river-bed,— the only route is along the right bank. But even there the mountains come so close to the river, that journeying by horseback is rarely possible, and journeying on foot is only safe

in the summer months; and the best route of all is along the surface of the river in winter when it happens to be hard frozen.

Wood had been partly prepared for this disappointment. When ascending the Pass of Ish-kashm, a strange, way-worn figure had met them, brushing his way through the willow scrub that covers the slope, with the skin of a horse wrapped round him. Tempted by the frozen state of the river, he had gone with some comrades to pay a visit in Darwaz, just beyond the Ruby Mines; but when about to return they found the river had burst its icy covering. His companions turned back to await the coming of summer; but he had pushed on, and only got through after sacrificing his horse, whose hide he was carrying home with him. Hardly had this strange-clad wayfarer passed on, when Wood met a party of horsemen descending from the pass, who told him they had been sent to collect tribute at a hamlet near the Ruby Mines. They had to leave their horses and make their way thither on foot; and on their return one-third of the party had been overwhelmed by an avalanche on the mountain-side. Happening to look back, the foremost of the party beheld a white mist rushing down, and their comrades were seen no more. Such was the region which Wood had now reached.

Overruling the fears and natural dislike of his little party, Wood now turned his face eastward, or E. by N., resolved to make his way up through the wild and lonesome narrow mountain-valley down which flowed the Oxus from its unknown source in the far-off mountain-land of Pamir. This valley, which he entered and first looked down upon from the Pass of Ish-kashm, is called Wakhan,— so Wood found: a name which is

mentioned passingly by Marco Polo, but which had never since been heard of in Europe, and which now became replaced in geography. Proceeding up this valley, which for fifty miles above Ish-kashm varies from a mile to barely two hundred yards in width—a mere thread among the tremendous mountain-ranges on either hand—Wood's little party early in the afternoon reached Ishttrakh. The word hamlet is too big for this little settlement—a few rude and small houses built for shelter among the rocky fragments of the mountains. As a snow-shower was falling when he arrived, no sign of human habitation was discernible, but for a yak standing quietly at what proved to be the door of one of the dwellings. The yak—the reindeer of Tibet and the Pamir,—a creature that cannot live where the temperature is above the freezing-point!

The mountain-range which here shuts in the valley of the Oxus on the south is the most easterly part of the Hindu Kush. Ishttrakh stands at the mouth of a glen or gorge in these mountains, down which a rivulet flows into the Oxus from its source in the eternal snows; and up this glen there is a path leading to a pass over the Hindu Kush, so that by a three days' journey one may reach the seat of the ruler of Chitral. But the journey must be made on foot, and is only practicable in summer, and the entire route is through the wild mountains, utterly uninhabited. So inaccessible is this region that even a route of this kind is held worthy of mention.

At Ishttrakh, Wood learnt that for forty miles upwards the valley of the Oxus was wholly uninhabited. The cold was great, and the wind from the mountains so piercing that nothing short of necessity would justify a bivouac for

the night in the open. Accordingly, after some ten hours' rest, Wood and his little party started from Ishttrakh at midnight—whether by moonlight or by the gleam of the snow is not mentioned—and rode along by the river through the wild and profound solitude for forty miles—thirteen hours in the saddle—to a little settlement called Kundut, which, be it observed, is due north of Attock. Just before reaching this place, the ground became more level, and the Oxus, dividing into many channels, meandered over a sandy bed, studded with numberless islets, which were thickly covered with an undergrowth of red willow-trees. In passing through one of these copses, Wood's dog started a hare from its bed—the only living thing they had seen throughout their forty miles' ride.

At Kundut, Shah Turai, in a little fort, ruled as monarch over the fifteen families which constituted the population, and whose houses clustered about the fort like so many cells in a beehive. Wood was hospitably received by the Shah. "A large fire soon blazed upon the hearth of the best house; and his subjects being convened, I was paraded round it to refute the assertion of a wandering *calender* (fakir) from Jumbo in the Himalaya Mountains, who had persuaded the credulous Wakhans that the Feringis were a nation of dwarfs." And here we get a glimpse, reminding us of one of the earliest stages of settled human life long before calendars were compiled or timepieces invented. The holes in the roofs of the houses, besides giving vent to the smoke, perform the office of sundials, indicating the hour of the day when the sun is shining. "Before the housewife begins to prepare the family meal, she looks not up at a clock, but round the walls or upon

the floor for the spot on which his golden light is streaming. The seasons also are marked by the same means; for when the sun's rays, through this aperture in the roof, reach one particular spot, it is seed-time."

Resuming his journey up the valley of the Oxus, Wood and his little party had not proceeded far when the barking of dogs and the sight of yaks, camels, and sheep roaming over the plain bespoke the vicinity of a pastoral people. It was an encampment of Kirghiz, numbering a hundred families, and possessed of about 2000 yaks, 4000 sheep, and 1000 camels: "not the ugly-looking camel of Africa, but the species known as the Bactrian, and which, to all the useful qualities of the former, adds a majestic port that no animal but the horse can surpass." It was the first time that the Kirghiz had ever wintered in that district, and they had just arrived,—having been solicited to do so by the Uzbeks of Badakhshan, with whom they are connected by race.

Throughout that day's journey the valley of the Oxus continued level, about a mile wide, grassy in some places, and, though far from fertile, improved in appearance compared with its lower course. But it is only on the brink of the river that herbage and willow-copse abound; the outer part of the narrow plain, at the foot of the mountains, being entirely bare and devoid of vegetation. After a twenty-four miles' ride, Wood reached a place called Kila Panj (from five hillocks clustered together); and at this point he crossed to the right, or north bank of the river, which there flowed at the rate of three and a half miles an hour. At the crossing-place at Kila Panj, the stream is split into two channels,—one of which, twenty-seven

yards broad, was two feet deep; the other, which was broader by ten yards, was so shallow that Wood's dog crossed it without swimming. A further ride of about ten miles brought the party to their halting-place for the night at Hissar—a small rude fort, with a little settlement around it.

At this point the valley of the Oxus bifurcates. One valley or glen runs up among the mountains east by south, the other runs north-east; and down each of them flowed a stream of nearly equal size. Which was the Oxus? To Wood's eye the stream from the east seemed slightly the larger; but the Wakhanis held the opposite opinion as a fact; nor was it easy for Wood to decide, for the stream from the north was broken into several channels. The northern stream, however, was covered with ice to the point of junction, whereas the eastern one was unfrozen,—plainly showing that the stream from the north rose in a much higher altitude than the other. Also, when Wood made a clearing in the ice, he found the velocity of the northern tributary double that of the one from the east. Further, the Kirghiz tribe whom he had met on the previous day had told him positively that the source of the Oxus was to be found in the lofty table-land to the north-east. So Wood resolved to track the stream which came down from the north.

But he wanted guides, and an escort for protection against the roving Kirghiz tribes; and he was detained at Hissar and at Langar Kish, a place a few miles further on; until it occurred to him to boldly ask an escort from the Kirghiz encampment down the river—that is, from the very people whom he had to guard against; and he had not to repent his confidence.

At Hissar, which stands at the confluence of the two streams, the valley of the Oxus—narrow at the best—terminates; and the route lies up the *durah* Sir-i-kol—the defile or rough glen down which comes the Oxus from the plateau of Pamir. Langar Kish (10,800 feet above the sea) is the most easterly point of Wakhan, and the last place of human habitation. The travellers now clothed themselves more heavily than ever, to keep out the intense cold: “the Munshi in particular was so hampered up with worsted cloaks that his arms were all but useless, and his short legs had scarcely action enough to keep him on his horse.” The sides of the mountains forming the defile were broken down in abrupt declivities, and the snow-wreathed stream flowed roughly amid their dislocated fragments. This is the route by which the Yarkand Caravan travels; and three hours after starting, Wood’s party came to a ravine which they had great trouble in crossing, and where frequently the caravan is interrupted, and its merchandise has to be transferred from the camel’s back to that of the yak. They bivouacked for the night on a knoll, free from snow, but only so from its being swept by every gust that traversed the *durah*. The cold was intense. Wood’s thermometer was only graduated down to 6° above zero, Fahrenheit, and the mercury had sunk down into the bulb. Three of the party (two of them Afghans) suffered so much during the night that they had to be sent back to Langar Kish. Height of the bivouac above the sea, 12,000 feet.

Next morning resuming their course up the rough snow-covered glen, the journey was most fatiguing. Although the snow lay only two feet deep, it was but half-froz-

en, and drifts abounded in which the horse and his rider floundered painfully. At noon they took to the frozen surface of the river, and the change was most agreeable. It was dark before they reached the halting-place chosen by the Kirghiz guides; the snow on it lay a yard deep, and a cold ugly spot it looked: but the Kirghiz taking their wooden shovels, quickly showed that there was a store of fuel, sheep and camels’ dung, beneath; and by the help of a good fire, and high snow walls around them, the night was passed in tolerable comfort. Height above the sea, 13,500 feet.

Before starting next day, the footmen of the party had to be sent back, dead-beat; and the party resumed their way up the frozen river. Horns in large numbers (the spoil of the Kirghiz hunters) now were strewed in all directions, projecting from the snow,—some of them of astonishingly large size. These belonged to the *Ovis Poli*, a creature between a goat and a yak, first seen by Marco Polo, and hence its European name. That night they bivouacked again on the site of a summer encampment of the Kirghiz, and with the same “comforts” as before. Height above the sea, 14,400 feet.

Next morning—the fourth after leaving Langar Kish—there was a strike among the escort;—only two of them could be persuaded to go further. But that was enough; for now the object of search was said to be only twenty-one miles distant. Hitherto Wood’s party had been greatly helped by following in the tracks of a band of Kirghiz who had just preceded them; but these had turned off up a glen to the left, and now they had to make a way for themselves through the half-frozen snow, which lay deeper and deeper as they advanced. Near as Wood had now

approached to the source of the Oxus, he would have failed after all in reaching it, had not the river been frozen. They were fully two hours in forcing their way through a field of snow not five hundred yards across. "Each individual by turns took the lead, and forced his horse to struggle onward until exhaustion brought it down in the snow, where it was allowed to lie and recruit whilst the next was urged forward. It was so great a relief when we again got upon the river," says Wood, "that in the elasticity of my spirits I pushed my pony into a trot:" a proceeding which was instantly checked by a Wakhani, who cautioned Wood to beware of the "wind of the mountains"—the rarefied air of those high altitudes, of which we shall see more by-and-by.

As they neared the source of the Oxus the ice on its surface became brittle. In the afternoon they had to leave it, and journey for an hour along its right bank. Ever since leaving Langar Kish, the mountains on either hand had appeared to become lower and lower,—the ascent being so gradual that they hardly thought of the great altitude which stage by stage they were reaching. Now, the mountains appeared to be entirely falling away from them; and ascending a low hill, which apparently bounded the valley to the eastward, at five o'clock in the afternoon of the 19th of February 1838, Wood at length stood upon the Bam-i-duniah, the "Roof of the World." Height above the sea, 15,600 feet.

Before him, looking northward, Wood beheld a wide mountain-land mantled in snow. A plain, stretching almost to the horizon and about four miles in breadth, lay embosomed amid swelling hills about 500 feet high, but which on the south east towered into moun-

tains; and in the middle of the plain, or rather along one side of it, spread a fine lake, in the form of a crescent, fifteen miles in length, and with an average breadth of one mile. And almost at his feet, at the southern end of the lake, the Oxus was flowing from its source, and plunging into the *durah* by which the travellers had approached. Here, then, was the object of this bold expedition accomplished. The old and almost forgotten story of Marco Polo was true; and the great river Oxus, which, after creating the Oasis of Khiva, disappears in the marshes of the Aral Sea, has its source in a lake on the Great Pamir steppe, the Roof of the World.

Passing on to the frozen surface of the lake, called Sir-i-kol, Wood cut some holes in the ice to let down his sounding-lead; but the depth was small—only about six feet,—and the water was discoloured and fetid, doubtless from the decay of the rich rank grasses which grow in summer. The lake was probably deeper in other parts, but Wood was unable to explore further, owing to the labour of cutting through the ice, which was two and a half feet thick. The difficulty of doing anything was felt to be excessive, owing to the extreme rarity of the atmosphere. "A few strokes with an axe brought the workman to the ground. A run at full speed for fifty yards made the runner gasp for breath." The pulse, too, was bounding as if at high fever-heat. Wood first observed this peculiarity when he was still among the mountain-valleys of Badakhshan. Accidentally touching his pulse he felt it was galloping, and, turning somewhat anxiously to his medical instructions, he took the remedies prescribed for fever. Next morning the pulse still galloped, but he

felt quite well; and he soon found that the pulses of all the party were in the same way. As he remarks, man has a barometer within him which approximately shows his elevation above the sea. On the banks of Lake Sir-i-kol the pulses of his party beat at from 110 to 124 per minute,—the pulsation being quicker in the stout or fat men than in the spare or thin.

On this elevated solitude Wood halted for the night. The uniform robe of snow rendered it difficult to determine distances or altitudes,—hence, he says, it is possible that Sir-i-kol is much larger than he took it for—but he reckoned that the mountains at the southern end of the lake were about 3400 feet above the lake, or 19,000 above the sea; and the perennial snow upon them, partially melting in summer, furnishes a never-failing supply of water to the lake and the Oxus which flows from it. The wintry scene was oppressive, almost appalling. A dull cloudless sky overhead, with a snowy waste below, extending far as the eye could reach. Not a living thing was to be seen, not a sound to be heard; the air was as silent and tenantless as the earth. Not even a bird stirred the air with its wings.

“Silence reigned around—silence so profound that it oppressed the heart; and” (says Wood) “as I contemplated the hoary summits of the everlasting mountains, where human foot had never trod, and where lay piled the snows of ages, my own dear country and all the social blessings it contains passed across my mind with a vividness of recollection that I had never felt before. It is all very well for men in crowded cities to be disgusted with the world and to talk of the delights of solitude. Let them but pass one twenty-four hours on the banks of Sir-i-kol, and it will do more to make them contented with their lot than a thousand arguments.”

Saddling-up soon after mid-day, Wood and his escort re-entered the defile, descending down to Langar Kish, and finding the mountains rising higher and higher on either hand as they descended. Journeying down the narrow valley of the Oxus, and recrossing the Pass of Ish-kashm, he made good his return through Badakhshan to Kunduz; and finally visited the Oxus at the point where it is about to enter the Deserts, after making its semicircular detour from Ish-kashm around Badakhshan. It was now a great river. It was with difficulty that he forded it on horseback, riding three abreast to break the current; and yet the river, at the ford, was split into three channels. These had an aggregate breadth of about 350 yards, and the stream in the main channel ran at the rate of four miles an hour.

Since Wood's memorable journey, the eastern “fork” (as the Americans say) of the Oxus, which joins with the Sir-i-kol river at Hissar, has been explored by the Indian traveller known as “the Mirza.” As Wood suspected, this eastern branch, called the “River of Sirhad,” is really the larger, although it has a much lower source. The length of its course is about 100 miles, while Wood's Oxus is about 70. From Hissar (the point of confluence) the valley of the Sirhad river rounds E. by S., close under the eastern extremity of the Hindu Kush, to where that mountain-chain is met at an angle by the lofty Karakorum chain of the Himalaya. Apparently, at the angle where these mighty chains meet, a lofty spur runs northward, forming the eastern front of the Roof of the World, looking down upon Yarkand and Kashgar. Certainly at this point the valley of the Sirhad river turns northward, opening out on the steppe of the Little Pamir,

where this branch of the Oxus (like the other) issues from a lake—about 13,300 feet above the sea.

Captain Wood's narrative was originally published at a time when Central Asia was a region not merely unknown to (which it still is), but wholly uncared for by, the public. In 1872, when the exploits of the Athalik Ghazi of Kashgar, and the military invasion by Russia, attracted public interest to that part of the East, Wood's narrative was republished, prefaced by an Essay on the Valley of the Oxus by Colonel Yule, C.B.* The Essay is worthy of the high reputation of its author, who, by his commentaries on Marco Polo's 'Journey,' and also by other writings, has proved himself our ablest authority on the geography and history of the greater part of Central Asia. It is from Colonel Yule's writings that we have mainly drawn the concluding portion of this paper, auxiliary to the simple narrative of Wood.

Very remarkable is it, in the historical incidents quoted by Yule, to see how prosperous and populous were many parts of this region which are now not only desert or in decay, but in some of which both soil and climate would seem highly adverse to civilised settlement. It is strange to find Wakhan—the wild narrow valley through which Wood (like Marco Polo) journeyed to the source of the Oxus—spoken of by the old Venetian traveller (in 1272) as "a land containing a good many towns and villages, and scattered habitations;" or, in still earlier times, by the historian Abulfeda, who speaks of the splendid palaces of the kings of Waksh.—a most mountainous

country on the upper tributaries of the Oxus—remaining unknown to the modern world, despite the "scientific expeditions" of General Kauffmann.

Strange as it may seem, these lofty mountain-solititudes of the world were as well known to the Chinese twelve centuries ago, or better, as they are to us at the present day. The first travellers who have left a written and published account of the region were two Chinese pilgrims of the Buddhist persuasion, who passed this way on their visit to India about A.D. 518, and who mention that this lofty region (called by the Chinese *Tsung Ling*) was commonly said to be half-way between heaven and earth,—just as the northern continuation of the Pamir mountains is to this day called by the Chinese the *Tien Shan*, or Heavenly mountains. In the next century (about 644 A.D.), another Chinese pilgrim to the Buddhist shrines of India, named Hwen Thsang, on his way back to China, took the very course up the valley or defile of the Sir-i-kol branch of the Oxus recently explored by Wood, and thence down from the Roof of the World into the plains of Yarkand and Kashgar, on his way to cross the very different, but not less formidable, obstacle to travellers—the Desert of Cobi. Hwen Thsang states that, on leaving India, he journeyed for 140 miles across the mountains, and reached the valley of Pomilo (Pamir), lying between two snowy ranges of the *Tsung Ling*.

"The traveller," he says, "is annoyed by sudden gusts of wind, and the snow-drifts never cease, spring or summer. As the soil is almost con-

* Journey to the Source of the River Oxus. By Captain John Wood, Indian Navy. New edition, edited by his Son. With an Essay on the Geography of the Valley of the Oxus, by Colonel Henry Yule, C.B. With Maps. London: John Murray: 1872.

stantly frozen, you see but a few miserable plants, and no crops can live. The whole region is but a dreary waste, without a trace of humankind. In the middle of the valley is a great lake. This stands on a plateau of prodigious elevation. The lake discharges to the west [south-west], and a river runs out of it in that direction, and joins the Potsu (Oxus). The lake likewise discharges to the east, and a great river runs out, which flows eastward to the western frontier of Kiesha (Kashgar), where it joins the river Sita, and runs eastward into it to the sea."

That a lake should have two outlets in opposite directions is very unusual, but not physically impossible; and although Hwen Thsang's statement is generally disbelieved, Burnes heard the same story from the natives about forty years ago.

In the thirteenth century, the Roof of the World was, for the first time, beheld by the eye of a European, Marco Polo; and only two or three Europeans have ever beheld it since then, even down to the present day. The 'Travels of Marco Polo' is truly a remarkable book. Its author was simply an enterprising Venetian merchant, who undertook the most wonderful and difficult journey, or series of journeys,—no doubt with a strong love of adventure in his heart, but merely in the way of business. He seems totally unaware that he himself was doing anything wonderful, although he expatiates on the strange sights and peoples which he met with. As regards his own adventures, and his own impressions of the difficult expedition which he undertook, he says almost nothing,—not even when travelling for weeks among the coldest and loftiest mountains in the world, or while traversing for a month the pathless wastes of the sandy desert of Cobi.

The portion of Marco Polo's

itinerary wherein he describes the approach to the lofty table-land of Asia, from Badakhshan up the valley of the Oxus, and the sight which met him when, like Wood nearly six centuries afterwards, he emerged upon the Great Pamir, is as follows—in his own words, but abridged:—

"In leaving Badashan, you ride twelve days between east and north-east, ascending a river that runs through a land containing a good many towns and villages and scattered habitations. And when you leave this little country, and ride three days north-east, always among the mountains, you get to such a height that it is said to be the highest place in the world! And when you have got to this height, you find a great lake between two [ridges of] mountains, and out of it a fine river running through a plain. The plain is called Pamier, and you ride across it south to north for twelve days together, finding nothing but a desert without habitations or any green thing; so that travellers are obliged to carry with them whatever they have need of. The region is so lofty and cold that you do not even see any birds flying. And I must notice also that, because of this great cold, fire does not burn so brightly, nor give out so much heat as usual, nor does it cook food so effectually."

Let an Alpine climber, or a tourist standing for his brief hour on the summit of Mont Blanc, look around upon the expanse of mountain-peaks and deep valleys, and fancy it all levelled up to his own altitude,—a comparatively level expanse far as the eye can reach, but with round-topped hills (unlike the jagged peaks of the Alps) of a few hundred feet in height projecting above this mountain-plain, with small lakes in the hollows among the hills. Such would be a resemblance to the Pamir plateau where Wood saw it; except that in one quarter the horizon was girdled by a lofty range of mountains, whose

summits rose between three and four thousand feet higher than Mont Blanc. And when Wood beheld it, this vast and unique mountain-plain was entirely covered with snow, and the Sir-i-kol lake frozen deep with ice.

Wood saw only the south-western extremity of the great plateau; but not the least remarkable feature of the region is its vast extent. From Lake Sir-i-kol it extends northwards for wellnigh 200 miles, where the plateau joins nearly at right angles the lofty Alai chain, along whose northern base flows the Jaxartes. The breadth of the Pamir plateau is variously reckoned from 20 miles by Hwen Thsang, who apparently speaks of one particular valley-route, to 100 by Colonel Yule, who computes the general breadth of the mountain-mass. Marco Polo, for some unexplained and unaccountable reason, except it were the spirit of adventure, did not content himself with crossing this mountain-mass, but proceeded across its entire length, descending into the eastern plains at Kashgar and thence returning south to Yarkand. After speaking of Lake Sir-i-kol, the source of the Oxus, the Venetian says: "Now, if we go on with our journey towards the east-north-east, we travel a good forty days, continually passing over mountains and hills, or through valleys, and crossing many rivers and tracts of wilderness. And in all this way you find neither habitation of man or any green thing, but must carry with you whatever you require. The country is called Bolor." Hwen Thsang said: "The whole tract is but a dreary waste without a trace of human habitation." Benedict Goës, who crossed the Pamir steppe late in the autumn of 1603, speaks of the great cold and desolation, and difficulty of breathing. In recent times (1861),

Abdul Medjid, an agent of our Indian Government, who passed the Pamir on his way to Kokan, in the valley of the Jaxartes, says: "Fourteen weary days were occupied in crossing the steppe: the marches were long, depending on uncertain supplies of grass and water, which sometimes wholly failed. Food for man and beast had to be carried by the party, for not a trace of human habitation is to be met with in these inhospitable wilds. The steppe is interspersed with tamarisk jungle and the wild willow, and in summer with tracts of high grass."

The loftiest part of the plateau is believed to be at its southern extremity where Lieutenant Wood saw it, 15,600 feet above the sea; and it declines to about 10,000 feet at its northern end. From its western front, several lofty ranges run south-westwards for two or three hundred miles, till they strike the course of the Oxus below Ishkashm, where the river makes its north-easterly circuit round Badakhshan,—with as many large rivers flowing down the narrow intervening valleys, draining the great snowy mass of the plateau. Colonel Yule says: "The core of the mountain-mass of Pamir forms a great elevated plateau, at least 180 miles north and south, and about 100 east and west. The greater part of this plateau appears to consist of stretches of tolerably level steppe, broken and divided by low rounded hills,—much of it covered with saline exudations, but interspersed with patches of willow and thorny shrubs, and in summer with extensive tracts of grass." Many lakes are scattered over the surface of the plateau, from which rivers flow—the many streams, as Marco Polo says, which have to be crossed when traversing the steppe from south to north. As might be ex-

pected from the great breadth of the plateau, there is no sharp ridge dividing the drainage or water-flow; some of the eastern rivers, which flow down to the plains of Kashgar and Yarkand, apparently rising far back on the western side of the steppe; while some of the western rivers, tributaries of the Oxus, appear to run in valleys overlapping the others, and having their source near the eastern edge of the plateau. As already said, the eastern side of the plateau appears to be higher than the western, and some of the peaks in that quarter, according to Hayward, rise to a height of 20,000 or 21,000 feet above the sea. In its northern part, the great steppe is crossed from east to west by a belt of mountains, traversed by the Kizil Yart Pass, which leads to the *dersht* or steppe of Alai, bounded on the north by the Alai range, whose northern front drains into the Jaxartes river. This small northern portion of the great plateau is only about twenty miles from north to south, but forty from east to west; and it is drained westwards by the Surk-ab ("Red River"), which is the greatest tributary of the Oxus, and, except one, the last of the large rivers which join the Oxus from the north.

Across this mountain-land of Pamir, lofty and desolate as it is, lay the earliest route between Western Asia and early-civilised China. In the reign of the Emperor Justinian an embassy was sent from Byzantium to the country from which silk came; but when they reached the Bolor mountains, and the Roof of the World frowned before them, the Byzantines lost heart and turned back; and so China remained unvisited by Europeans for other eight centuries. But, for generations before Justinian, commercial enterprise had established a route to Eastern Asia

across this formidable barrier of mountains. Ptolemy the geographer speaks of the "Serice caravan," of which the Yarkand caravan of the present day is doubtless a relic. The Serice caravan, says Ptolemy, started from Hyrcania, at the south-western corner of the Caspian Sea, and "then the route runs through Aria [the Herat territory] to Margiana Antiochia [Merv]. Thence the route proceeds eastward to Bactra [Balk], and from that [crossing to the right bank of the Oxus, where there was a stone bridge in the days of the Emperor Humayoon], northward up the ascent of the hill-country of the Comedæ; and then, inclining somewhat south through the hill-country as far as the gorge [probably about the Ruby Mines], in which the plain [along the bank of the river] terminates; and then for a distance of about 150 miles, extending to the Stone Tower, the route would seem to tend northwards [as the valley of the Oxus does above Ish-kashm]. The Stone Tower stands in the way of those who ascend the gorge; and from it the mountains extend eastwards to join the chain of Imaus [the Roof of the World], which runs north to this point from the territory of Palimbothra" [or India].

From this statement it is plain that the ancient Serice caravan crossed the Pamir by following either the eastern or western "fork" of the Upper Oxus—either by the glen of the Sirhad river, or by Wood's Oxus, up the defile to Lake Sir-i-kol. The geographical position of the Stone Tower mentioned by Ptolemy has given rise to much discussion among geographers. Apparently, it was a fort guarding the defile leading down from the Pamir, and through which invaders or marauding bands would come from the mountains or from the country to the east, about Yar-

kand and Kashgar. Such a fort might be placed almost anywhere in the valley of the Oxus as far down as the Ruby Mines, if not lower still, — for in Darwaz and Roshan (the provinces on the right bank of the Oxus below Ish-kashm), the long and lofty parallel chains of which we have spoken as sloping south-westwards from the Pamir, come down abruptly upon the Oxus. And it is curious to observe that when the Turkish tribes began to descend into Western Asia, a fort was actually built in this quarter to check their irruptions. "In 793," says Yule, "Fadhil Ibn Yahya, the Barmecide, was invested with the government of all the countries from Kerman to the *frontier of the Turks*; and he caused a barrier with two castles to be erected in a defile beyond Khotl, by which the Turkish marauders used to come down in their forays. The memory of this barrier, which was known to the Arabs as *El Bab*, or 'the Gate,' is believed to survive in the name of the State of Darwaz (Gate), which still exists on the Panja, or Upper Oxus." This castellated barrier erected "beyond Khotl" must have stood on the banks of the Oxus within some 80 or 100 miles below Ish-kashm—in which district, as already said, several lofty mountain-chains from the Pamir come down abruptly upon the river's bed, as at the Ruby Mines. The Stone Tower of Ptolemy, however, lay much further up the river, at "the gorge" leading up to the Pamir steppe; and it seems to me that Hissar, where the two forks of the Upper Oxus unite, and from whence one gorge leads up to Sir-i-kol and the Great Pamir, and the other to the Little Pamir, very aptly corresponds with the position assigned to the "Stone Tower" of Ptolemy. Moreover, Hissar means "the

Fort," just as Darwaz means "the Gate;" and the rude fort which still exists at that place may actually have existed there since the early times of the Seric caravan.

Nowhere in the world is there a more mountainous and inaccessible region than that of the Upper Oxus and its tributaries; and it is just in such localities that one finds the remains of the old population. The various travellers who have recently penetrated here and there into this mountainous region—comprising the provinces of Karategin, Roshan, Shaghnan, and Wakhan—agree in stating that the settled but thin and scattered population belongs to the Iranian (Persian) branch of the Aryan or Indo-European race. The people, called Tajiks, are descendants of the early Persians: the poor rude denizens of Wakhan and adjoining districts belong to the once mighty nation which established the empire of Cyrus and Darius. In Badakhshan also the bulk of the people are Tajiks. Among this upland section of the Tajiks there are relics of the old Zoroastrian fire-worship. In Wakhan, between Ish-kashm and Hissar, Wood saw the ruins of three "Kaffir" forts, which the natives believe to have been erected by the Gebirs or fire-worshippers: and I have no doubt the natives are right, for only a year ago the correspondent of the 'Daily News' found a fire-temple not wholly abandoned on the shores of the Caspian. Moreover, Wood mentions the reluctance with which a Badakhshi blows out a light. In like manner, he says, "A Wakhani considers it bad luck to blow out a light by the breath, and will rather wave his hand for *several minutes* under the flame of his pine-slip than resort to the sure but to him disagreeable alternative" of blowing it out.

The Tajiks, says Wood, are a

handsome race of the Caucasian stock, differing widely from the Turkish or Mongolian, Uzbeks and Kirghiz, who, from the sixth century onwards have been flooding Western Asia. The Tajiks are to be found both to the north and south of the Hindu Kush. According to Wood and others, the Kaffirs of the valleys to the north of the Cabul river, leading up to the lofty Chitral and Baroghil Passes of the Hindu Kush, belong to the Tajik race; and they are certainly the wildest and most barbarous branch of it. Living in snowy and inaccessible valleys, it may be doubted whether they were ever brought under the influence of the Zoroastrian creed, or any other. They fiercely repel Mohammedanism, and do not appear to have any settled religion: hence the name "Kaffirs," or unbelievers, applied to them by their neighbours, the Mohammedan population both of Affghanistan and of Badakhshan. About the time of our first invasion of Affghanistan, when a British officer (I think Captain Conolly) was at Jellalabad, he was surprised one day by his attendants rushing into his tent, in a state of great excitement, and exclaiming, "Here are your countrymen coming!" It was a party of Kaffirs. But the officer apparently had little taste for ethnology, and he got rid of his wild-looking "countrymen" as quickly as possible.

The highlanders from the Upper Oxus—the Bactrians and Sacæ—formed the hardiest and most daring regiments in the armies of Darius and Xerxes; and the Sacæ led the van in the attack upon the Greeks at Thermopylæ. They must either have been Turkish or Iranian, but there is no reason to believe that they were different in race from the Persian host among whom they were enrolled. Rawlinson, in

his 'Herodotus,' places the country of the Sacæ at the head of the Oxus, on the Pamir, if not also beyond the mountains, in the plains of Yarkand. The empire of Darius appears to have extended beyond the Roof of the World; and undoubtedly in those times the entire population between Oxus and Jaxartes was Iranian—as in the main it still is to this day eastward of the longitude of Balk, except on the Pamir itself.

Widely different is the Kirghiz race, which now form the thin and roving population of the Pamir mountains, and one of whose tribes Wood found wintering for the first time in the valley of Wakhan. They are evidently of the same race as the Uzbeks, who have long been settled in Kunduz and on the plains around the lower course of the Oxus. The difference between a temperate and a rigorous climate on the *physique* is observable in the well-proportioned frame of the Uzbek, and the stunted growth of the Kirghiz of Pamir. "More weather-beaten faces," says Wood, "I have never seen; they had, however, the hue of health. Their small sunken eyes were just visible from beneath fur caps, while the folds of a snug woollen *comforter* concealed their paucity of beard. The clothing of most of them consisted of a sheep's skin, with the wool inside." They liked tobacco, but were absolutely voracious of snuff—eating, not snuffing it. When Wood presented his box to the chief of the tribe, the Kirghiz quietly emptied half of its contents into the palm of his hand, then, opening his mouth, and holding his head back, at two gulps he swallowed the whole. Wood pronounced the young women (very unlike the men) pretty. "All have the glow of health in their cheeks; and though they have the

harsh features of their race, there is a softness about their lineaments, a coyness and maidenly reserve in their demeanour, that contrasts most agreeably with the uncouth figures and harsh manners of the men." Colonel Burnaby, in his 'Ride to Khiva,' mentions a charming Kirghiz girl who greatly took his fancy until he saw the cool way, or rather the lively relish, with which the fair damsel cut the throat of a fat sheep which he had presented to her family for a banquet!

To the denizens of this land of snow the yak, or *kash-gow*, is as invaluable as the reindeer to the Laplander; or, in another way, as the camel to the Arab. Its milk is richer than that of the cow; and its hair is woven into clothes and other fabrics. Where a man can walk, a yak can be ridden. It is remarkably sure-footed: like the elephant, it has a wonderful sagacity in knowing what will bear its weight, and in avoiding hidden depths and chasms; and when a pass or gorge becomes blocked by snow (provided it be not frozen), a score of yaks driven in front will make a highway. This strange creature frequents the mountain-slopes and their level summits; it needs no tending, and finds its food at all seasons. If the snow on the heights lie too deep for him to find the herbage, he rolls himself down the slopes, and eats his way up again, displacing the snow as he ascends. When arrived at the top, he performs a second somersault down the slope, and displaces a second groove of snow as he eats his way to the top again. The yak cannot bear a temperature above freezing; and in summer it leaves the haunts of men and ascends far up the mountains to the "old ice," above the limit of perpetual snow, its calf being retained below as a

pledge for the mother's return, in which she never fails. It was on the summit of the Pass of Ish-kashm that Wood first met this strange animal; and he sent one down to a friend at Kunduz: but although Badakhshan was then in winter, the poor yak died long before it reached the plains.

The Roof of the World is not a place for the census-takers, but it is computed—a mere guess—that the several tribes who inhabit or frequent these mountain-solititudes number about a thousand families, chiefly on the Little Pamir, around Lake Rangkul. In the summer the women, as in the pastoral districts of the Alps, encamp in the higher valleys, and devote their whole time to the dairy, the men remaining below, but paying flying visits to the upper stations. "All speak in rapture of these summer wanderings." Doubtless the temporary separation of the sexes imparts a zest to these occasions; but it is wonderful the change which summer makes even upon that lofty mountain-land. Even around Lake Sir-i-kol, the loftiest part of the plateau, as high as the summit of Mont Blanc, no sooner does the summer sun melt the snows in the valley than the most succulent verdure covers the soil. The grass grows nearly a yard high, of the richest quality; and every traveller, from Marco Polo down to Faiz Bakhsh, repeats the fact that the leanest horse becomes fat in a fortnight's time upon that verdurous upland. The *kirgahs*, or tents of the Kirghiz, are strongly built and very comfortable—about fourteen feet in diameter and eight feet in height; the fire blazes in the centre, with a good outlet at the top; and a suspended mat secludes the dressing-place of the women. While the females tend the flocks—sheep,

yaks, and camels—there is ample scope for the hunters. Lake Sirikol is a favourite summer resort of these rovers of the plateau. No sooner does the sun melt the snows on the little plain than the banks of the lake are studded with their tents, while the waters of the lake are frequented by abundant flocks of wild-fowl. The tenantless air, as Marco Polo and Wood saw it in winter, becomes noisy with the flight of birds. The spoils of the chase not only add to the small supply of human food, but comprise skins and fleeces alike of domestic and commercial value. The most remarkable animal of the plateau is the great sheep of Pamir, (for it is found nowhere else in the world) the *Ovis Poli*, with its enormous horns. Here and there on the plateau the yak is seen in a wild state, in small herds far up on the snowy slopes of the mountains. Whether wild or domesticated, the yak is gregarious, and is able to beat off the hungry wolves. There is also a kind of goat, called *rang*, having a valuable fleece, and from which several of the lakes which dot the plateau take their names—Rang-kul, or “Goat Lake.” Strange to say, deer (of some kind) abound; foxes and wolves frequent the plateau, and bears and tigers are occasionally met with.

A remarkable but highly comfortable change on the face of the earth is the great circumscription which has occurred in the domain of the wild beasts, especially of the man-slaying kind. What hard times the “prehistoric” peoples must have had, in regions of dense forest, where savage man was a feeble intruder, and the *feræ* were the lords dominant! The matter-of-fact annals of the Chinese record that their ancestors at first were so ignorant and helpless that they

made their dwellings in trees to escape from the wild beasts,—just as do the Veddahs of Ceylon at the present day, and also some of the rude tribes of Borneo. Even in historic times, according to Virgil, the lion was a native of Italy; and the Nemæan lion was doubtless the last of his race in Greece. In less remote times the “king of beasts” abounded in the valley of Jordan, and also on the plains of Mesopotamia, affording royal sport to the bold and hardy monarchs of Nineveh, who tracked the lion to his lair—sometimes attacking him single-handed and on foot—as coolly and frequently as the Czar or the gallant old Emperor of Germany go a-boar-hunting, shooting the brute from their ambush. So late as the fourteenth century, lions abounded on the Oxus; and it is recorded that a great review of his army, held by Ghengis Khan, on the banks of that river (somewhere about Balk) was interrupted by a party of lions that broke into the camp. Now, the lion has entirely disappeared from the valley of the Oxus, and the whole western part of Central Asia. The Pamir knows him not; and although the Russian officers have heard of his being seen about Lake Issyk-kol (the White or Frozen Lake), close to the frontier of Siberia, it seems that even the vast mountain-chains of Central Asia have ceased to be the habitat of the royal beast.

“Habit is a second nature;” and when habit has operated for several generations, it is marvellous what it enables human nature to bear. So, the Kirghiz tribes can roam with impunity, and in summer with pleasure, over the inhospitable Roof of the World. Even a Venetian gentleman can journey over it for forty days without a single word as to his own hardships, and merely with a few sentences descriptive of

the aspect of the region. But it hardly needs the uncomplaining words of Lieutenant Wood to realise the perils of journeying at such an altitude. "The danger," he says, "which is increased by [the necessity for] sleeping literally amongst the snow, in the middle of winter, did not occur to me at the time. We were most fortunate in having done so with impunity. Our escape is, under Providence, to be attributed to the oceans of tea we drank, . . . which kept off the drowsiness which cold engenders, ending in death. . . . The kettle was never off the fire when we encamped; indeed, throughout the whole of our wanderings the Munshi and myself lived almost entirely upon it. We used the decoction, not infusion, and always brewed it strong. Another preventative was the firing we constantly kept up, and the precaution of sleeping with our feet towards it." Wood was only a week on the Pamir,—namely, in ascending and returning from Hissar, where the Sir-i-kol defile begins,—and yet the greater part of his small party had to be sent back before reaching the summit of the plateau.

Such, then, is the Bam-i-duniah, the "Roof of the World." At present the interest which attaches to that remarkable region is even more military and political than geographical. Russia now holds all the country north of the Alai-Tau chain, the southern watershed of the Upper Jaxartes; and Russian "scientific expeditions" have been out on the Pamir, and exploring the quadrangular mountain-region lying between their own frontier and the Upper Oxus and Hindu Kush. West of the Pamir plateau

for about 200 miles, the country is intersected by a series of mountain-chains coming down from the plateau unbroken till they reach the Oxus,—a region wellnigh impervious and uncrossable, either from north or south. But the Pamir plateau is like a lofty mound, a mountain-bridge, whose comparatively level summit connects the Terek and other eastern passes of the Alai chain with the Darkot and Baroghil passes of the Hindu Kush,—leading down the Chitral valley to Jellalabad, or by the Gilgit, across the Indus, to Cashmere. No army will ever cross this mountain-bridge; Asiatic armies, or rather single *corps d'armée*, have crossed the Pamir from east to west, but no army can traverse the 200 miles from north to south. No doubt a column might do so, even with light artillery, and might steal across it secretly, arriving suddenly at the crest of the Hindu Kush. If Stolietoff's mission could come from Samarcand to Bameean, entering Affghanistan before we had tidings of its starting, one of Kauffman's columns might still more secretly traverse the solitudes of the Pamir. Hence, when war lately threatened in Europe, our Indian Government ordered the Maharajah of Cashmere to occupy the Baroghil Pass with his troops,—albeit we never heard that this had been done. But even had they arrived at Baroghil, the Muscovites would have been little more than half-way to India. "It's a far cry to Lochawe!" Anyhow, we have described the geographical features of the Pamir, and readers who have military tastes may be left to draw their own conclusions.

LOIS: A SKETCH.

CHAPTER I.

"Eyes so tristful."

FIVE o'clock on a chill October evening; the wind coming in gusts, with a dreary, wailing sound in the pauses between, that tell of a coming storm. Every gust detaches fresh leaves from the avenue of chestnuts, that all the summer has formed the glorious approach to Anderton House. But now the ground is thickly carpeted with their golden-brown treasures, and beneath their overarching boughs paces, with slow steps, the figure of a girl.

Twice, notwithstanding the chill dampness, the rising wind, and rapidly increasing twilight, she walks up and down the avenue, with bent head and clasped hands; then, with a long sigh, she opens the gate that leads into a trim garden, and from thence to a wide stone terrace, and pausing there, prepares to let herself in through a French window into a cheerful, fire-lit room. The key is turned reluctantly, almost as if the warm interior were not a temptation to her; and with a lingering look behind her, she hesitated, her foot on the threshold, as if half contemplating another walk, and even as she stood thus, a man's low voice fell upon her ear,—a tall man's figure stood beside her.

"Lois."

"You here!" she said, with a start, bringing her eyes back from the far-away darkening sky, and her voice trembling a little as she spoke.

"I have come to see you," the voice replied; "there is no harm in that, is there? I saw you in the avenue, and followed you through

the garden almost involuntarily; at any rate, without thinking it might be a liberty. But you must forgive me, as I am here, and let me in this way."

In perfect silence they entered the room, and moved into the circle of firelight, and in its flickering light you can see them well.

A young man, and a younger woman. He, a big broad-shouldered man, dark-haired, dark-eyed, with a short brown beard with gleams of gold about it, that shone in the firelight; she, a tall slender girl with a white face, out of which two dark-grey eyes looked,—grey eyes that at another time might have attracted by their beauty, but to-night were only rendered remarkable by their passionate despair, and the black rings surrounding them.

It was the girl who at length broke the silence. Taking off her hat with slim white hands that trembled in the firelight, and pushing back the wavy-brown hair from a low forehead, she turned towards her companion questioningly, but as no answer came to the unspoken words, she steadied her trembling voice, and said slowly, as if it were a lesson learnt by heart, "My uncle is not in."

For a minute the man made no reply. He was standing with his back to the fireplace, watching her with an intentness that might have made her nervous; but there are moments when all the little things that at another time might abash us are forgotten, or overlooked in the immensity of the present moment. So it seemed was the case

now. Under those searching eyes, those of Lois did not fall; her clasped hands no longer trembled: she stood quite still indeed, but as if under the power of a mesmerist.—"So the upshot of it all is, that you are going to marry Sydney Dering?" That was how he broke the silence at length. At his words, thought and life seemed to return to the grey eyes, and the girl started, as if awaking from an actual dream. She lifted her hand—a hand on which flashed and sparkled in the fireglow a great diamond—and pushed the hair off her forehead.

"Yes," she made answer then, in a low, very clear voice; "to-morrow is my wedding-day."

There might have been interpreted a tinge of warning or of reproof in the tones of her voice.

"Why?"

She hesitated a moment, and then, with sudden passion, that was sad to hear in so young a voice, "Do you forget that when last——" And then changing her sentence—"that you promised you would never come back?"

"I remember, and I admit that I have broken my promise. Scold as much as you like, do what you like, but," with a sudden break in his voice, "for Heaven's sake, don't look at me like that!"

"I am sorry," she said, gently; but whether the apology was for her looks or her words, it were difficult to say. "I would like you to go, Mr Moreton,—I am tired—very tired. And—I am happier alone."

"Frank, at any rate; but I am not going yet. Hitherto you have had it all *your* way, but it shall be no longer so; now you must listen to me. I have tried to live without you,—I cannot; so I have come to take you away. On my honour," as she would have interrupted him,

"I would have tried to bear it, I would have left it all alone, if you had been happy, but you are not. Why, good Heavens!" with sudden impetuosity, "I should scarcely have known you if I had met you in the street! Ah, child! what did you do it for?"

"It was right *then*; it is more than ever right now," she replied, in a low voice that struggled to appear calm. "She loved you, and you were engaged to her, and besides——"

"They told you about the money, did they? And how I should have nothing if I married you, and riches with her. Oh, I've no doubt you heard all the particulars before you made up your mind! No man living is worth poverty to a woman. Well, you have got what you wanted then,—Dering is rich enough in all conscience, and——"

He paused; but whether from lack of words, or in compunction at the agonised face raised to his, it would be hard to say.

"Ah, don't—don't!" she cried, clasping her hands together, "if you do not in truth wish to drive me mad! Have some pity on me. Everything and everybody is cruel and hard; and the right has grown so dim, that I scarcely can tell it from the wrong! Tell me," stretching out two slender hands, "what am I to do?"

"To do?" he repeated, moving a step nearer. "You are to come with me—away—*now*; do you understand? I have friends, with whom you can stay to-night; and to-morrow, before the world shall have discovered your absence, you will have become my wife."

She looked up half bewildered, as if scarcely comprehending his words. And then, as if to break the silence, and so remove the spell: "No, no," she said, hastily, moving

back a step as she spoke; "no, no; not that,—that is all over. You must not tempt me—it is not kind. Only you must never say those cruel things again. I can bear all the rest. Have I not been learning to bear it these three months? You must have pity now."

She spoke so low that Robert Moreton had to lean down to hear what she was saying. Even his doubts were hushed to rest looking at the white, hollow cheeks, and dark-rimmed eyes.

"I cannot go," pacing up and down the room; "it is useless to tell me to do so. You love me—it is unnecessary for you to deny it; and I love you—how much, you will never guess or know."

At his words a slight tinge of colour passed over her cheeks.

"Hush, please," she interposed, pleadingly.

"It is madness, therefore, for us to part," he went on, unheeding her interruption. "Come."

He paused in his walk, and held out his arms as he spoke.

"No, no!" she cried, shrinking away; "your words are an insult—to her—and to me!"

"I think, Lois," he cried, "you are the coldest, cruellest woman I ever met! Love! Why, the very meaning of the word is incomprehensible to you. Marry whom you will," an angry flush dyeing his cheeks; "it is nothing to me." And then, with a sudden change of tone—"My darling, forgive me; I am mad, I think. Do not mind my words,—do not listen to them, except when I tell you to come away with me; for, you see it yourself, we could not live apart."

They were standing close together upon the hearth-rug now, he towering above her; his dark, passionate eyes fixed on hers, awaiting, almost breathlessly, her reply.

"Mr Moreton," she said, and

her voice trembled so, that she made a fresh beginning. "Mr Moreton, an hour ago Sydney Der- ington was standing where you are now, saying 'Good-bye,' and I——" She hesitated a second, but then went on quite firmly, though still in that low, careful voice, not taking her eyes off his face, or shrinking away from him as she had done at first—"and I kissed him for the last time before I stand at the altar as his wife. Tell me, what would you think of a woman who deceived him now?—for," her voice falling once more, "he loves me."

"And you think that I do not?"

"No, no," quickly; "but you see it is different. To marry you would be wrong; to marry him——"

"Would not be right," he interrupted; "don't think it."

"I cannot tell," she sighed, wearily. "He loves me, and," more eagerly, "I do like him, and my uncle wishes it; and—oh, tell me what to do!" with a momentary imploring cry.

"If you would listen to me, you would come with me before it is too late, and leave him to make the best of it. Have you pretended to him that you love him also?"

The colour flitted over her pale cheeks.

"He knows," she said, shortly.

"And you have made up your mind? For the last time, I tell you, sacrifice everything, child,—the opinion of the world, the money, though I honestly believe that does not count with you,—and come with me, and let my love nurse you back into health."

The dark eyes were bent upon hers, saying "Come" as plainly as the passionate words; but Lois did not falter.

"I cannot!" she cried. "You must not tempt me, for I will not go back from my word now; it is

too late. Enough misery has been ; I will do now what I believe to be right. You know," imploringly, "whatever you may say, that I am striving to do right."

He moved back a step as the low, sorrow-laden voice fell on his ear, and then held out his hand in silence.

Instead of taking it, she shrank back from it. "I could not," she said ; "I am a weak coward, and you—you are a man, and ought to be stronger, braver ; then, of your pity, go. So weak am I, that if I had my hand in yours, and you said 'Come,' I could not, I believe, say 'No.' Then be merciful, and go ; and if you can, do not despise me !"

In perfect silence Robert Moreton walked over to the glass door which still stood half open, but, having reached it, he turned back once more to Lois's side, and looked at her a moment without speaking, and then—"I believe," he said, "you will be happy yet. You are a good woman ; you are trying to do what is right, so it will come right. You have called out all there is of good in me, to-night, or I should not be saying this. By-and-by," with a break in his voice, "you will love your husband—good women always do—and then the past will seem a dream."

"I am going to try," she said, softly. "You will never know, Robert, how thankful I am that your last words were kind !"

"Good-bye," he faltered.

"Good-bye," she said tenderly, quietly, as one might whisper it in an actual dream ; and the little glass door closed, and Lois Grey was left alone to contemplate her future.

What story is it the wind tells as it sobs and wails about a house ? Surely a woful story, it finds such a ready echo in our hearts. Later

on, Lois Grey, listening to it, feels slow, painful tears rise to her eyes—tears she will not allow to fall.

"No," she says, determinedly, rising as she feels them gather, and brushing them away, "I will not even cry ! It is sad—most sad ; but I will waste no time in tears ; I will save all my strength to make a better thing of the future."

And while she is praying for guidance, and power to do right, and forgiveness for past errors, we will take a glimpse into another apartment, where another girl is wrestling with fate to-night.

A very different girl this, to the one we have just left, with the sad grey eyes ;—a girl in the first flush of beautiful young womanhood. Brilliant in colouring ;—a tall, regal figure, bright golden-brown hair, and large blue eyes, —certainly a woman likely to gain her full share of admiration. And yet—

On her knee lies an open letter, signed "Robert Moreton," which tells of a love that, if it once was hers, has grown cold now ; and it is over this letter that the gold head is bent ; at its words the blue eyes are sparkling, the low brows drawn together in sullen anger. "Throw me over,—that is it in plain English," lifting her head scornfully ; "and it is *her* doing,—I know it well. But I will not let him go,—he *shall* love me." And as she spoke she rose, and, drawing up her figure to its full height, stood gazing at herself in the glass.

"Yes, once married, he must love me. She would never have a chance against me. What is it," she cried, after a moment's pause, "that she does ? A white-faced little thing like that ! First Sydney Dering, and now Robert,—she has taken them both away from me !"

And then, with sudden faltering, and burying her face in her

hands, the tears began to flow. But she brushed them angrily away, and drawing pen and ink towards her, sat down to write. "With his love, or without it," she muttered, as her pen travelled over the paper. "Ah, surely I must win it in time; and if not——" A pause. The ill-tempered look that

marred the beauty of the face crept over it again. "If not, there are other things in life but love."

Then there was silence,—a silence as deep as that that had already fallen over Anderton House, save for the moaning of the storm, which was increasing in violence with every passing hour.

CHAPTER II.

"What is my duty?—The demands of the day."

A month, four whole weeks, have passed away since Lois Grey became Lois Dering. The honeymoon is over, and Sydney has brought his wife back to Kolver,—back to his ward, Florence Gainsford, who, with his mother, lives under his roof.

Lois's eyes are less despairing than when we saw them last,—an occasional gleam of sadness, like the strain of sorrow in a German valse, alone is left to tell of the sadness they have seen. But they look out of a white face still—a white face sadly wanting in the curves that are the chief glory of youth; and beside the magnificent beauty of golden-haired Florence Gainsford, Lois's small pretensions to good looks seem very small indeed.

And Florence has a knack of letting her feel that it is so,—a knack of putting her farther and farther into the background,—of asserting her rights as the daughter of the house—a position she has held too long to relinquish without a struggle; so that, in addition to other reasons she may have for standing at arm's-length from her guardian's wife, this by itself is a powerful one.

Her reign, however, is nearly over now. Very soon will come her wedding-day; and after that—— But when Lois gets as far as that she does not follow out the train of

thought,—only gives a great sigh of relief.

In the meantime, day by day, Robert Moreton comes riding over from Dewhurst, in obedience to his lady-love's whims. He sat down once intending to write a letter containing some excuse,—anything that should prevent his going to Kolver; sudden illness even came into his mind as a reason for running away, no matter what should be said of him. But as he sat, pen in hand, he remembered two pleading eyes that had once roused every good thought and feeling he could recall,—a farewell when he had sworn to be a help, and not a hindrance; and of all that might be said of—some one—if he should refuse to go to Kolver, now that the mistress of it was home again;—and he threw the sheet of paper into the fire, and rode over as usual.

It was an ordeal, perhaps; but it was better for her—that was enough for him.

"She shall have every chance of happiness," he said, loyally, as he flung himself off his horse; "and I do not think *he* knows who it was that went nigh to break her heart. Only I wish that *she* had given me back my freedom, though, after all, that was my own fault."

Was Sydney Dering, it may be wondered, aware of the tragedy enacting itself beneath his eyes?

Sometimes his wife wondered faintly if it were so.

He said nothing ; but then he was a silent man, who rarely spoke without distinct occasion. Since that evening two months ago, when Lois Grey had faltered out her confession that the love he offered she had not to return, and he had told her he would wait in patience till she had learned to repay his affection, he had never alluded to the subject. He did not speak of hope or love in present or future,—not even now when the shadow was fading slowly from her eyes, and a more peaceful expression taking its place. He might have been blind, or, perhaps, as Lois sometimes thought—merely careless.

It might have seemed strange to him, and in another man might have called forth some question or remark, how, go where he would, the slender girlish form followed him.

But she said nothing, and he asked no questions, showed neither surprise nor pleasure, perhaps felt neither ; but when a well-known ring came at the door, and a well-known voice was heard in the drawing-room, wherever Sydney Dering might be, if he looked up, he was sure to find his wife by his side.

If he rose up to go out, or to play on the organ, as he sometimes would in the twilight of these winter evenings, the slim black figure seemed by instinct to put down the book it held, and cross the floor. "You are going out? May I come with you?" she would say softly.

And he would reply "Yes," simply, and nothing more would pass between them. Later on the question and answer even grew unnecessary.

When he rose, his work over, and put aside his writing materials, he had only to stretch out his hand to feel the small, slim fingers in

his ; and together they would pass the drawing-room door, whence issued the low murmur of voices ; together they would walk down the long gallery, to where the organ stood ; and whilst Sydney played, and Lois sat crouched on the rug in the firelight listening, there was no need of words.

Once or twice they came across the lovers. Florence, superb in her beauty and her love ; Robert, bending his tall head to listen to her words. Even then, though Lois felt the colour die out of her cheeks in the very fear that possessed her, lest sorrow that she felt she might live down alone, should come to be shared by her husband ;—even then, as she turned in nervous fear towards him, lest he should have observed her white face, she saw, with a sigh of relief, that he was not looking at her—that his eyes were turned towards the outside world, and the gathering snow-clouds, although his hand still rested on hers.

"There will be snow," he said, calmly. "Do you think you will venture out?"

"Yes, *please*," she cried, eagerly ; "I should like a walk!"

"It is not a very good day, and you look so delicate. I do not like you to run any risks."

"I am quite strong, Sydney—when I am with you," she added, with a smile, after a pause. "I would much rather go."

"Then, of course, you shall," he replied, cheerfully. "Two are always better than one. I have had a hard day's work. You shall come and talk to me."

But, after all, they did not talk much,—only wandered about, and looked at the dogs and horses, and speculated about the snowstorm and various other unimportant matters, until down the hard frosty road came the sound of horses' feet.

And then Sydney, looking again at the inclement sky, suggested that the library, with a bright fire, would be a pleasant exchange for this dim, cold atmosphere; and his wife agreeing, they went in.

Does he guess anything, or know anything? she wondered. But the calm, quiet face told nothing; there was no answering reflection from the questioning eyes she involuntarily turned towards him, as the thought passed through her mind, and she gave a quick sigh of relief.

"Come to me when you are tired of the drawing-room and mother's society. Florence has gone over to the Veres' for a week, so you may find it dull; but perhaps I flatter myself when I suggest you may find it less dull here?"

He had his back to her as he spoke, stirring the fire, so he did not see the sudden gleam of relief that seemed to lift years off her,—did not hear the exclamation of thankfulness that crossed her lips; was aware, indeed, of nothing until he felt a soft kiss on the hand that hung down by his side. When he did turn round she was gone, so all explanation of the unusual caress was of necessity impossible.

A week, when it is only a reprieve from something that must come to pass, flies more swiftly than the usual fourth of a month; but, on the other hand, the reprieve in itself helps us, renews our strength, and so enables us to bear better the pain, the anxiety, whatever it may be, when it does come, and so Lois Dering found.

Found Florence Gainsford in her defiant happiness, her proud beauty, less trying than before that week's holiday. Besides, the time was drawing on now; wedding-presents, wedding-dresses were discernible about the house; soon—

ah! very soon now—the shadow thrown by the presence of these lovers would disappear, leaving her, Lois Dering, as she so ardently prayed, unshaded by ill,—or even by faint reminders of the past.

"I will forget it," she said, day by day; "I will remember nothing, think of nothing, but *him!*"

It is the 1st of January, the evening before the wedding, and Lois is seated on a low stool by the fire in a little sitting-room that is rarely used: but every unoccupied corner in the house seems to have been called into requisition; and to be out of the confusion and fuss that is reigning everywhere else, Mrs Dering has taken refuge here.

Her thoughts have wandered away from the book she is still holding in her hand, her head has sunk on the low rail of the fender, and almost unknown to herself, and certainly without any specific cause, the tears have gathered in her eyes.

The quiet opening of the door, however, reminds her of this fact, and she raises her hand quickly to brush them away, but not, it seems, quickly enough, for Robert Moreton's voice breaks the silence,—Robert's voice, earnest and low, and full of pain: "What is it? You are crying. What is the matter?" And then, with a sudden change in his tones, "I beg your pardon, Mrs Dering; I was told Florence was here, and that she wanted to see me directly I arrived."

"I will go and look for her," Lois said, rising from her seat and turning away, ignoring, as he had done, those first words.

"No, no!" he cried; "indeed I would rather not. This is far pleasanter and quieter for you than the drawing-room. I will go back there; sooner or later I shall be sure to find her."

Lois could not find it in her heart to dissuade him, so she sat down again on the footstool from which she had risen, and from there she watched the man's figure as he walked irresolutely away. Something in his attitude, something in the firelit room, and the solitude and the quiet, reminded her in a strange far-off manner, as we recall bygone dreams in a dream, of that other evening when she had chosen her path in life, putting her duty, or what she believed to be such, before her love, and acting on an impulse that the dream caused, she stretched out her hand. "Robert," she said, in her sweet voice—"Robert, you know I wish you well to-morrow."

He turned at the sound of her voice, but he made no reply to her words; only, after a pause: "Are you happy?" he asked. Then they became aware that a third person was present,—that Florence Gainsford was standing close beside them, with drawn brows, watching.

"Robert," she said, slowly, "will you go into the conservatory and wait there a few moments for me? I shall not be long, and I want to talk to you a little alone,—there are so many people in the drawing-room."

"All right; I'll go," he replied, and so departed, and the two women were left alone.

Then Florence, drawing her splendid figure up to its full height, and gazing mercilessly down on the slight girlish form beneath her: "You may look as innocent as you can,—or as you dare, Mrs Dering; but I tell you that you do not deceive me, if you do others, and I am determined that you shall know it. You may try to come between Robert and me, as you came between Robert and Sydney and me——"

"Hush!" cried Lois, rising to her feet, her eyes flashing—"hush!

How dare you say such things? I will not listen to another word."

"You shall hear every word I choose to say. What chance do you think you have against me? I tell you that I loved your husband,—that he would have married me had it not been for your false face. I tell you that I know how you flirted with Robert Moreton, and would have married him if he had had Sydney's fortune. Ah," with a hasty movement, "a child could see through you! No one but an infatuated man could ever have been deceived by such bold scheming. Take care that his love is not as quickly lost as won. But enough,—your past is nothing to me, absolutely nothing, except in so far as it affects my future. And I tell you plainly that I will not,—do not,—forgive anything. You can do me no harm; for if you care to know it, I am marrying him solely because I do not choose that you shall come between me and anything or any one that is mine. Do you understand? But if you value your own peace of mind, you will do well not to interfere between us again."

"Ah, poor Robert!" It was almost more a sigh than an articulate sentence, but Florence heard it.

"It is too late to pity him now," she said, sneeringly; "you should have thought of all that before."

Her words, the tones of her voice, awoke Lois from the apathy that had stolen over her, as she had stood there listening, though only half consciously, to Florence's words. "Oh, Syd, Syd!" she cried, clasping her hands together; "why do you ever leave me alone?"

"I will tell him *my* story, if you prefer it," Florence said, coldly. "I think his opinion of you would not be quite the same if he knew as much as I do."

"Ah, spare *him!*" Lois cried,

wringing her hands; "do not strive to poison his mind against me."

"He is spared,—as you choose to call it,—so long as you do not attempt to come between me and my husband. If you do, trust me, my vengeance is in my own hands, and will be both swift and sure."

She turned and walked slowly away, with a stately movement which it was impossible to imitate, without one word from Lois, who seemed as one struck suddenly dumb.

Miss Gainsford played her part well during the evening,—did and said all that was required of her, even to murmuring a few words of love to Robert Moreton, as he stood by her side in the conservatory.

She was troubled with no uncomfortable sensations at the remembrance of those words spoken to Lois. She did not think she had been untruthful, or even unkind.

From her own point of view she had interpreted Lois's conduct, and it was, as she herself said, *from that point of view*, only too easy to be seen through; but then it is always difficult, often impossible, for a lower nature to judge a higher, from the mere fact that many deeds can be interpreted so easily well or ill, according to the power of vision granted to the interpreter. So Florence Gainsford went on her way rejoicing, feeling that she held in her hand a dagger, which might be called upon to do its fatal work at any moment that might be required.

"I have given her a fair warning," she said, in a hard voice, as she stood alone in her room that night. "Next time I shall not warn; I shall strike." And so fell asleep to awake and find that it was her wedding-day.

But whilst she walked slowly away without a backward glance, Lois remained, sitting quite still for a whole hour, with beating pulses and wide-open eyes that

stared into the dying embers of the fire, going over and over again in her mind the details of that terrible interview. "Did I do wrong? Perhaps I should have told him everything before I married; but it would be too cruel now, whatever it might have been then. No; at any cost, it must be borne alone *now*. Why, I would put up with *anything* to save him an hour's pain!" And then covering her face with her hands: "He might not believe me—he might believe her—and think, as *she* says, that it was the money that tempted me. Oh, I could never bear it!" And with a quick movement she rose to her feet, and quitting the now dark room, walked to the door of her husband's study.

"Syd," entering, and speaking quickly with panting breath, and the marks of tears still about her eyes—"Syd, may I sit here with you?" He stretched out his hand and drew her down beside him.

"Do I ever say 'No'?" he asked, gently; but he added nothing more,—made no allusion to the tear-drops on the eyelashes, or the trembling voice—only smoothed the hair back from her aching forehead in silence.

"That feels *safe*," she said, half under her breath once; and he replies gently, "I like to know that you feel safe with me."

After a long pause—"Sydney," Lois asked, "where are they going for their honeymoon? It is very odd," nervously, "but it never struck me to ask before."

"To America. You know Florence's relations are American, so it seems a good opportunity to go out and make acquaintance with them. They will be away six months."

"Six months," repeated Lois, looking up into her husband's face with a little sigh that sounded like relief. "Then when they return

home we shall have been married eight whole months!"

Perhaps Lois's train of thought was not easy to follow out by Lois's husband; perhaps the sigh of relief, and the words by which it was followed, were an enigma to him,

he either could not, or did not care to guess.

At any rate he said nothing, and Lois returned to the watching of the fire; and on her side also the silence after that remained unbroken.

CHAPTER III.

"*Passavant le meilleur*"
— *Old French War-Cry.*

January has given place to June; instead of frost and snow, and bare branches overhead, a midsummer sun is shining strong and bright, and the trees that grow around Kolver are green with the greenness of early summer. There is summer everywhere: in the joyous song of birds, in the many colours of the gay roses that enrich the garden; and within the dark eyes and on the soft cheeks of Lois Dering, it seems to have also found an abiding-place.

She is standing by the open window of her husband's study, looking over the rich lawn to where the roses show beyond; and as she stands there in her clinging white dress, that is unrelieved by any colour, her lips curved into a happy smile, which is reflected in her sweet eyes, it is hard to recognise the girl with great tragic eyes who said "good-bye" to Robert Moreton some eight months ago.

"Lois."

At the sound of her husband's voice she turned her head.

"That," he said, holding out an envelope, "means, I suppose, that they have come home."

The smile faded slowly, entirely away, as she took it; but her husband's eyes were bent upon his letters, which had just arrived, so perhaps he did not observe it. Did not observe how the colour also slowly faded away, and the

shadow crept stealthily back into the sweet eyes.

But she said nothing, only opened the envelope, and drew forth from it a card gaily monogrammed, which requested the presence of Mr and Mrs Dering at a ball to be held a fortnight hence at Siston Manor.

She looked at it a moment, as if she could not comprehend its signification, and then in silence crossing to Sydney's side, laid it down on the table.

He took it up, and whilst reading it, held the hand that had placed it there, imprisoned in his; but he did not glance up at the face above him, only said gently, "I think we shall have to go, Lois, though we are not ball-going people. Unfortunately, even *we*," with a smile, "have to consider the world sometimes!"

Nothing more was said then or afterwards on the subject, and the dreaded day came round in due course, as days have a habit of doing, without respect to our feelings.

But in that intervening fortnight the shadow that had been banished crept back, and took up its abode in Lois's eyes; the pathetic droop returned to the sweet mouth.

Once more Sydney Dering might have observed, had he been an observant man, how, whenever he looked up from his writing, the

slight figure of his wife was seated on a low stool at his feet, or crouched in an easy-chair by his open window, looking abroad with that far-seeing gaze that sees nothing.

Once more, whenever he went abroad, he found a small hand in his, heard a low voice beg to be allowed to go with him.

For, "if," was the unspoken dread deep down in Lois's heart—"if she should come over here, and find me alone again,—or, worse still, if *he* should come!"

And then she would rise from the piano, or her painting, or whatever was the occupation of the moment, and hasten down the passage with quick nervous feet, to that room that she felt represented, as far as she was concerned, safety,—to that one, whom she had never known unwilling, or unready to receive her.

"Besides the feeling of protection, it is a comfort that he is so absent,—that he notices nothing; does not observe when I am restless and unhappy, or when I am quiet and content, which is a rest," with a sigh, "because I need not even think how I am looking, or what I am saying, when I am with him. His mind is in his books; but I," with a quick, proud smile, "have his heart. Ah," clasping her hands together, "if I were to lose it!"

The great hall of Siston was gleaming with lights; men and women talking, flirting, dancing, quarrelling, were passing to and fro. Mrs Moreton, resplendent in amber satin, was the admired of every one. Beauty such as hers could not fail to attract attention. But it did not touch the heart in the way that Lois Dering's did, for all that; and if votes had been taken on the subject, there would have been many given to the tall

slender woman in trailing white satin,—the woman with the small dark head and dreamy eyes, who moved about with her hand on her husband's arm.

"You will give me a dance?" questioned Robert Moreton, almost eagerly,—an older Robert than we saw eight months ago, not precisely a happy-looking bridegroom; and Lois, at his words, shrank closer to her husband's side, and began some faltering excuse.

But Sydney interposed. "You must dance a little," he said, with a smile, "or people will say I am preventing you. And you should begin, for you know we are not going to stay very late. I am lazy," he went on, turning to Robert, "and not a ball-going man, as I daresay you may remember; so my wife is going to be obedient, and, in consideration of the long drive home, she has promised to leave early."

Mr Moreton made no reply, beyond a muttered "Balls were not much in his line either," but offered his arm, which Lois took, and almost before she was aware of what she was doing, she found herself walking down the room with Robert, for the first time able to speak to him without fear of listeners, since that terrible eve of his marriage six months ago.

That time was in both their minds. In his, with the remembrance of that question he had asked, the answer to which in common loyalty he had not pressed. The drooping figure, the firelit room, the weeping woman, all were present before him now, and forbade all attempts on his part at commonplace ball-room conversation.

With her there was but one remembrance,—that of the bitter words she had heard that night, the threat that had so terrified her; and involuntarily she raised her eyes and

glanced round the room in search of the one whom it was her first thought to seek in time of trouble or perplexity. Yes, there he was, standing quite close beside her, though not apparently watching her, and across her troubled heart came a sensation of relief.

And with that sensation of relief she felt capable of thinking of some slight conventional phrase wherewith to break the silence which had hitherto sheltered her; and even as she was about to say it, through all the noise about her, was clearly borne to her ears a strange voice which said, as if in reply to a previous question: "Yes, he was awfully in love with her,—he only married the other for her money."

"And she?"

Something in the significance of the words arrested Lois's attention,—something in the words themselves helped her to a knowledge of whom they were speaking, and with a quick, terrified movement she raised her eyes to her husband's face, even as the voice made answer: "Married Dering for his."

Their eyes met, for he was watching her; and she strove to read in his if he had also heard, but there was no sign if it were so. With a sudden resolve, which blinded her to what others might think or say, "Let me go to him, Mr Moreton," she faltered; and before Robert had realised what she meant, she was by Sydney's side.

"Ah, no, no!" she cried, her words coming out with something like a sob. And then, restraining herself with an effort, and slipping her arm quietly through his: "Sydney," she said, lifting her head proudly, her eyes flashing, and a delicate colour rising in her cheeks—"Sydney, would you mind taking a turn round the room with me? I——"

"It is not very amusing for you," he answered gently, "to go to a ball and then to talk to your husband."

"I should like it," she replied softly, laying her other hand on his arm—"just once, please, round the room."

Slowly they did as she asked,—she with her small head lifted, her dark eyes looking into his, and then the music striking up, told them another dance was beginning, and Lois's partner, coming to claim her: "Thank you, Syd," she said in a low voice, with sudden vehemence as she was about to leave him—"thank you, Syd, so much!" Only Robert Moreton, left partnerless by reason of Lois's sudden flight, perhaps, observed them, but he could not forget the look with which she had left him and turned away with her husband.

"Of course," he muttered, impatiently—"of course she is fond of him. Did I not tell her so it would be?" half defiantly, as if it had been the fact of his telling it that had brought it to pass.

"Moreton has gone, or is going, back to America." The speaker was Mr Dering, the scene his own breakfast-table, the audience his wife and mother, and the time a month later than the Siston ball.

"Back to America!" exclaimed old Mrs Dering; "why, they have only just returned from there."

"Not *they*," corrected Mr Dering. "Moreton is leaving his wife in England."

At those words Lois raised her eyes quickly, as if about to speak, but she said nothing, and her husband went on: "She—Florence—is going up to Scotland for a month or two, so I asked her if she would care to come here for a few days first."

"When?"

Lois was all eagerness now.

"On Monday next; but she will not stay long—only a day or two. She said she would like to see you, mother."

"Ah, Sydney, then you will not be here!"

"No, Lois; I cannot help it. I must go to London as I arranged on Saturday; but I shall only stay as short a time as possible. London is not very tempting at this time of year."

"No," said Lois, kneeling by his side, and speaking more earnestly than the occasion seemed to warrant, "you must not say that. You must not want to come home because London is dull, but because I am here."

"Of course," he answered, throwing his arms about her, and raising her to her feet. "Of course you know how I shall weary till I see you. The question is rather—No, no," interrupting himself, "we will not ask any questions, but just enjoy the time that is left to us. Let us go to the organ; I have something I should like you to hear."

"Good-bye, dear wife." Mr Dering was just starting for London, and Lois was hovering about him, saying and hearing last words, and for once Sydney seemed to have emerged out of his ordinary quiet self, and to be more disturbed than there seemed occasion for. "I wish you were coming with me. We have never been separated yet since we were married, have we? Take great care of yourself,—and do not fret or worry about anything. Will you promise?"

"Yes."

"And if you should really want me, you will send for me at once, will you not—to Gresham Place?"

"Yes. Ah, Syd," with sudden passion, "how good you are to me!

You will be always kind to me?" imploringly.

"You are my wife, Lois," he said gently, drawing her towards him; "my dear wife. Good-bye, and God bless you."

He had kissed her and gone, but ere reaching the door he came once more to her side.

"Lois," stooping his head, and speaking very low, but more passionately than she had ever heard him speak before, "would you say, 'Dear Syd, I love you'?"

All in a second the colour died slowly away out of Lois's face. A mingling of utter surprise and many other feelings kept her silent, and in that second's space the glow faded out of Mr Dering's face, leaving just the kind, gentle look she knew so well.

"Of course," she half stammered; but Sydney's voice cut her sentence in two.

"What nonsense I am talking!" he said. "Words are but very unsatisfactory things,—deeds are much better;" and before the colour had returned to her cheeks, he was gone.

"Oh, Syd, Syd!" she cried, when she had realised this fact, sinking down on a chair and covering her face with her hands,—“why did I not say it? Oh, dear Syd, the very first thing that you have ever asked me to do!”

She wept inconsolably for some time; and then remembering that after all he was only going for a week, she dried her tears, with a resolve that the very first thing when he returned—“Ah, yes,” she said softly to herself, “we shall see then.”

But in the meantime Florence Moreton's visit had to take place.

She arrived on the Monday, as she had said—harder, colder, more unloving than ever, at least in Lois's eyes; but then, perhaps, she

was hardly a fair judge of Robert Moreton's wife.

The day was got through somehow, Mrs Moreton showing most clearly that her visit was paid to Mr Dering's mother, not to his wife.

But Lois bore with everything. "It will not last long," she thought. "Four more days and *he* will come home,—two more days and she will go;" for this was Tuesday, and on the following Thursday Mrs Moreton had announced that it was her intention to depart.

"Where is Mr Dering staying in town?" she asked at dinner on Wednesday night; and his mother replied, "At 4 Gresham Place." "I shall go and pay him a visit whilst I am in London," she went on. "I daresay I shall find him in, and I particularly want to see him before I go to Scotland."

As she spoke, she looked full into Lois's eyes, with calm, insolent triumph.

"He will be glad to see you, Florence," said old Mrs Dering. "He is very fond of you," with a little smile at the unsmiling beauty by her side.

"Other people," she said, with a little stress on the words, "have rather put me out of his good graces, I fear."

"Impossible."

"So I should have thought," she replied shortly; and there the conversation ended,—all conversation as far as Lois was concerned. Her thoughts came faster and faster. If she could only get a moment alone to collect them in!

At length the dinner was over, and she was at liberty to retire to her own room, and think over what was coming.

"Oh, what is she going to do?" she cried, pressing her hands together. And after a moment: "If she tells him what she told me, what will he think? Ah, he will

believe her—I know he will. He is so unobservant,—sees so little of what is going on about him that the doubt will find a place in his heart. And," with sudden passion, "he will remember how I said 'Good-bye' to him,—how I would not say I loved him when he asked me,—and he will never know that — Ah," breaking off suddenly, "I could not bear it! It would kill me."

But rising to her feet, and with an effort calming herself, "I must see her. She shall be forced to say what she is going to do."

With hasty steps she traversed the passages that lay betwixt her room and Mrs Moreton's, and knocking at the door, was bidden to enter.

Florence looked surprised though, when she saw who obeyed her voice, but she said nothing, leaving it for her visitor to state the cause of her appearance. There was something in the way she turned her head, shading her eyes with a feather fan all the while from the glow of the lamp—something so calm, so relentless—that it made Lois feel herself small and pitiable, and in the wrong, as she stood before her. But any certainty was better than this terrible doubt. "What are you going to see my husband for?" she asked, in tones that she could not prevent from trembling, try as she might.

"I am going to see him," replied Florence, crossing her small feet on the stool before her, and turning her head back to the contemplation of the empty fireplace, "to tell him what his wife forgot to tell him when she married him,—that she was in love with Robert Moreton all the time that she was trifling with him, merely for the pleasure of preventing him from marrying me,—the girl whom it was always intended he should marry;—but that at

last prudence triumphed over love, as in such a case it is very likely it would do,—so she married him for what he could give her,—leaving Robert Moreton to console himself with me. I shall also tell him how I warned his wife,” with a little scornful emphasis on the word, “that if she would confine her flirting to the past, I would say nothing about my discoveries.”

“Mrs Moreton,” interrupted Lois, “you are a hard woman,—an ill-tempered woman,—and you hate me; still you are truthful, I think; and,” clasping her hands, “even if you *do* believe some of the terrible things you say of me, you would not stoop, surely, to tell a lie, to see how much you can make my husband believe, just for the sake of being revenged on me?”

“I shall tell him,” went on Florence, in that same cold hard voice, utterly heedless of Lois’s passionate interruption, “how you came to our ball, talked to my husband, and how, the next morning, he told me—his wife—that England was unbearable to him, and that he should go back to America. I may be very blind, but not quite so blind as not to be able to see the cause and effect there.

“No,” as Lois would have interrupted, raising her feather fan slowly, “I do not care to hear your excuses,—you can keep them for your husband. It remains, of course, to be proved yet, whether he will take your word or mine.”

“I was going to make no *excuses*,” said Lois quietly, proudly, in the pause that followed. “I should think that I had descended to your level if I bandied words with you.” And without another syllable she left the room.

But alone in her own apartment her courage gave way. The enemy had not altogether had the

woorst of it, and Lois’s aching heart echoed many of her bitter words.

“Was I doing wrong all the time,” she cried, as she paced up and down, “when I was trying so hard to do right? Ah! why did I not tell him all? How I wish now I had! I wish I had had any one to warn me—and I am all alone, quite alone now! If she makes him believe her now, when he is everything to me,—ah, it will kill me! Oh, Syd, Syd, dear Syd! my husband, my only friend! why did you leave me?”

She was crying now, bitter, salt tears, that flowed almost unconsciously, as she paced the room, or paused to look forth at the deepening gloom of night.

“She will go to him to-morrow, the first thing,—this may be my last night of peace. She shall have it all her own way,—she has conquered me! Besides, I could not go up with her. And fancy poor quiet Sydney in his study, with two angry women scolding and upbraiding each other in his presence!” And she smiled a little dreary smile at the very idea.

But at that moment a sudden thought struck her; she ceased speaking, and a quick faint gleam brightened the eyes which had been gazing abroad so forlornly. She took out her watch—only half-past nine.

“Plenty of time,” she murmured. In an instant she had rung the bell.

“Owens,” as her maid entered, speaking hurriedly, with burning cheeks, and eyes still full of tears, “something has occurred which makes it absolutely necessary I should see your master to-night, so I am going by the 10.50 train to town, and I want you to come with me to the station. Can you be ready in five minutes?”

“Certainly, ma’am; but will you not drive?”

"No, no," with nervous impatience; "I want to go quietly," a red streak dyeing her cheeks, "so you must not let any one know I have gone,—you understand?"

"Certainly, ma'am," Owens said again; and she being old and discreet, and having been Lois Grey's maid in the old days before she came to Kelver, Lois Dering felt she might trust her; and turning to her with sudden impetuosity, "So much depends on it, Owens," she said,—"all my happiness," her eyes growing misty again. "Don't let Mrs Moreton know I have gone."

"It is all right, Miss, though I should say 'Ma'am,' but having known you before, it sometimes slips out,—but they all think you have gone to bed; and how should they ever know different?"

The London train was just dashing into the station as Lois and Owens found themselves on the platform to meet it. Lois had not spoken all the way; she would not even think of what she was going to do, the words she was going to say.

All she could think of was, that the same roof no longer sheltered herself and Florence Moreton, and that she felt she could not have borne.

She had crept into old Mrs Dering's room before leaving, and had kissed that elderly lady, somewhat to her surprise, for Lois was not a demonstrative woman as a rule.

"Good night, mother," she said gently,—she had got into the habit of calling Mrs Dering by that name, for the sake of gathering about her, if possible, the relationships, at least in name, that she had missed so long out of her life. "Good night, mother. If— Ah, mother! is Sydney ever unkind?"

"No, no," said the old lady, look-

ing up half astonished at the question, and the fervour with which it was asked. "No, no; he is too just for that."

"But it is more than justice I want," she murmured as she turned away. And it was those words that had been ringing in her ears ever since.

All through that hour's railway, all through the long drive in the rattling cab afterwards, and now as she stood before the dreary dark London house, through the silent street they seemed to be echoing: "Ah, but I want more than justice!"

Who that counts upon that here is likely to be satisfied?

She had rung, how many times was it? The cabman was growing impatient, her own heart was sinking lower, lower. She had never thought of this. Suppose he were not here; that the empty house had seemed too dreary, and he had gone to his club. It was only too probable; and what should she do, alone in London, at this hour of the night? and with feverish strength she rung again—such a peal, that it seemed as if its echoes would never die away; but when they did, lo! there was the sound of shuffling feet, the door was opened by a dirty, slipshod charwoman, and one great difficulty was surmounted,—she was safe inside her own house.

"Where is he—Mr Dering?" she asked; and at length, when Mrs Jones had sufficiently recovered her temper and her senses to answer, she pointed to the study door, under which a light was visible; and the good woman speedily retired, visions of mutton-chops having to be cooked at this unseasonable hour of the night, in addition to being awoke out of her first sleep, seizing her—and with somewhat hasty steps she disappeared.

But not before Lois's nervous hand had turned the handle of the library door, and that she stood in the presence of her husband. He was hard at work; the sounds in the house had not even disturbed him,—he was aware of nothing until the door opened, and a low, trembling voice cried, "Sydney, I have come to you!" And looking up, he saw a vision of his wife, but not the happy, contented girl he had left four days ago, but a woman with dark-shadowed, tearful eyes, and pathetically drooping mouth, that told easily enough their own tale of woe.

"What is it?" he questioned, steadying his voice as best he could, and holding out his hand.

But she never heeded it.

"Sydney," she said, crossing the room, and standing on the opposite side of the table, looking down at him with wide, terrified eyes—"Sydney," speaking in quick, nervous tones, "she is coming to tell you that I married you for your money; and, Sydney——"

He held up his hand as if he would stay her words, but she went on, regardless of the sign. "And she says that I love Robert Moreton,—and that when it comes to believing either her words or mine, that you will not believe mine, because I have deceived you. Oh, Sydney," clasping her slender hands together, "you *must* believe me!"

"And what must I believe?" he asked, slowly.

He had risen now, and was standing looking down at her white face and frightened eyes.

"Believe?" she repeated, her voice sinking into an earnest whisper. "Why, whatever she says, you must believe I love you. It may be hard," she went on, steady-

ing her voice with difficulty, "because she says such dreadful things, and they all sound so true; but you must put no faith in them; you must try and think, however hard it may be, 'She tried to do right.' It is not justice," a little incoherently, those words coming back to her remembrance—"I want much more than justice."

"And what, then, do you want?"

"Love," she cried, unsteadily.

"Have I ever refused it?" he asked. And then: "My dear," he said, gently, "have I not watched you?—is not that better than any guess-work? The world may guess, may accuse even, but I *know*." He stretched out his arms as he spoke. "Dear wife," he said, "did you *really* doubt me? Did you suppose that any one could step between us? Did you really believe I would take any one's word against yours? Ah, dear wife, that shows that I have not quite conquered, even yet!"

His arms were about her now, her head was on his shoulder, her beating heart was growing quieter under the influence of his presence, but she raised her eyes at his words, and asked what he meant.

"It was coming—the love, I mean," he replied, tenderly. "Very slowly, but none the less surely, it was taking root in my wife's heart. That day—the day I came up here—it was nearly full grown, was it not?"

"It was there, Syd," she said, the tears falling hot and fast upon his coat-sleeve, "but I did not know it. I never found out what it was till you were gone. Now," clasping her arms about his neck—"now, with all my heart, I can say, 'Dear Sydney, I love you.'"

LIFE AND DEATH.

THREE SONNETS.

I.

O LIFE! O Death! Ye dread mysterious twain,
 Baffling us from the cradle to the bier;
 Phantoms that fill our souls with strange, vague fear,
 Elusive as the forms that haunt the brain
 Of the sick raver. Question we in vain
 The lore of all the ages, sage and seer,
 To answer why and who ye are, and clear
 The clouds that round you evermore remain.
 Whence come ye? Whither go ye? None may say—
 One leads man walking in an idle show
 Along the myriad paths of joy and woe
 To where the other waits to bear away
 The enfranchised Soul, that chartless Ocean o'er,
 To the dim land whence man returns no more.

II.

O Life! O Death! How good ye are and fair,
 As, luminous in the glory of God's love,
 Ye stand revealed His Angels from above!
 Angels we've entertained, though unaware,—
 The janitors that wait our souls to bear
 Through either gate of Being; not to rove
 Unguided, but in course prescribed to move,
 Fixed as the planets' paths that roll through air.
 In Christ's "dear might," your Lord and ours, now bold
 With reverent courage, lo! the veil we raise
 Erst wrapped around you, and with wondering gaze
 Your solemn beauty undismayed behold,
 No more dread mysteries, our souls to scare,
 Making Life Vanity and Death Despair.

III.

Life is no sleepless dream, as poets sing:
 Death is no dreamless sleep, as sophists say.
 A deeper wisdom tells us, brothers they,
 Loving, though parted until Time shall bring
 The twain together in their journeying,
 To part no more, on that supremest day,
 When Heaven and Earth and Time shall pass away,
 And Christ shall reign o'er all as God and King.
 Yet, till they meet, there stands a third between,
 A brother, like yet differing from each,
 And he is SLEEP, whose mission is to teach
 What Life's and Death's less mysteries may mean,*
 Till, Life's watch o'er, we "fall on sleep," to spring
 To deathless Life through Death's awakening.

JOHN FRANCIS WALLER.

* Ὕπνος τὰ μικρὰ τοῦ θανάτου μυστήρια.—Menander.

SOCIETY AND THE SALONS BEFORE THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

WHO were the men of the French Revolution? Naturally we seek them among the members of the *Tiers Etat* that held those memorable meetings in the Tennis Court at Versailles; on the benches of the Girondists, and in the mutterings of the Mountain; in the clubs and the *cafés* and the *faubourg* of the working-classes. And no doubt the Mirabeaus and the Vergniauds, the Desmoulins, the Dantons, and the "incorruptible" Robespierres, have, in one sense, the most direct claim to the title. But after all, those philosophers, demagogues, and mob-orators were but the youngest children of the demon of the Revolution. To them fell the finishing of the work which others had been, consciously or unconsciously, forwarding; and they reaped with the axes of the guillotines the harvest that centuries had sown. When the aristocrats crowded the prisons, and were sent in their thousands on the tumbrils to the scaffolds, it was but another illustration of the law of moral government that makes the children suffer for the sins of the parents. It is hard, indeed, to say where the history of the Revolution begins, for the feudal system, with all its terrible abuses, was for long the only refuge of the helpless. The seigneur might play the tyrant over the hovels that had clustered themselves for protection under the battlements of his castle; but at least he secured to their inmates their lives and the enjoyment of such property as it pleased him to spare them. Without even imperfect safeguards of the kind, the life of the peasant would seldom have been worth a day's purchase in an age where might meant right, and in a country where the

man-at-arms was the master. It was the iron hand of the martial seigneurs that kept the *basse peuple* from perpetually flying at each other's throats; and although, as the guardians of their feminine vassals, they may remind one of wolves left in charge of the sheep-fold, nevertheless the virtue of the lowly would have fared still worse had the advent of the reign of equality and fraternity been anticipated by a few hundreds of years.

But investigations as to the beginnings of the history of the Revolution have at best a philosophical or speculative interest. It is sufficient for all practical purposes to choose any arbitrary date under the old monarchical *régime* when we already see the revolutionary influences in baleful activity. And for luridly picturesque illustration of a turbulent though superficially brilliant society, the reigns of the later Valois princes will serve our purpose as well as any others. By that time, though the seigneurs still exercised their rights, and more especially the rights that were represented by a money value, with a few honourable exceptions they had entirely ignored their responsibilities. The subtle and stern policy of Louis XI. had paved the way for the apotheosis of the consolidated and invigorated monarchy in the person of Francis. In Francis we have one of those fortunate historical characters who imposed upon his contemporaries as he has imposed upon posterity. Beaten and humiliated on the field of Pavia, having compromised the rights of the Crown and broken his solemn pledges, he nevertheless continued to carry his head high, while his memory is encircled by a halo of

chivalry. The qualities for which he is admired, and even his undeniable virtues, had distinctly revolutionary tendencies. He was a man of taste, and a generous patron of the fine arts. But what with his courtly magnificence and his political ambitions, he dipped recklessly in treasure-chests that had somehow to be replenished, and set a royal example of lavishing to all the spendthrifts of the realm. To some extent he had encouraged independence of thought on the first stirring of the new religious movements, though he never scrupled to sacrifice his *protégés* to the *force majeure* of political circumstances. The very opposite of Louis XI., and, in many respects, of his immediate predecessor, he inaugurated a new order of things which impoverished his kingdom, demoralised his aristocracy, and fostered the seeds of inveterate animosities between classes—an order of things which endured down to the grand crowning catastrophe.

Louis XI. could be liberal on occasions, but, as a rule, he had carried parsimony to avarice. As he had broken the power of the formidable feudatories, so he held his great nobles at arm's-length—surrounding himself with Ministers who were his creatures, and who cost him comparatively little. Francis originated the system of centralisation. The aristocracy were attracted to the splendours of his chateaux, as moths flutter to the flame of a candle. Each of the seigneurs strove to shine in his degree, and most of them scorched their wings or something worse, since all outstripped their means. The Jews and the usurers had a blissful time of it, when money must be had on any terms, and domains were being mortgaged wholesale. The screw was being tightened on the farmers and peasants, who were crushed under *corvées* that were inexorably

exacted, and they seldom saw their lord from one year's end to the other. Those unfortunates had to stagger under their daily burdens, without the relief of even crying for redress. It was like being given over into the hands of the tormentors, while tortures were aggravated by the *poire d'angoisse*—an excruciating medieval adaptation of the more humane modern gag. The taskmasters understood their duties too well to transmit complaints that were idle and irritating. Meantime the master of those serfs was struggling for his share of Court sunshine. He dare not withdraw into the shade for the briefest space, for fear of losing what favour he had gained. His indefatigable attendance and his outlay were self-interested speculations. If he were paid by Court places or lucrative commands, he lived in easy magnificence, and dressed himself in much-envied authority. If his claims were neglected and his intrigues proved fruitless, he dropped out of the race a beggared man. So the nobles became the obsequious courtiers of the sovereign, and the harsh oppressors of the helpless people.

By the time of Francis's effete grandchildren, those abuses had been seeding in rank luxuriance, and the demoralisation had made rapid progress. Francis was at least a man, with chivalrous tastes and manly ambitions. The sons of Catherine de Medicis showed in their strain Italian indolence with Italian ferocity. They had inherited the frail constitutions which had been enfeebled by premature excesses. Resembling in many respects the last monarchs of the Merovingian dynasty, they differed from them in having no hereditary *maire* of the palace. That was a post that was always being intrigued for; and the favourites for the time

either "amused themselves" like the king, or turned their attention to the more practical business of establishing a family and enriching it. So the spirit of a sanguinary frivolity reigned supreme; while the distance between Paris and the provinces was widening. Huguenotism was something more than the profession of new forms of belief and a reaction against the corruptions of Rome. It was the dawning of a hope in the heart of the nation; a protest against the shameless self-indulgence of the privileged classes; a social uprising against grinding oppression. The nobles who headed the movement were the most thoughtful of their caste; and the younger gallants who embraced the opinion of their families were bound by their party badge to a greater circumspection of conduct. The one point on which they steadily declined to be converted was the point of honour. If their tenets or their respectability laid them open to scoffs, they were the more ready to suspect insults and to resent them; and as the bravest soldiers of France were in the ranks of "the Religion," so there were no more terrible duellists than were to be found among their *jeunesse dorée*.

For the fashion of duelling was then at its height; and seldom has a fashion of any kind been carried to more outrageous excesses. The progress of science and invention had given the swordsmen of the new school unusual facilities. The cumbrous weapons of mediæval times had gone out since Henri Deux had fallen to the lance of Montgomery. It was no longer an affair of solemn tilting-matches between barriers, when men sweltered under the ponderous weight of their mail, mounted on animals like Flemish dray-horses. Gentlemen had come to draw at a moment's notice, and fight it out in their slashed doublets. The fencing-

master was abroad, and Italy had sent France her *savants* in the art of arms as well as her painters, sculptors, and architects. The use of the rapier was the only serious study of the gentlemen, whose careers were likely to be as brief as inglorious, if they had not graduated in the schools of self-defence. Already they were being initiated in the subtleties of feint, thrust, and parry; although they still used the dagger by way of guard, to the disturbing of the harmony of eye and arm. Not only were challenges given on slight provocation, but on no provocation at all. A certain reputation was a perilous thing, for it awoke the ambition of novices on their promotion. There were instances, indeed, when the reputation became so terrible as to scare even the harebrained spirits of the time, who, although they prided themselves on their reckless indifference to danger, preferred to draw the line short of certain death: as in the case of the notorious Bussy d'Amboise, *ame damné* and champion in ordinary to the Duc d'Alençon, afterwards D'Anjou,—a prince as "false, fleeting, and perjured" as Shakespeare's Clarence, and who is said to have come to as tragic an end. "The brave Bussy" was the very type of the high-born ruffler and *spadassin*, and the stories told of his prowess sound marvellous. It was said that to keep his hand in, and simply by way of practice, he would defend himself against three or four practised swordsmen, who set upon him with their naked weapons; and if his overbearing insolence was notorious even in that age, it scarcely surpassed his skill and courage. The Scriptural judgment pronounced on men of blood found signal fulfilment in the case of Bussy. He died hard, and fighting desperately in a *guet-apens*, into which he had been betrayed by his licentious gallantry. The

story told by Dumas in his 'Dame de Monsoreau' is founded in the main incidents upon fact and the chronicles, though these suggest that the gallant came to his end through the treachery, and not the tenderness, of his mistress.

The duels of those days—duel, by the way, is a misnomer—were arranged on the principle of the greatest pleasure of the greatest numbers. There were two seconds at the least on either side, and they never stood idle when their principals were engaged. Then, as now, there were spots of habitual resort, like the Bois de Boulogne or de Vincennes in the present century. But in old Paris, though its buildings were densely crowded, there was no need to go far to find sequestered fighting-ground. There were waste spaces in the precincts of many of the convents; and so if the wounded men held to the rites of religion, they had ghostly comfort within easy reach. Superstition sanctified ferocity; and sometimes, on specially formal occasions, the Church had been invoked by the Crown to give its sanction to the right in the arrangement of the preliminaries. Thus, in the famous combat of the *mignons* of Henry III. with the champions of his brother's faction, the weapons of the *mignons* had been solemnly blessed; sword and dagger blades had been sprinkled with holy water; and three of the most disreputable livers in all Paris had been shriven and absolved by the king's confessor.

There was a strange mixture of courage and cowardice, of punctilio with a most unchivalrous abuse of advantages, in the habits of the time. Some of the ceremonial of chivalry still survived, though the spirit was dead or dying. When men had dropped in those set contests of six or more, it was in accordance with the recognised rules of the game to butcher the sur-

vivors by odds of numbers. Ambushes were laid in the narrow streets, where the dark shadows in nooks and corners, between the dim swinging lamps, lent themselves easily to strategy of the kind. Princes of the blood had only to hint that they would gladly be rid of an inconvenient enemy, to send scions of the noblest houses of France to practise the arts of the skulking Indian. The kings fell into the fashion like the rest; and when their authority had been set successfully at defiance, they had recourse to the treachery that supplied the place of strength. So we have not only the massacre of St. Bartholomew, when the trap was baited with the hand of a daughter of France, and the monarch threw himself into the part of a Judas with the spirit of an actor who has the heart in his *rôle*; but that dramatic tragedy in the Chateau of Blois, where the Guises were slaughtered on the threshold of the council chamber. Gentlemen of birth got a living and reputation as professional bravoës; like De Mauvel who was intrusted with the murders of Coligny and Henry of Bearn, on the strength of the adroitness he had shown in disposing of De Mouy St Phale, and others of the Huguenots. As these ruffians played useful subordinate parts in the state-craft of the day, so their services were not merely recompensed in secret. They not only had well-filled purses to jingle in the *cabarets*, and were admitted to royal audiences by back-staircases; but they had their open *entrées* at the Court, where they mixed with "men of honour." The gentlemen who were continually coming from the provinces to push their fortunes at the Court, laid themselves out to deserve the favour of their patrons by some atrocious deed of violence. Occasionally, when they had not the discretion to keep their own

counsels, but had whispered of the honourable mission they had accepted, they might find themselves disagreeably checkmated. Thus it was bruited about that one of these ruffling adventurers proposed to himself the honour of assassinating D'Andelot. It was flying boldly at dangerous game, for D'Andelot was the younger brother of the Admiral Coligny, and had the courage of the princes of the family of Châtillon. But it would have been beneath a man of D'Andelot's degree to cross swords himself with an obscure adventurer, and he had friends and followers in plenty who were eager to take up the quarrel. One of those zealous adherents was on the outlook for this truculent stranger at a grand Court reception; took the opportunity of hustling him in such a way that a demand for satisfaction brooked no delay; and nipped his hopes of preferment in the bud by passing a rapier through his body.

What strikes one as strange, even among so many incongruities, is the nerve and vigour displayed by the *viveurs* in one of the most dissipated societies the world has ever seen. That they should have been personally brave is no matter of surprise, if their courage had too often degenerated into ferocity, for courage has always been pre-eminently a French quality. They remind us very much of Ouida's Guardsmen, whom we happen to know to be phantoms of her brain. Like their fathers before them, they had done all in their power to weaken their constitutions by excessive debauchery. They lived hard, they ate like ogres, they drank deep, they excited themselves by playing at games of hazard for stakes they could ill afford to lose; love-making, with fighting, was the business of their lives; and they habitually turned the night into day. Nevertheless they were almost in-

variably "all there," on any of these bloody emergencies which might crop up at any moment. Not only did they show "three-o'clock-in-the-morning courage," passing straight through the bath from a drinking-bout to some match that had been suddenly improvised, where they were turned down like cocks in a cock-pit; but they sought agreeable distraction in dabbling in conspiracies where the torture-chamber and the scaffold were the penalties of failure. Nor did they neglect any of the numerous opportunities of taking part in a spirited little civil war. Used to lives of such effeminacy as carry us back to the worst days of the decadence of Imperial Rome, revelling in luxuries whenever they could procure them, they nevertheless not only behaved in the field with the dash of the Duke of Wellington's "dandy Guardsmen," but manfully bore the fatigues of the war, and even, in case of extremity, its privations. What weighed upon them most was the dulness of a protracted leaguer, when they had been shut up with their chiefs in some provincial town, till the whirligig of events should bring relief or a surrender. It is true they might lighten the weariness of the siege by love-affairs with the ladies of the citizens; and it is significant of the general degradation of manners, that these ostentatiously *affichés* attachments *par amours*, tended to a pleasant understanding between the *noblesse* and the *bourgeoisie*.

Generally in the incessant civil broils from the days of the League, and before them down to those of the Fronde, it was the people who were punished in the place of the principals. It was the people who suffered by the privations and exactions, the scouring of the country for supplies, the levying contributions on the cities, the wanton burning and plundering, the heavi-

est losses in the field. The great nobles held out till they had either made good their point or submitted on the promise of an ample indemnity. It is true that, now and again, things ended differently; especially when the Church, the Valois, and the Lorraine Princes had been alarmed by the growing strength of the Huguenots. Then, occasionally, as one or the other party had the upper hand, it would take a savage revenge on the principle of *væ victis*. Prisoners of the rank and file were butchered in cold blood—one of the rare occasions when the lower orders had the best of it; and the gentlemen of birth had the privilege of being consigned to the dungeons and tormentors. Perhaps the most terrible scenes of the kind took place on the discovery of the conspiracy of Amboise, when the Guises did their utmost to merit the fate that befell themselves later in the neighbouring chateau. At Amboise they had gone to work with cruel deliberation to inspire a terror which should deter from similar attempts. The king, who was a minor, and a puppet in their hands, was forbidden to exercise his prerogative of mercy. In consideration for his health, and possibly for his feelings, he had to be removed from the romantic town his guardians had turned into a charnel-house. The walls of his fortress-palace were festooned with the severed limbs and the corpses of victims hung in chains, like vermin to the doors of a barn. The gutters of the steep streets ran in rivulets of gore that are said to have discoloured the waters of the river; and when the soldiery had been satiated with that wholesale butchery, the *noyades* of the infamous Carrier were anticipated. Their swords or the channel of the Loire sufficed to dispose of the mob; but,

meantime, in the dungeons hewn out of the rock, the rack and wheel and presses were at work, with the practised ingenuity of the sworn tormentors. And it is remarkable that, though frail nature would often succumb, and the slow agony lead sooner or later to confession, yet frequently the sufferers supported the torture, disdaining to save themselves by the betrayal of their friends. We may find an explanation as to those implicated in that affair of La Renaudie by assuming that being Huguenots they might have been honestly religious, and that, in their enthusiasm, they regarded themselves as martyrs for their faith. But that explanation will not apply to widely different cases where the torture was endured with similar constancy, as when some of the instruments and confidants of the faithless D'Alençon, declined to betray the master who had abandoned them.

Yet the torture of those days was studied as a science, though perhaps it had gained in diabolical refinement by the time that Damiens was operated on before the *beau monde* of Paris for his attempt upon Louis the Well-beloved. The scene in the sixteenth century was usually a gloomy underground chamber, dimly lighted by torches or cressets, and deadened by massive masonry against the escape of sound. The executioner was probably born in the scarlet, or had at all events served an apprenticeship to some master who had perpetuated the grim traditions of the craft. He and his *aides* had paid careful attention to the machinery: if the screws and the pulleys worked slowly and roughly, that was all the better, so long as they did not kill. A speedy release was the thing to be guarded against; and most horrible of all was the presence of the surgeon. There he stood, in

grave imperturbability, with hard, watchful eyes, or with the finger on the pulse of the patient, appropriately robed in his sad-coloured garments, ready to interpose should tortured nature seem overstrained, or to awaken it when it had found relief in kindly oblivion. In the latter case, he would apply himself with salts and essences to the revival of the mangled wreck of humanity, and rekindle the sparks of life by assiduous attentions, till the recovery was so satisfactory that the torture might be resumed. Occasionally the sufferer would make full confession; sometimes, having nothing to say that was worth hearing, he would groan out a tissue of incoherent falsehoods; not infrequently, as we have remarked, he would be firm to the end—greatly to the credit of his courage or his obstinacy. In the sixteenth century, and long afterwards, that licensed inhumanity was recognised all over France, and abused—if abuse may be said to be possible—by the possessors of seignorial rights, as well as by the provincial Parliaments and governors. Remembering the traditions of cruelty and insolence that had been multiplying themselves from time immemorial through the length and breadth of the land under the rule of harsh and irresponsible tyrants, we may have some conception of the revengeful spirit that was unchained, when the mob had broken loose and become masters in their turn.

Thus neither in the country, nor even in the cities, had the people natural protectors or courts of appeal whither they could turn for redress. There were no tribunes to interpose between them and the patricians. The supreme power of the Crown was, in some respects, a terrible reality; but the people had seldom profited by it, and were used to see it set at nought. There were no great municipal corporations like

those of the free imperial cities of Germany, where the burghers could hold up their heads behind their walls; though, by the way, such oligarchies as those of Nuremberg or Ratisbon could be cruelly tyrannical as any Valois. The realm of France was like the empire of the Cæsars, as De Quincey describes it,—a world where there was no possibility of flight, with the difference that there were many tyrants in place of one. Individuals had to make up their minds to endure. Shifting quarters could only be done by risking life and sacrificing property,—unless when the fugitive took service as a man-at-arms, becoming one of the *tondeurs* in place of the flayed. Even when a Richelieu, practising the parable of Tarquin, had struck down the heads of the poppies, and crippled or curbed the feudal aristocracy, the people gained comparatively little. The Court had become more splendidly extravagant than ever; and the vanity and ambitions of Louis the Great waged a succession of costly or humiliating wars. But from the days of the orgies of the Tour de Nesle to the frivolities and scandals of the Petit Trianon, the contrasts of magnificence and misery had been extreme. On the one side we see the seigneur at Paris, or, in later times, at one of the palaces in the environs. In vain had monarchs like Henri Quatre, simple and careless in their personal habits, set an example of indifference to dress; in vain had clear-sighted reformers like Richelieu sought to restrain society by sumptuary laws; in vain had miserly ministers like Mazarin carried frugality into avarice in their personal expenditure. The men vied with the women in that extravagance of costume which was fostered by the fashions of each successive age. The richest stuffs of Italy and the Low Countries were slashed in all

fantastic manners. A gala suit with its falling collars and ruffles of lace and delicate quiltings of white satin, might be ruined by the wine-stains in a single drinking-bout. Constant changes of dress were as much *de rigueur* as in the over-abused Court of the Empress Eugenie. And the personal magnificence of the master struck the key-note to the style of the suitable establishment he maintained. The great nobles had their attendant gentlemen and their pages, the officers of their households, the staff of their kitchens, with their upper servants and troops of lackeys in their liveries. It is true that their furniture might have seemed incommodious to the more fastidious ideas of the fortunate middle classes of this present century; but they launched out freely in articles of luxury, and luxuries in those days brought fancy prices. They hung their walls with tapestry richly woven and figured after artistic designs; and decked uncomfortable couches with magnificent embroideries. They gilded and moulded and painted their ceilings; they had taken to importing rare mirrors from Venice, and patronised pupils of the Lombard goldsmiths for plate; and while Palissy was being persecuted for his heretical opinions, the graceful and eccentric conceptions of his pottery wares were already becoming the rage. They paid sooner or later for these objects of *meublerie* and *vertu*. The wines and the banquets were in keeping with the plate on the buffets, and the damask and crystal that set off the tables. They played high, too, as we have said, and they often lost heavily, and how they came by the ready money is a mystery.

For looking on the dark reverse of the picture, and at the condition of the provinces and the populace of Paris, we see in contrast to that lurid and factitious splendour the very blackness of wretchedness. The

farmers and peasants were ground down by forced contributions and exactions; and a great proportion of their most precious time was sacrificed to merciless *corvées*. Down to the very eve of the Revolution, these *corvées* had increased rather than diminished; and a man might be called away when his crops were overripe to repair the impassable roads for a chance visit of the seigneur. Aside from the great highways, the roads had always been execrable. It was difficult to send surplus produce to any market, so that in the most bountiful seasons, prices in the remote parishes were often nominal. When there was a local dearth, there was little assistance to be had; and the famines, when the people generally had been starving, were followed by deadly fevers and epidemics. At the best of times the labouring men worked hard and fared wretchedly; and every now and then some levy of the *ban* and *arrière-ban* swept off the field-hands to serve in the wars. That last evil had increased, when the absolute ascendancy of the king had suppressed all domestic troubles, with the exception of the religious persecutions in the south. Never had the drain on the country been more severe than when the glories of the Grand Monarque were on the wane, and his armies were being annihilated by Marlborough and the Allies. As for Paris, the inhabitants of its gloomy streets and tortuous alleys were in chronic wretchedness, and sullenly mutinous; while millions were being squandered on palaces in the environs, and directors of the finances like Fouquet were rivalling the ostentation of the sovereign.

And if the material condition of the people was deplorable, matters were scarcely more satisfactory in a moral point of view. The example of the Court and the conduct of the aristocracy had been con-

sistently scandalous. Until Louis XVI. made his appearance, too late, in the novel characters of respectable husband and father, the only king who had not been a *roué* and professed voluptuary was Louis XIII.; and he had laid himself open to ridicule by making love ostentatiously but platonically. The insolent mistresses of the monarchs had taken the *pas* of their lawful wives; their children had been legitimised, ennobled, and enriched with princely *appanages* and well-paid sinecures. To the State progresses of the seraglio of Louis XIV. had succeeded the orgies of the Regency and the infamies of the *Parc aux Cerfs*. Nor was it only the royal sensualists, who had their agents to scour the cities and the country in search of pretty faces. The great nobles, the Court favourites, the *parvenus* farmers-general, had each of them his secluded *petite maison*, where outrages were perpetrated with practical impunity. The *roturier* had as little chance of redress for the injuries by which he ought to have considered himself honoured, as the peasant of a century or so before, who smarted under the *droit de seigneur*.

In the darkest days of the dark middle ages, the Church had stood between the people and its tyrants. With all the grossness of its corruptions, it had been comparatively paternal in its rule; and the position of the vassals on its vast domains had been relatively enviable. There had been sanctuaries, besides, to shelter the unfortunate with the criminal; and it had encouraged the hopes of a brighter hereafter. But since the Churchmen had ceased to suffer violence themselves, their sympathies had been rather with the oppressors than the oppressed. They had added domain to domain, they had inherited deathbed donations, till, in the great accumulation

of their riches, they rivalled the mushroom financiers. The high dignities and wealthy emoluments were monopolised by members of the aristocracy, who lavished their revenues in the dissipation of the Court, and were laymen in all respects but the privilege of marrying—a deprivation for which they easily consoled themselves. Even those who had risen from the ranks by force of abilities and eloquence, were, with hardly an exception, conspicuous as time-servers. Their only protest against the disorders of the kings was occasionally refusing them the right of confession. They exempted them specially from the penalties of vice and the moral responsibilities of ordinary humanity, in these highly finished efforts of oratory that pleased the taste of the more intellectual of their audiences. Setting society scandalous examples themselves, they could not enforce decent living on their subordinates. Thus the influence of the rural priests had been gradually paralysed; while the princes and prelates of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, by their practical commentary on the precepts of the Gospel, had provoked general hostility beyond the ranks of the privileged.

So the primary source of the Revolution with its horrors was in the faults and follies of a self-indulgent society which had taken for its motto *après nous le déluge*, and forgotten that it might have to reckon with a day of retribution. But that day of retribution was precipitated by the growing influence of the *salons* in favour of free thought and speech. The *salon* was an institution essentially French and distinctively feminine. It was the *réunion* in the drawing-rooms of some *grande dame*—great by station or by talents, but chiefly by tact—of congenial spirits, who learned to understand each other in the course of habitual and unrestrained

intercourse. The *salon* came to be governed by its code of unwritten laws, at least as much as by *Madame la Presidente*; and its frequenters prided themselves on their loyalty, in the French meaning of the word. Talking, jesting, speculating, and mocking, giving a free rein to satire and irony, within certain defined though elastic limits, they found courage in the sense of a common sympathy, and not unfrequently pushed courage to audacity. The *salons*, in a different way, had anticipated the Reign of Terror. Wit and brilliant epigram have always had more than mere toleration in France; and though people in power might be smarting from their wounds, they were slow to retaliate by abusing their authority. They nursed their resentment in silence, and affected to smile, rather than provoke further ridicule by proclaiming their annoyance. Suppressing a *salon* was a serious thing, and it was difficult to quench the lights of a constellation illuminated by rank, genius, and learning, all banded together in close confraternity. Napoleon attempted that not unsuccessfully, when he had turned France into a barrack-yard, with an aristocracy of marshals who had risen from the ranks, and a police of *espionnage* presided over by a Fouché. But Napoleon's most autocratic predecessors were more sensitive to an opinion which made itself felt even in the sanctuary of the royal bed-chamber. The *bon mot* that described the old *régime* as "a despotism tempered by epigrams," embodied a great historical truth.

The *salons* had been doing a great work, and in their beginnings at least had been an almost unmixed benefit. They had refined manners; they had developed thought; they had encouraged learning, arts, science, and literature; they had established a succession of little

republics of the intellect, amid the turmoil of wars, factions, and intrigues. Not that they held themselves aloof from politics, or raised themselves above the bitterness of faction. On the contrary, under the League, the Fronde, and later, they resolved themselves repeatedly into coteries of conspirators, and waged a war of pamphlets as well as of words. But their grand motive, and their enduring effect, was to emancipate minds from the fetters of tradition, and to inoculate society with those novel ideas, which, gradually spreading downwards with the diffusion of education, could not fail to be directly revolutionary in the end. They were necessarily pessimist rather than optimist. In place of approving things because they were, they rather treated their existence as a presumption against them. They flashed the vivid light of *spirituel* criticism upon abuses repugnant to justice and common-sense, which had only been tolerated from the habit of acquiescence. The system worked harmlessly and pleasantly enough, so long as it meant merely something like the *jeux d'esprit* of an aristocracy, fairly satisfied on the whole, in spite of occasional exiles and imprisonments, with their social ascendancy under a paternal despotism. Even princes of the blood took to playing with fire, laughing at jests on the doctrine of hereditary rights, and trifling with perilously revolutionary speculations. But the republican tolerance of the *salons* had introduced the recruits, who, springing from the people, had their interests in common with it. Those *protégés* were welcomed and petted with a supercilious courtesy and contemptuous patronage more irritating than any holding them at arm's-length might have been. Thus there are stories told of Voiture which may serve to illustrate what we mean, though the poet was not

made of the stuff to be dangerous. The son of a tavern-keeper, with the *entrée* of the best houses, he was permitted extraordinary licence; and *apropos* to one of his outbreaks, the Prince de Condé remarked of him at Rambouillet, "Si Voiture était des nôtres on ne pouvait le souffrir." That precisely expressed the slighting civility with which the wits of the people were treated by their superiors. Resenting it, although they dared seldom show their resentment, they had no temptation to detach themselves from their order. On the contrary, they laboured zealously though secretly for the social subversion, towards which the *salons* were unwittingly helping them. The Voitures and their fellows of the earlier dispensation ended in the giants of a more advanced generation—in the Diderots and D'Alemberts, the Voltaires and Rousseaus. The flint and the steel of bright intellects struck their sparks in the quick passages of arms that were to kindle the combustible atmosphere in a conflagration; sceptics and freethinkers in politics as in religion entered against each other in a race of audacity; and even those who, like Erasmus, were not of the material for martyrs, were somewhat consoled by notoriety if martyrdom chanced to be forced upon them. The *lettre de cachet* or the edict of exile was an advertisement of the doctrines that had provoked it; and when the offender was restored to the admiring circle that had been bereaved of him, he found that the seeds he had sown had been shooting and ripening in his absence.

What is extraordinary is, that an institution so novel as the *salon* did not grow slowly to maturity from insignificant beginnings. But as that of the Hôtel Rambouillet was the first of them all, so it has remained the most famous. Who and what

was the woman, we ask naturally, who has the credit of the original idea that bore such extraordinary fruit; who achieved immortality as the first of the queens of society, or rather, as the first of the presidents of the feminine oligarchy that for long held the sceptre of society in commission? And though she has been pronounced a remarkable woman by the unanimous consent of her contemporaries, yet, from what we can gather, she seems to have been hardly so far *hors de ligne* as to explain the exceptional position she made for herself. We can only come to the conclusion that we have a proof the more, that even commanding success in society is due to the impalpable combination of qualities it is altogether impossible to analyse. Not that we are inclined to depreciate Catherine de Vivonne, Comtesse d'Angennes, afterwards Marquise de Rambouillet. She was beautiful and rarely accomplished besides,—she was well-born and wealthy. But surely it needed something more than talents and accomplishments, birth and riches, to set an example of manners at the early age of six-and-twenty to the boisterous Court of the buxom Queen Regent; to reclaim the rough veterans of the fierce religious wars and the reckless scapegraces of a turbulent rising generation to a regard for the *bienséances* that was as new to them as it was *génante*; to break stiff-necked aristocratic prejudices into submission to her gentle yoke, forcing nobles of innumerable quarterings to be courteous to *roturiers* with neither fathers nor court-armour; and to keep order among the elements of a courtly bear-garden, where sharp speeches were flying about as freely as balls from the arquebuses at Arques or Ivry. Yet all that Catherine de Vivonne accomplished, apparently by those subtle feminine influences which made her word, her look,

her very presence, a law to the guests, not a few of whom were of rank superior to her own. It is more wonderful, perhaps, that she accomplished it in face of the rivalries which her self-made ascendancy must inevitably have provoked in a generation of women whose jealousies were proverbial.

The Hôtel Rambouillet was a protest against the licence of the day; a neutral ground where the partisans of faction could compose the differences of which they were beginning to weary. And the time of its foundation was happily chosen. Society longed for repose and amusement after a period of wars, prescriptions, executions, and confiscations that had spread misery and sown animosities broadcast. It needed amusement, and knew not how to amuse itself. Dissipation had taken the place of more innocent distractions, and the life of the camp-bred man of fashion was a round of duels and revels. The licence of the period had extended to the ladies. Their refinement was scarcely superior to their morality, and both left almost everything to desire. Horseplay and practical jokes were of everyday occurrence in the highest circles; the language of the Court was such as might have passed current in the modern *cabaret*, and the jests most heartily relished were of a breadth that often went beyond the borders of obscenity. The change from the reception-rooms of the Palace or the princely Hôtels to the famous blue *salon* of Madame d'Angennes, must have been like passing from one of our popular music-halls into church. There, in place of *bon mots* and *double ententes* that might have scandalised a *vivandière*, you listened to precise and somewhat pedantic disputations as to the shades of meaning in words; though those disputations on language, by the way, came

somewhat later, and the hostess had begun by making things pleasant, before she ventured to make her *réunions* instructive. She had encouraged lively conversation that easily diverged into subjects that were literary, artistic, or aesthetic. To the Rambouillet Hôtel came the poets of the age, with their fresh tributes of verses; and gentlemen who had no pretensions to compose, could at all events bring their contributions in the form of criticisms. We take it that it was in the blue and yellow *salons* that the "fine gentleman" of subsequent comedy, first took substantial shape; when some tincture of letters became almost as necessary to the character as a richly fancied dress or readiness with the small-sword. Thither, or to receptions modelled after those of Rambouillet, came the fathers of French tragedy and comedy, sometimes like Corneille in their *première jeunesse*, to read the pieces that were to make their authors immortal. Pastoral romances, like those of the Marquis d'Urfé, were modernised after contemporary life, and translated into action. It became the *mode* to form respectful and platonic attachments, to dress out the language of compliment in fantastic tricks of speech. As Victor Cousin says, in his article on the assemblies of Mademoiselle de Scudéry, the behaviour of the ladies was correct, with no ostentation of prudery, and tenderness was permitted, though passion was forbidden.

The range of the entertainments offered was as wide as the temperaments and the tastes of the varied company. It was no uncommon thing for some courtly *abbé* to delight his audience with an *impromptu* discourse, where the style was perhaps more considered than the matter. Yet sometimes a startling, though not altogether disagreeable, surprise was impro-

vised for those light-hearted votaries of fashion; as when Bossuet, then a youth of sixteen or seventeen, made his *début* with the Marquis de Rambouillet, under the auspices of the Marquis de Feuquières. Lady Jackson tells the story well in her amusing volumes on 'Old Paris.' The Marquis presented his modest companion as a youth with an irresistible vocation for the pulpit, with a marvellous facility for extemporaneous discourse, and who promised to be one day a miracle of eloquence. At that time a sermon in a *salon* was a novelty; and when it was suggested that the young Bossuet should give a proof of his powers, Madame de Rambouillet characteristically hesitated. Her innate good taste probably disapproved making sacred subjects a spectacle for the indifferent; but she reluctantly deferred to the wishes of her friends. The hero of Rocroi happened to be there, and Monseigneur expressed a wish for the sermon. Then the "eagle of Meaux" tried his maiden flight, and seldom had ever a veteran Court preacher addressed a more embarrassing audience. Bossuet was but a boy from the country, of very humble origin besides, and it can only have been the high consciousness of his mission and opportunity that raised him above the trying surroundings. Thoughts inspired by his genius, found expression in the words that were warmed by the fire of his native eloquence. The company, with the well-bred versatility that characterised it, had passed from gaiety of mood to the semblance of gravity, and composed itself to listen seriously. A slip of paper with a suggested text was placed in the hands of the *débutant*. The subject could hardly have been more suitable to the society; it was given in the words of the great "Preacher" *par*

excellence—"Vanity of vanities; all is vanity."

"Some of the more frivolous of the company could scarcely suppress laughter as he stepped on the dais. But the deep, calm, grave voice of the young man, as in simple but eloquent words he pronounced the exordium, soon commanded the attention. Attention became interest; the *salon* was forgotten, and the 'Ave Maria' said as devoutly as in Notre Dame. . . . The profound silence that had reigned throughout the discourse continued even for a few minutes after the preacher had concluded, so deep was the impression he had made. Pulpit eloquence was then almost unknown. His poetic fervour and powerful words had fallen on ears accustomed to the dryness and pedantry with which the truths of religion were then invariably set forth. The great preachers of the seventeenth century had not yet appeared. The first of them was heard that night in the *salons* of Rambouillet. M. de Feuquières hastened to embrace his *protégé*, and the company gathered round him to express their admiration and thanks. No one had asked his name, and, in truth, until this triumph was achieved, had cared to know it. It was but a plebeian one, and had served, with his then provincial air, for a poor jest to the idle young nobles who were supposed to be studying at the College of Navarre, where he was himself a student, lately arrived from Dijon."

That was an exceptional scene, with thrilling effects and a dramatic *dénoûment* that must have been talked of for long, and which was worthy of being chronicled. But looking back upon them by the light of contemporary memoirs and letters, the nightly aspects of these brilliant gatherings are as picturesque as they are full of interest. We can not only group the frequenters in the rooms, but refurnish and redecorate the apartments themselves, to the mirrors on the walls and the paintings on the panels. For the costumes we may go to the works of contemporary painters from Rubens down-

wards. Among the glittering groups of high-born celebrities and nonentities—among scarred and grizzled marshals of France and the gay young gallants their grandchildren—among *abbés* more like *petits maîtres* than priests, with their fashionably-cut cassocks and their ruffles of Flanders lace—among the ladies, resplendent in family jewels, and rustling in stiff satins and brocades,—there stand out certain typical figures. There was the mistress herself, who has been painted for us with loving minuteness, though by pens that may possibly have flattered. There was the Court contingent, with the eagle-beaked D'Enghien at its head, and his hump-backed brother of Conti. There was their beautiful sister the Duchess of Longueville, who, escaping from the clutches of the smallpox with charms unimpaired, had her own receptions afterwards during the Fronde, when she played the Queen of Hearts among the citizens of Paris. There were hot-headed rufflers like De Calprenède and De Scudéry, who had the pens of ready writers as well, and who may be said to have set the fashion of professional novel writing. There was the clever M. de Scudéry's more talented sister, whose sisterly affection was set to work at high pressure to supply the incessant drains of her brother's necessities; and there was the little circle of poets who were famous in their time, but whose works have since been wellnigh forgotten, with the interminable romances of the Scudérys. An assiduous frequenter of the *salons*, from the Hôtel Rambouillet to that of Madame de Sablé, was the Rochefoucauld of the 'Maxims,' then Prince de Marillac, whose tongue is said to have been as sarcastic as we should have supposed from his 'Maxims.'

Most conspicuous among the ladies were two who were never

wedded, though hardly even the Marquise herself was the object of more general adoration. One was beautiful; both were fascinating. We have already alluded to Mademoiselle de Scudéry, the writer of the romances that were then becoming the rage. It was said that she had every charm save that of personal beauty. She had shown the versatility of her talents in impassioned verses before she had written these voluminous novels and the society of the *salon* had christened her their Sappho. But when fair-complexioned *blondes* carried all before them, Mademoiselle de Scudéry had the misfortune to be sallow and almost swarthy. She had been deeply marked besides by the smallpox, that terrible scourge of the day. But the disadvantages that mortified her vanity were redeemed by the brightness and intelligence of expression which lighted up somewhat insignificant features. No woman of the time had more varied treasures of information, or could converse with greater gaiety and *entrain*. Almost more petted in the Hôtel was Angélique Paulet. Men learned to admire Mademoiselle de Scudéry for her mind, but they fell in love at first sight with Mademoiselle Paulet. It was impossible to overlook that magnificent *blonde* with those luxuriant masses of golden hair, the flashing eyes, and the brilliant complexion. She had inspired grand passions, but she held her adorers in respect by her *farouche* airs of prudery and the impetuosity of her nature; and it was not her yellow tresses alone that had gained her the well-known *sobriquet* of *la lionne*. Though the spoiled child of the society, with her seductive coquetry and her bewitching voice, she could use her teeth and claws on occasion. If she was cold of temperament, she had some reason to be vain; for a

liaison that may have been innocent, though it somewhat compromised her, linked her earliest love-affair with the event of the century. Long afterwards, when the venerable queen of fashion had her *fauteuil* among the crowd of those who might have been her grandchildren, men whispered of the visit paid the beauty by Henri IV. on the fatal day of his assassination by Ravallac.

If we have loitered in the reception-rooms of the Marquise de Rambouillet, it is because hers was not only the first of the *salons*, but most typical of all the rest. It would be impossible, within the limits at our disposal, to give more than the most superficially comprehensive catalogue of the long series of social gatherings, with their notorieties, that perpetuated the traditions of Rambouillet by an unbroken succession down to the reign of the Citizen-king. All we can attempt is to touch on a trait here and there; to take passing notice of some characteristic celebrity; and to glance at the latest phase of the development of polite freethinking and philosophical radicalism. And *apropos* to traditions handed down by apostolical succession, we are impressed by the longevity of the lights of the *salons*. From Mademoiselles de Scudéry and Paulet, who passed the fourscore years and ten, and the Marquise de Rambouillet herself, down to the Madames du Deffand and Geoffrin, they seem to have lived in the radiance of an intellectual youth, far beyond the ordinary span of mortality. It may have been that the brilliancy of their mental powers was the sign of the exuberance of their bodily vigour; but the life they led seems to have been eminently healthy, with its happy alternations of excitement and repose. The world went smoothly with them;

their habits were regulated like clock-work; they rose superior to the *entraînement* of mere vulgar dissipation. They appear to have practised, for the most part, a good-natured philosophy that preserved them; though, of course, there were exceptions, as when Madame de Longueville had become the life and soul of the malcontents of the Fronde. Dipping into the chronicles of the *salons*, we are surprised from time to time by finding the heroine of one century surviving far into the next, when we had half fancied she must have been mouldering under some moss-grown gravestone. So there came to be an unbroken continuity of intercourse, which insured a certain sequence of system and ideas, although it was modified by the progress of speculation and the inevitable changes of manners.

The brilliant success of the Hôtel Rambouillet, as it provoked jealousies, incited rivalry and imitation. But the first avowed attempt at rivalry proved a failure, although made under patronage that was almost omnipotent. Threatened perpetually by conspiracies, and surrounded by bitter enemies, Richelieu had regarded the *réunions* of Rambouillet with very natural suspicion. The Minister would willingly have come to an understanding by which the Marquise should have given her parole for the good behaviour of her guests. When the lady refused with characteristic spirit, and when the confidants he sent for purposes of *espionnage* found that they were civilly sent to Coventry, he resolved upon starting a centre of counter-attraction. He had already established her favourite niece in the palace of the Petit Luxembourg; and now Madame de Combalet's magnificent suites of apartments were thrown open to the worlds of fashion and literature. But the

spirit of unrepressed partisanship that reigned there proved fatal to free thought and unembarrassed intercourse; while Madame de Combalet, like many of the *belles mondaines* of the time, oscillated between the world and the terrors of the hereafter. When she went into *retraite* at her favourite convent with the purpose of assuring her salvation, her receptions were interrupted, and the company fell away. Far more successful was Madame de Sablé, who may be said to have picked up the charmed mantle when it fell from the shoulders of Madame de Rambouillet. The Marquise de Sablé was the intimate friend of that indefatigable politician and intriguing diplomatist, the Duchesse de Longueville. But the Marquise, in the maturity of her widowhood, had had enough of the vanities of the world. She set herself in earnest to that work of preparation for death which Madame de Combalet had been in the habit of undertaking spasmodically; and she built the mansion for her retreat in the precincts of the monastery of Port Royal de Paris. Nowhere did one find a more stately tone of manners, or more exquisite refinement and taste. But though her mind was much preoccupied by religion, and perhaps because she felt so intensely on the subject, religious discussions were discouraged or forbidden among guests who professed every variety of opinion. She turned the conversation rather to the worldly lessons that might be gathered from the actual intercourse of life, and set the example of embodying her reflections and experience in some condensed *pensée* or pregnant apothegm. And by something like a trick of the irony of destiny, the worldly-wise Maxims of the misanthropical La Rochefoucauld had their origin in his friendship with this devoutly-

minded lady who had set all her aspirations on the things of eternity.

Another lady, of more questionable antecedents and very opposite character, who was honoured by the intimacy of the Duke, was the renowned Ninon de l'Enclos. Ninon, though she had been gay, was by no means giddy: she had benefited by a very excellent education; she had nursed the moderate fortune she inherited; she had acquired a variety of accomplishments to assist her unrivalled gifts of seduction; and living almost beyond the years of any of the long-lived sisterhood, to the last she charmed the intellect as well as the senses. The *salon* in the house in the Rue des Tournelles, where she had characteristically decorated the panels with scenes from the story of Psyche, was filled with such a crowd of princes, potentates, and gay young seigneurs, as to move the jealousy of the stately Anne of Austria. Ninon, in fact—though carrying the parallel too far would do her gross injustice—had anticipated the rôle of some of our ladies of the *demi-monde*, or rather of the more reputable Mrs Rawdon Crawley. She offered men of refinement the charms of a society where restraints were relaxed although not removed, and which certainly tended to disincline eligibles from matrimony. The queen, in a burst of feminine petulance, sent the siren an order to withdraw to a convent, even going so far as to suggest as the most suitable that of the Daughters of Repentance. Thanks to the interposition of influential mediators, matters were smoothed over; and indeed Ninon had friends whom it would have been folly to imitate, when the wit that wounded and rankled had terrors even for majesty.

The *habitués* of the receptions of the crippled Scarron had attacked the Court party with poisoned weapons. His simple rooms were

the headquarters of the pamphleteers who had held Mazarin up to bitter ridicule; and Scarron himself was the author of the 'Mazarinades.' It was in the Rue de la Tixeranderie that Françoise d'Aubigné, Madame de Maintenon, made her *début* in the world of Paris; and the deformed wit married the beautiful young provincial out of chivalrous compassion as much as admiration. He saved the future Queen of Versailles from the veil to which she had been devoted; and the heroine of that strange romance repaid him with grateful tenderness.

The Hôtel of the Cardinal, after his death, became a twin centre of society. The half that took the name of Hôtel Mazarin had been part of the dowry of Hortense Mancini, who was married to the Maréchal de Meilleraie, afterwards created Duc de Mazarin. The other half, known as the Hôtel de Nevers, passed to the brother of Hortense, who had been ennobled as Duc de Nevers. Both were furnished with more than royal magnificence; for Mazarin, miserly as he was, had a mania for sumptuous decoration, and had sunk a portion of his hoards in the accumulation of objects of art. It was a strange fate that of the Duchess of Mazarin, who, after being courted as the niece of the all-powerful Minister, and sparkling among the queens of society in all the luxury that wealth could command, spent the decline of her life in seclusion at Chelsea, and died there in such extremity of insolvency that her creditors laid an arrest on her remains. Faithful to her through all her changes of fortune was St Evremont, whose career had been nearly as checkered as her own. The brilliant wit had been a soldier of fortune in his youth, and a satirist of fortune as well. He had transferred his ser-

vices, in both capacities, to the Cardinal, after having been courted by the princes at the head of the Fronde; and the Cardinal, though always chary of his crowns, appreciated the value of the recruit he had gained. He might have been less satisfied with his new adherent had he known that St Evremont was satirising him secretly; but, as it happened, it was reserved for Louis XIV. to revenge the memory of the Minister he had detested. The chance discovery of a stinging pasquinade on Mazarin, though only in the shape of a private letter, determined the King on making an example of a satirist, without seeming to be actuated by personal resentment. But St Evremont had warning of the coming *lettre de cachet*, and escaped to Holland, and thence to England. There we meet him, in the pages of De Grammont, shining among the licentious wits at the Court of the second Charles; and surviving into the eighteenth century, on a modest pension from the English Treasury, he died in narrow circumstances and the fulness of years, to be honoured with a funeral in Westminster Abbey.

The *siècle* of Louis XIV. was unfavourable to the *salons*. His ambition and enterprises gave them subjects enough for discussion and speculation; but the ascendancy of his all-absorbing personality must have weighed heavily upon them. It was no light matter to offend the absolute tyrant of a servile aristocracy. Moreover, the *salons*, as we have said, were distinctively Parisian—like Madame de Staël, if any of these literary ladies were banished voluntarily or otherwise to the provinces, their thoughts would always turn regretfully to their own especial Rue du Bac—and Louis disliked Paris, and visited it as seldom as possible. He had

never forgiven the citizens their turbulence, and the humiliations they had heaped on his mother and himself. Nevertheless, while Marly, St Germain, or Versailles were basking in the sunshine of the monarch's countenance, there were still houses in Paris where there were regular *réunions*, recruited by occasional visitors from the Court; while there were royal ladies who held rival courts of their own at the Palais Royal and the Luxembourg.

Hurrying on towards the middle of the eighteenth century, we come to those latter-day *salons* of the old *régime* that did the most towards hatching the Revolution. Among the most notable was that of Madame Geoffrin, which, indeed, was one of the institutions of the century. Already immense strides had been made towards actual equality in the republic of intellect. It was no longer a case of admitting brilliant young *roturiers* upon sufferance; or of tolerating "professional beauties" and feminine wits who were pushed forward by the men. Few of her predecessors had exercised more absolute authority than Madame Geoffrin. She is said to have been the daughter of a vintner; she had married a *bourgeois* colonel of the National Guard, who made a handsome fortune as a manufacturer of looking-glasses. Yet before her death we find her corresponding on the easiest terms with Catherine, Empress of all the Russias; and she was tempted from Paris in her old age to pay a visit to Stanislas Poniatowski, who had announced to her his accession to the throne of Poland by writing, "Maman, votre fils est roi." Madame Geoffrin had formed the nucleus of her *salon* by seducing the friends of Madame de Tencin, who was alive to the proceedings of her un-

grateful *élève*. "Savez-vous," she said, "ce que la Geoffrin vient faire ici? Elle vient voir ce qu'elle pourra recevoir de mon inventaire." Madame Geoffrin's recruiting was more than successful, and Sainte-Beuve dilates on the company she entertained. Each Monday she had a dinner for the artists—Vanello, Vernet, Boucher, La Tour, Vien, &c. Each Wednesday she entertained the literary world, and among the guests at the brilliant feasts of reason were D'Alembert, Mairan, Marmontel, Morellet, Saint-Lambert, Helvetius, Grimm, D'Holbach, and many a kindred spirit. Her saloons were thrown open for receptions after dinner, and the evening closed with the most select of little suppers, limited to some half-dozen of her intimates. Princes came to her, says Sainte-Beuve, as private individuals, and "les ambassadeurs n'en bougeaient des qu'ils y avaient mis pied." Madame Geoffrin, like the Marquise de Sablé, tabooed politics and religion; and she lent a watchful ear to the conversation around her, peremptorily checking any *risqué* or dangerous speeches with a "Voilà qui est bien." Her sterling good sense was as conspicuous as her good-nature; and she showed the latter quality in endless deeds of benevolence. A more questionable use of her ample means was in the liberality with which she subsidised the 'Encyclopédie;' and *apropos* to her long-standing *liaison* with the Encyclopedists, her last *bon mot* is recorded. She was lying on her deathbed, struck down by paralysis, when her daughter, more devout than her mother, closed the door of the room against the philosophers. There was profound sensation, of course, among the old friends of the house, and the rumour of it reached the dying woman. "My daughter," she said, "like

Godfrey de Bouillon, wishes to defend my tomb against the infidels."

No one of the leaders of French society has been better known in England than Madame du Deffand. We naturally associate the blind old lady with her maternal affection for Horace Walpole; and it was in London that the best collection of her letters "was first published, from manuscripts found among Walpole's papers. If Madame Geoffrin embodied sterling good sense, Madame du Deffand represented excellent taste; and the letters she has left are models of composition. She owed little to education, and almost everything to self-instruction and intellectual society. Her style, as Walpole wrote to her, was specially her own; and he could hardly have paid it a higher compliment than in warning her against trying to change for the better by modelling her writing after Madame de Sevigné. In her old age she fell on comparatively evil days, and she had to repent the act of benevolence which should have given her a daughter by adoption. In her discovery of a congenial spirit in Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse, we are reminded of the story of Cimabué and Giotto. Madame du Deffand, who was of a noble family of Burgundy, had met in her native province a bright young girl who was the *souffre-douleur* of the family that had received her for "charity." She appreciated at first sight the qualities of the Cinderella, brought her to Paris, installed her as her companion, and presented her to the company who frequented her receptions. Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse acted towards her patroness as Madame Geoffrin had behaved to Madame de Tencin. Madame du Deffand was an invalid who rose

late, and Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse profited by her opportunities. The mistress of the house soon discovered that she was being deprived of the monopoly of her most cherished possession in the shape of the devotion of her *fidèles*. There was a storm, which scarcely cleared the air, and Madame du Deffand had no reason to congratulate herself on having precipitated a rupture. The attentions that had been paid to her faithless *confidante* proved to have been no unmeaning compliment; and the seceders who, as Sainte-Beuve expresses it, followed the fortunes of the *spirituelle émigrante*, framed themselves into a joint-stock company to establish her in a *salon* of her own. Among them were numbered D'Alembert, Turgot, and Brienne, the future archbishop and chancellor—a secession that the blind lady might well deplore. "From that moment Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse lived apart, and became, by her *salon* and by her influence on D'Alembert, one of the recognised powers of the eighteenth century."

It is time that we brought our article to a close. It is not in its plan to break ground on the new epoch that may be said to have begun with Madame Rêcamier; nor need we recapitulate what we have said, directly and indirectly, as to the influence of those *salons* of the eighteenth century on the terrible dramas that were to be enacted at its close. The mere names that are scattered over the last few pages are amply suggestive of the extent of that influence. If the precursors of the later revolutionists were in the dissolute aristocracy of the dim ages, its most able and indefatigable pioneers are to be found among the friends of the Geoffrins, the Deffands, and the L'Espinasses.

THE STUMP MINISTRY : ITS FIRST SESSION.

A MINISTER who is the object of worship almost idolatrous to the great mass of his partisans, and behind whom they now sit in overwhelming majority, has had control of the nation's interests for about five months. In ordinary circumstances such a period might well be held too short to justify any decided criticism of a statesman's proceedings. But the position of the Ministry which now holds office is different from that of any ordinary Administration, whether as regards the events antecedent to its accession to power, or those of the few months of its existence. The mode and manner of its coming into being were unlike anything previously known in parliamentary history; the power given to it by the constituencies was almost unheard of; and the course it has run for little more than the third part of a year, has been as much if not more out of the common than might have been expected, either from the peculiarity of its hatching, or the gigantic monstrosity that was the issue of it.

Never in the constitutional history of this or any other country was the political war for the overthrow of a Government conducted as was that which the present Prime Minister and his friends waged against the late Administration of Lord Beaconsfield. A policy which commended itself to the judgment of Parliament, and overcame the arguments of party orators so effectually as to bring over to its side many whose political associations necessarily made them jealous critics, was assailed again and again in vain. The House of Commons remained unmoved by opposition rhetoric, and gave an unflinching support to the Government. The un-

wonted spectacle was seen of men who had once been Ministers of the Crown rushing about the country during vacations and recesses, in order to excite crowds by violent declamation in favour of views which, when Parliament assembled, they were unable to induce very many of their own party to sanction. Those who, on platforms crowded with admirers, roared as veritable lions, were as dumb dogs in comparison when obliged to stand in face of their opponents at St Stephen's. As Lord Salisbury truly said, "Butter would not melt in their mouths." Not once during the momentous years since 1874 were they able to talk in the Houses of Parliament as they ranted from waggons or railway bridges, lest they should disgust those of their political friends who repudiated their views, and alienate others whom party loyalty alone kept from open revolt. For it was one of the anomalies of the last Parliament, which history will have to explain, that while never was a Ministerial policy more fiercely and persistently assailed, and held up to public scorn as weak, unworthy, and immoral, never was the invective of opposition less effectively supported when brought to the crucial test of division. Never did Lord Hartington the nominal shepherd, or Mr Gladstone the real leader — the butting-ram — of the flock, succeed in bringing their followers together. A score or so of wandering sheep would break away and rush into the wrong pen, and another score would resist with absolute stolidity all attempts to lead or drive them.

But while the firmness and patriotism of Parliament were thus upholding the Ministry of the day

against opposition, which, whether right in its views or not, was undoubtedly factious in its action, the enemies of the Government were hard at work with the only weapons left to them—those of invective and abuse. It cannot be doubted that the strength and continued success of the Government in Parliament were most satisfactory from a patriotic point of view, and as furnishing an incident to be recorded with pride in British history—national representatives putting aside party trammels when questions of world-wide importance are at issue. But it is equally true that the negative effect was most damaging to constitutional interests. The patriotic were lulled into false security; while, at the same time, the vanity and conceit of those who were endeavouring to make political capital against the Government were so piqued by their repeated defeats, that they were stimulated to tremendous exertion, and induced to adopt any weapons, however unworthy. Their only hope was to overthrow, by a gigantic effort, the Ministry which their most violent attacks had hitherto been unable even to shake. Sensible men of all classes, and powerful journals of all politics, looked upon the Government as able, without any strengthening of its fortifications, to resist every attack in the future, as it had done in the past. Being unable to see any breach as the result of so many previous assaults, they were confident that everything was secure, and that no fresh works need be thrown up, or extra guards mounted. The efforts of the enemy had so signally failed, in comparison with the energy displayed in them, that all the defending and a great number of the attacking party looked on the result of the final great struggle as a foregone conclusion.

The last assault might cause some loss to the defenders, but it was not believed that it could compel a surrender.

One thing above all others tended to produce this feeling of security, which in the end proved so disastrous to the late Government. It was quite manifest to all who were well informed, and who retained sufficient calmness to watch the struggle with reasonable impartiality, that the attack was being conducted in a manner in which there was a great deal of glaring misrepresentation, and much that was so wild as to border on the frantic. The rules which usually obtain in such contests were again and again overstepped. Words that social etiquette scarcely permits, and many words that it forbids, were freely and vehemently used by the leader of the clamour, and re-echoed by his followers. "Insane, suicidal, and wicked," were among the mildest of the epithets which formed the fighting vocabulary of excited orators. The Lowes and the Harcourts, the Brights and the Chamberlains, the Rylands and the Andersons, and those lower down, if indeed there be any, vied with each other in the licence of vituperation and invective, which they, as imitators of their chief, permitted to themselves. He and they bade the nation believe the proceedings of the Government then in power to have been such that "no honest people could think of them without shame and degradation,"—that to suffer a continuance of their foreign and colonial policy would be immoral; and "Heaven's name" was again and again invoked in passionate appeal against the existence of a Ministry of such vain counsels and evil lusts. The tone used was so extravagant, the energy so excited, that it roused contempt rather

than indignation among educated and sensible people, suggesting more the condition of minds unstrung by envy and disappointment than of patriotic hearts moved by wisdom. Accordingly, it was the general anticipation of those who took an interest in public affairs, that an opposition so conducted called for no special energy to counteract its effect upon the constituencies.

In this a double mistake was committed. It was forgotten that the constituencies created by the Reform Acts of 1867 and 1868 contain a vast mass of voters who are likely at all times to be swayed by those who take most trouble to attract their attention at the moment—voters who cannot be expected to show much discrimination in the opinions they form, but are more likely to be carried away by passionate appeals than led by sober counsels. The masses are always emotional; they are seldom discriminating. Naturally prone to strong language themselves, they enjoy it with special relish when it is uttered by men of higher position than their own. They are led not by their own convictions, but by those who have the inborn gift of leading. Let the man who has the power but start the current, and the headlong rush follows—

“Die Menge schwankt in ungewissen Geist

Dann strömt sie nach, wohin der Strom sie reist.”

The constituencies brought into being by the last Reform Bill can never be left alone to form their own judgment by those who truly desire well to their country. They are certain not to be left alone by the Radicals, who, whatever other faults they may have, undoubtedly give evidence of the strength of their convictions by their untiring energy. But even if this were not so, the modern possessor of the

franchise must not be neglected. He is exacting of attention, and he requires instruction. The modern voter must be influenced, and the influence must be kept up from day to day vigorously, unceasingly, unweariedly. The party that does not appeal to the passions of men—that neither rouses their natural propensity to destructiveness, nor offers bribes to their selfishness—can least afford to leave the household suffrage voter uncared for, in the fond hope that his action at the ballot-box will be guided by sound principles. We do not expect good manners from children who live in the back slums of our cities, unless we seek them out and tend them. As little should we expect sound politics from voters of the less cultivated classes of society if we leave them alone and untended, to learn their political manners in an atmosphere which reeks with Radicalism.

Such was the first mistake—imagining that because it was evident to the instructed that the opposition made to the Government was unsound and unfair, it could produce no evil results and need not be feared. The second error was as serious. The manifest extravagance and frantic character of the opposition was looked upon as sufficient to defeat itself. It was thought that the marked contrast between its violence out of doors and the feebleness displayed in Parliament indicated its own weakness, and would prevent the constituencies being influenced by it. Relying on the truth that

“Deep rivers with soft murmurs glide
along,
The shallow roar,”—

it was fondly believed that the blatant talk and loud shouting of the envious and the foolish would be as harmless as the babbling stream—that the constituencies

would gauge its mean depth, as so many had already done, and instead of being swept away in the current, would set themselves against it resolutely. Those who took this view had forgotten Dryden's lines—

“Though nonsense is a nauseous heavy
mass,
The vehicle called Faction makes it
pass.”

It seems not to have occurred to them to consider that the very violence and extreme character of the extra-parliamentary clamour was produced by, and intended to counteract, the Government's parliamentary success. It was essentially an appeal from the informed and skilled to the ignorant and unversed. Flattery of the mob was the leading characteristic of its style. It was a direct appeal to passion. Excitement and not calm judgment was the spirit evoked. The struggle was undoubtedly conducted on the Liberal side with the skill of genius; but it was the genius which felt that the battle must be won by tactics hitherto unknown in our constitutional history. It will be shown later how this was done, and how successfully, so that the “vehicle Faction” did make most wonderful “nonsense pass.”

But besides the character of extravagance and absurdity which was stamped on so large a proportion of the stump oratory of 1879, much of it was known to be absolutely false, and much of it to be only colourably true, the deviations from truth being easy of exposure. Accordingly, it was believed that the falsity which was attached to it would cause it to defeat itself, and that no more was necessary to extract the sting than to expose the falsehood. But in this instance, again, the operation of a general rule was trusted to, without

regard to the circumstances of the particular case. Just as men are
“Slow to believe that which they wish
Far from their enemies,”—

so, when the unscrupulous course is taken of influencing by passion while professing to guide by reason, men will believe anything against the object held up to their detestation. Lies fly out on swift wings, and when the wind of passion blows behind them, the truth will vainly press to catch them up. Lies, uttered with tones of solemnity and interlarded with pious appeals to Heaven, are believed, while

“Modest truth is cast behind the crowd;
Truth speaks too low, hypocrisy too
loud.”

Nor do lies so told catch only the ignorant and those whom bias makes ready to believe anything. It is foolish to ignore the well-ascertained fact that falsehoods often and solemnly repeated will find believers, even among people otherwise wary and cautious,—nay, sometimes the very utterer himself is caught in the net of his own hiding—

“Till their own words at length deceive
^{’em,}
And, oft repeating, they believe ’em.”

Persistent assertion, particularly in political attacks, will always have a measure of acceptance for the time being, however certainly its evil success will later recoil upon its authors. Only let it be persistent enough, and be uttered with solemn emphasis as the expression of a semi-religious faith, with much profession of a sense of responsibility on the part of the accuser. Say it but often enough and ponderously enough and unctuously enough—

“And here's the secret of a hundred
creeds;
Men get opinions, as boys learn to spell,

By reiteration chiefly;—the same thing
Will pass at last for absolutely wise,
And not with fools exclusively,"—

words which are specially correct when the thing that is being said "oft enough" is a slanderous accusation against your neighbour.

It will be granted by the most keen supporters of the Gladstone agitation of 1879-80 that there was abundance of reiteration. As Sir William Harcourt elegantly expressed it, they had to keep "pegging away." The truth is, the fury of the Liberals was in no respect spontaneous, but was worked up by persistent agitation. The wrath of official Liberalism was raised to a white heat not by the Conservative policy, but by the monstrosity of a Conservative Government being powerful at all, and resisting all their assaults in Parliament so successfully. It is in their eyes a crime for Conservatism to be in power, except "by permission."

"Malicious envy, root of all debates,
The plague of governments and bane of
states,"

was at the bottom of all the turmoil. The party that, according to their former assertions, had wrought its own ruin in 1867 by passing Household Suffrage, sitting on the right side of the Speaker for six years in undiminished strength; the political Chatterton, who had destroyed himself, ruling as the most powerful statesman of modern times, and raising the prestige of Great Britain once more in the councils of Europe,—all this was a sight too maddening to be endured. Weapons for its destruction must be found; and their blows must fall in furious showers. To hold the fort of the State against Liberalism is a crime. It is robbery of the righteous, and against robbers all is fair. To get them cast out

and ourselves divide the spoils will be a blessing to the country, and so noble an end justifies the means. This was the Radical creed at the last election, as expressed in their words and manifested in their actions.

If the course of political affairs during the years of the latest Eastern crisis had been as carefully observed as it should have been by those on whom rests the responsibility of the conduct of the political struggle preparatory to the general election, the error of underrating the influence of the Opposition labours throughout the country, because of their extravagant and unscrupulous character, might have been avoided. It would not have escaped observation, that long before the dissolution of Parliament Mr Gladstone and his coadjutors had very efficiently gauged the ignorance and gullibility of a large proportion of the parliamentary voters, and had succeeded in exciting them to that condition of political passion in which they soon become deaf to all argument that may tell against the object of their idolatry, and ready to cheer anything that the voice may utter, which to them "is the voice of a god and not of a man." The proposal of Hushai the Archite, to put ropes round the city and drag it into the river, was not more absurd than many things uttered with pompous solemnity during Liberal stumping, and cheered to the echo by gaping audiences. The cool effrontery with which things absolutely contradictory were said—the ignorant being caught one day by strong asseveration, and the old Liberals soothed by saving clauses on another—has never been equalled in history. The extreme Radicals were patted on the back, and promised the reversal of this piece of policy, and the abandonment of that

acquisition. Conventions would be repudiated, and retreats ordered at once. Whigs, on the other hand, were told, almost with a wink, all that kind of thing is electioneering enthusiasm, and useful to get us these Radical votes, but to keep their minds easy. Of course obligations undertaken by the present Government must be fulfilled. Home Rule was a thing that a respectable Whig could not even vote for an inquiry into, and Mr Gladstone did not understand what it might mean; but that was no reason why a Home-Ruler should not be elected, and bring a very useful vote to a Liberal Government. Never mind about a policy. "Out with the Tories," and there will be time enough to consider what should be done afterwards. Great was the flattery with which the Radical voters were spoken of as the "intelligence" of the country; and yet those who thus spoke were not afraid to put this wonderful intelligence to such strains, after it had been worked up to a proper standard of political excitement. And they were right. You cannot mix the tumbler too strong for those who have already drunk too much, and whose toast is "Confusion to our foes."

Perhaps the strongest of all the circumstances which may be held to account for the general belief which undoubtedly existed, that the Radical agitation, headed by Mr Gladstone, would be unsuccessful, was that already alluded to,—the firm, unflinching support given by Parliament, independent of party, to the Beaconsfield Administration. This, it was thought, was a difficulty in the way of Radical success, which could not be overcome. Old Whigs, moderate Liberals, and ultra-Radicals had been found again and again giving a hearty and patriotic support to the

policy of the Government, in spite of threats by Reform Club committees and grumbings of Radical caucuses. This fact was appealed to, and the appeal was unanswerable. What was the use of fulminating in strong language against a Conservative Ministry—language so violent as to constitute a practical popular impeachment—when they could point to many able and stable men on the Opposition benches from whom they received consistent support?

But here, again, those who thus argued had not correctly measured the audacity of the agitation leader. They looked upon him, and perhaps rightly, as leading a forlorn-hope. But they forgot that audacity in such a leader may be the best generalship. And so it proved. Here came in that stroke of genius of which some notice was promised in a former part of this paper, and which overcame this apparently insuperable difficulty most brilliantly. Whether it was not at the same time a blow most foul, let men judge now, when events can be rehearsed calmly. Mr Gladstone ventured on a master-stroke which, if successful, would completely destroy all advantage his opponents could derive from appealing to the fact that Parliament had given them an ample certificate. He boldly seized on this inconvenient ally of the Conservative Government, and included him in the impeachment. Unscrupulous constables, when an exceptionally strong witness for the defence accompanies a prisoner to the police station, sometimes get rid of the difficulty summarily by suddenly seizing him and including his name in the charge-sheet as an accomplice. Such a proceeding is exactly on a par with what Mr Gladstone did, and his doing was hailed with tremendous applause by his Radical friends. In his first Mid-Lothian tour, the Ministry

alone were attacked and vituperated. But when Mr Gladstone found that all his glorification among Scotch Radicals had no effect in altering the stream into the Government lobby, he changed his tactics in his second stumping round. He made a furious onslaught, not only on the Ministry, but on Parliament itself, transferring to it every charge he had before formulated against the Government. Parliament, which ought to have impeached Beaconsfield, must itself be impeached along with him. All who took the trouble to read Mr Gladstone's second series of Mid-Lothian addresses will remember how this new evolution was developed to outflank the foe's strongest defences.

"The responsible Government, as I have stated from this place, and state again, has been supported by the majority of the House of Commons. That majority of the House of Commons has freely taken over the responsibility, which, in the first instance, was that of Ministers alone."

"I tell you confidently, gentlemen, I have sat in eleven Parliaments of this country; and of all the eleven there is not one that would for a moment have entertained such a scheme, excepting the Parliament which has supported Lord Beaconsfield's Administration. You may think, gentlemen, that that is not a very civil thing to say of a Parliament; but I assure you, such was the pressure on my mind, that I said it on Monday night in the House of Commons as plainly and as intelligibly as I have said it now to you."

"I rejoice that now we have another tribunal to appeal to—a tribunal I think, I will venture to say, of larger hearts and of larger minds—a tribunal from which I expect more solid and more intelligent judgment than we have been able to get out of the Parliament that is now expiring, misguided as it has been by the influence of the Administration."

"No man ought, without questioning himself again and again, to advance against a Ministry that it has invaded the rights of Parliament, and against a Parliament that it has suffered, tolerated, encouraged, and rewarded that invasion. And yet, gentlemen, that is the work of the late Parliament. It is no vague, general charge. A severe charge it is. It is one that cannot be conveyed in slight or in secondary language. You must find for it forcible and stringent terms. But follow it into its detail, scrutinise it to the very root, and you will find that in points almost without number it is too grievously made good; and that the late House of Commons, which is the proper guardian, and the only effectual guardian, of British liberty, has not performed its trust, but has been content to see those liberties impaired and compromised in the shape of aggression and trespass upon the privileges and prerogatives of the Parliament itself."

The tactics thus adopted to capture, by a bold stroke, a position that seemed impregnable, were carried out with tremendous vigour by the statesman who originated them. With an intensity of passion which seemed to give to the being swayed by it power to set the natural laws of his period of life at defiance, making nought of physical fatigue and mental strain, he hurled his anathemas against the Executive which formulated, and the Parliament which gave life to, the national policy. The statesman who guides public opinion by argument was displaced by the preacher who incites to action through the emotions. Not as politically mistaken, but as personally wicked, were Ministers, and those who upheld them, denounced. The rhetoric of excitement was deliberately resorted to. The tone was that of revolutionary propagandism, not of responsible statesmanship. Mr Gladstone, with the marked tendency which he constantly manifests to the chicaneries

of Jesuitry, used his position as an experienced statesman to increase his influence, but professed to be a statesman retired from business, that he might escape the responsibility attaching to the character. His conduct was like that of a French general of the Empire leading the Communists, with a blouse over his epaulettes and a *bonnet rouge* on his head. The prestige of position was used to obtain support, while the position itself was in pretended humility resigned, in order that the responsibility attaching to it might not be incurred. The weight of statesmanly repute was employed to give practical force to the tactics, and to stimulate the enthusiasm of the rank and file; but the position of statesmanship was disclaimed, in order to allow the necessary licence to the attack. The skill of generalship must be used; but the *cordon*, which might be sullied by practices contrary to the usages of war, must not be worn. The shout was the shout of "the greatest statesman of this or any other age;" but it was only "a humble country member" who was answerable for the meaning of the sounds. The intention was to inflame the public mind by the pressure upon it of the "intense earnestness" of a versed and favourite statesman; while the double advantage of a colour of disinterestedness and a freedom from the necessary restraint of responsibility might be secured, by posing as a mere shooting-coat-and-gaiters member of Parliament.

How from this position of double-dealing Mr Gladstone declaimed—denouncing Parliament, insulting our allies, and giving encouragement to Home Rule, as no man could have done without disgrace to himself and injury to his country, who stood in the position of a leader either in or out of office; and no

man who ever had been a statesman should have done—least of all within a few weeks of his becoming First Minister of the Crown,—every one knows. How successful his agitation proved itself the Conservative party know but too well. If the lesson is learned which the history of that agitation teaches, there may in the end be more good than evil resulting from it. If Conservatives will but realise that the lashing of a sea into fury is the work of a few hours, and that it is *wind* by which its power is so quickly developed, they will not so fondly trust to the storm blowing past harmless as they did during the last year. Bulwarks to resist the sea must be built during calm weather, and in good time. It is the duty of the Conservative party to have strong defences against the destructive tendencies of Radical and revolutionary politics. These are spasmodic and violent, and may, if not banked out when the winds are at rest, sweep all before them, when some political Æolus lets the stormy blasts loose. Let the Conservative party learn the lesson; and perhaps when the next Radical wave is blown up by some future "irresponsible country member," it may be thrown back on itself harmless, by the resistance of the united and cemented bulwark of a party determined to oppose revolution and protect the institutions under which our country has grown great and prosperous.

But while the Liberal majority of 1880 was to a great extent obtained by these unworthy means, it was also in a very considerable degree due to a different and a most laudable cause, which ought to be noticed in considering the character of the majority. When the general election was imminent, it was felt by all men who wished well to the country, to be above everything de-

sirable, that whatever party held power after it was over, it should not do so on the sufferance of the Home-Rulers. All saw that if the success of Government measures should depend on the assistance of Parnellites, it could only be obtained at a price which no honest Ministers would pay, and which must at once seal the fate of any Ministry that could be found base enough to tender payment of it. It was this feeling, no doubt, that stimulated the Liberal party to the most strenuous efforts for the purpose of increasing their majority, when it had become clear, early in the contest, that a Conservative Cabinet was no longer possible. Old Whigs, who had been coldly indifferent during the previous stump agitation, and held aloof from the fierce and unwarrantable abuse that was showered on the Beaconsfield Government, were roused to activity the moment it became certain that their party must take office. A majority, with the Home Rule vote discounted, became a necessity, if their accession to power was to bring them anything but shame or disaster, or both. Their efforts were successful. The overweening confidence of the Conservatives in the counties, which in many instances had made them careless both in nursing the register and paying attention to the voters, with the aid of the all-powerful temptation contained in the prospect of being on the winning side, enabled the Whigs to snatch many victories by a vigorous *coup-de-main*, and swelled the already great majority beyond the wildest expectations of the most sanguine Liberals. Steady Whigs were rejoiced to think that the new Ministry could discard the assistance of the Irish Home Rule party, and looked forward to the prospect of a Liberal reign, which in its brilliant success

should console them for the unjustifiable way in which the Tories had for six years usurped their right to control the government of the country.

If the strength of a Government could be satisfactorily tested by the number of their majority in the House of Commons, then the Gladstone Administration of 1880 ought to be the most stable that has swayed the destinies of the nation during the last half-century. The majority with which they took their seat on the Treasury bench was made up of enthusiastic Liberals, full of jubilation over a party victory, which to many of them was a surprise, and to all a success beyond their most sanguine calculations. To the outward seeming all promised well. The turn in the tide of bad trade had come; the prospect of the season seemed more favourable for agriculture than for several years back. Afghanistan and Zululand were quieted. Eastern Europe was no longer causing immediate anxiety. The good ship Liberalism had but to set full sail to the breeze to carry her inestimable blessings swiftly and safely to every part of the world where the interests or the duties of the nation called for action.

Such was the state of matters a few short months ago. What is their condition now? Is it too much to say that the brilliancy of the former prospect finds its exact contrast in the melancholy sight now before the eyes of Great Britain and the world? No Ministry has ever held office in this country with a substantial majority which has been so discredited in three years, as the present Government is now, after it has had about three full months to develop its measures. Just as their most sanguine expectations never led

them to look for such power as they possessed when they took the reins of office, so the most extravagant hopes of those who are their political foes could never have made it possible for them to anticipate such a rapid decadence of the new Administration's prestige. Instead of the colossal Liberal majority, with "the greatest statesman of this or any other age" as its head, being seen doing its work with a powerful hand like a sinewy Hercules, it rather resembles the giant of the race-course booth. An unwieldy, weak-kneed, petulant mass, it is like the "tallest man in the fair," wonderful for everything except the capacity to be of the slightest practical use, and occasionally being in such a state from "want of tone" (according to good-natured medical phrase), that the irregular and disorderly action of its monstrous parts creates considerable risk of the whole booth being upset. Within a few weeks of his engagement the giant has become so unsteady in his habits, that his performances have descended from the sublime to the ridiculous.

What has the head done?—that head whose "intense earnestness" has been held up to the admiration of the constituencies of Great Britain, and from whose lips they were told unadulterated wisdom and purest truth ever flowed. Almost the first act of Mr Gladstone which was of an importance to attract public attention, on his becoming Prime Minister, was to pen a humble apology to a sovereign, one of our allies, for language which, to use his own words, he could "not defend, far less repeat," uttered by him when conducting, in a position "of less responsibility," the most tremendous political agitation of the last quarter of a century. He placed himself between the horns

of a dilemma. Either what he spoke was untrue and should never have been spoken at all; or it was true, but the Minister who has got into power by stating the truth, may escape from difficulties thereby created, by saying that what was true was false and cannot be justified. The deliverance of impartial critics upon this incident will be, that Mr Gladstone tried to drag our ally in the mire to serve his own political ends; and that the Prime Minister of this country exposed it to humiliation in his person, that he might save himself from the consequences of his own gratuitous and most unjustifiable attack upon a friendly state. The contrast between Mr Gladstone, the immaculate exposé of everybody else's evil deeds, declaiming in Mid-Lothian to-day, so "honest" and so "earnest," and the same Mr Gladstone a few weeks after, eating his own words to "Dear Count Karolyi," may be edifying as a proof of versatility and courage of a certain kind, but it is not the sort of exhibition that is most refreshing to ordinary British subjects. They are not yet sufficiently educated in the Ignatius Loyola school, as to appreciate an earnestness which is "irresponsible," and a moral code which allows the use of means that cannot be manfully justified, in order to gain an important end, and whenever the end has been compassed, permits escape from the consequences by prompt and abject confession of the impropriety of the means.

What has been his conduct as leader of the House of Commons—that position which calls for so much tact, temper, and loyal watchfulness over its dignity and freedom? He has within a few weeks so far forgotten the responsibility of his position in these respects, and given way to excited feeling, as to ig-

nore the authority of the Chair in matters of order, and to move that a member whom the Speaker did not call to order should be silenced. No doubt it may be pleaded for him, that the member in regard to whom the motion was made was committing a very marked breach of taste and good feeling, and that the leader of the House was in truth

“Goaded by most sharp occasions,
Which lay nice manners by;”

but this can in no way excuse one of his age and experience for committing the mistake of taking an improper step to put matters right. The leader who takes an inch in irregularity, from however good a motive, is tempting others to take an ell. And the result of this high-handed and unconstitutional ebullition was to cause a scene most discreditably to Parliament, and to place the First Minister of the Crown in the humiliating position of having ultimately to withdraw a motion which had been tabled with vehemence and pressed with determination.

He has further succeeded in astonishing society by two actions of a most antipodean description. Contrary to all past usage, he has nominated a Roman Catholic, and that Roman Catholic a pervert, to a viceregal position under a sovereign, one of the fundamental conditions of whose right to reign is that she shall be a Protestant. No one can doubt that this was done with special regard to the nominee's religious faith. It is preposterous to pretend that the appointment could be justified solely on the ground of special qualification for the office. And thus the spectacle is exhibited of the author of 'Vaticanism,' written, presumably, from a position of "irresponsibility," going out of his way to give

a viceregency to one of its votaries. On the other hand, he has lent all his powerful influence, both as an individual and as a Minister, to aid an avowed atheist in his efforts to force his way into a seat in the House of Commons. And this in the case of one not merely holding sceptical opinions as an individual, but who is an active and unblushing propagandist, whose dissemination of indecent and abominable writings in furtherance of his so-called philosophy it has been necessary to rebuke by punishment in a criminal court. Still further, he publicly announced his intention to parade his infidelity before Parliament, to tell its members to their faces that an oath as he should answer to God was an empty form, which would have no binding effect upon his conscience. Yet this man, when he made these avowals, and even when, after making them, he had the effrontery to volunteer to take the oath after all, was backed up by the Prime Minister with fervour in his attempts to thrust himself, with all his atheistical philosophy paraded in front of him, into the Legislature of a country whose royal flag carries the motto, "*Dieu et mon Droit.*" When the dignity of the House of Commons was outraged, and its authority defied by this "fool who hath said in his heart, There is no God," the sad sight was seen of the leader of that House sitting in sulks and dudgeon, abdicating his position and petulantly casting off loyalty to the House because the offender was his *protégé*, and because the House of Commons had dared to outvote him on the question of admitting the infidel. He who objects so fiercely to what he calls imperialism, has made it plain that the House of Commons, or at least his majority, must submit to his impiousness or suffer his displeasure.

He is not the servant of the country, but its representatives are his serfs. The man who is loudest against what he calls a "mechanical majority," loses no time in making it plain that a majority which will not do his bidding, even when the doing of it is revolution, will be made to feel who is its master. The sight of the leader of the House, sitting begloved and cane in hand, refusing to give any assistance in the maintenance of its authority, because it has an opinion of its own in a matter of constitutional importance, and will not yield to his dictation, is novel, and it is to be hoped will remain unique. It is a first and very marked indication of Mr Gladstone's views of the uses of a majority, and shows conclusively why he considers a Conservative majority to be "mechanical." It is because he holds that to be the proper function of a majority. It is not its being mechanical that rouses his ire; it is that its duty being mechanical it sometimes carries out the will of a wicked Lord Beaconsfield. When it is the instrument of a virtuous Minister like himself, the only crime it can commit is assuming to be anything more than Liguori's Jesuit—"a stick in the hand of a man."

There is one thing about this wretched Bradlaugh business which makes it of much greater importance than if it related merely to so insignificant a person as the individual in question. It is painful to think that such a man, with such a history—whose name would probably have been unknown except among atheists and holders of strange social doctrines in his own stratum of society, but for the fact that his profane and disgusting views were so offensively put forth as to necessitate his trial in a criminal court—should be the means of practically effecting a substantial

constitutional revolution. For can anything more revolutionary be imagined than a Ministry allowing the Legislature of a Christian country to be invaded by those who deny the very existence of God, and refuse to recognise any responsibility hereafter for the deeds done in the body? Yet Mr Gladstone is not ashamed, in his special pleading for the atheist, to talk of "the narrow ledge of theism," as if the religious toleration, which has gone the length of accepting all men who acknowledge God, has brought them within a thousand miles of allowing themselves to be governed by those who deny His existence and insult His sovereignty. Mr Gladstone ought to know, and we believe does know, that there was scarcely a man in the Parliaments which removed Roman Catholic and Jewish disabilities who would not rather have kept the law as it stood for ever, if they had believed that the admission of atheists could be looked upon as a logical sequence of what they did.

There is one other act which, though technically that of the Ministry as a whole, may in all fairness be set down on the list of deeds for which Mr Gladstone is responsible. He has added one penny to the income-tax. The man who went to the country in 1874 with the cry that the income-tax should be abolished, begins his next term of office by increasing it. The burden of a tax which he and his followers have always denounced as a war tax, is deliberately added to, not from any necessity consistent with that representation of it, but to compensate for loss created by the repeal of another tax, which Conservatives have always maintained ought to be abolished at a convenient opportunity, but which, in the days when the revenue was increasing by "leaps

and bounds," neither Mr Gladstone nor any other Liberal ever took a single step to remove.

Such are some of the doings of the head of this colossal Liberal power. A glance at a few of the acts of the whole body will be equally instructive. But first, what have they undone of the work of their predecessors? If one tithe of what was shouted before and during the general election were true, the new Ministry, on coming into power, would of necessity have had to reverse many important acts of those whose places they took. The Cyprus that—to use Mr Gladstone's phrase—we had "filched," would have been given up. The Anglo-Turkish Convention, which was "insane," would have been abandoned. The Porte, who it was "absurd" to say would resist by force the will of Europe, would have been dealt with and disposed of. The concert of Europe, which the Beaconsfield Government had "broken up," would again be brought to bear in irresistible demonstrations against the unspeakable Turk. Sir Bartle Frere, the wicked proconsul, who slaughtered "poor Zulus," would have been at once recalled. Beneficent and practical home-work would immediately be set in operation, and a short session of Liberalism would do more than years of Conservative "sham" legislation. One of the most important officials of the Liberal party gave as an excuse for their leaders putting forward no programme of policy, that they would have enough of work in setting right the evil things done by the Conservative Government to occupy them for some time. And if the last Government had been, as was asserted, the "very worst Government of the century—untrustworthy, wicked, detestable," and a hundred other things, there would

have been some reason in what he said. But his friends having gained their end by all this strong language, what have they done, during the months they have been in office, to reverse the action of those they ousted from power? As regards Turkey, they have done nothing that was not within the programme of the former Ministry. The loud bluster so many of them indulged in about Bulgaria and Roumelia has so far died away, that within a few weeks we have been told that if Turkey will settle the Greek and Montenegrin questions, no more will be asked at her hands in Europe. And so plain is it that the anti-Mohammedan aspirations of Bulgaria and Roumelia have nothing to expect in their aid from us, that already the old Russian game is being played—the importation into these countries of Russian arms, Russian officers, and Russian men. The naval demonstration mode of coercion,—that highly moral expedient of bullying a weak Power, not because you intend to act, but because you have made up your mind that action would be unnecessary if you shammed it enough,—is, indeed, still on the *tapis*; but it seems to be quite understood that, as representing any real intention of using force, it is a mere sham. Its danger as a precedent is too clear to require notice. But one thing is quite plain from the state of matters in the East. The concert of Europe has not been so consolidated by joy of the nations at Mr Gladstone's accession to power as to lead to much display of confidence in the prospect of future peace. Every day that has elapsed since Mr Goschen went forth with a Liberal olive-twig in his button-hole has witnessed increased preparations for war in Eastern Europe. War, and not peace, is the result to which all external action points.

Much might be said about Afghanistan, but until more detail is known it would not be fair to make decided comments. Still this at least may be said now, that three months of the new *régime* have been signalled by a military disaster for which the Government of the day will have to find excuse. The disaster was not the result of treachery, as was the case in Cabul, but of underrating the power of the enemy, and of intrusting to general officers inexperienced in actual warfare the responsibility of carrying out delicate and important operations. We need not go over the series of blunders which culminated in the defeat of Kushk-i-Nakhud, or apportion to each quarter its due degree of culpability. It is quite clear, however, that Ayoub Khan's menaces were regarded with an indifference which was altogether reckless. His advance was known at Candahar and Simla on 27th June, and it was then decided that a force should be sent out to oppose him. The day before the departure of this force, Ayoub's strength was known at Candahar with tolerable accuracy, and it was known also that the force sent against him was vastly inferior numerically, and had only one battery to his six. Why, then, were not reinforcements from the reserve division, which Lord Lytton had ordered to be held in readiness for some such emergency, pushed up to General Phayre, and General Phayre's troops advanced at once to Candahar? Let it only be ascertained where the responsibility of this neglect is to be attached, and there can be no mistake as to the judgment which the country will pronounce. But there is one fact connected with this last phase of the Affghan war on which comment need not be delayed—viz., that the India Office in London was in such ignorance of

what was going on, that when the news of the disaster came, Lord Hartington was unable to give Parliament the slightest information. On the nature of the expedition, the forces which composed it, and all other important facts, the Secretary for India knew as little as the messenger who carries his despatch-box to the House. One would have imagined that every step and detail of the all-important proceedings in that land would have been well known, and that the Government at home would have followed them with the keenest anxiety; but such, apparently, was not the case. The Ministry of all the talents and virtues is guided, as to the actings of to-day in India, by the opinion of General Stewart pronounced many weeks before; and military expeditions are absolutely ordered by the Governor-General without regard to intervening occurrences. Expeditions most hazardous, and on which the whole future prestige of Great Britain in Afghanistan—ay, and in all India—may depend, are entered upon, and brought to woful end, before the Government at home know how they are composed, or what they were intended to accomplish. It is surely not too much to say that such a state of things is in every respect discreditable. The Gladstone Government have to thank the brilliant military commander and his plucky troops who have defeated Ayoub Khan, for, to some extent, saving our military prestige in India; but they are mistaken if they believe that the successful result of General Roberts's daring march will save them from the blame which must attach somewhere for the previous disaster, and which, at present, they cannot show does not attach to them.

What, again, has been the conduct of the Government in regard

to affairs in South Africa? It will not be forgotten that one of Mr Gladstone's most severe strictures upon the Government of Lord Beaconsfield was, that they had so instructed Sir Bartle Frere as to secure all credit of success to themselves, while so adjusting matters that the blame of all failure should fall on their subordinate. Mr Gladstone, who thus spoke, could not with any show of fairness join in the furious Radical attacks which were made against that much-respected and valuable public servant, upon whom the most unmeasured insult was heaped by the Lawsons and the Chamberlains. Accordingly, when the new Government took office, Sir Bartle Frere was not recalled. Yet now, Sir Bartle Frere is removed from his post. He was first kept there, because Mr Gladstone had chosen to make capital against his chief, and not against him; and now when there is no longer need to keep up that line of conduct, he is suddenly told, in order to satisfy Radical spite, that he is deprived of his office. It is, perhaps, fortunate that so able a man is once more relieved from compulsory silence under attack, and can publicly inform his countrymen of the truth. It cannot be hoped that he will make those who maligned him ashamed; but he can give valuable information to a country that respects him, being no longer under the obligation to keep the counsel of a Government which, when in Opposition, used him as a means of discrediting their opponents, and on obtaining office cast him off, on the ground that his views, if not those of the previous Ministry, were not in accordance with theirs.

Coming now to Home politics, is it too much to say that the new Ministry has within a short quarter of a year raised a feeling of uneasi-

ness and even alarm in the minds of a great number of their own respected supporters, straining party allegiance to the snapping-point by their crude, rash, and unstatesmanlike measures, their truckling to the seditious and the revolutionary, and their playing fast and loose with property in order to curry favour with the extremists? Men who thought they were once more going to have a day of "Plain Whig Principles," with just a bit thrown now and again to stop the barking of those troublesome Radicals, and prevent their showing their teeth, soon stood aghast when they saw the kind of Liberalism they were expected to support. And thus the unprecedented spectacle was seen in the first session of a new Parliament, of the measures pressed by the Ministry being met with the most scathing criticism from those sitting on the Government benches in both Houses of the Legislature, the Opposition being led by men whose names are as household words among the members of the party in power. A Government, which would certainly have been excused had its first brief session being signalised by no very important or striking measures, has succeeded in turning nominal strength into practical weakness, by perverse breaking loose from sound principles of legislation, peevish impatience of discussion and criticism, and a painful display of haste to buy a cheap popularity, by measures tending to benefit particular classes, without regard to the rights and property of others.

There are only three measures brought in during the late session which have any novelty about them, and are of any great public importance, — the Employers' Liability Bill, the Hares and Rabbits Bill, and the Irish Disturbance Bill. Of the first it may be said that the

law as it stood was such as to call for some amendment, it being undoubtedly hard that the doctrine of *collaborateur* should be extended to responsible managers, who practically took the entire charge of large and dangerous works, and were more in the position of authorised delegates than servants of the proprietor. But the Bill of the Government was not an honest effort to remove a legal injustice, but was so conceived as to be a manifest sop thrown to the working class and others. It was crudely framed, ill considered, and unstatesmanlike, and bore unmistakable traces of its political purpose, showing how Liberalism, which professes to have no sectional regards, seeks to please the class who form the majority at the expense of the minority. It is another illustration of the fact that Liberalism aims at satisfying not the community, but a part of it; not society, but that class of it from which the votaries of Liberalism hope to obtain most themselves. They are very loud in general denunciation of bribery, but they see nothing immoral in a gigantic bribe to the masses. Bribery is bad enough when the corrupt doer provides the bribe himself. It is much worse when the money is taken out of other people's pockets.

The Hares and Rabbits Bill is a most deplorable specimen of the same kind of legislation, if possible more hastily conceived and crudely framed. It is a Bill to prevent people contracting in their own way about matters which are of no interest to any but themselves. No one will say that such legislation may not in certain cases be wise and right. But this Bill had on it the same stamp of political bribery as the last referred to. As Lord Beaconsfield truly said, the manifest animus with which it had been drawn up was amazing. It is a

sufficient indication of the unsatisfactory character of this Liberal effort, that its rejection should be moved by a member of a family whose Liberalism is strong, and whose present head was long the active whip of the party, and is now the Speaker of the House of Commons. It may be left to Liberals themselves to account for the fact that the most strenuous opposition to the Government measures comes from the Liberal side of the House. When the names of Brand and Trevelyan are found at the head of opposition to a Liberal Government's measures, the inference to be drawn by those who look on at the play is obvious.

But the Bill of the Government which has attracted the most public attention, is that the name of which has been on every one's lips for some time, the "Irish Disturbance Bill"—well named, indeed, if the word "disturbance" be taken in its ordinary sense. This ill-fated Bill was drawn in ignorance, brought in in haste, supported by contradictory arguments, mercilessly cut up by Liberal members, looked upon as revolutionary by many English and Scotch Liberals, and scarcely accepted as an instalment of their demands by the Irish party. Although the most remarkable measure brought in by the Government, it was entirely an afterthought. There was no notice of it in the Queen's Speech, but only an indication that the state of Ireland was satisfactory,—which reads curiously alongside of the statement of the Prime Minister about a dozen weeks after, that we are within "measurable distance" of civil war in that land. The Disturbance Bill was introduced with the statement that there had been recently an enormous number of evictions by landlords in Ireland—which statement, it was proved, would not stand examination either

as regarded the number or the assertion as to the landlords. It was supported by the asseveration that these evictions had required vast numbers of police to assist the officers of the law in the procedure; but it soon became known that these numbers were obtained by counting men in the same way as a gaping country booby counts the procession of "the 600 steel-clad warriors" in a theatrical spectacle, not knowing that a score or so do duty ten times over. As regarded the evictions which did take place, no allowance was made for the fact that Mr Parnell and his friends had been going from one end of Ireland to another stimulating resistance to the payment of rent, urging tenants to pay nothing but what they thought reasonable, and if that was refused to pay nothing at all, but to "stick by their holdings." The further fact was ignored that, in answer to these disgraceful instructions, not only did many who were able to pay withhold their rents, but they and their friends, by threats and dangerous violence, prevented others from paying who were willing and even anxious to do so.

The Bill itself was such as might have been expected from its origin. The character of it was changed from day to day to catch votes. When its dangerous tendencies were seen to create serious alarm in a large portion of the Liberal party, the Irish Attorney-General proposed an amending clause, which the Home Rule party at once denounced as destroying the whole benefits of the Bill. The arguments in favour of it filled the wide range lying between the statements that it was a just measure of temporary relief to real distress, and that we were in Ireland within measurable distance of civil war. It was pushed through the House

of Commons, in the certain knowledge that it must leave that chamber a discredited measure. It ultimately passed that House by a smaller majority than had ever supported the late Government, though the normal majority of the present Government is as three to one at least in comparison with that of the former. It was sent up to the House of Lords in circumstances which practically made it the duty of that Assembly to throw it out, and was sent there for no other purpose than to give the Radical spouters the opportunity of attacking the Upper House, and throwing the blame of the loss of the measure upon the Peers. The Government scraped together enough of votes out of their large majority to save themselves from the humiliation of withdrawing a discredited Bill, being willing rather to suffer the degradation of appearing to join in the attacks of demagogues on the Upper Chamber. Unfortunately, however, for the success of these contemptible tactics, the fate of the Bill in the House of Lords was such as to make it impossible to influence any mind against that House, which is not already—as apparently the Chief Secretary for Ireland's is—at the command of the revolutionary party.

The motion to throw out the Bill was made by one of the most venerable and consistent Liberals in the House. Peers made a sacrifice of lucrative offices under the Crown rather than depart from principle to do Mr Gladstone's bidding. Of those who promised to support the second reading, some with merciless power exposed the faults of the measure. Officials who must support it out and out were apologetic and cringing. The plea most urged was that it was "exceptional and temporary." It was on a similar repre-

sentation that the Old Man of the Sea was first suffered to get on Sindbad's back. Temporary measures to save people from being compelled to pay their debts in the case of people who do not intend, if they can help it, to pay them at all, are apt to be looked upon as temporary only in the sense of their being intended to be replaced by permanent arrangements of the same kind. Legislation to declare debts "doubtful" for two years, is likely to tend to these and many others having to be written off as "bad" in the end. And if this is so when the debtor is an ordinary person, it is still more so when he is of an imaginative type—most of all, when the imaginative individual is being worked upon from day to day by designing and unprincipled men, who, for their own ends, are setting him to resist his creditors.

The history of the Gladstone Administration up to the present time may be briefly summed up. The new Prime Minister rode into power on the crest of a tremendous wave, which the wind of his oratory had mainly contributed to raise. He entered on office with a majority which no Minister has had command of within this generation. He was set so high above opposition that he could bid defiance to Conservatives and Home-Rulers alike. His party had sunk their differences, or at least had professed to do so. His rivals for the Premiership had waived their claims. He had but a short session before him, and the prospect of a long prorogation to mature his schemes. What is the state of things now? He has already found that people who will applaud anything, however strong, when shouted against the common enemy, will not necessarily do the same when they think their own interests are in danger. He has seen that

though atheists are necessarily Liberals, many Liberals are not yet prepared to lie down with such political bedfellows. He has seen that though Home-Rulers hate the Tories as he does himself, they will give him their support against them for an adequate consideration, and not otherwise. He has seen that any attempt to pay even a first fraction of the price alienates many of the rest of his followers. He has seen his efforts to conciliate the Irish party causing consternation to English Liberals, yet barely accepted with civility as an instalment by those whom it was intended to propitiate. He has seen his majority disappear altogether, when he tried to use it as a lever to force an atheist into the Legislature. He has seen it attenuated to an alarming degree when he asked it to sanction unwarrantable interference with property, to please demagogues and revolutionists, and to encourage the improvident and the lawless. He has seen his law-officers both in England and Scotland rejected by their constituencies when seeking re-election on taking office. He has seen the most vigorous opposition to his most important measures led by representative Liberals in both Houses of Parliament. He has seen the Greys and the Brands rise to move the rejection of his so-called reforms. He has seen the representative of one of the oldest and most distinguished Liberal families rise in his place in Parliament, and declare the most important Government Bill of the session to be a "dishonest and dishonourable" measure. He has seen officials of his own nomination resign their posts within twenty weeks of their appointment, because they could not bring themselves to turn their backs on principle, and to aid in passing semi-revolutionary mea-

sures. He has seen his latest created peers, formerly Ministers under him, whom he had sent to strengthen the debating power of his party in the House of Lords, voting against his most important measure of his first session. He has seen that same measure reduce his majority in the House of Commons to a figure scarcely exceeding the numbers of the Home Rule party, and has seen it defeated in the Upper House by nearly six to one, there being sufficient numbers of his own party voting with the non-contents to throw his measure out, without the aid of a single Opposition peer. He has seen his majority melting away during the first weeks of his tenure of office, at the rate of about two seats per month, so that it is already literally decimated. He has seen parliamentary obstruction, which his powerful Government was to put down with ease, as rampant and more clamant than ever. He has seen the sops thrown to the obstructionists produce no effect but to make them more insatiable. He has seen the most monstrously prolonged session of modern times end in unseemly and lawless wrangles. He has seen one of the chief members of this Government quoted as saying of the House of Lords that such interference as theirs might "lead many men in and out of the House to consider whether the frequent repetition of such action did not call for *some change in the constitution of the Upper House as advisable and even necessary.*" He has seen another of the chief members of his Government repudiating in strong terms the statements of his colleague. He has seen one Minister explaining that another Minister in using such language had expressed only "his own opinion," (*proh pudor!*) and had no intention of expressing the opinion of the Government. He

has seen an "important Liberal Association" not afraid (according to his own statement) to send him, as Prime Minister of Great Britain, a resolution containing these words:

"That the indignation of this Association has been aroused by the efforts on behalf of the people, of Government and the people's representatives, having been thwarted by an irresponsible branch of the Legislature, the members of which exercise vitally important functions, irrespective of their moral character or mental capability. That this Association earnestly desires that Government may be able to devise and apply means for the correction of this flagrant constitutional anomaly."

And having received this scandalous production, he has not been ashamed to say that he is "much gratified," without one word of repudiation. And after all this, the Prime Minister, with characteristic courage, assures his Greenock admirers from the deck of the Grandtully Castle, that as he and his colleagues "had begun, so they would continue, and so they would end their career" (adding most significantly, as if conscious that the situation is critical), "whether that career be short or long."

It is only necessary, in order that the country may see clearly what is before it, to shade off this sketch of what has happened since Mr Gladstone took office, by quoting a word or two from what may be considered the Government organs, the 'Times' and the 'Daily News.' That these two papers should now be entitled to that name, is of itself an indication what kind of a Government rules the country. Says the 'Times' in regard to our Indian possessions—

"If England has annexed India, it is scarcely less true that India has annexed England. What sufficient advantage, it must be asked, do we receive in return? The advantages

we confer are obvious enough; but so too are sacrifices we make in conferring them. The time has surely come for us to realise our position in India, and to see how far it really demands from us all that we have been content to give for it."

Says the 'Daily News' in regard to a Bill thrown out in the House of Lords without the aid of one Conservative vote—

"It much depends on their" (the House of Lords) "own discretion how long their (!) institution is to be allowed to remain unmodified. If they are wise, and do not for a long time interfere again, as they did the other night, with the action of representative institutions, they may go unaltered for no one can say how much time yet."

These two excerpts are perfect in their impudence of tone, and their palpable fishing for instruction from the Radicals how far Government newspapers may go in recommending mean and revolutionary action. When politics has got into such a state, that trash of this kind is published in Government organs,—and it may be added—talked by Cabinet Ministers airing their "individual opinions" from the Treasury bench, and causing gratification to Prime Ministers,—the country cannot be far from the downfall of

a Ministry, or from the taking of a serious step towards political revolution, or both. Meanwhile the duty of the Conservative party is clear. Acting on our chief's counsel, let there be no constitutional struggle, except upon a question worthy to be the means of raising it. The party is amply strong enough both in the country and in Parliament to overthrow the present Government whenever the heterogeneous conglomeration which put them in power develops too dangerous vigour from the tail. Let Conservatives, till then, assist by every means to prevent such development, in perfect certainty that as soon as the tail finds it cannot have its own way of wagging, it will shake to pieces the body that restrains it. But above all things, let every Conservative hold fast by principle. Let there be no imitation of the Jesuitical opposition of the last Parliament which held that "responsibility" in statesmen depended upon whether they were in office or not. Such morality may sometimes aid in obtaining a present triumph, but there is abundant proof in the political history of the last four months that it has a Nemesis of its own creation following close upon its footsteps.

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THE PRIVATE SECRETARY.

CHAPTER I.

WHEN Robert Clifford advertised for a private secretary, it was not without sundry misgivings, nowise abating when the announcement actually appeared in the 'Times,'— "Wanted, by a private gentleman, a confidential secretary,"—for he shrank by anticipation from the inroad on his privacy which would be caused by such an addition to his little household; but the correspondence arising out of the business to which he had applied himself was making such inroads on his leisure—by which, being an indolent man, he set great store—that to obtain relief in this way appeared to be the lesser evil.

This step, however, in the first instance, rather added to than diminished his labours, the advertisement producing such a shower of applications for the appointment, that it seemed as if the whole educated population of England must be in want of employment, and made up of persons possessing exactly the qualifications needed for such a situation. Clifford had seen something

of the under currents of London life, but it was a new revelation to find how many respectable and fairly educated men were eager to accept as salary a sum smaller than that which a few years before they were costing their fathers while at school? Fortunately he had taken the precaution to give for address his club, whence the applications were forwarded to his chambers, or—withstanding the condition stated in the advertisement, *apply by letter only*—he would have been inundated with visitors, the candidates and their friends, each thinking that an exception would be allowed in his case.

The next step was to sift the applications. Clifford read them all through carefully, and selecting about a score of the most promising, wrote to inform those candidates to whom the remainder belonged that they were not chosen, and to the selected candidates to ask them to give him a personal interview at his chambers. The writing of so many letters was a laborious operation;

and while engaged upon it, Clifford, who was indolent as well as conscientious, found himself heartily wishing that the secretary had been already at hand to help him. However, it was got through at last; and now came the task of final selection. Clifford had appointed a morning for the reception of the applicants, and a different hour was named for each candidate, so that they might come in succession, or at any rate that not more than two or three might be in waiting at a time. Clifford sat at his round table, with the candidates' papers before him, and got up the case of each in turn, before they were shown in, one by one, the porter of his chambers acting as master of the ceremonies. At first he felt awkward under these new relations. A shy man, the deferential manner of the candidates distressed him as much as their eagerness to gain his favour; but the feeling gradually wore off, and he soon found himself able to put each candidate through his facings with self-possession, and extract from him the further information which he needed. The operation took time, but it afforded a useful means of further elimination. Testimonials are usually somewhat one-sided; they enlarge on the merits of the subject, but his defects are to be inferred only from what is left unsaid. Thus Clifford found that the testimonials of one candidate, whose ability and experience were warmly vouched for, had omitted to mention that this worthy person was stone-deaf; another, whose strong points were said to be a sweet temper and great literary power, proved to be so fat that he could hardly find room in the comfortable arm-chair placed for the candidates at the opposite side of the table. Another poor fellow, credited by his backers with all the virtues of humanity, seemed evi-

dently to be growing blind: Clifford foresaw a probable pensioner, and steeled his heart.

The result of the personal interviews was to reduce the field, in Clifford's view, to three candidates, any one of whom would probably prove very suitable; and he was reviewing their qualifications in his mind, trying to discover some reason for giving one of them the preference over the others, when he noticed that one packet still remained to be disposed of, untransferred from the original heap on his right to that on his left, signifying that one candidate still remained to be seen. The packet was a small one, consisting indeed of only a single paper, a short letter signed "H. Reid," to the effect that the writer, if appointed, was confident of giving satisfaction. "An application unsupported by a single testimonial," said Clifford to himself, throwing it down on the table; and he wondered what could have made him keep this application, which contained so little information, among those reserved. Then he remembered that he had been struck with the earnestness and simplicity of the letter, and the neat and clear handwriting. "Well," he thought, "H. Reid is not likely to stand much chance against two or three of the men I have seen to-day. However, as an appointment has been made for H. Reid, H. Reid must be seen." So he rang the hand-bell for the porter with an impatient feeling, for the morning's business had been fatiguing, and he was anxious to get it over.

There were no more gentlemen waiting, said the porter, in reply to the summons, only a party.

"Well, then, show the party in, one at a time; but I have appointments for only one person more."

"The party is only one person, if you please, sir," said the porter; "a

young person,—a young lady," he added, rather doubtfully, and seeming disposed to smile, yet as if not knowing how Clifford would take it.

"Well, then, show in the young lady at once. I wonder what she can want with me," thought Clifford; "but it must be money, of course. A woman with a mission, probably. These earnest young ladies with a mission don't mind what they do or where they go, so long as their mission is a charitable one."

But his reflections were interrupted by the re-entry of the porter ushering in the "party."

Clifford rose, and bowing, motioned to his visitor to take the vacant chair opposite his own, and then reseating himself, awaited her communication.

The visitor was a woman rather above the middle height, slight in figure. So much was revealed by the shape of the waterproof cloak she wore, nearly covering a dark-coloured dress. Her face was hidden by a veil; nor did Clifford look at it long, being a shy man. After his first bow he turned his eyes away from the lady towards the fireplace, leaving it to her to begin the conversation.

"I believe, sir, you have advertised for a private secretary?"

The voice was soft and low; and as Clifford turned towards the speaker, who had now lifted her veil, he confronted a pair of expressive eyes, and saw that the speaker was young.

He bowed in reply. "A sister of one of the applicants," he thought; "but I am not going to job this appointment for any sister."

"I have waited on you in consequence," said the young woman; "I have come by appointment. I think," she continued, with a little hesitation, "that is my application I see on the table."

"That?" said Clifford, a little testily,—"that is an application from 'H. Reid,' who is one of the candidates selected out of a great many; but H. Reid was asked to come himself, not to send a deputy."

"I am H. Reid," said the visitor, with a shade of disappointment in her voice.

Clifford started. "But is there not some mistake?" he asked. "I did not advertise on behalf of any institution, but for a private secretary, for private and confidential business, and to be employed at home—here, in these chambers, in fact."

"Then you cannot entertain my application?" said the young woman, sorrowfully.

"She is not pretty," said Clifford to himself; "she is too sallow; but what expressive eyes she has! and what beautiful teeth! What is her history, I wonder? Is she a young lady? or only a 'young person'? Certainly she has not got the Cockney twang, but she is very matter-of-fact." Then he continued aloud, "You thought, perhaps, that I was an elderly gentleman? What do you say now?"

"You don't look very old, sir."

This was said in a matter-of-fact way, as if the speaker took too serious a view of life to be much troubled about the comparative ages of the men she met with.

"I am a good deal older than you, miss," said Clifford to himself, a little nettled. "I should put you down at not much more than twenty, although your face looks so careworn." Then he went on, "Perhaps you thought the advertiser dated from a family mansion, with a large establishment round him, and ladies in the house. Young bachelors living in chambers don't often want private secretaries."

"I did not think about it," she answered, simply; yet Clifford

thought he could detect a touch of scorn in her voice, as if implying that had they met on terms of equality, she would have held him cheap. "I am in want of a situation, and I thought I might prove fit for this one. I think," she continued after a pause, "if you allowed me a trial I should give satisfaction."

"But," said he, feeling embarrassment rather than pleasure in the situation, and disposed for the moment to throw cold water on the applicant's zeal, "do you know that what you are asking for is a post with very hard work, and very little pay?"

"I don't mind hard work," replied H. Reid; "I have been accustomed to hard work. May I ask what the hours would be?"

"Well, I am afraid I am rather irregular in hours; it would be pretty well all day, and sometimes even longer,—at least, I don't mean that; what I mean is, that I don't keep regular hours like a banker or a merchant; and on some days, when a pressure of letters comes, I find myself working on till late. And sometimes I am away all day, and then I have to make up for lost time when I come home. But I daresay it could be arranged that the secretary should keep regular hours, even if I do not," he added, although without any very definite notion about the matter. "Suppose," he continued, interrogatively, "we were to say from ten to four as a rule, and extra time whenever necessary"?

"I should not consider those long hours at all. A girl whom I know works in a telegraph office, and has to be there from nine to six."

"So she has a friend a telegraph clerk," thought Clifford, with a feeling of disappointment; "then she must be in a humble way of life, although she does speak so

nically herself. All those telegraph young women have the detestable London twang." Then he added aloud, "Of course you will understand, Miss Reid, that by mentioning these particulars, I don't wish to commit myself to anything definite."

Miss Reid bowed, but looked disappointed, and he went on—

"But have you considered all the bearings of the case? The position would be rather peculiar and exceptional, and——" Clifford here paused, as if waiting for his visitor to say something; but she merely looked gravely at him with earnest eyes, and he went on, rather confusedly,—“In short, don't you think that the position for a young—a young lady, shut up here in a bachelor's quarters day after day, would be just a little awkward?"

"I should be very sorry to put you to any personal inconvenience," replied Miss Reid, with just a touch of scorn in her voice; and as she spoke, Clifford thought she looked as if she might be forty. "I thought perhaps there might be a spare room, or office, which the secretary could occupy?"

"I was not thinking of my own convenience," he replied. "Of course there are other rooms besides this in the flat. I was rather thinking of you. But if you don't mind, I suppose I need not. But how would you manage about meals? I am speaking hypothetically, of course, as if we had actually come to an agreement, which we have not. You see I want to put all the difficulties of the case before you. You can't go from morning till late in the afternoon without something to eat."

"I daresay," she observed, simply, "there will be some restaurant not far off. Yes, there is the refreshment-room at the Army and Navy Stores, which is quite close.

I could get there and back in a very few minutes. Oh yes, sir, I should be able to manage very well for refreshments, I am sure." She spoke eagerly, as if very desirous that this objection should not be made much of.

"You take me too seriously," said Clifford; "I was only joking about the refreshments. My house-keeper, I have no doubt, would be able to arrange that part of the business. But are you in the habit of going to restaurants alone?"

"I have to go everywhere alone," she replied; and again there was a shade of scorn, mingled with melancholy, in her voice. "When people have to go about London seeking to earn their bread, they soon get to be able to take care of themselves."

"I beg your pardon for doubting your capacity in that respect." Clifford here felt a little nettled and disappointed. There would have been something romantic in the idea of giving shelter and support to a helpless young creature. But with this young woman, so self-possessed and competent to take care of herself, there seemed no room for any notion of chivalry, or even flirtation. Miss Reid was evidently a very matter-of-fact young lady. "Perhaps she is hungry too," he thought; "poor thing, she certainly looks rather pinched." Then he added aloud—

"But we have been going too fast. These are matters of detail which ought to have been discussed later. To be quite businesslike and practical,"—Clifford felt that he had been very much the reverse,—"I ought first to ask what are your qualifications for the office you seek."

"I have had a good education: I believe I know my own language; I have lived a good deal abroad, and know French very well, German

pretty well, and I am quick at figures. You have seen my handwriting?"

"Yes; you write a very clear, neat hand, and not too small. Well, now, suppose you give me a sample of your skill in composition." So saying, Clifford rose, and going to the writing-table behind his chair, took a packet of foolscap and a pen and placed them before his visitor. "Suppose you write a short essay on—well, say on the qualifications needed in a private secretary."

Miss Reid took the pen without looking up, and, after a minute's pause, began to write. Clifford meanwhile, instead of resuming his seat, stood facing the table, with his back to the fire, looking down at her, sitting at his right. The young lady, noways embarrassed by the knowledge that he was watching her, wrote on steadily, and for a few minutes the silence was broken only by the sound of her busy pen. Clifford noticed, now the shabby glove was drawn off, that the hand was white and well formed, with thin taper fingers. "Perhaps," he thought, "she may have pretty feet, although that boot which just shows below her dress is old and muddy. And her dress is shabby. She must be in want, poor thing, to have come seeking for this post. If she were better dressed she would be almost good-looking. It is certainly a very expressive face, and she has a pretty figure."

Presently she handed him the paper, and sat quietly with folded hands looking up at him, while he, still standing before the fire, read her essay.

"ON THE QUALIFICATIONS NEEDED
IN A PRIVATE SECRETARY."

"The private secretary should be diligent and methodical, and especially careful to convey accu-

rately in his letters the exact meaning of his employer's instructions.

"He must be courteous in his communications with his employer's correspondents, conveying refusals as delicately as may be consistent with distinctness of meaning.

"He should offer his own advice and suggestions for the disposal of business only when they are sought for, or when it may be clearly for the employer's interests to do so. In the latter case, he should not be restrained by the fear of being thought officious, or being snubbed. At the same time, he must carefully avoid the temptation to exert the tyranny of office, the besetting sin of useful and zealous servants, by pressing unduly his own views against those of his employer.

"The duties of a private secretary differ from those of a public officer, in that they may have to be more irregularly performed as regards time. The private secretary must be prepared to sacrifice his own convenience in this respect to that of his employer, and, above all, to put up with quickness or even fretfulness of temper, so long as its exhibition does not involve any loss of self-respect, making proper allowance for the natural tendency of all persons to abate the restraints of manner among those with whom they come frequently in contact.

"It needs hardly be added that the private secretary should scrupulously preserve inviolable all the private information, not to say secrets, of importance which may be intrusted to him, acting scrupulously in this respect in the spirit of Hamlet's injunction to Horatio.

"[If the private secretary be a woman, the needful alteration should be made throughout in the personal pronoun.] (Signed) H. REID."

It was now Miss Reid's turn to watch Clifford's face as he read

the little essay, and she looked up at him with obvious anxiety.

"And, pray, who told you," said he, smiling, yet with a shade of annoyance in the tone of his voice, "that I had a quick and fretful temper?"

"I had no one in particular in view," she said, simply; "but I suppose all men, when their own masters, are more or less exacting and impatient."

"Indeed! and may I ask, where have you gained your deep experience of our sex? I beg your pardon," he continued, noticing a change in the expression of her face; "I had no business to put so impertinent a question. Well, I daresay you are right; although I am sure Simmonds, my housekeeper, will tell you I am never cross with her—indeed I think it is rather the other way. Well, now, having gone so far, Miss Reid, there is one thing I suppose I ought to ask, and that is for a personal reference."

Miss Reid looked distressed.

"A certificate from your last employer would be the most satisfactory kind of testimonial," he continued, as she remained silent.

"I have never been out in employment before," she said at last, and with evident hesitation; "at least, not in employment of this kind. I have had some experience in teaching."

"Well, then, a reference from your last situation would be sufficient."

"I think," said Miss Reid, after a pause, and evading the proposition, "I could obtain a reference which would be perfectly satisfactory, but there would be some little delay in procuring it. The gentleman I should apply to is abroad."

But somehow Clifford did not relish the idea of delay, and, without answering her directly, he continued—

"There is another point, too. You have forgotten to inquire what the salary of the appointment is to be."

"I thought you would mention this point in due course, sir."

"I propose to fix it at two hundred a-year. Don't you think that enough?" he added, noticing a look of surprise on Miss Reid's face.

"Oh no, sir," she replied; "quite the reverse. It is a great deal more than I expected."

"You should not say that," said Clifford, smiling, and feeling that he had taken her at a disadvantage; "you ought not to cheapen yourself in that way. They say that women are spoiling the market in every line of business by doing their work at such a low figure. You ought to have made a palaver about the rate. You see," he added, in a bantering tone, "for all you are so clever, and such a judge of character, there are some things on which you may get a hint with advantage. Well," he continued, feeling a little uncomfortable as she made no reply, while the large eyes looked at him gravely without responding to the jest, "we must, I suppose, consider the matter as settled. Of course," he added, feeling that he was committing himself rashly, "it is understood that the engagement is not made for the whole year, but only by the quarter. When shall you be able to take up your duties? to-morrow?"

"I am very sorry, sir, but I am afraid I can hardly be free quite so soon as that. This is Thursday. Would it inconvenience you very much if I deferred coming till next Monday?"

It was arranged accordingly that Miss Reid should enter upon her duties on the Monday—Clifford, however, being sensible of a distinct feeling of disappointment that the beginning should be put off so long

—and the young lady rose to take her departure. She stopped as she was going out of the room, and said, "I am deeply grateful for your kindness in appointing me, sir; I trust to give you no cause to regret it."

"I am sure you will not," replied Clifford, although he would have been puzzled to assign any specific grounds for his confidence. Then he added, "By the way, you have not told me where you live?"

"I live some little way out of town," she said; "but I can get to and fro very easily."

"And do you live alone?"

"No, sir;" and then colouring, and with some hesitation, she added, "I live with my father." And again Clifford felt a little disappointed. Matter-of-fact though the lady's proceedings had been, there was an air of repressed feeling about her which had led him to look for an answer implying something more mysterious and romantic.

No sooner was Clifford left alone than he began to think he had made a fool of himself. Here had he engaged this young woman, about whom he knew positively nothing, to occupy a confidential position involving a complete inroad into the privacy of his life. He would not have engaged any one of his own sex on such terms; and Miss Reid, who professed to wish that the matter should be put on a purely business footing, must despise him for being so soft. He dismissed, indeed, as soon as he thought of it, the idea that this might be the scheme of some designing woman to attach herself to him. Miss Reid had nothing of the siren about her, and to suppose that her matter-of-fact manner was assumed to cover an artful plan of this sort was evidently absurd. Difference of sex was hardly to be regarded as entering into the matter;

and yet, as he recalled the pose of her figure while she was writing the essay, he could not but admit that there was nothing unfeminine about her. She was not at all the sort of person to associate with the idea of the championship of woman's rights or the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts. Still there was no doubt that he made a sensible inroad on the independence of his bachelor life, without apparently any corresponding advantage that could not have been equally obtained by choosing a secretary of his own sex; while the disadvantages were obvious. Indeed, the more he thought about it, the more awkward the matter seemed; and but that he had been so foolish as to let Miss Reid go without learning her address, he would even now have written to cancel the bargain. But then, again, he was sensible of a somewhat strong desire, whether founded on a sentiment of romance or mere curiosity, to pursue the adventure. After all, he could always get rid of the private secretary at any time by paying a quarter's salary. An excuse for putting an end to the engagement could no doubt be readily found, if—as he now, under the reaction of feeling set up by her departure, expected would prove to be the case—she should turn out to be incompetent, or the arrangement was found embarrassing and inconvenient; and this would be a more dignified way of proceeding than to make such an admission of softness as would be implied in cancelling the engagement before it was entered on. But at any rate, some special arrangements must be made to meet the case; and so reflecting, he rang for Mrs Simmonds, his cook and housekeeper.

"Simmonds, I have just engaged a private secretary. The spare room at the end of the pas-

sage will have to be turned into a sort of office."

"Very good, sir. The gentleman will sit there, I suppose, to do his writing."

"Quite so. The fact is, however, the secretary is not exactly a gentleman. It will be a—a young lady—the young lady who called this morning with the other people."

"Indeed, sir!" said Simmonds, bridling up.

"Yes. The young lady and her father are in reduced circumstances." Simmonds appeared somewhat mollified at the word father, and he went on—"Some more furniture will be required for the room—a writing-table and so forth. I will see to that. The young lady will come from ten till four every day; and if she wants to send me any messages, and I should happen to be at home, she will ring, and you or Jane can bring them. She will communicate through you."

"I see, sir," said Simmonds, now quite mollified.

"Yes," he continued, gathering confidence as he saw that Simmonds was not disposed to make difficulties, "you and Jane must look after her, and you must arrange to let her have some luncheon every day—a chop, or something of that sort, I suppose, or whatever young ladies are in the habit of eating. And, Simmonds," he added, as she was leaving the room, "you need not tell anybody that the young lady is a secretary; in fact, you need not say anything about it. There is no reason why anybody but you and Jane should ever see the young lady. If any one should happen to see her, you can say she is under an engagement to copy some writing; in fact, that is how the thing should be explained to Jane. It is quite usual nowadays to employ female hands on work of that sort; they do it so much cheaper than men."

Then Clifford went out to get some furniture for the room, which was now almost bare, for he had not been long in occupancy of his flat. His purchases included a pedestal writing-table with drawers, and chair to match, a couch, an easy-chair, a side-table with lock-up pigeon-holes above, a Lund's copying-press on a stand, and a couple

of despatch-boxes opening with the same key. The arrangements completed, he found himself looking forward with considerable impatience to Monday, constantly striving to recall the exact features of his visitor, feeling amused as well as annoyed to find how indistinct was the impression they had left behind.

CHAPTER II.

On the following Monday morning, precisely at ten o'clock, Clifford, who had just finished breakfast, heard the outer bell ring, to be answered by Simmonds; and presently the sound of voices in the hall, and opening of doors, announced that Miss Reid had arrived and taken possession of her room. Then he could hear the footsteps of Simmonds returning to the kitchen, and all was still.

Clifford's chambers consisted of a flat on the second floor of the Alexandra Mansions. Access was obtained from the central staircase, common to all the sets of chambers, opening into the little hall, which ran through the centre of the block. Four rooms opened on the passage from the right side. The first—that nearest to the hall-door—was the one appropriated to the private secretary. Then came a small dressing-room communicating with it, which also was set apart for her use. Next to this was the dining-room, seldom used, Clifford usually dining at his Club. Last of all was the sitting-room, the largest of all—library and drawing-room combined—which he occupied throughout the day. These four rooms made up the side of the flat looking on to the street. On the left side of the passage was the door leading to the servants' rooms and offices; then came the blank wall

which separated them from the passage; and lastly, his own bedroom, opposite to his sitting-room. The offices and his bedroom looked into a courtyard or well at the back, the sides of which were inlaid with white polished tiles to give light. Thus, between Clifford's sitting-room and that occupied by his secretary, two other rooms intervened, cutting off all sound from each other of what the occupants were doing.

Miss Reid found her day's work ready prepared for her, in the form of a number of letters needing replies. Clifford had answered none since Thursday, and as his correspondence was a large one, there was a considerable accumulation. These letters had all been placed in one of the despatch-boxes on Miss Reid's table, and on the top was laid a sealed envelope containing the key, and a memorandum of instructions. Upon each letter a few lines prescribing the mode of dealing with it had been written in red ink. But Miss Reid was to be careful to observe the distinction between the words "draft" and "reply." In the one case she was to prepare a draft of the proposed reply, and submit it to him for approval before making a fair copy for despatch: in the other case the reply might be written at once in the sense of the instructions; but in the first instance these replies also were to

be shown to him before being posted, until he was satisfied that the private secretary had got into the way of expressing herself exactly as he wished. All letters were to be written in copying-ink, and impressions taken in the Lund's copying-books provided for the purpose with the accompanying press. These books were to be indexed from day to day, so that the correspondence could at once be traced. As soon as the letters for the day were ready for signature and despatch, and the other draft letters prepared for approval, they could be sent in to him in one of the boxes.

So ran the instructions, which also provided for recording and registering the letters received. There being, as we have said, a considerable accumulation of papers awaiting the secretary, and as no doubt she would take some little time in settling down to work, Clifford was not surprised that the young lady did not seek for or send to him at once; but as the morning wore on, and she made no sign, he began to get fidgety and impatient. Probably she would be puzzled how to set to work; but was it pride, or diffidence, or modesty that kept her from coming or sending to him for instructions? Hardly the latter condition, to judge from her boldness on Thursday. Could it be that she found no difficulty in dealing with the papers, and was going to knock off the whole job at a sitting? He would have liked to see what she was doing; but there would be an awkwardness in going to her room now, as he had not done so on her first arrival. That would have been the proper time for a visit: his own stupidity was to blame for the misadventure. But really it seemed as if the notion of her being there at all was a delusion of the fancy, so still was the house. Yet no! For at one o'clock a movement

could be heard in the passage, and the jingle of plates and glasses. Miss Reid's luncheon is being taken into her room, according to orders. Then all is silence again. Soon afterwards Clifford took his hat and went out for a walk, pausing for a moment before the door of Miss Reid's room,—but only for a moment: it would not do to appear to be listening. All seemed quiet within; and he went off with an amused sense of the drollness of the situation,—a young lady in his employ, shut up in his house, whom he has not yet ventured to see,—feeling also, more strongly than ever, that he had done a very foolish thing in making the engagement. A private secretary who was not on confidential terms with his or her employer, and who could not come in and out freely, and did nothing but copy letters, was not likely to be of much use. He might as well have given out his correspondence to be done at a law-stationer's by contract.

About three o'clock he came home again. The house presented the same still aspect as before. He had expected to find a returned despatch-box awaiting him; but there was nothing on the table except some more letters. He took up a book and tried to read, but found it impossible to fix his attention; and at last, after waiting some time longer, he got up and went to Miss Reid's room. He hesitated a little before knocking, and then doing so, entered the room without waiting for a reply.

Miss Reid was seated at the writing-table, the surface of which was covered with papers. One despatch-box was on the table; the other, with open lid, on the floor. The aspect of the room and its occupant was thoroughly business-like. Clifford had just time to notice that Miss Reid was differ-

ently dressed from when he had first seen her. Her cloak was folded up and placed on a chair, with her hat—evidently a new one—resting on it. Her dress, although quite plain and of dark material, was well made, and covered a slight, slim figure. Neat cuffs and collar set off the slender hands and neck better than did the dingy cloak in which he had first seen her. "It is odd," he said to himself, "that I should not have thought her pretty; and what beautiful hair she has, if it is all her own."

Miss Reid rose and bowed. Clifford bowed in return; and then, after a little hesitation, advanced and offered his hand.

Somehow he felt a little shy, and was certainly the least self-possessed of the two. "I hope you find yourself pretty comfortable," he said at last; "Mrs Simmonds has looked after you, I hope, and sent you some luncheon?"

He knew this had been done, and what the luncheon was composed of, for he had ordered it himself; but he wanted something to say.

Miss Reid replied that she was most comfortable, and that Mrs Simmonds had taken every care of her.

"And have you got all you want in the way of stationery and so forth?"

"Everything, thank you, sir, is most complete; I only hope I may be able to do justice to all the preparations which have been made."

"But the position of this table is a little perplexing, I see," he observed again, for want of something to say; "the light comes on it at the wrong side. How stupid of me not to think of that! Let me turn it round the other way. Perhaps you would kindly help,—it is rather heavy. There, that will do;" and the two, by their united efforts, slued the table round, while Clif-

ford hastened to move the chair to the other side, also the box which was on the floor.

"Pray do not trouble yourself, sir," said Miss Reid, as he stooped to pick up the box. She stooped at the same time, and their heads came in contact.

"I beg your pardon," said Clifford, rubbing his head; "that was confoundedly stupid of me. I hope you are not much hurt?"

"Not more than you are, sir, I believe," she replied, without showing any sign of pain.

"Women bear pain better than men," said Clifford, stopping the rubbing, and letting his hand fall.

"Some women," said Miss Reid.

So she is a flatterer, thought Clifford; she wants to pretend to crack up men. Then bethinking him that possibly Simmonds might be listening in the passage, he added aloud, "But how does your work get on?"

"Pretty well, thank you, sir—at least I hope so for a beginning: but there are several points on which I want instructions; I have made a note of them here."

"Well, let me first see those letters that you have disposed of. Won't you sit down?" he continued, taking up the papers and sitting down himself in the writing-chair at the table, while motioning to her to take another.

"Thank you, sir, but I would rather stand, if you please; I have been sitting all the morning." Accordingly, Miss Reid stood by his side while Clifford went through all the papers which she had prepared for him.

The work was very well done so far as it went, although there was not very much of it. In one or two cases, indeed, the secretary had not quite understood the orders on which her letter was to be written; but in every case the draft was well

expressed and precise : and Clifford, who prided himself on his business-like habits, found with pleasure that his secretary had not over-estimated her powers. The letters were not quite as he would have written them himself; but he would not, by altering them, give her the trouble of writing them again.

"But now as to taking copies," said Clifford, rising; "do you know how to manage a Lund's press?"

"I am afraid not, sir; but I hope to learn the method very quickly. Perhaps Mrs Simmonds could show me?"

"Mrs Simmonds be—she knows as much about copying letters as she does about playing the piano. By the way, you have not told me whether music is among your accomplishments?"

"I play a little," said Miss Reid, simply; "but about the way of using the copying-press?"

"You do it in this way," said Clifford, a little nettled at being brought back to business, moving to the side-table on which stood the press. "You first wet the paper of the book thoroughly with the brush—so; then you put it in the press to dry it partially against the blotter—so; and then you take the book out and place the letter between the damp leaves, and return the book to the press to take the impression—so. The whole art consists in judging of the degree of dampness to be left in the paper, and the length of time the letter should be kept in the press. If you overdo it, the letter comes out as if it had been written on blotting-paper. I can't bear to get a letter myself copied in this careless way, and I should like still less to send one out so. This letter that we are now taking the impression of was written about three hours ago, so I am keeping it rather long in the press. See now," he continued,

drawing the book out, "we have got a perfect facsimile impression, and yet no one could tell that the original had ever been in the press. That is the point to aim at. Some people are greatly offended if you take press copies of the letters you send them. However important the subject may be, they like the fiction to be kept up that the letter has not been copied, although they know that the thing must have been done in some form. Now, suppose you try your hand at it. Yes, the press is a little stiff," he continued, as he watched his secretary in vain trying to press down the levers with all the force of her slender fingers, while he could not but notice the graceful motion of her figure as she bent over the table. "Let me help you;" and so saying, he applied his own hands to the levers. In pressing these he pressed her hands too, which were on them, and she withdrew them quickly, stepping back a pace at the same time. "How clumsy I am!" he cried; "I am afraid I must have hurt you again."

"You did, a little;" and he thought he could detect, from the tone of her voice, that she did think him clumsy, but was not at liberty to find fault with her employer. So he reverted to business. "Now you have left the letter long enough," he exclaimed, retreating from the table to make room for her—"out with it quickly! Yes, that is a fairly good impression, but there is still the mark of the beast on it. You have kept the paper a trifle too long in the press; but you will soon be able to work the machine properly. You are evidently quick at learning."

Miss Reid bowed. Clifford could hardly tell whether or not she was pleased at his praise. He continued, "But now the next thing is to post these letters; let

me help you,"—and the two were employed for a few minutes in folding and putting into their envelopes the letters which Miss Reid had written. "Now for the stamps," said Clifford: "but stay, I have given you no stamps," and he went back to his room, and presently returned with a sheet of them.

The stamps were soon applied, and Miss Reid stood waiting, as if she expected him to leave the room. Clifford broke the silence—

"I suppose you feel tired after your day's work?"

"Oh dear no, sir; I will set to work at once, and finish what has still to be done, if you will kindly look through these drafts and instruct me on the doubtful points."

"But you would not get through all those letters by night. There is no immediate hurry about them; you have done quite enough for a beginning,—besides, I feel idle myself. Better give over for to-day, and take them up to-morrow."

"Thank you, sir," said Miss Reid simply, and proceeded to lock up the papers in one of the despatch-boxes. Then she moved towards the chair on which her hat and cloak were lying, and transferring the former on to the table, took up the cloak as if to put it on.

"Allow me to help you," said Clifford, gallantly.

"Thank you, sir," again replied the young lady, "but I am accustomed to manage for myself." She spoke in a repellent way, and Clifford stopped short, feeling rather sheepish. After a pause he said, "Miss Reid, I have a suggestion to make."

Miss Reid laid down the cloak, and making a little bow, stood waiting for the communication.

"It has occurred to me," he observed with some little hesitation, "that perhaps you might find it a

convenience to take an advance of salary."

"Thank you, sir, but I think I would rather be paid in the regular way—that is, after it is due." Miss Reid spoke simply, but again in a cold, repellent way.

"I daresay you will think me an unbusinesslike creature to make the proposal," he replied, feeling awkward, "but the fact is, I have noticed," looking significantly at her dress, "that you appear to have been put to some expense, and I thought that a little ready money might be a convenience. It would be a pity that you should incur debt just at the beginning of your engagement."

"It is very kind of you to make the proposal, sir, but I was not quite without money when I first called, although I did not feel justified in spending it until I was sure of an engagement. You must not think me extravagant, but I thought it was only proper to make myself a little smart. Every woman likes to be decently dressed," she continued with a smile, as if anxious to remove any ill impression; and it seemed to Clifford that she now for the first time spoke like a woman, rather than a machine which he had bought. And his feelings now went off on the other tack. "Confound it," he thought, "she is setting her cap at me." The circumstances of his past life had made Clifford somewhat suspicious, and now it flashed across him that he had been altogether too simple and slow of taking an obvious hint. This demure and matter-of-fact manner was no doubt merely assumed. A young lady who could so far go out of her way as she had gone already, would surely be ready to go a little further on small encouragement. And the feeling now rising uppermost within him was of something more than the curiosity

and expectation which her appointment had first created. She looked almost arch, and certainly winning, as she stood before him, ready to leave the room, yet waiting by the door, an altogether different person from the anxious applicant of last Thursday. Clifford knew little about women, and his general feeling towards them was of chivalrous respect, his manner towards them shy; still the suspicion now came uppermost that it might be merely his own awkwardness and slowness of apprehension which was at fault, in failing to apprehend the motives of his visitor, and that probably she was holding him cheap because the affair had not already advanced another stage. Something there was of disappointment in his mind that this interesting young creature should be found to come below the high standard by which he had measured her at first; but to this succeeded a sudden desire to push the adventure, if such it was to be, to the end.

He advanced to wish her good day, and held out his hand. The young lady responding, gave him her own, making him a little curtsey—whether of coquetry or respect, he could not say.

“Tell me,” he said, still holding her hand, “do you think you shall be satisfied with your engagement?”

“It is rather whether you will be satisfied, sir. I daresay you have hardly had time to make up your mind on that point,”—she said this looking him frankly in the face, and with a smile which he thought very winning. Her features when in repose had not struck him as beautiful; it was their mobility, and the play of expression in her face, which made their charm.

“Is she laughing at me for my simplicity,” he thought, “or is she simple and honest herself?” And he continued, rather awkwardly, still holding her hand—

“Who? I? Oh yes, I am very well satisfied with my bargain. I think I ought to be, ought I not?” he added, with an air of would be gallantry. “I shall be satisfied enough, you may be sure, if *you* don’t repent of it,—eh?”

As he spoke, he felt there was more in his manner than his words.

“You will never give me cause to repent of it, I am sure,” she replied, withdrawing her hand; and making him another bow, she opened the door and passed out, leaving him standing in the room, blushing with shame, although even then uncertain of the exact meaning to be attached to her words, and whether she had understood what he had intended to convey by his. After all, he had not said much; but his looks, he thought, could hardly be misunderstood. Yet there was nothing either of encouragement or indignation in her manner. “Well,” he thought, “if she is as pure-minded as she appears to be, I am a mean rascal for trying to take advantage of my position.” And he determined to put the ideas which had possessed him for the moment altogether on one side. In future, and always, his relations with his private secretary should be maintained on a strictly business footing. There should be no question of gallantry, or even politeness, beyond what would be shown to one of his own sex employed in this capacity. After all, a deal of trouble would be saved by adopting this line, as he had intended doing from the first.

CHAPTER III.

Accordingly, when next morning Miss Reid arrived, as before, precisely at ten o'clock, Clifford again made no sign; and the two occupied their respective rooms without, at first, any communication passing between them. The secretary, indeed, would be abundantly occupied with the business left over from the previous day; and it was nearly noon before he had made the necessary annotations on the post of the morning. Then he would have liked to take the bundle of papers into her room, but restrained himself. He would give her no further opportunity for supposing that he desired to establish their relations on a footing of gallantry. He would be nothing henceforth but the matter-of-fact master. For another thing, he must complete his disarmament of any suspicions that might be still harboured by Simmonds on the subject, and the expression of which, on her part, would be subversive of all domestic comfort; although Simmonds, who knew more of her master and his ways than most people, would probably not be difficult to satisfy on that score.

In fulfilment of this determination, therefore, instead of taking in the papers himself, he put them in a box, and ringing for Jane, the maid, told her to carry it to Miss Reid. This was the first step towards opening that form of communication. Soon Miss Reid's bell could be heard, and Jane brought him a return box, containing some draft letters for approval, and some queries upon others for further explanation and instruction,—the work, in fact, which had been prepared the previous day. Clifford noticed with satisfaction

that the drafts were far from suitable in form. No margin was left of blank paper for his emendations, and some of her writing was crossed. In truth, he was in a more critical mood now than yesterday. "She is not perfection, after all," he thought; "here is something to take hold of." So he slashed the drafts about freely, and wrote on a slip of paper that all drafts should in future be written in half-margin, on one side only, and with plenty of space between the lines for additions and alterations, and then returned the box by the same agency. Again he noted, by the sounds permeating the flat, that Miss Reid's luncheon was being taken in to her: he then went out as before for his usual walk.

He did not return home till after four o'clock, when he found the despatch-box on his table, and all the mutilated drafts in it in one bundle, with fresh ones neatly rewritten, embodying all his alterations, in another. Taking them up he went to Miss Reid's room, and knocking at the door, entered. Miss Reid rose as before, and bowing, waited for him to speak.

"These revised drafts are all very nice and proper," he said; "but why be at the trouble of writing them a second time?"

"It was no trouble, sir."

"No; but then you have lost so much time over them. You might have been preparing the fair copies for despatch instead."

"I thought you would like the originals to be neat and proper for record. The first drafts looked so untidy after all those corrections."

"Yes, but I don't like to see time wasted. Why have two originals? The fair copy is to be done in copying-ink, and put through the

press ; so that in any case you will have a copy in the book, won't you? As it is, you have lost a day's post." Clifford spoke tartly, as if he were vexed. This time, at any rate, there should be no question of the relations between employer and employed.

"I am very sorry," said Miss Reid, mournfully ; "I quite understand now. It was very stupid of me, but I did it for the best." She looked so dejected that Clifford hastened to reassure her, finding it impossible to preserve his first manner.

"Well, there is not much harm done ; I daresay you will soon get into the way of the thing."

"I will do my best, sir, you may be sure ; and if you do not mind being at the trouble of having these letters posted, by-and-by, they shall all be ready for you by to-night."

"Oh no, there is no need for that ; I don't want you to work at them over-hours : a day more or less will not matter much."

"I would rather get them done this evening, if you please, sir, and then I shall be ready for to-morrow's work : it will be a pity to begin by accumulating arrears. But if you will have a little patience with me, I hope I shall soon be able to give you satisfaction." And so it was settled accordingly. And Miss Reid sat down and began writing as if the matter were settled ; and leaving her room, Clifford called to Simmonds to tell her that Miss Reid's work would probably detain her till late that evening ; she was to be sure and take in tea to her at five o'clock. So saying, he left the house, and dining as usual at his Club, did not return till late. Then he found all the letters in the despatch-box awaiting his signature, and taking them out he posted them himself,

before he went to bed, in the nearest pillar-post.

The next day began in the same way as the two preceding ones. The private secretary arrived at ten o'clock to a minute, and Clifford sent her the day's work as before in the despatch-box, by the hand of Jane, and went out as usual for his walk, returning in the afternoon. Then Jane brought him back a box full of papers,—letters newly written according to orders, for approval before despatch ; and draughts of others, this time written in half-margin, with the lines well spaced out ; while there was also a memorandum of cases on which further instructions were desired. With all these Clifford dealt in order. He altered the drafts freely, for he was very precise and methodical in correspondence, and his secretary had not yet caught the mode of expression which suited him. He even altered some of the letters she had written, although they were quite unimportant—acknowledgments of letters or pamphlets received, and so forth—which involved that they should be written a second time. Lastly, he replied to the secretary's queries, which had been drawn up on half-margin, writing his orders or explanation against each. It would have been simpler and shorter to go and talk the matter over with her, but he abstained from doing so. What had passed between them on the first day still rankled in his mind : it would have needed an effort which, being naturally indolent, he was averse from making, to place their relations on a friendly footing, or even one of mutual courtesy, without going into explanations, or evoking something in the way of a scene which would have been equally embarrassing. "She prefers the relation of master and servant," he thought ; "so let

it be. After all, it would probably turn out that her society was not worth cultivating. Well educated as she is, I don't suppose she is quite a lady; at any rate, it will save a great deal of trouble if our connection is maintained on a purely business footing." And still thrusting on one side, without allowing himself to dwell on it, the feeling of romance which had possessed him on the first prospect of the addition of this new inmate to his household, he resolutely associated her in his mind with the unsentimental appearance she presented on the day of her first visit, with her shabby boots and rusty cloak.

So now having replied to the different queries, he added a remark on the bottom of the paper: "Miss Reid is requested not to extend her day's work beyond five o'clock, unless specially instructed to do so. Any matters undisposed of by that hour are to be taken up and dealt with on the following day. There will be no loss of time in the long-run by keeping regular hours;"—and rang for Jane to take the box back.

The succeeding days were passed in precisely the same way, Clifford not allowing himself to dwell on the sense of disappointment he was conscious of feeling that matters should have fallen into this groove, albeit it was entirely of his own making. But one result was satisfactory. Mrs Simmonds and Jane, who were probably somewhat exercised at first by Miss Reid's engagement, now took no more thought about her coming and going than of the tradesmen's calls. And Clifford, pursuing the method of doing business adopted from the first, noticed with pleasure the quickness with which the secretary had fallen into his ways, and had caught his style of expression. Each day the emendations and corrections of her work

became fewer. "She is certainly very intelligent," he thought; "she seems to know exactly what I want to say, and how to say it." As one result of this aptitude, his own share of the business became rapidly lighter, and he found himself daily enjoying more and more leisure for his books.

During this time he never even saw his secretary, although constantly dwelling on her features, and trying to recall them. He began to feel the absurdity of the thing. Miss Reid might just as well do her work at home, and save him the embarrassment of her presence in the chambers. Still, although it would often have been simpler, and saved time, to give his instructions personally, he persevered in his system. "Let her come to me," he thought; "if we are to be master and servant, the servant may as well seek the master as the master the servant."

But Miss Reid did not come to him. At last, one day, he had occasion to refer to the letter-books which were in her room, and this excuse for going there satisfied his pride and his scruples. "Pray, keep your seat," he said, as she rose on his entrance; "I merely want to refer to the letter-books,"—and he went straight to the side-table in the drawer of which they were kept, while Miss Reid resumed her seat and her writing.

"You are getting on famously," he said presently, looking round the orderly room; "you find the work all plain and straightforward now, I think." Then he added, holding up the book which he had been consulting, "These indexes are rather too full."

"I am sorry, sir——"

"There is nothing to be sorry about," he said, smiling good-naturedly; "Rome was not built in a day. You are doing very well.

But an index is not an index if you tell the whole story over again. Brevity is the thing to study in an index. In fact, it may be studied with advantage in all correspondence. The tendency to be a little diffuse is the only fault I have to find in your writing."

"Thank you, sir, for mentioning it. I will endeavour to be more brief in future."

"I see you have got your papers in good order," he continued, taking up the different bundles, one by one, in the pigeon-holes of the cabinet;—"but what is this?"

"Those," said Miss Reid, rising and coming towards him, to see which packet he referred to, "are your instructions on my queries."

"But what is the good of keeping these? They were needed only in the days of your apprenticeship."

"They might be useful for my—if at any time you had occasion to employ another secretary."

Clifford looked at the speaker to see if her words contained any special meaning; but her face betrayed no expression of the sort as she added, with a slight smile, "Of course, I have no wish to anticipate evil; still, in matters of business, one is bound to consider the interest of one's employer, and I should be sorry if you had to go through the same trouble a second time, in teaching——"

"Your successor? That is very disinterested of you," said Clifford, sarcastically.

"Not at all, sir," she replied,

simply; "it appears no more than my duty to suggest it."

"What is the girl really thinking about, I wonder?" was his mental rejoinder. Nor was the doubt made plainer when she added, "This reminds me that there is one suggestion I ought to make."

"And what is that, pray?"

"Merely that it might be better if my name appeared on the record somewhat differently. It might be misunderstood if '*Miss Reid*' appeared on the papers."

"Oh! So you think there *is* room for misunderstanding? So you propose that I should dub you *Mr Reid*? I have you there, you little humbug," he added to himself.

"I would suggest that you should put simply '*H. Reid*.'"

"I thought you were going to say simply—'*Reid*.' Very good, *H. Reid*; perhaps it will be as well. Is it allowable to ask of *H. Reid*," he added, as he moved towards the door, "if the *H.* stands for *Helen*, or *Harriet*, or *Hannah*?"

"My name is *Hilda*, sir."

"Your mother's name?"

"No; I was called after my aunt, my mother's only sister."

"Is your mother alive?"

"No, sir; I lost my mother about two years ago. I am living with my father."

Clifford, as he went back to his room, remembered that *Miss Reid* had always been dressed in half mourning.

ARMY REFORM.

THE new Secretary of State for War has announced the intention of dealing with the various army questions still unsettled. As regards organisation, what has been called Lord Cardwell's scheme has so far proved a failure, not through any inherent defects, but from the attempt of the Government of the day to carry on wars without asking Parliament for the sinews of war. The Government has for the last three years been playing this game of false economy, and our military organisation has in consequence been subjected to a strain which it never was intended to bear, and under which it was inevitable that it would break down.

When the Liberals succeeded to office, the condition of the army loudly called for immediate remedy. The report of Lord Airey's Committee supplied all the necessary data, and among Mr Gladstone's lieutenants were several men of great ability, who, having been at the War Office during the inception of the present organisation, were thoroughly versed in all the details. Either Lord Cardwell, Lord Northbrook, or Lord Lansdowne would have been ready to deal with the subject to the best possible advantage. But to employ them on the work was too obvious a measure for the system of "How not to do it." It is understood that Lord Cardwell's health at the time prevented his taking office. Lord Northbrook was sent to the Admiralty, where he found himself at first very appropriately *at sea*. Lord Lansdowne went to the India Office, of which he had no previous experience. And Mr Childers, disqualified for the Admiralty by his knowledge of naval matters, under-

took to regenerate the army. The consequence of this shuffling of the official pack is that, at a time when the army is *in extremis*, Mr Childers requires nine months for gestation before delivering himself of the remedial measures so urgently required—a wise delay, no doubt, in view of his ignorance of the special work confided to him; but in that case, what becomes of the somewhat arrogant pretension that "a statesman"—save the mark, how many of the class are there?—can take up any new department as profitably as if he had served an apprenticeship to it?

When Mr Childers does declare himself, it is almost certain it will be in the same sense as that in which Colonel Stanley would have dealt with the subject in the spring of the present year, but for the general election; and nine months will have been lost, during which the crisis has been aggravated by fresh Indian troubles, and may be further intensified by events in Eastern Europe.

In anticipation of the remedies Mr Childers may propose, it is desirable the public should appreciate the causes of the so-called "break-down" of the existing organisation.

The primary cause is that the country carried on two difficult wars at the same time, with all the establishments on a peace footing.

The subsidiary causes are as follows:—

The present system was based on the principle that during peace the number of battalions at home should balance the number abroad; and that if war should necessitate the despatch of any of the home battalions, the balance should be redressed by a *pro tanto* increase of

the number of men at the depots. Yet, owing to the demands of war, the home force was reduced by fifteen battalions, without any compensating increase to the number of men remaining at home.

The consequence was, that whereas in ordinary times each battalion abroad depended for its yearly drafts on its depot numbering 90 men, assisted by its home battalion, numbering five, six, seven, or eight hundred men. When 15 battalions were sent abroad, these, together with their 15 linked battalions previously abroad, or 30 battalions in all, had to look for their yearly drafts to 15 depots alone, numbering in the aggregate 1350 men. To enable these depots to meet the demand, each should have been raised from 90 to at least 400—that is to say, the 15 depots in the aggregate should have been raised from 1350 to 6000. The consequence of neglecting this obvious measure, which formed an indispensable feature of Lord Cardwell's scheme, was, that the drafts of seasoned men required to be sent in the following year to the 30 battalions concerned were not forthcoming from the depots, and had therefore to be supplied by volunteers from the battalions remaining at home, to their great detriment.

The increase of the depots here referred to, though indispensable in view of the requirements of the future, could not obviously meet the demand for seasoned soldiers to complete the battalions going on service. A battalion at peace strength can only be raised to war strength either by completing its numbers from the Reserve, or by volunteers from other battalions; there is absolutely no other method, because a battalion going into the field must be composed of soldiers having a service of one year and an

age of twenty years as the minimum; and the depots on a sudden call are unable to supply men possessing these qualifications. But as it would be highly impolitic to employ the Reserve men compulsorily for every war requiring a few battalions to be placed in the field, "volunteering" must be resorted to.

The late abuse of volunteering has been rather unreasonably employed as an argument against a practice which, within restricted limits, constitutes a desirable and convenient assistance to the adjutant-general in an emergency. But the extent to which this expedient should be resorted to should be reduced to a minimum by always maintaining a certain number of battalions at war strength.

Consequently the present system was based on the condition that the battalions at home should be maintained at a certain minimum strength. The numbers were fixed both with a view to provide at an early period an adequate Reserve, without which "short service" is a mockery, and also as the only means of maintaining in readiness for the small wars, in which England is so frequently involved, a certain number of battalions at high strength.

Yet the number of men on which Lord Cardwell's scheme was based, and which were approved by Parliament, were voted only for one year. In the very next year thereafter the numbers were reduced by more than 7000 men, by the very Government that had established the system; and since then the numbers actually voted have made it inevitable that the battalions first for service have been composed nearly one-half of boys under eight months' service.

The causes above enumerated were entirely due to the *political*,

not to the military, administration of the army. As a commentary, the following remarks from Napier's 'Peninsular War' are so applicable, that we here reproduce them:—

"War tries the strength of the military framework; it is in peace that the framework itself must be formed, otherwise barbarians would be the leading soldiers of the world. The slightest movement in war requires a great effort, and is attended by many vexations which the general feels acutely and unceasingly; but the politician, believing in no difficulties because he finds none, neglects the supplies, charges disaster on the general, and covers his misdeeds with words.

"The want of transport had again obliged the Allies to draw the stores from Elvas; and hence here (Badajos), as at Ciudad Rodrigo, time was necessarily paid for by the loss of life; or rather the crimes of politicians were atoned for by the blood of the soldiers.

"Why were men thus sent to slaughter when the application of a just science would have rendered the operation comparatively easy? Because the English ministers, so ready to plunge into war, were quite ignorant of its exigencies; because the English people are warlike without being military, and under pretence of maintaining a liberty they do not possess, oppose in peace all useful martial establishments."

In commenting on the foregoing quotations, a writer on army reform in 'Fraser's Magazine,' of April 1871, remarks:—

"More than thirty years have come and gone since these words were written, and it may well be questioned if the English people have become wiser in the interval. No one can accuse Mr Gladstone and his colleagues of a frantic eagerness to plunge into war; and Sir W. Napier would probably have been satisfied with the measure of liberty to which the English people have attained; but their opposition to martial establishments in peace tending to increased estimates, is as strong now as when the historian wrote.

"The newspapers which, before the Franco-German war, insisted on re-

duced military expenditure at all hazards, and which, under the alarm created by that war, urged on the Government the most extreme measures to remedy the mischief they had so large a share in creating, are now oscillating back again to the false sense of security which recent events had disturbed.

"While the war lasted, ballot for the militia was pronounced indispensable by the least impulsive of the English journals. Some of them even rejected that measure as not going far enough. The 'Spectator' declared 'No ballot will be permitted; the whole population without exception must be subjected to the same training.' And the 'Times' enunciated the creed that 'no reasons but those founded on false security, blindness to change, indolence or pure folly, can be given why every man should not have a certain amount of military training.'

"Had the war been prolonged even a few months, there is little doubt that 'conscription' would have been forced by the apprehensions of the public on an unwilling Ministry. But the cooling-down process, dating from the conclusion of the armistice, has been very rapid indeed. We may feel sure that the opinions enounced in the 'Times' on any given morning are those which have been prevalent for the preceding day or two in clubs, in railway-carriages, and among the mercantile community; and so early as the 26th January, just three days after the first hint of an armistice being probable, that journal, sounding the inevitable note of reaction, painted a glowing picture of peaceful prospects in Europe and America, declared that we have already sufficient soldiers for all our wants, and concluded with a rhapsody on the blessings of a general disarmament.

"It would almost appear as if popular institutions and an efficient army were incompatible. It is a simple matter that Parliament, while the impression of last year's events is still fresh, should vote fifteen millions for the military service of the year; but it is more easy to vote this sum than to apply it profitably, or to induce the country to acquiesce in the continuance of such an expenditure when danger no longer appears to threaten.

"How then, under a popular form

of government, can English Ministers be restrained from playing fast and loose with the lives of English soldiers? The time, it is feared, is yet distant when 'statesmen' of either party will prefer rather to sacrifice power than to imperil the honour and safety of the country in obedience to the ignorant cry of the masses. Mr Mundella, as the representative of the working men, has already proclaimed the formula of their intelligent creed—"No increase to the military estimates;" and although the increase now proposed by the Government may be voted for the present year, what guarantee exists that in succeeding years the military charges shall not become 'small by degrees, and beautifully less,' to suit the taste of the constituencies?"

Can it be denied that the foregoing remarks apply as forcibly to the different Governments of this country during the last ten years as at the time when they were written? In this matter both parties are in fault.

The unsatisfactory condition of our infantry battalions, which occasioned the convening of Lord Airey's Committee, was largely due to the action of Mr Gladstone's Government in reducing the establishments on the maintenance of which the success of their own scheme absolutely depended.

Lord Beaconsfield's Government chose to imperil our armies rather than run the risk of a hostile vote by asking Parliament for funds to meet the requirements of the wars with which we have been threatened, or in which we have been engaged, during the last three years; and, as a consequence, it was impossible to complete the battalions for service in South Africa with soldiers of proper age and service without destroying the infantry battalions remaining at home; and after all, the Zulu battalions contained a large infusion of men under one year's service.

This method of conducting our affairs is simply childish. In abolishing "purchase," and in establishing the short-service organisation, Mr Gladstone's Government were satisfied with making a flash before the public for effect; but they entirely neglected the measures which could alone give those "reforms" a fair chance of success. The question of promotion and retirements is one loudly calling for a definite and final settlement. And in connection therewith, under the pressure exercised by his "honourable friend, the member for the Border burghs," Mr Childers has pledged himself to deal with "honorary colonelcies" and the redundant list of generals.

Mr Trevelyan is an aspiring politician of considerable ability and promise, but, like other hot reformers, he is somewhat too aggressive. We would suggest to that gentleman that Mr Bright in this particular is a beacon for avoidance rather than an example for imitation; that a strong case is best supported in moderate language; and that erroneous or distorted facts, stated in acrimonious and exaggerated language, can only damage the cause they are intended to serve.

Referring to Mr Trevelyan's speech in the House of Commons reported in the 'Times' of the 7th July, all that he says respecting the advantage to a country of possessing young and active generals is indisputable; but he goes much too fast when he asserts that the abolition of "purchase" provided a *tabula rasa* on which a "perfectly new construction of our army could be built."

"There never was such a chance," he says, "for a bold and great administrator;" meaning, of course, that Lord Cardwell neglected or was unable to avail himself of that chance.

There is nothing so sobering to an enthusiastic reformer as the responsibility of power. Lord Cardwell was both a bold and strong administrator; and we venture to think that if Mr Trevelyan had been in Lord Cardwell's place in 1871, he would have found greater difficulties in his way than as a creator than he finds now as a critic.

According to that gentleman's statement, there are in the British army 626 generals on the active list, and "the retired list of generals is one that no man can number." Whereas, the number on the active list, by the June Army List, is 475; and the retired list, "that no man can number," contains 130— and these include generals of the Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, Royal Marines, and of the Indian establishment. He went on to say—

"The country ought to know that while, with the help of India, it was paying three-quarters of a million of money to maintain a perfect army of generals, when there was duty to be done in India of the nature that fell to the lot of a general, proper men were not to be found on this endless roll; but thirty-four officers of a lower grade had to be selected, and their pay raised, in order to fulfil the duties to which this list of generals as now constituted was, by the confession of the War Office and the Horse Guards, unequal."

The above is both offensive and incorrect. Either Mr Trevelyan has failed to master his special subject, even in the ten years that have elapsed since he first took up the rôle of army reformer, or he is uncandid and unfair in his treatment of it.

If he did not know, he ought to have known, that of the "three-quarters of a million of money to maintain a perfect army of generals," about one-third was due to pay and

pensions of generals on the old Indian establishment, — due, that is, to the remnant of an obsolete system that was dying out, and that admitted of no remedy.

Again, Mr Trevelyan knew, or ought to have known, that the selection of officers of a lower grade to fulfil the duties of generals, was a measure adopted solely in order to effect the small saving in each case between the pay and allowances of a brigadier and those of a major-general, — not because the list of generals was unable to supply men competent for their duties.

Again, when Mr Trevelyan uses these words, "Before promotion returns to the same miserably slow rate of progress at which it crept along before the abolition of purchase," we can only conclude either that the speaker was misreported, or that he has set up as an army reformer with a very scanty stock of accurate knowledge. The creation of the additional generals in 1877 of which the speaker complained, was a measure adopted, whether wisely or not, to remedy the stagnation of promotion which had directly resulted from the abolition of purchase.

At the time when the Bill for that purpose was under discussion, it was evident it would be incomplete without some provision to prevent the stagnation of promotion that must otherwise result. Indeed Lord Cardwell pledged the Government to introduce, if necessary, a measure for that purpose; and it was on the faith of that pledge that the Commander-in-Chief accepted the abolition of purchase in the following words:—

"The Secretary of State for War has declared most distinctly that he intends that the flow of promotion shall be maintained at its present rate. That is the point at issue. If the

retirements are such that the flow of promotion is maintained at the same rate without as with 'purchase,' there can be no two opinions but that it is the better way to do away with 'purchase.'—Speech in the House of Lords, 12th July 1870.

From the time when Lord Cardwell's Bill became law, however, a stagnation of promotion set in, and nothing was done by Mr Gladstone's Government to alleviate it. It was left to the Conservatives, after the lapse of six years, to deal with an evil which had then become urgent. A Royal Commission reported on the subject of "promotion and retirement;" and in compliance with their recommendations, serious injustice has been done by compulsorily retiring officers who, after a given number of years' service, are still found in certain grades. And thus many excellent officers who would have obtained the promotion absolving them from that regulation if *the pledges given by Mr Gladstone's Government had been fulfilled*, have been compelled to retire, to the ruin of their professional prospects and of their lives.

Those pledges being unfulfilled, there was no justification for imposing compulsory retirement on army officers. The flow of promotion should rather have been restored by the offer of effectual inducements to retire, at whatever cost.

If the State take forcibly for public purposes the property of an individual worth £10,000, and pay him in compensation only £5000, the State is a robber. But the tendency of modern legislation seems more and more to aim at accomplishing "reforms" at the expense of classes or individuals.

By abolishing slavery England purchased a cheap reputation for philanthropy, principally at the cost of the planters.

The abolition of purchase has resulted largely in injustice and suffering to the officers. And the present session of Parliament affords another remarkable example of the tendency of "Radical" legislation in a measure which sought to throw all the burden of the suffering occasioned by the "act of God" on a class the least able to bear it, and who were themselves suffering from that act.

"*Fiat justitia,*" &c., is a favourite motto in the mouths of the Liberal party when it suits them; but if it had been equitably applied in the above instances, none of the classes concerned should have borne a larger proportionate share of the cost than the remainder of the community.

The *bonus* system which, under "purchase," represented the over-regulation prices, would of itself have continued to provide the requisite flow of promotion. But the *bonus* system was forbidden, partly on the ground of its immorality, partly according to the "big-drum" style of declamation dear to the *doctrinaires*, on the ground that merit, and not money, should be the only passport to advancement in the armies of England.

As regards the first, we are unable to perceive anything objectionable in a practice by which one officer paid another to make for him, a little earlier, a vacancy to which a little later he would succeed as a matter of right, *provided he were efficient*. Any qualifying tests might be as rigidly applied under a "purchase" as under a "non-purchase" system; for before promoting any officer, the Commander-in-Chief need only consider whether the aspirant was thoroughly qualified, without regard to any money he might have paid by anticipation. Indeed, the fear of losing the money

so paid would afford an additional incentive to efficiency.

The *bonus* system, however, would be incompatible with "selection by merit," because no officer would pay another to create a vacancy unless his succession was reasonably certain. The reasonable certainty would depend on two conditions—that the aspirant should be senior of his grade, and that he should be properly qualified.

Anything like a just system of selection by merit, however, is, in the army, impossible except in time of war. Other professions afford scope for the display of superior ability, and merit earns advancement by the operation of "natural selection;" in the struggle for existence the strongest rise to the top.

But in the army advancement would depend on an *artificial* selection, although during the dead level of peace there is no opportunity for the display of such differences in military ability, or of those qualities valuable in the man of action, which could justify the selector in disturbing the course of seniority in army promotion.

Considering also the fallibility of human judgment, and the influences to which, notably in England, the selector would be liable, the chances of injustice would be infinitely less under a "seniority" promotion than under "selection," however honest the selector might be.

The 'Times,' in a leading article of 29th July, forecasting the changes likely to be proposed by Mr Childers, says that he "has already announced his intention of readjusting the active list of generals in accordance with the public requirements;" but "*it would probably be too much to expect him also to interfere with the custom under which mere seniority remains the qualification for regimental command.*"

It is, fortunately, true that regi-

mental seniority remains still one of the principal elements to be taken into account in determining regimental promotion. The other qualifications are — efficiency, and a certain minimum period of service. If an officer, though senior of his grade, does not possess the two last qualifications, an officer from some other regiment is selected for promotion in his stead. To push selection beyond this would be mischievous in the extreme.

If "selection," in the sense in which it is advocated by the *doctrinaires*, means anything, it means something as follows:—

A vacant majority is to be filled up. Of the three senior captains, who have had no opportunity of proving their capacity in the field, the first is judged to be a fair officer, the second better, the third best. If selection is to be a reality, the third captain should succeed to the first vacant majority, and the second captain to the second vacancy, the first captain being twice passed over.

If it should be replied that it is not intended to discriminate between approximate shades of merit, it follows that this theoretical selection would resolve itself into a system of seniority, modified by the *veto* in cases of incompetency or insufficient service.

The only officer of any experience who advocated "selection" was the late Lord Sandhurst, on the ground of its alleged success in reorganising the Indian army after the Mutiny. Admitting, for the sake of argument, the "success," it affords no analogy. The selector in India is not exposed to the social and political influences by which the selection in England is beset. Moreover, owing to the Mutiny, the regiments of the Indian army in great measure disappeared, and the officers became unattached at one

stroke. The principle of selection was then applied to this unattached list for the purpose of officering the new corps as they were successively formed; and the fortunate individual selected need never come in contact with the man over whose head he had been lifted.

The English army, on the other hand, consists of regiments whose officers are in hourly intercourse; and the members of the regimental family would, under a system of selection by merit, live in a perpetual atmosphere of jealousy and ill-feeling.

Again, the advocates of selection assert that it has provided the navy with a body of highly instructed officers, while "purchase" failed to provide properly instructed officers for the army.

But here, as in the case of India, there is no analogy between the two services. The officers of the navy, like those of the Indian army, form one list in order of seniority; while, in the army, there are as many lists as regiments. A regiment is always in commission, and its officers are permanent. A ship is commissioned, and her officers are associated only during three years. In the navy, the officer selected in preference to another may never come in contact with the man he supersedes. In a regiment, the superseder and the superseded would sit daily at the same board.

The superiority of naval officers in the matter of professional knowledge is in no degree due to "selection," but results from a severe system of instruction, which is rigidly enforced, on the ground of a necessity that makes itself felt every hour. A ship in commission is always in presence of the enemy, and the lives of a whole ship's company depend for many hours out of every twenty-four, on the

professional skill of some subordinate officer.

It was a favourite argument with the "purchase" abolitionists that the professional training of German officers was far superior to our own—a superiority, however, that could not have been due to "selection," since promotion in the German army was, and still is, as a rule, by seniority. The depreciators of English officers were therefore driven to attribute their inferiority in training to the purchase system. Speaking in the House of Peers, Lord Northbrook stated that, under the system of "purchase" it was impossible to secure what he called a professional body of officers, because so many of all ranks yearly left the army by sale, that "however anxious officers might be to acquire a knowledge of their profession, it was utterly impossible the majority could do so while those rapid changes went on."

But we would ask, in the name of common-sense, what was there to prevent "the majority" who remained in the army, and who constituted the field-officers, captains and subalterns of the time being, from acquiring an adequate knowledge of their profession, supposing an efficient system of instruction to have been enforced? Six years are surely sufficient for mastering the mysteries of a subaltern's duties; and "purchase" or "no purchase," it would be solely due to the incapacity of the administration, if a subaltern who might leave the army at the end of six years were not as efficient as any other subaltern of the same standing who might intend passing his life in the service.

"A professional body of officers," in the sense in which the officers of the French army were professional at the time of the Franco-German war, is by no means to

be desired. It is of consequence to a country like our own, exposed to jealousy, and whose motto on the outbreak of war has always been the converse of "*Ready, aye ready,*" to possess a large number of retired officers among the civilian population. And the number of men who, under "purchase," yearly left the army by sale, did provide a very large number of instructed officers who would have been available to officer the militia and volunteers on an emergency.

The rapid organisation of the American armies during the civil war was only rendered possible by the number of West Point graduates, of whom not one-fifth embraced the army as a profession, who were found engaged in civil pursuits in every State of the Union.

But an ounce of experience is worth a pound of precept, and we are able to cite in favour of a system of "seniority" promotion, the experience of the Franco-German war. For many years before the commencement of that struggle, the French army had been officered largely from the ranks, and promotions were determined by "selection," or nominally by merit—just the system Mr Trevelyan would introduce among ourselves. Yet the annihilation of the French regular army was largely due to the incapacity of the officers. General Trochu, writing three years earlier, complained that, whereas the English soldiers when allied with the French were scrupulous in paying the proper military marks of respect to French officers, the latter could not obtain such marks from their own soldiers. And we know that, in the war of 1870-71, French officers had no command over their men, and that the soldiers under reverses became as dangerous to their superiors as wild beasts.

On the other hand, we find that the Prussian army, whose soldiers submitted to an iron discipline, was officered largely by nobles personally devoted to the sovereign, and that the *system of promotion was practically (and still is) one of pure seniority*, tempered by the *veto*—the prerogative which the Emperor possessed, to the same extent only as the English sovereign, of promoting officers at pleasure being rarely exercised.

We have no desire to push the above comparison beyond its fair value; but when we find, on the one hand, a system of promotion by selection coexisting with invariable disaster, and on the other hand a system of promotion by seniority, accompanied by uniform success, we do say that a prudent legislator should take these facts into account before seeking to introduce "selection" in the army of England.

"To readjust the active list of generals in accordance with public requirements," is an undertaking in which Mr Childers will find considerable difficulty. The conditions of such a measure must be,—*firstly*, the equitable treatment of existing generals; *secondly*, the maintenance of such a plan of promotion as will provide officers of suitable age in their respective grades.

The army reformers are fluent when they treat of pulling down existing institutions, but are dumb in respect to building up again.

The reduction of the redundant list of generals from 600 to Mr Trevelyan's figure of less than 100, can only be accomplished by *pro tanto* retarding promotion in the lower grades. The number of infantry and cavalry colonels promoted to be major-generals in 1878 was 13; the number promoted in 1879 was 9; the average number under existing arrangements does not certainly exceed 14. The aver-

age number of vacancies by death, however, among the general officers is about 20, every third vacancy only being filled by promotion; and thus, even though all promotions from colonel were stopped until the list should be reduced to 100, it would take twenty-five years to effect the desired readjustment.

Again, the abolition of honorary colonelcies on anything like an equitable plan would be a costly measure. Heretofore the nominal connection of a general officer with a regiment as its colonel, has been a mark of honour and emolument which the recipient could hold at the same time with an active command. It is now proposed to substitute for an honorary colonelcy a certain increase of pay, in the shape of *pension*, and to establish a harmony between the military and civil services, by limiting the granting of such military pensions to officers who have completed their active service and are not eligible for active commands.

The principle is intelligible, and, indeed, unexceptionable; but it will be difficult to determine where the line shall be drawn between generals now holding honorary colonelcies as well as active commands, and those who are only expectants of both.

All the 475 generals now on the active list joined the army under the guarantees of the purchase system. A large proportion sank at least £5000, many of them much more, to obtain the rank of lieutenant-colonel, the whole capital sum being absolutely lost on promotion to general's rank. These men have

given to the country the service of their lives *plus* a large sum of money; and what do they receive in return? By far the greater number never obtain active employment; and their pay—in this case really a pension—amounts to £450 a-year, a sum less than the annuity they might have purchased with the money expended on promotion, if they had never given a day's service to their country.

It can hardly be denied that, in consideration of their life service, and of their money expenditure, by which the State has directly benefited, a certain balance is due to these officers; and *that balance is represented by a vested interest in the succession not only to honorary colonelcies, but to active commands in addition.* It would surely be a breach of faith to deprive existing generals of that vested interest without a full equivalent. If honorary colonelcies are abolished, the unattached pay of *all* general officers should be equitably increased, the increase being proportionate to the grade. And if it should be ruled that in future a general holding an active command shall not be eligible for an honorary colonelcy, or the equivalent increase of pay, the emoluments of the active commands must in equity be *pro tanto* increased.

Thus the change proposed, which would be really a change more in name than in fact, would be the reverse of economical; and we are inclined to think that Mr Childers will find himself confronted with such difficulties, that his decision will be, "Rest and be thankful."

DR WORTLE'S SCHOOL.—PART VII.

CHAPTER XIX.—“NOBODY HAS CONDEMNED YOU HERE.”

MRS WORTLE when she perceived that her husband no longer called on Mrs Peacocke alone became herself more assiduous in her visits, till at last she too entertained a great liking for the woman. When Mr Peacocke had been gone for nearly a month she had fallen into a habit of going across every day after the performance of her own domestic morning duties and remaining in the schoolhouse for an hour. On one morning she found that Mrs Peacocke had just received a letter from New York in which he had narrated his adventures so far. He had written from Southampton, but not after the revelation which had been made to him there as to the death of Ferdinand. He might have so written, but the information given to him had, at the spur of the moment, seemed to him to be so doubtful that he had refrained. Then he had been able to think of it all during the voyage, and from New York he had written at great length, detailing everything. Mrs Peacocke did not actually read out loud the letter, which was full of such terms of affection as are common between man and wife, knowing that her title to be called a wife was not admitted by Mrs Wortle; but she read much of it, and told all the circumstances as they were related.

“Then,” said Mrs Wortle, “he certainly is — no more.” There came a certain accession of sadness to her voice, as she reflected that, after all, she was talking to this woman of the death of her undoubted husband.

“Yes; he is dead — at last.”

Mrs Wortle uttered a deep sigh. It was dreadful to her to think that a woman should speak in that way of the death of her husband. “I know all that is going on in your mind,” said Mrs Peacocke, looking up into her face.

“Do you?”

“Every thought. You are telling yourself how terrible it is that a woman should speak of the death of her husband without a tear in her eye, without a sob,—without one word of sorrow.”

“It is very sad.”

“Of course it is sad. Has it not all been sad? But what would you have me do? It is not because he was always bad to me,—because he marred all my early life, making it so foul a blotch that I hardly dare to look back upon it from the quietness and comparative purity of these latter days. It is not because he has so treated me as to make me feel that it has been a misfortune to me to be born, that I now receive these tidings with joy. It is because of him who has always been good to me as the other was bad, who has made me wonder at the noble instincts of a man, as the other has made me shudder at his possible meanness.”

“It has been very hard upon you,” said Mrs Wortle.

“And hard upon him, who is dearer to me than my own soul. Think of his conduct to me! How he went away to ascertain the truth when he first heard tidings which made him believe that I was free to become his! How he must have loved me then, when, after all my troubles, he took me to himself at the first moment that was pos-

sible! Think, too, what he has done for me since, and I for him! How I have marred his life, while he has striven to repair mine! Do I not owe him everything?"

"Everything," said Mrs Wortle,—"except to do what is wrong."

"I did do what was wrong. Would not you have done so under such circumstances? Would not you have obeyed the man who had been to you so true a husband while he believed himself entitled to the name? Wrong! I doubt whether it was wrong. It is hard to know sometimes what is right and what is wrong. What he told me to do, that to me was right. Had he told me to go away and leave him, I should have gone,—and have died. I suppose that would have been right." She paused as though she expected an answer. But the subject was so difficult that Mrs Wortle was unable to make one. "I have sometimes wished that he had done so. But as I think of it when I am alone, I feel how impossible that would have been to him. He could not have sent me away. That which you call right would have been impossible to him whom I regard as the most perfect of human beings. As far as I know him, he is faultless;—and yet, according to your judgment, he has committed a sin so deep that he must stand disgraced before the eyes of all men."

"I have not said so."

"It comes to that. I know how good you are;—how much I owe to you. I know that Dr Wortle and yourself have been so kind to us, that were I not grateful beyond expression I should be the meanest human creature. Do not suppose that I am angry or vexed with you because you condemn me. It is necessary that you should do so. But how can I condemn

myself;—or how can I condemn him?"

"If you are both free now, it may be made right."

"But how about repentance? Will it be all right though I shall not have repented? I will never repent. There are laws in accordance with which I will admit that I have done wrong; but had I not broken those laws when he bade me, I should have hated myself through all my life afterwards."

"It was very different."

"If you could know, Mrs Wortle, how difficult it would have been to go away and leave him! It was not till he came to me and told me that he was going down to Texas, to see how it had been with my husband, that I ever knew what it was to love a man. He had never said a word. He tried not to look it. But I knew that I had his heart and that he had mine. From that moment I have thought of him day and night. When I gave him my hand then as he parted from me, I gave it him as his own. It has been his to do what he liked with it ever since, let who might live or who might die. Ought I not to rejoice that he is dead?" Mrs Wortle could not answer the question. She could only shudder. "It was not by any will of my own," continued the eager woman, "that I married Ferdinand Lefroy. Everything in our country was then destroyed. All that we loved and all that we valued had been taken away from us, War had destroyed everything. When I was just springing out of childhood, we were ruined. We had to go, all of us,—women as well as men, girls as well as boys,—and be something else than we had been. I was told to marry him."

"That was wrong."

"When everything is in ruin about you, what room is there for

ordinary well-doing? It seemed then that he would have some remnant of property. Our fathers had known each other long. The wretched man whom drink afterwards made so vile might have been as good a gentleman as another, if things had gone well with him. He could not have been a hero like him whom I will always call my husband;—but it is not given to every man to be a hero."

"Was he bad always from the first?"

"He always drank,—from his wedding-day; and then Robert was with him, who was worse than he. Between them they were very bad. My life was a burden to me. It was terrible. It was a comfort to me even to be deserted and to be left. Then came this Englishman in my way; and it seemed to me, on a sudden, that the very nature of mankind was altered. He did not lie when he spoke. He was never debased by drink. He had other care than for himself. For himself, I think, he never cared. Since he has been here, in the school, have you found any cause of fault in him?"

"No, indeed."

"No, indeed! nor ever will;—unless it be a fault to love a woman as he loves me. See what he is doing now,—when he has gone,—what he has to suffer, coupled as he is with that wretch! And all for my sake!"

"For both your sakes."

"He would have been none the worse had he chosen to part with me. He was in no trouble. I was not his wife; and he need only—bid me go. There would have been no sin with him then,—no wrong. Had he followed out your right and your wrong, and told me that, as we could not be man and wife, we must just part, he would have been in no trouble;—would he?"

"I don't know how it would have been then," said Mrs Wortle, who was by this time sobbing aloud in tears.

"No;—nor I; nor I. I should have been dead,—but he? He is a sinner now, so that he may not preach in your churches, or teach in your schools;—so that your dear husband has to be ruined almost because he has been kind to him. He then might have preached in any church,—have taught in any school. What am I to think that God will think of it? Will God condemn him?"

"We must leave that to Him," sobbed Mrs Wortle.

"Yes;—but in thinking of our souls we must reflect a little as to what we believe to be probable. He, you say, has sinned,—is sinning still in calling me his wife. Am I not to believe that if he were called to his long account he would stand there pure and bright, in glorious garments,—one fit for heaven, because he has loved others better than he has loved himself, because he has done to others as he might have wished that they should do to him? I do believe it! Believe! I know it. And if so, what am I to think of his sin, or of my own? Not to obey him, not to love him, not to do in everything as he counsels me,—that, to me, would be sin. To the best of my conscience he is my husband and my master. I will not go into the rooms of such as you, Mrs Wortle, good and kind as you are; but it is not because I do not think myself fit. It is because I will not injure you in the estimation of those who do not know what is fit and what is unfit. I am not ashamed of myself. I owe it to him to blush for nothing that he has caused me to do. I have but two judges,—the Lord in heaven, and he, my husband, upon earth."

“Nobody has condemned you here.”

“Yes;—they have condemned me. But I am not angry at that. You do not think, Mrs Wortle, that I can be angry with you,—so kind as you have been, so generous, so forgiving;—the more kind because you think that we are determined, headstrong sinners? Oh no! It is natural that you should think so,—but I think differently. Circumstances have so placed me that they have made me unfit for your society. If I had no decent gown to wear, or shoes to my feet, I should be unfit also;—but not on that account disgraced in my own estimation. I comfort myself by thinking that I cannot be altogether bad when a man such as he has loved me and does love me.”

The two women, when they parted on that morning, kissed each other, which they had not done before; and Mrs Wortle had been made to doubt whether, after all, the sin had been so very sinful. She did endeavour to ask herself whether she would not have done the same in the same circumstances. The woman, she thought, must have been right to have married the man whom she loved, when she heard that that first horrid husband was dead. There could, at any rate, have been no sin in that. And then, what ought she to have done when the dead man,—dead as he was supposed to have been,—burst into her room? Mrs Wortle,—who found it indeed extremely difficult to imagine herself to be in such a position,—did at last acknowledge that, in such circumstances, she certainly would have done whatever Dr Wortle had told her. She could not bring it nearer to herself than that. She could not suggest to herself two men as her own husbands. She could not imagine that the Doctor had been either

the bad husband, who had unexpectedly come to life,—or the good husband, who would not, in truth, be her husband at all; but she did determine, in her own mind, that, however all that might have been, she would clearly have done whatever the Doctor told her. She would have sworn to obey him, even though, when swearing, she should not have really married him; and there would have been no other course open to her. It was terrible to think of,—so terrible that she could not quite think of it; but in struggling to think of it her heart was softened towards this other woman. After that day she never spoke further of the woman's sin.

Of course she told it all to the Doctor,—not indeed explaining the working of her own mind as to that suggestion that he should have been, in his first condition, a very bad man, and have been reported dead, and have come again, in a second shape, as a good man. She kept that to herself. But she did endeavour to describe the effect upon herself of the description the woman had given her of her own conduct.

“I don't quite know how she could have done otherwise,” said Mrs Wortle.

“Nor I either; I have always said so.”

“It would have been so very hard to go away, when he told her not.”

“It would have been very hard to go away,” said the Doctor, “if he had told her to do so. Where was she to go? What was she to do? They had been brought together by circumstances, in such a manner that it was, so to say, impossible that they should part. It is not often that one comes across events like these, so altogether out of the ordinary course that the common rules of life seem to be insufficient for guidance. To most

of us it never happens; and it is better for us that it should not happen. But when it does, one is forced to go beyond the common rules. It is that feeling which has made me give them my protection. It has been a great misfortune; but, placed as I was, I could not help myself. I could not turn them out. It was clearly his duty to go, and almost as clearly mine to give her shelter till he should come back."

"A great misfortune, Jeffrey."

"I am afraid so. Look at this." Then he handed to her a letter from a nobleman living at a great distance,—at a distance so great that Mrs Stantiloup would hardly have reached him there,—expressing his intention to withdraw his two boys from the school at Christmas.

"He doesn't give this as a reason."

"No; we are not acquainted with each other personally, and he could hardly have alluded to my conduct in this matter. It was easier for him to give a mere notice such as this. But not the less do I understand it. The intention was that the elder Mowbray should remain for another year, and the younger for two years. Of course he is at liberty to change his mind; nor do I feel myself entitled to complain. A school such as mine must depend on the credit of the establishment. He has heard, no doubt, something of the story which has injured our credit, and it is natural that he should take the boys away."

"Do you think that the school will be put an end to?"

"It looks very like it."

"Altogether?"

"I shall not care to drag it on as a failure. I am too old now to begin again with a new attempt if this collapses. I have no offers to fill up the vacancies. The parents

of those who remain, of course, will know how it is going with the school. I shall not be disposed to let it die of itself. My idea at present is to carry it on without saying anything till the Christmas holidays, and then to give notice to the parents that the establishment will be closed at Midsummer."

"Will it make you very unhappy?"

"No doubt it will. A man does not like to fail. I am not sure but what I am less able to bear such failure than most men."

"But you have sometimes thought of giving it up."

"Have I? I have not known it. Why should I give it up? Why should any man give up a profession while he has health and strength to carry it on?"

"You have another."

"Yes;—but it is not the one to which my energies have been chiefly applied. The work of a parish such as this can be done by one person. I have always had a curate. It is, moreover, nonsense to say that a man does not care most for that by which he makes his money. I am to give up over £2000 a-year, which I have had not a trouble but a delight in making. It is like coming to the end of one's life."

"Oh, Jeffrey!"

"It has to be looked in the face, you know."

"I wish,—I wish they had never come."

"What is the good of wishing? They came, and according to my way of thinking I did my duty by them. Much as I am grieved by this, I protest that I would do the same again were it again to be done. Do you think that I would be deterred from what I thought to be right by the machinations of a she-dragon such as that?"

"Has she done it?"

"Well, I think so," said the Doctor, after some little hesitation. "I think it has been, in truth, her doing. There has been a grand opportunity for slander, and she has used it with uncommon skill. It was a wonderful chance in her favour. She has been enabled without actual lies,—lies which could be proved to be lies,—to spread abroad reports which have been absolutely damning. And she has succeeded in getting hold of the very people through whom she could injure me. Of course all this correspondence with the Bishop has helped. The Bishop hasn't kept it as a secret. Why should he?"

"The Bishop has had nothing to do with the school," said Mrs Wortle.

"No; but the things have been mixed up together. Do you think it would have no effect with such a

woman as Lady Anne Clifford, to be told that the Bishop had censured my conduct severely? If it had not been for Mrs Stantiloup, the Bishop would have heard nothing about it. It is her doing. And it pains me to feel that I have to give her credit for her skill and her energy."

"Her wickedness, you mean."

"What does it signify whether she has been wicked or not in this matter?"

"Oh, Jeffrey!"

"Her wickedness is a matter of course. We all knew that beforehand. If a person has to be wicked, it is a great thing for him to be successful in his wickedness. He would have to pay the final penalty even if he failed. To be wicked and to do nothing is to be mean all round. I am afraid that Mrs Stantiloup will have succeeded in her wickedness."

CHAPTER XX.—LORD BRACY'S LETTER.

The school and the parish went on through August and September, and up to the middle of October, very quietly. The quarrel between the Bishop and the Doctor had altogether subsided. People in the diocese had ceased to talk continually of Mr and Mrs Peacocke. There was still alive a certain interest as to what might be the ultimate fate of the poor lady; but other matters had come up, and she no longer formed the one topic of conversation at all meetings. The twenty boys at the school felt that, as their numbers had been diminished, so also had their reputation. They were less loud, and, as other boys would have said of them, less "cocky" than of yore. But they ate and drank and played, and, let us hope, learnt their lessons as usual. Mrs Peacocke had from

time to time received letters from her husband, the last up to the time of which we speak having been written at the Ogden Junction, at which Mr Peacocke had stopped for four-and-twenty hours with the object of making inquiry as to the statement made to him at St Louis. Here he learned enough to convince him that Robert Lefroy had told him the truth in regard to what had there occurred. The people about the station still remembered the condition of the man who had been taken out of the car when suffering from *delirium tremens*; and remembered also that the man had not died there, but had been carried on by the next train to San Francisco. One of the porters also declared that he had heard a few days afterwards that the sufferer had died almost immediately on his arrival

at San Francisco. Information as far as this Mr Peacocke had sent home to his wife, and had added his firm belief that he should find the man's grave in the cemetery, and be able to bring home with him testimony to which no authority in England, whether social, episcopal, or judicial, would refuse to give credit.

"Of course he will be married again," said Mrs Wortle to her husband.

"They shall be married here, and I will perform the ceremony. I don't think the Bishop himself would object to that; and I shouldn't care a straw if he did."

"Will he go on with the school?" whispered Mrs Wortle.

"Will the school go on? If the school goes on, he will go on, I suppose. About that you had better ask Mrs Stantilup."

"I will ask nobody but you," said the wife, putting up her face to kiss him. As this was going on, everything was said to comfort Mrs Peacocke, and to give her hopes of new life. Mrs Wortle told her how the Doctor had promised that he himself would marry them as soon as the forms of the Church and the legal requisitions would allow. Mrs Peacocke accepted all that was said to her quietly and thankfully, but did not again allow herself to be roused to such excitement as she had shown on the one occasion recorded.

It was at this time that the Doctor received a letter which greatly affected his mode of thought at the time. He had certainly become hipped and low-spirited, if not despondent, and clearly showed to his wife, even though he was silent, that his mind was still intent on the injury which that wretched woman had done him by her virulence. But the letter of which we speak for a time removed this feel-

ing, and gave him, as it were, a new life. The letter, which was from Lord Bracy, was as follows:—

"MY DEAR DR WORTLE,—Carstairs left us for Oxford yesterday, and before he went, startled his mother and me considerably by a piece of information. He tells us that he is over head and ears in love with your daughter. The communication was indeed made three days ago, but I told him that I should take a day or two to think of it before I wrote to you. He was very anxious, when he told me, to go off at once to Bowick, and to see you and your wife, and of course the young lady;—but this I stopped by the exercise of somewhat peremptory parental authority. Then he informed me that he had been to Bowick, and had found his lady-love at home, you and Mrs Wortle having by chance been absent at the time. It seems that he declared himself to the young lady, who, in the exercise of a wise discretion, ran away from him and left him planted on the terrace. That is his account of what passed, and I do not in the least doubt its absolute truth. It is at any rate quite clear, from his own showing, that the young lady gave him no encouragement.

"Such having been the case, I do not think that I should have found it necessary to write to you at all had not Carstairs persevered with me till I promised to do so. He was willing, he said, not to go to Bowick on condition that I would write to you on the subject. The meaning of this is, that had he not been very much in earnest, I should have considered it best to let the matter pass on as such matters do, and be forgotten. But he is very much in earnest. However foolish it is,—or perhaps I had better say unusual,—that a lad should be in love before he is

twenty, it is, I suppose, possible. At any rate it seems to be the case with him, and he has convinced his mother that it would be cruel to ignore the fact.

“I may at once say that, as far as you and your girl are concerned, I should be quite satisfied that he should choose for himself such a marriage. I value rank, at any rate, as much as it is worth; but that he will have of his own, and does not need to strengthen it by intermarriage with another house of peculiarly old lineage. As far as that is concerned, I should be contented. As for money, I should not wish him to think of it in marrying. If it comes, *tant mieux*. If not, he will have enough of his own. I write to you, therefore, exactly as I should do if you had happened to be a brother peer instead of a clergyman.

“But I think that long engagements are very dangerous; and you probably will agree with me that they are likely to be more prejudicial to the girl than to the man. It may be that, as difficulties arise in the course of years, he can forget the affair, and that she cannot. He has many things of which to think; whereas she, perhaps, has only that one. She may have made that thing so vital to her that it cannot be got under and conquered; whereas, without any fault or heartlessness on his part, occupation has conquered it for him. In this case I fear that the engagement, if made, could not but be long. I should be sorry that he should not take his degree. And I do not think it wise to send a lad up to the University hampered with the serious feeling that he has already betrothed himself.

“I tell you all just as it is, and I leave it to your wisdom to suggest what had better be done. He wished me to promise that I would undertake to induce you to tell

Miss Wortle of his conversation with me. He said that he had a right to demand so much as that, and that, though he would not for the present go to Bowick, he should write to you. The young gentleman seems to have a will of his own,—which I cannot say that I regret. What you will do as to the young lady,—whether you will or will not tell her what I have written,—I must leave to yourself. If you do, I am to send word to her from Lady Bracy to say that she will be delighted to see her here. She had better, however, come when that inflammatory young gentleman shall be at Oxford.—Yours very faithfully,

“BRACY.”

This letter certainly did a great deal to invigorate the Doctor, and to console him in his troubles. Even though the debated marriage might prove to be impossible, as it had been declared by the voices of all the Wortles one after another, still there was something in the tone in which it was discussed by the young man's father which was in itself a relief. There was, at any rate, no contempt in the letter. “I may at once say that, as far as you and your girl are concerned, I should be very well pleased.” That, at any rate, was satisfactory. And the more he looked at it the less he thought that it need be altogether impossible. If Lord Bracy liked it, and Lady Bracy liked it,—and young Carstairs, as to whose liking there seemed to be no reason for any doubt,—he did not see why it should be impossible. As to Mary,—he could not conceive that she should make objection if all the others were agreed. How should she possibly fail to love the young man if encouraged to do so? Suitors who are good-looking, rich, of high rank, sweet-tempered, and at the

same time thoroughly devoted, are not wont to be discarded. All the difficulty lay in the lad's youth. After all, how many noblemen have done well in the world without taking a degree? Degrees, too, have been taken by married men. And, again, young men have been persistent before now, even to the extent of waiting three years. Long engagements are bad,—no doubt. Everybody has always said so. But a long engagement may be better than none at all.

He almost made up his mind that he would speak to Mary; but he determined at last that he would consult his wife first. Consulting Mrs Wortle, on his part, generally amounted to no more than instructing her. He found it sometimes necessary to talk her over, as he had done in that matter of visiting Mrs Peacocke; but when he set himself to work he rarely failed. She had nowhere else to go for certain foundation and support. Therefore he hardly doubted much when he began his operation about this suggested engagement.

"I have got that letter this morning from Lord Bracy," he said, handing her the document.

"Oh dear! Has he heard about Carstairs?"

"You had better read it."

"He has told it all!" she exclaimed, when she had finished the first sentence.

"He has told it all, certainly. But you had better read the letter through."

Then she seated herself and read it, almost trembling, however, as she went on with it. "Oh dear;—that is very nice which he says about you and Mary."

"It is all very nice as far as that goes. There is no reason why it should not be nice."

"It might have made him so angry!"

"Then he would have been very unreasonable."

"He acknowledges that Mary did not encourage him."

"Of course she did not encourage him. He would have been very unlike a gentleman had he thought so. But in truth, my dear, it is a very good letter. Of course there are difficulties."

"Oh—it is impossible!"

"I do not see that at all. It must rest very much with him, no doubt,—with Carstairs; and I do not like to think that our girl's happiness should depend on any young man's constancy. But such dangers have to be encountered. You and I were engaged for three years before we were married, and we did not find it so very bad."

"It was very good. Oh, I was so happy at the time!"

"Happier than you've been since?"

"Well, I don't know. It was very nice to know that you were my lover."

"Why shouldn't Mary think it very nice to have a lover?"

"But I knew that you would be true."

"Why shouldn't Carstairs be true?"

"Remember he is so young. You were in orders."

"I don't know that I was at all more likely to be true on that account. A clergyman can jilt a girl just as well as another. It depends on the nature of the man."

"And you were so good."

"I never came across a better youth than Carstairs. You see what his father says about his having a will of his own. When a young man shows a purpose of that kind he generally sticks to it."

The upshot of it all was, that Mary was to be told, and that her father was to tell her.

"Yes, papa, he did come," she

said. "I told mamma all about me."

"And she told me, of course. You did what was quite right, and I should not have thought it necessary to speak to you had not Lord Bracy written to me."

"Lord Bracy has written!" said Mary. It seemed to her, as it had done to her mother, that Lord Bracy must have written angrily; but though she thought so, she plucked up her spirit gallantly, telling herself that though Lord Bracy might be angry with his own son, he could have no cause to be displeased with her.

"Yes; I have a letter, which you shall read. The young man seems to have been very much in earnest."

"I don't know," said Mary, with some little exultation at her heart.

"It seems but the other day that he was a boy, and now he has become suddenly a man." To this Mary said nothing; but she also had come to the conclusion that, in this respect, Lord Carstairs had lately changed,—very much for the better. "Do you like him, Mary?"

"Like him, papa?"

"Well, my darling; how am I to put it? He is so much in earnest that he has got his father to write to me. He was coming over himself again before he went to Oxford; but he told his father what he was going to do, and the Earl stopped him. There's the letter, and you may read it."

Mary read the letter, taking herself apart to a corner of the room, and seemed to her father to take a long time in reading it. But there was very much on which she was called upon to make up her mind during those few minutes. Up to the present time,—up to the moment in which her father had now summoned her into his study, she had

resolved that it was "impossible." She had become so clear on the subject that she would not ask herself the question whether she could love the young man. Would it not be wrong to love the young man? Would it not be a longing for the top brick of the chimney, which she ought to know was out of her reach? So she had decided it, and had therefore already taught herself to regard the declaration made to her as the ebullition of a young man's folly. But not the less had she known how great had been the thing suggested to her,—how glorious was this top brick of the chimney; and as to the young man himself, she could not but feel that, had matters been different, she might have loved him. Now there had come a sudden change; but she did not at all know how far she might go to meet the change, nor what the change altogether meant. She had been made sure by her father's question that he had taught himself to hope. He would not have asked her whether she liked him,—would not, at any rate, have asked that question in that voice,—had he not been prepared to be good to her had she answered in the affirmative. But then this matter did not depend upon her father's wishes,—or even on her father's judgment. It was necessary that, before she said another word, she should find out what Lord Bracy said about it. Then she had Lord Bracy's letter in her hand, but her mind was so disturbed that she hardly knew how to read it aright at the spur of the moment.

"You understand what he says, Mary?"

"I think so, papa."

"It is a very kind letter."

"Very kind indeed. I should have thought that he would not have liked it at all."

"He makes no objection of that kind. To tell the truth, Mary, I should have thought it unreasonable had he done so. A gentleman can do no better than marry a lady. And though it is much to be a nobleman, it is more to be a gentleman."

"Some people think so much of it. And then his having been here as a pupil! I was very sorry when he spoke to me."

"All that is past and gone. The danger is that such an engagement would be long."

"Very long."

"You would be afraid of that, Mary?" Mary felt that this was hard upon her, and unfair. Were she to say that the danger of a long engagement did not seem to her to be very terrible, she would at once be giving up everything. She would have declared then that she did love the young man; or, at any rate, that she intended to do so. She would have succumbed at the first hint that such succumbing was possible to her. And yet she had not known that she was very much afraid of a long engagement. She would, she thought, have been much more afraid had a speedy marriage been proposed to her.

Upon the whole, she did not know whether it would not be nice to go on knowing that the young man loved her, and to rest secure in her faith in him. She was sure of this,—that the reading of Lord Bracy's letter had in some way made her happy, though she was unwilling at once to express her happiness to her father. She was quite sure that she could make no immediate reply to that question, whether she was afraid of a long engagement. "I must answer Lord Bracy's letter, you know," said the Doctor.

"Yes, papa."

"And what shall I say to him?"

"I don't know, papa."

"And yet you must tell me what to say, my darling."

"Must I, papa?"

"Certainly! Who else can tell me? But I will not answer it to-day. I will put it off till Monday." It was Saturday morning on which the letter was being discussed—a day of which a considerable portion was generally appropriated to the preparation of a sermon. "In the meantime you had better talk to mamma; and on Monday we will settle what is to be said to Lord Bracy."

CHAPTER XXI.—AT CHICAGO.

Mr Peacocke went on alone to San Francisco from the Odgen Junction, and there obtained full information on the matter which had brought him upon this long and disagreeable journey. He had no difficulty in obtaining the evidence which he required. He had not been twenty-four hours in the place before he was, in truth, standing on the stone which had been placed over the body of Ferdinand Lefroy, as he had declared to Robert Lefroy that he would stand before he

would be satisfied. On the stone was cut simply the names Ferdinand Lefroy of Kilbrack, Louisiana; and to these were added the dates of the days on which the man had been born and on which he died. Of this stone he had a photograph made, of which he took copies with him; and he obtained also from the minister who had buried the body, and from the custodian who had charge of the cemetery, certificates of the interment. Armed with these he could no

longer doubt himself, or suppose that others would doubt, that Ferdinand Lefroy was dead.

Having thus perfected his object, and feeling but little interest in a town to which he had been brought by such painful circumstances, he turned round, and on the second day after his arrival, again started for Chicago. Had it been possible, he would fain have avoided any further meeting with Robert Lefroy. Short as had been his stay at San Francisco, he had learnt that Robert, after his brother's death, had been concerned in buying mining shares and paying for them with forged notes. It was not supposed that he himself had been engaged in the forgery, but that he had come into the city with men who had been employed for years on this operation, and had bought shares, and endeavoured to sell them on the following day. He had, however, managed to leave the place before the police had got hold of him, and had escaped, so that no one had been able to say at what station he had got upon the railway. Nor did any one in San Francisco know where Robert Lefroy was now to be found. His companions had been taken, tried, and convicted, and were now in the State prison, — where also would Robert Lefroy soon be if any of the officers of the State could get hold of him. Luckily Mr Peacocke had said little or nothing of the man in making his own inquiries. Much as he had hated and dreaded the man, much as he had suffered from his companionship, — good reason as he had to dislike the whole family, — he felt himself bound by their late companionship not to betray him. The man had assisted Mr Peacocke simply for money; but still he had assisted him. Mr Peacocke therefore held his peace and said nothing. But he would have

been thankful to have been able to send the money that was now due to him without having again to see him; but that was impossible.

On reaching Chicago he went to an hotel not far removed from that which Lefroy had designated. Lefroy had explained to him something of the geography of the town, and had averred that for himself he preferred a "modest, quiet hotel." The modest, quiet hotel was called Mrs Jones's boarding-house, and was in one of the suburbs far from the main street. "You needn't say as you're coming to me," Lefroy had said to him; "nor need you let on as you know anything of Mrs Jones at all. People are so curious; and it may be that a gentleman sometimes likes to lie 'perdoo.'" Mr Peacocke, although he had but small sympathy for the taste of a gentleman who likes to lie "perdoo," nevertheless did as he was bid, and found his way to Mrs Jones's boarding-house without telling any one whither he was going.

Before he started he prepared himself with a thousand dollars in bank-notes, feeling that this wretched man had earned them in accordance with their compact. His only desire now was to hand over the money as quickly as possible, and to hurry away out of Chicago. He felt as though he himself were almost guilty of some crime in having to deal with this man, in having to give him money secretly, and in carrying out to the end an arrangement of which no one else was to know the details. How would it be with him if the police of Chicago should come upon him as a friend, and probably an accomplice, of one who was "wanted" on account of forgery at San Francisco? But he had no help for himself, and at Mrs Jones's he found his wife's brother-in-law seated in the bar of the public-

house,—that everlasting resort for American loungers,—with a cigar as usual stuck in his mouth, loafing away his time as only American frequenters of such establishments know how to do. In England such a man would probably be found in such a place with a glass of some alcoholic mixture beside him; but such is never the case with an American. If he wants a drink he goes to the bar and takes it standing,—will perhaps take two or three, one after another; but when he has settled himself down to loafe, he satisfies himself with chewing a cigar, and covering a circle around him with the results. With this amusement he will remain contented hour after hour;—nay, throughout the entire day, if no harder work be demanded of him. So was Robert Lefroy found now. When Peacocke entered the hall or room, the man did not rise from his chair, but accosted him as though they had parted only an hour since. “So, old fellow, you’ve got back all alive?”

“I have reached this place, at any rate.”

“Well, that’s getting back, ain’t it?”

“I have come back from San Francisco.”

“H’sh!” exclaimed Lefroy, looking round the room, in which, however, there was no one but themselves. “You needn’t tell everybody where you’ve been.”

“I have nothing to conceal.”

“That’s more than anybody knows of himself. It’s a good maxim to keep your own affairs quiet till they’re wanted. In this country everybody is spry enough to learn all about everything. I never see any good in letting them know without a reason. Well;—what did you do when you got there?”

“It was all as you told me.”

“Didn’t I say so? What was the good of bringing me all this way, when, if you’d only believed me, you might have saved me the trouble? Ain’t I to be paid for that?”

“You are to be paid. I have come here to pay you.”

“That’s what you owe for the knowledge. But for coming? Ain’t I to be paid extra for the journey?”

“You are to have a thousand dollars.”

“H’sh!—you speak of money as though every one has a business to know that you have got your pockets full. What’s a thousand dollars, seeing all that I have done for you?”

“It’s all that you’re going to get. It’s all, indeed, that I have got to give you.”

“Gammon.”

“It’s all, at any rate, that you’re going to get. Will you have it now?”

“You found the tomb, did you?”

“Yes; I found the tomb. Here is a photograph of it. You can keep a copy if you like it.”

“What do I want of a copy?” said the man, taking the photograph in his hand. “He was always more trouble than he was worth,—was Ferdy. It’s a pity she didn’t marry me. I’d ’ve made a woman of her.” Peacocke shuddered as he heard this, but he said nothing. “You may as well give us the picter. It’ll do to hang up somewhere if ever I have a room of my own. How plain it is! Ferdinand Lefroy,—of Kilbrack! Kilbrack indeed! It’s little either of us was the better for Kilbrack. Some of them psalm-singing rogues from New England has it now;—or perhaps a right-down nigger. I shouldn’t wonder. One of our own lot, maybe! Oh; that’s the money, is it?—A thousand dollars; all that I’m to have for coming to England and telling

you, and bringing you back, and showing you where you could get this pretty picter made." Then he took the money, a thick roll of notes, and crammed them into his pocket.

"You'd better count them."

"It ain't worth the while with such a trifle as that."

"Let me count them then."

"You'll never have that plunder in your fists again, my fine fellow."

"I do not want it."

"And now about my expenses out to England, on purpose to tell you all this. You can go and make her your wife now,—or can leave her, just as you please. You couldn't have done neither if I hadn't gone out to you."

"You have got what was promised."

"But my expenses,—going out?"

"I have promised you nothing for your expenses going out,—and will pay you nothing."

"You won't?"

"Not a dollar more."

"You won't?"

"Certainly not. I do not suppose that you expect it for a moment, although you are so persistent in asking me for it."

"And you think you've got the better of me, do you? You think you've carried me along with you, just to do your bidding and take whatever you please to give me? That's your idea of me?"

"There was a clear bargain between us. I have not got the better of you at all."

"I rather think not, Peacocke. I rather think not. You'll have to get up earlier before you get the better of Robert Lefroy. You don't expect to get this money back again,—do you?"

"Certainly not,—any more than I should expect a pound of meat out of a dog's jaw." Mr Peacocke, as he said this, was waxing angry.

"I don't suppose you do;—but you expected that I was to earn it by doing your bidding;—didn't you?"

"And you have."

"Yes, I have; but how? You never heard of my cousin, did you, —Ferdinand Lefroy of Kilbrack, Louisiana?"

"Heard of whom?"

"My cousin, Ferdinand Lefroy. He was very well known in his own State, and in California too, till he died. He was a good fellow, but given to drink. We used to tell him that if he would marry it would be better for him;—but he never would;—he never did." Robert Lefroy as he said this put his left hand into his trousers-pocket over the notes which he had placed there, and drew a small revolver out of his pocket with the other hand. "I am better prepared now," he said, "than when you had your six-shooter under your pillow at Leavenworth."

"I do not believe a word of it. It's a lie," said Peacocke.

"Very well. You're a chap that's fond of travelling, and have got plenty of money. You'd better go down to Louisiana and make your way straight from New Orleans to Kilbrack. It ain't above forty miles to the south-west, and there's a rail goes within fifteen miles of it. You'll learn there all about Ferdinand Lefroy as was our cousin,—him as never got married up to the day he died of drink and was buried at San Francisco. They'll be very glad, I shouldn't wonder, to see that pretty little picter of yours, because they was always uncommon fond of cousin Ferdy at Kilbrack. And I'll tell you what, you'll be sure to come across my brother Ferdy in them parts, and can tell him how you've seen me. You can give him all the latest news, too, about his own wife. He'll

be glad to hear about her, poor woman." Mr Peacocke listened to this without saying a word since that last exclamation of his. It might be true. Why should it not be true? If in truth there had been these two cousins of the same name, what could be more likely than that his money should have been lured out of him by such a fraud as this? But yet,—yet, as he came to think of it all, it could not be true. The chance of carrying such a scheme to a successful issue would have been too small to induce the man to act upon it from the day of his first appearance at Bowick. Nor was it probable that there should have been another Ferdinand Lefroy unknown to his wife; and the existence of such a one, if known to his wife, would certainly have been made known to him.

"It's a lie," said he, "from beginning to end."

"Very well; very well. I'll take care to make the truth known by letter to Dr Wortle and the Bishop and all them pious swells over there. To think of such a chap as you, a minister of the Gospel, living with another man's wife, and looking as though butter wouldn't melt in your mouth! I tell you what, I've got a little money in my pocket now, and I don't mind going over to England again and explaining the whole truth to the Bishop myself. I could make him understand how that photograph ain't worth nothing, and how I explained to you myself as the lady's righteous husband is all alive, keeping house on his own property down in Louisiana. Do you think we Lefroys hadn't any place beside Kilbrack among us?"

"Certainly you are a liar," said Peacocke.

"Very well. Prove it."

"Did you not tell me that your

brother was buried at San Francisco?"

"Oh, as for that, that don't matter. It don't count for much whether I told a crammer or not; that picter counts for nothing. It ain't my word you was going on as evidence. You is able to prove that Ferdy Lefroy was buried at 'Frisco. True enough. I buried him. I can prove that. And I would never have treated you this way, and not have said a word as to how the dead man was only a cousin, if you'd treated me civil over there in England. But you didn't."

"I am going to treat you worse now," said Peacocke, looking him in the face.

"What are you going to do now? It's I that have the revolver this time." As he said this he turned the weapon round in his hand.

"I don't want to shoot you,—nor yet to frighten you, as I did in the bedroom at Leavenworth;—not but what I have a pistol too." And he slowly drew his out of his pocket. At this moment two men sauntered in and took their places in the further corner of the room. "I don't think there is to be any shooting between us."

"There may," said Lefroy.

"The police would have you."

"So they would,—for a time. What does that matter to me? Isn't a fellow to protect himself when a fellow like you comes to him armed?"

"But they would soon know that you are the swindler who escaped from San Francisco eighteen months ago. Do you think it wouldn't be found out that it was you who paid for the shares in forged notes?"

"I never did. That's one of your lies."

"Very well. Now you know what I know; and you had better

tell me over again who it is that lies buried under the stone that's been photographed there."

"What are you men doing with them pistols?" said one of the strangers, walking across the room, and standing over the backs of their chairs.

"We are a-looking at 'em," said Lefroy.

"If you're a-going to do anything of that kind, you'd better go and do it elsewhere," said the stranger.

"Just so," said Lefroy. "That's what I was thinking myself."

"But we are not going to do anything," said Mr Peacocke. "I have not the slightest idea of shooting the gentleman; and he has just as little of shooting me."

"Then what do you sit with 'em out in your hands in that fashion for?" said the stranger. "It's a decent widow woman as keeps this house, and I won't see her set upon. Put 'em up." Whereupon Lefroy did return his pistol to his pocket,—upon which Mr Peacocke did the same. Then the stranger slowly walked back to his seat at the other side of the room.

"So they told you that lie;—did they—at 'Frisco?" asked Lefroy.

"That was what I heard over there when I was inquiring about your brother's death."

"You'd believe anything if you'd believe that."

"I'd believe anything if I'd believe in your cousin." Upon this Lefroy laughed, but made no further allusion to the romance which he had craftily invented on the spur of the moment. After that the two men sat without a word between them for a quarter of an hour, when the Englishman got up to take his leave. "Our business

is over now," he said, "and I will bid you good-bye."

"I'll tell you what I'm a-thinking," said Lefroy. Mr Peacocke stood with his hand ready for a final adieu, but he said nothing. "I've half a mind to go back with you to England. There ain't nothing to keep me here."

"What could you do there?"

"I'd be evidence for you,—as to Ferdy's death, you know."

"I have evidence. I do not want you."

"I'll go, nevertheless."

"And spend all your money on the journey."

"You'd help;—wouldn't you, now?"

"Not a dollar," said Peacocke, turning away and leaving the room. As he did so he heard the wretch laughing loud at the excellence of his own joke.

Before he made his journey back again to England, he only once more saw Robert Lefroy. As he was seating himself in the railway car that was to take him to Buffalo, the man came up to him with an affected look of solicitude. "Peacocke," he said, "there was only nine hundred dollars in that roll."

"There were a thousand. I counted them half an hour before I handed them to you."

"There was only nine hundred when I got 'em."

"There were all that you will get. What kind of notes were they you had when you paid for the shares at 'Frisco?" This question he asked out loud, before all the passengers. Then Robert Lefroy left the car, and Mr Peacocke never saw him, or heard from him again.

A JEWISH RABBI IN ROME.

WITH A COMMENTARY BY BEN ISRAEL.

Fifteenth Century. Reign of Sixtus IV.

RABBI BEN ESDRA to his dearest friend,
 Rabbi Ben Israel, greeting—May the Lord
 Keep thee in safety! I am still in Rome,
 And, after months of silence, now redeem
 My pledge to tell you how this Christian world
 (Which here I came to study), nearly viewed,
 Strikes me, a Jew born, and with steady faith
 In all the Law and Prophets of our land.
 Still, though a Jew, it is the Truth I seek,—
 Only the Truth,—and, come from whence it will,
 I greet it with bent head and reverent heart.
 I am a seeker;—though my faith is firm,
 I will not tie my mind in knots of creeds.

No more preamble. I am now in Rome,
 Where our Jehovah rules not,—but the man
 Jesus, whose Life and Fate too well we know,
 Is made a God—the cross on which he died
 A reverend symbol, and his words the law.
 His words, what were they? Love, goodwill to man.
 His kingdom? Peace. His precepts? Poverty.
 Well, are they followed? That's the question now.
 What fruit have they produced?

One moment, first.

I think no ill of him. He was sincere,
 Lofty of thought, a pure idealist,
 Possessed, indeed, by visionary dreams,
 But wishing ill to no one, least of all
 To us, and to our Faith, which was his own.
 I will not say he was entirely wrong
 In the strong censures that he laid on us;
 For we had many faults—were, as he said,
 Only too much like whited sepulchres,—
 And then, no good man is entirely wrong,
 And none entirely right. The truth is vast,
 And never was there Creed embraced it all.
 Like all enthusiasts he beheld his half,
 Deemed it the whole, and with excess of zeal
 Pushed his ideal truth beyond the stretch
 Of human practice. Most of what he taught
 The wise and good of old had said before.
 His healing skill, this sect calls miracles,
 A hundred others had as well as he;

And for that claim his followers set up,
 And he, perhaps (though here there is much doubt),
 Asserted of himself, that he was sent
 Messias, King of kings, to save the world,—
 This, surely, was no crime deserving death :
 No mere opinions, void of acts, are crimes.

Besides, what sect or creed was ever crushed
 By cruelty ? Our error was perverse,
 Wilful, unwise. Had we but spared his life,
 He would have passed away as others pass,—
 Simon and John and Apollonius,
 Judas of Galilee, and many more.
 But, no ! we lifted him above the rest ;
 Made him conspicuous by his martyrdom ;
 Watered with blood his doctrines ; fired the hearts
 Of those who loved him with intemperate zeal
 And wild imaginations, till at last
 They thought they saw him risen from the dead.
 Our folly (call it by its lightest name)
 Nourished the seed into this mighty sect,
 That takes his name and worships him as God.

Setting aside the superstitious part,
 I ask, What were the doctrines that he preached,
 And that his followers with their lips profess ?
 Love ! Peace ! Goodwill to man ! This was the gist
 Of all he taught. Forgive your enemies !
 Seek for the lost sheep from the fold that stray !
 Harm no one ! For the prodigal returned
 Kill the fat calf ! Be merciful to all !
 Who are the enemies, prodigals, lost sheep,
 To whom their mercy, love, care, gifts are given ?
 Not we, the Jews, in truth. Is it for us
 They kill the calf ? Are we the enemies
 That they forgive ? Have they goodwill for us ?
 Not they ! They hold us rather like foul swine,—
 Abuse us,—lay great burdens on our backs,—
 Spit on us,—drive us forth beyond their walls,—
 Force us all slavish offices to do,—
 And if we join their sect, scorn us the more.
 If those are blessèd, as he says, whom men
 Revile and persecute, most blest are we !

Yet was not Jesus, first of all, a Jew,—
 Even to his death a Jew ? Did he renounce
 His strict faith in the Prophets and the Law ?
 Never ! “ I come not to destroy,” he said,
 “ The Law or Prophets, only to fulfil.”
 So, too, his preaching, whatsoe'er it was,
 Was to the Jews. The miracles he wrought
 Were for the Jews alone. “ I am not sent,”—

These are his words,—“but unto the lost sheep
Of Israel’s house : my bread is not for dogs.”
Who were the dogs to whom he thus refused
To lend his healing hand ? What had she done
Who asked his service that he scorned her thus ?
She was from Canaan, or a Greek—no, Jew ;
This was her crime. ’Tis true that, touched at last
By those sad humble words of hers, “The dogs
May eat the crumbs dropped from the master’s board,”
He made her an exception to his rule,—
But still his rule was this. This his first rule.
No ? But it was ! Remember the rich youth
Who prayed to be his follower : “Two things,”
He said, “are needful.” First, that you obey
The Law and Prophets—that is, are a Jew ;—
And then the second, that your wealth and goods
You sell, and give the proceeds to the poor.
First be a Jew, then poor. Renounce all wealth ;
Keep nothing back. These are conditions prime,
Refusing which, your following I reject.

I see you gravely shake your head at this ;
But read the records,—you will see I’m right.
Jesus, let me repeat it yet again,
Was first and last a Jew ; never renounced
That faith of ours ; taught in the Synagogue ;
Quoted the Prophets ; reaffirmed the Law ;
Worked with the Jews, and only healed the Jews,
And held all other nations but as dogs.*

* (*Commentary by Ben Israel.*)

I’ve read the records carefully again :
It goes against my will—still, I admit,
Ben Esdra may be right. Here let me note
One case that he perchance has overlooked—
That of the Publican named Zaccheus.
This man was rich, and, curious, sought to look
On Jesus,—for this purpose climbed a tree.
Jesus, perceiving him, proposed himself
To be his guest ; at which a murmuring went
Among his followers,—for this wealthy man
Was, as they said, a sinner, or no Jew.
But I note this, that Zaccheus on the spot
Surrendered half his goods unto the poor
Ere Jesus went into his house ; and then,
And not till then, said Jesus—“ On this house
This day salvation cometh, forasmuch
As he, too, is a son of Abraham ”—
That is, a Jew. Again, where did he send
His twelve disciples (Judas ’mid the rest)
To preach the Gospel ? To the Gentiles ? No !
This he forbade,—but “unto the lost sheep
Of Israel’s house.” And one case more I note,—
That of the woman of Samaria,
To whom he said (his followers murmuring
That he should speak to her) : “Salvation comes

And second (mark this well, and ponder it),
 He was a Communist—denied the right
 Of private wealth ; ordained a common purse
 To be administered for all alike,
 And all rejected who refused him this.
 " 'Tis easier for a camel to pass through
 A needle's eye,"—these are his very words,—
 " Than that a rich man should inherit heaven."
 A rich man, mind you, whether good or bad.
 What was the moral of his parable
 Of Lazarus, and Dives ? What offence
 Did Dives, that in everlasting fire
 He was condemned to suffer ? What good deed
 Did Lazarus, that he at last should lie
 On Abraham's bosom in eternal bliss ?
 Nothing ! The beggar, Lazarus, was poor ;
 Dives was rich. This was the crime of one,
 The virtue of the other. Not one hint
 Of any other reason for the hell
 Or heaven that he adjudged them,—not one word
 That Dives was not charitable, kind,
 Generous, a helper of his brother man ;—
 No accusation, save that he was rich.
 No word that Lazarus, with all his sores,
 Possessed ONE virtue, save that he was poor.
 Nay, more : when Dives in his torment sued
 For mercy, what did Abraham say to him ?
 You for your evil deeds must suffer now ?
 No ! but, " You had the good things on the earth,
 Lazarus the evil. Therefore, now, to thee
 Is torment given—comfort unto him."

Working to pile up wealth Jesus abhorred.
 " Each man for all," he said, " and all for each.
 Take no thought of to-morrow—for the day
 Sufficient will be given. No sparrow falls
 Save through God's law. The ravens of the air
 Sow not and reap not, yet God feedeth them.
 The lilies of the field nor toil nor spin,
 Yet Solomon was not arrayed like them.
 Why, then, take thought of raiment and of food ?

But to the Jews." Doubtless, as well we know,
 It was unlawful for a Jew to eat
 And bide with those who were uncircumcised.
 Upon this point, long after he was dead,
 Extreme contention 'mid his followers rose,
 If Gentiles, ere they had been circumcised,
 Into the Christian faith could be baptised—
 Some holding full adherence to the law
 A prime condition,—some, that it sufficed
 If its main principles were recognised :
 But this I merely note. It seems quite clear
 That only Jews at first could join the sect.

Leave all to God. Blessèd are ye, the poor !
 God's kingdom shall be yours : but ye, the rich,
 Woe unto you." This was his life and text.
 Once only—so the record goes—a rage
 Seized upon Jesus, when, with whip and thong,
 The money-changers—all who bought and sold—
 He from the precincts of the temple drove,
 Saying, "'Tis writ, This is the house of prayer,
 But ye have made it to a den of thieves."
 Let this show what he thought of such as these.
 Those who were with him knew and did his will,—
 Lived in community of goods, renounced
 All private wealth. This doctrine, too, they preached
 After his death ; and all who joined their sect
 Sold their possessions, houses, treasures, lands,
 And paid the price into the common store,
 To be administered to each one's need.
 They did not seek by subterfuge and trick
 To cling to Mammon while they worshipped God.*

What should a Christian do, then, who accepts
 The doctrines that this master, nay, this God
 (For so they call him), clearly thus appoints ;—
 Live by them, should he not ? Not by blank words
 Affirm them, but by all his acts and life.
 First, love to God—and love to man as well.
 Then peace, forgiveness, kindness, poverty.
 What is the Christian practice ? War—the sword
 As arbiter of all disputes of men—
 Reprisals,—persecutions unto death
 For all who differ from them—Peter's sword
 That Jesus bade him sheathe,—no simple lives
 Of frugal fare and pure beneficence,
 But luxury and imperious tyranny
 In all high places,—all in earnest strife
 To pile up wealth for selfish purposes,—
 Each greedy for himself, the wretched poor
 Down-trodden, trampled on,—the Church itself,
 Splendid with pageant, cruel in its power,—
 Pride rampant, hissing through a thousand maws,—
 Power, like a ravening wolf among the lambs,
 Worrying the weakest,—prayers, lip-deep, no more—
 The devil's work done in the name of God.

Such is the spectacle I see in Rome.

* Here I, Ben Israel, note the curious case
 Of Ananias and Sapphira, struck
 By sudden death, because of all their wealth
 They kept a part back for their private use—
 Tempting by this the Lord, as Peter said.
 But where are the Almighty's lightnings now ?

Among the pomps in which this Christian Church
 Invests its pageants, oft I think of him
 Whom they pretend to worship, and his words
 Come back to me with which he once reprov'd
 Our priests of his own days. The world, indeed,
 Has but one pattern for its worldliness,—
 Or now, or then, 'tis evermore the same.
 If we of old were stiff-necked in our pride,
 Desiring power instead of godliness,
 Avid of pomp,—these Christians are the same :
 They will not follow either God or Christ.
 “ Thus saith the Lord, Stand in the ways, and see ;
 Ask, where is the good way, and walk therein,
 And so ye shall find rest unto your souls.
 But they replied, We will not walk therein.”
 Thus Jeremiah,—Jesus much the same.
 Long prayers, low bowings in the market-place,
 Chief seats in synagogues, upper rooms at feasts,
 Fine linen, costly dresses, pompous rites,
 Grand ceremonials, purple trailing robes,
 Embroidered hems, and wide phylacteries,—
 All this he scorned. Well, still we see the same,
 For all his scorn, among his followers.
 His very words describe these cardinals
 As they were made for them alone,—not us.
 Not we alone were whited sepulchres ;
 Robbed widows, orphans, every one for greed :
 This Church still robs them, wears its purple robes,
 Prays at the public corners of the streets,
 Nor even the outside of the platter cleans.

And what thinks Jesus of it?—if, indeed,
 He from beyond can look into their hearts,
 Who call upon his name and preach of Peace.
 Foul hypocrites, who feed their hungry flocks
 With husks of dogmas and dead chaff of talk,
 And trample virtue down into the mire.

I ask myself, Do these men ever think
 Or weigh their master's teaching, practice, words,
 That thus by rote, like empty formulas,
 They gabble them, as senseless parrots talk.
 Doctrine and life to him were one. To these
 Doctrine from life is utterly divorced.

Whatever Jesus was, this Church, these men,
 Are none of his,—or ours ; his words alone
 They worship like a fetish, without sense,—
 His real inner teaching they reject ;
 Nay, are afraid to look it in the face
 And seek its meaning, lest it come to this,
 That they must choose between the things he would,
 And what they covet dearer than their life.

Jew as I am, in view of them, at times
 I long to see some real Christian sect
 Ready to take the system that he taught,
 And try it in this world,—not talking Peace,
 Good-will to men, Love, Justice, Charity,
 But living it in very deed,—a sect
 That should abjure all individual greed,
 All competition for a selfish end,
 And joining, make one common purse for all,
 As Jesus did among his followers.
 Would it succeed? Ah, you and I are Jews;
 Jesus has no authority with us.
 But were we Christians, and not hypocrites,—
 Did we believe that he was really God,
 Or even that his mission was divine,—
 How should we dare to gloss his teachings o'er,
 And twist his doctrines so that they should fit
 Our worldly needs, and in the very face
 Of his plain orders seek some verbal trick
 To warp them to the life we like to lead!

The Eternal One must needs look down and smile
 At these base wriggings of His creatures here,
 Filled with sad pity, too, at their offence,—
 Seeing them do, with His name on their lips,
 All He forbids, and dreaming none the less
 They only shall be saved,—all others damned.

Would Jesus' plan succeed? The world thus far
 Has taken another path,—we most of all,—
 Believing not in him, nor in his scheme;—
 But dreaming—shaking, as it were, from me
 All usages and habits of the world,
 At times I stretch my mind out in the vague,
 And seek upon this plan to build a world.
 No property, but that which all should own
 With equal rights,—the product of all work
 Held for the common good in trust for all;
 All, to the lowest, to be clothed, fed, housed,
 Freed from necessity and from the wolf
 Of hunger, and the pains and pangs of life;
 Each having claims on all to do the task
 Best fitted for his powers, tastes, happiness;
 Each as a duty bound to do his share,
 And not to be a drone within the hive.

What glory might the world then see!—what joy!
 What harmony of work! what large content!
 What splendid products of joint industry!
 All toiling with one purpose and one heart;
 No war, no waste of noble energies,—
 But smiling peace, the enlarging grace of art;

Humanity a column with its base
Of solid work, and at its summit crowned
With the ideal capital of Love !

This is a dream that turns this world of ours
Quite upside down ;—I'll say no more of it.

And yet one word more, lest you deem me fool !
Think not I dream : none but a fool could dream
Equality of rights,—that is, the claim
To justice, life, food, freedom in the bound
Of common benefit, involves the claim
To equal virtues, powers, intelligence,—
Since God in these unequal shaped us all,
And fitted each one for his special end.
So should the wise, just, virtuous take the lead,
Or all at once is lawless anarchy ;
For what more fatal, hopeless, than a scheme
Where wise and good, and fool and knave alike,
Own equal powers and rights in government ?

But how secure the leadership to those
Whom God hath made for leaders ? Ah, my friend,
That is the question none hath e'er resolved ;
For liberty, at best a negative—
Mere freedom from restraint—engenders soon
Licence and tyranny,—dire positives :
Just as Aurelius, best of emperors,
Begot for son the cruel Commodus.

Danger on all sides threatens government.
Choose you a king,—the very best is weak,—
And fierce temptation dogs the path of power.
Choose you the Demos,—it perchance is worse ;
For then, as in an agitated sea,
The frothiest ever to the surface swims.
Caprice, rage, panic, interest, sway the mob ;
Justice is overstormed, wisdom lies low,
And noisy ignorance, swollen by the breath
Of blatant demagogues, wrecks the lost state.

Why ?—But because the eager lust of men,
The godless strife of utter selfishness,
Makes of the world a blind and brutal herd,
All crowding on, devoid of common aim,—
Each goring his own way to make his path.

Well, seeing this, and how these blundering schemes
Beget a brood of sin and misery,
Said Jesus to his followers : All is wrong ;
Let it be all reversed,—such life is hate ;
But God is love : try love, then, for your scheme,—

Try God's law ;—as the Book of Wisdom saith,
 “ All hatred stirreth strife ; but love hath power
 To cover up all sins ;” and yet again :
 “ He who his neighbour scorneth, sins ; but he
 Is happy who hath mercy for the poor.”
 “ The profit of the earth is made for all,
 And riches breed disease and vanity.”
 So saith the preacher, just as Jesus said.
 Nothing was new in Jesus' scheme but this,—
 To make community a fact—no dream.*
 But new or old, his followers obeyed,
 Accepting what he taught. Their life was pure,—
 They craved no gains, abjured all private wealth ;
 Preached poverty, and practised what they preached ;
 And then, with stealthy step and half-veiled face,
 Pride entered, and ambition ; and they shaped
 That fair community into the thing
 Now called a Church, and on its altar raised
 The same false idol he had driven forth ;
 And now what is this Church so called of Christ ?
 The last and even the most hideous shape
 Of tyranny—that spawns upon the world
 As love's true offspring the foul serpent brood
 Of superstition, bigotry, and hate.

Thus looking on, and striving as I can
 To keep my mind wide open to new thought,
 I weave my dream of what the world might be,—
 A vague wild dream, but not without its charm.

* And scarcely this, say I, Ben Israel—
 Commenting on this letter. We of old
 Among the patriarchs ever practised it.
 And well it worked, till, into cities packed,
 Men grew ambitious, greedy, void of God,
 And then confusion came to one and all.
 The greed of riches is the curse of man :
 Virtue and wisdom only, hand in hand,
 Have any rightful claims to power ; the wise,
 The good, in every age affirm the same,—
 Solon, Confucius, Plato, Thales, all.
 “ Flee greed, choose equal rights,” Menander says.
 When Greece made question of her wisest men
 What is the best form of all government,
 Thales replied, “ Where none are over-rich,
 None over-poor ;” and Anacharsis said,
 “ Where vice is hated—virtue revered.”
 So Pittacus—“ Where honours are conferred
 But on the virtuous ;” and Solon, too,
 In thought, if not in words, like Jesus spoke,—
 “ Where any wrong unto the meanest done
 Is held to be an injury to all.”
 So also Solomon,—“ Remove me far
 From vanity and lies ; and give to me
 Nor poverty nor wealth. Blessed is he
 Who for the poor and needy giveth thought :
 The Lord shall help him in his time of need.”

Since nothing in our Law forbids to us
 The trial of this scheme, suppose we Jews—
 (Nay, do not smile)—suppose we very Jews
 Go on and do even this, the Christians' work :
 They will not do it,—oh, be sure of that !

No more of this : oh, my Jerusalem !—
 Thou whom again we shall rebuild in power—
 Let Justice be thy strong foundation-stones,
 And Love the cement that shall knit them close.
 Firm in our Faith—at last—at last, O Lord !
 When we have suffered to the bitter end,
 Thy chosen people Thou wilt lift again,
 And sweep Thy enemies before Thy path.
 Come not to Rome,—it is the sink of vice :
 Its grandeur is decayed ; its splendid days
 Are faded. Famine, War, and Pestilence—
 Tempest and inundation and fierce hordes—
 Have o'er it swept, with ruin in their track.
 The herdsman tends his flocks upon the Hill
 Where Manlius drove the Gauls. The Capitol
 Scarcely exists in name : its temples proud
 Are wrecked and ruined. In the Forum herd
 Horned cattle ; and beyond the Flaminian gate,
 Where once triumphant swarmed the crowds of Rome,
 Spreads a flat marsh, o'ergrown with rustling canes,
 Where flocks of whirring wild-fowl make their home.
 Death haunts the temples, once so full of life.
 Life crowds the tombs where the dead Cæsars lie,
 And fortifies their wrecks for deadly feud.
 The arts have perished. Prone upon the earth
 Lie shattered the proud statues of their gods,
 While the rude builder breaks them with his pick,
 Or burns them into lime. The games are o'er ;
 The streets are filled with ruffian soldiery,
 Quick at a quarrel ; and the deadly knife
 Of treachery stabs the unsuspecting foe.
 Upon the Castle every week are seen
 Black corpses, nailed along the outer walls.
 The city throngs at night with bravos hired,
 Who after murder find a safe retreat
 In many a priestly palace. In a word,
 Rapine and murder, rape and parricide,
 Ay, ev'ry crime, with or without a name,
 Ravage the city. Justice, with sad face,
 Weeping, hath fled, and Mercy's voice is dumb.
 Is this the reign of Christ—or Belial ?

Yet still I linger here : I scarce know why.
 There is a charm that, all beyond my will,
 Allures me, holds me, will not let me go.
 'Tis not indeed like our Jerusalem ;

Yet in its age, its sorrows and its wrongs,
 It is allied to her,—a city sad,
 That, like a mourner weeping at a tomb,
 Sits clad in sackcloth, grieving o'er the past,
 Hoping for nothing, stricken by despair.
 Sad, lonely stretches compass her about
 With silence. Wandering here, at every step
 We stumble o'er some ruin, once the home
 Of happy life ; or pensive, stay our feet
 To ponder o'er some stern decaying tomb,
 The haunt of blinking owls. Nor all in vain
 Doth kindly nature strive to heal the wounds
 Of Time and human rage : with ivy green,
 With whispering grasses, reeds, and bright-eyed flowers,
 Veiling its ruin ; and with tremulous songs
 Of far larks hidden in the deep blue sky,
 Lifting the thoughts to heaven.

Here many a day

Alone I stray, and hold communion sad
 With dreams that wander far on boundless ways
 Of meditation vague, recalling oft
 The passages of Prophets in our Land.
 At times Isaiah seems to speak, and say
 To Rome, as once unto Jerusalem :
 "Judah is fallen, ruin hath involved
 Jerusalem. What mean ye that ye beat
 My people into pieces ? that ye grind
 The faces of the poor ? The Lord shall take
 The bravery of thy ornaments away ;
 Thy men shall perish by the sword in war ;
 Thy mighty ones shall perish, and thy gates
 Lament and mourn ; and thou, being desolate,
 Shalt sit upon the ground. Woe unto them
 That draw iniquity with the weak cords
 Of vanity, and call the evil good,—
 Their roots shall be as rottenness, like dust
 Their blossoms perish,—for they cast away
 The Lord's law, and despise his Holy Word."

And then in sorrow for this grievous fate
 In which we are plunged, I comfort me with this—
 That He, the Eternal One, hath promised us
 That we at last shall from our sorrows rest,
 And from our fear, and from our bondage dire,
 And build again our new Jerusalem.

And yet once more. Hear Jeremias speak :
 "How doth the city solitary sit
 That once was filled with people ! How is she
 Become a widow, that among the powers
 Was great, and princess in the provinces ?

She weepeth sorely in the night ; her tears
 Are on her cheeks ; and of her lovers none
 Will comfort her." Ah, my Jerusalem !
 Thy sister here is Rome, and sins like thee,
 And she shall suffer also like to thee.

As she hath suffered for her heathen pride
 And worship of false gods, and now is cast
 Headlong to earth with all her temples proud,
 So shall she suffer in the time to come
 For all her violence and worldly lust,
 And all her utter falseness to her faith.
 Is there no place upon this wretched earth
 Where God shall have His own, and peace shall reign ?
 Is there no spot the devil doth not own ?
 Shall we, poor human wretches, ever seek
 To thwart God's law, and rear up in His stead
 Base idols, and make covenant with Death ?

Such thoughts come over me, oppressed and sad,
 As 'mid Rome's ruined tombs I meditate,
 Feeling how transient a thing is man,
 Whose life is but a shadow on the grass
 That comes and goes, or like a passing wind,
 Or like a voice that speaks and vanishes.
 And sitting silent under the blue sky
 That broods unchanging on the change below,
 Idly I watch the drooping ivy swing
 Through sunlit loops of arching aqueducts,
 Printing its wavering shadow on the sward.
 Or, as my eye runs down their lessening lines,
 Broken by gaps of time and war, and swing
 Along the far Campagna's rolling stretch
 Like vertebræ of some huge skeleton,
 I ponder o'er the past of Rome,—the pomp,
 The pride, the power, the ruin,—masters, slaves,
 Conquerors and victims, even the gods themselves,
 Shattered and fallen and equal in the dust—
 And silent nature calmly moving on,
 Heedless of them, and what they were or did,
 As it will be of us, when we are gone.
 Often, again, with scarce a conscious thought,—
 My spirit wandering vaguely, who knows where ?—
 I gaze upon the cloud-shades trailing slow
 O'er the deep chasms of the opaline hills,
 And drift with them through some abyss of space,
 And feel the silence sink into my soul.
 At times a rustling starts me, and I see
 Some long-haired goat, that, mounting up to crop
 A wandering spray, peers down through glass-grey eyes,
 And, pausing, stares at me. At times, again,
 I hear the thud of hoofs upon the grass,

And jangling swords, and voices of command,
 As some armed troop goes galloping along.
 And then I hide me, knowing that my tribe
 Are only recognised to be the butt
 Of mocking words—or scarce more wounding blows.
 The shepherd, leaning idly on his staff,
 Alone has kindly words for such as we,—
 For nature hath subdued him into calm,
 Until he almost seems a part of her.

I have seen the Pope, whom in their blasphemy
 They term God's Holiness. A fisherman,
 Like Peter, was his father ; and his son,
 By mock humility and specious ways
 Veiling his inward self, inly devoured
 By lust of place, and luxury, and power,
 Hath mounted in the end to Peter's chair.
 Peter was poor and simple at the least,—
 Honest though ignorant. This Sixtus here,
 Fourth of his name, his utter opposite,—
 Luxurious, worldly, fierce, and stained with crime.
 There are no limits to his low desires ;—
 None to his passions ; and he treads us down
 As if we were the offal of the earth.

Last week he gave a banquet that, I think,
 Poor Peter would have been aghast to see :
 'Tis said it cost some twenty thousand crowns,
 Shaming Vitellius with its cost and waste.
 But this is nothing to his other deeds.
 Little he thinks of carrying out the dream
 Of which I just have spoken. No ! the poor
 Starve on black bread, and fester in disease,
 While thus he lords it in his luxury.
 Nor are the rich much better off with him :
 A short month since he pillaged an old man—
 The Prince Colonna—on some poor pretence ;—
 Robbed him of all his plate, robes, tapestries,
 Tore him with torture, then lopped off his head ;
 And clothed in wretched rags to mock his rank,
 Sent back in answer to his mother's prayers
 For his mere life—the mutilated corpse !
 And this is God's vicegerent on the earth—
 The head of what they call the Christian Church !

Bad as the Christian's lot is, ours is worse :
 We are the football and the scorn of all,—
 Laden with taxes, tributes,—forced to wear
 An ignominious badge,—banned from the town,
 And huddled in the Ghetto's filthy den.
 No public office may we hold : our oath
 Avails not in their courts against the word

Of any Christian ; and now, worse than this,
 In these last years one degradation more
 Is cast upon us by this Christian court,
 Whose creed is, " Love your neighbour as yourself."
 We are but beasts that in the Carnival
 Must race half-naked, clothed but round the loins,
 A halter on our necks, as we were dogs,—
 Insulted, hooted, jeered at by the mob.

No one of us is free of this,—or old
 Or young, whatever be our state,—
 Elder or priest or child,—it matters not.
 High ladies, cardinals in purple robes,
 Ay, even the Pope himself, with all his court,
 Seated on high, in all their pomp and pride,
 Laugh at us, as we stumble on our course,
 Pelted with filth, and shake their holy sides,
 Encouraging the mob that mock at us.

But what offends me more than all the rest
 Is that this usage has debased our tribe,—
 Bent its proud neck, and forced it to the earth,—
 Taught us to cringe and whimper, taught us wiles,
 And driven us at their beck to creep and crawl.
 We, who were God's own people,—we must bow
 Before these Christians : with a smile accept
 Even their kicks, and humbly give them thanks
 For our mere life. This stings me to the quick.
 As for what Christ said, " Love your enemies ;
 Bless them that curse you, and do good to them,"—
 This is beyond the power of any man—
 Beyond my power at least,—I curse them all !

I stay my pen here,—for the hot blood boils
 Within my brain in thinking on these things :
 I dare not trust myself to write you more.

My work is almost done for which I came,
 And soon I hope to greet your face again,
 Shaking the dust off from this godless place,
 With all its rottenness and infamy :
 Then for my dear Jerusalem again !

Greet all my friends,—Rebecca, Ismael,
 And all your dear ones. Peace be with you all !
 I count the days till we once more shall meet.

W. W. S.

VOYAGES IN THE P. AND O.

REMINISCENCES OF AN OLD FOGEY.

IT is now a great many years ago since I made my first voyage to India. The P. and O. s.s. Hindustan, in which I went out, was regarded at the time as a model of naval architecture, combining speed, size, comfort, and all the latest improvements in a remarkable degree; and we passengers were all very proud of her. She had double decks, and, under favourable circumstances, could steam eight knots an hour, with an expenditure of I don't know how many tons of coal a-day. But the P. and O. Company had a monopoly of the Eastern seas at that time, and notwithstanding an outlay on this head which would be ruinous in these days of competition, the P. and O. managed to burn their coal and keep up a table almost as wasteful as their engines, and yet make a handsome profit. Many years afterwards I saw the Hindustan, laid up, relegated to the ignominious office of a coal-hulk, or something of the sort. She lay there, a notable example of the revolution effected in naval architecture. Could it be possible that this short, fat, ugly old hulk was the same vessel that used to be extolled as a model of the ocean steamer! Compared with the yacht-looking vessels which now compose the Company's fleet, with their long, low hulls and raking masts, and nearly twice her tonnage, some of which were anchored ahead of her in the stream, she looked like a cart-horse beside a racer. The reflection naturally occurred, will the time come when these beautiful craft, whose great size is concealed in their graceful

lines, shall in turn be condemned as clumsy and antiquated, and withal too small? Nor could I help being impressed with the analogy suggested by the old hulk in regard to myself. We had both of us in our ways become out of date. Younger men, looking at my battered old face and figure, will wonder, no doubt, how I could ever have been thought slim and graceful. And indeed, in my particular case, the doubt would have been justified; I never set up for being a model of elegance: but the comparison would have been appropriate in the case of several of my fellow-passengers—cadets like myself, and very fine young fellows. We cadets were full of life and hope and spirits: we were all mere boys; for commissions were given early in those days, and most of us had come fresh from school—all without passing any examination. I for one should certainly not have succeeded in passing one, for I had not got even into the fifth form at Rugby, and had never come under the notice of the head-master—successor to the great Arnold, who died just before I went there—except for a certain “function” more common then than in modern times, as I had good reason to know. We youngsters, I say, were full of life and hope and spirits. There were some half-dozen of us on board, profoundly ignorant of India as of everything else, our study of military science being limited to a reading of ‘Charles O'Malley’ and ‘Tom Burke,’ but not the less well satisfied with ourselves on that account. Had we got our

appointments by the most severe competitive examination, we could not have been more thoroughly impressed with the excellence of the arrangements under which we had been selected. The system which had produced a Clive,—of whom, however, we did not know more than that he was connected in some way with the black-hole and the battle of Plassy, and that he had wanted to blow out somebody's brains with a pistol, but whether his own or another man's, the tradition, as it reached us, did not explain—my own introduction to Indian history, through the medium of Lord Macaulay's famous essay, not having taken place till a later date,—a system which produced such results was evidently the best possible system: it had produced us. As for myself, I had been called away from school in the middle of the term, an event which created a certain amount of stir in my house—the suddenness of the thing was in itself a merit of the system—and having made my appearance before the Court of Directors, and taken an oath of allegiance to the East India Company, had been thereon at liberty to get my outfit, including a full-dress uniform, the facings only of which were left doubtful till it was known which regiment of Bengal Native Infantry would have the honour of enrolling me among its numbers. This uniform I had the delight of exhibiting at home to a select party of friends before it was packed up in tin,—likewise an enormous shako, as to which my uncle George remarked that the climate of India could not be so very hot, or a shako like that would not be worn. I discovered afterwards it was not the climate which was traduced by report;—the shako never was worn: indeed, I had not half-a-dozen opportunities

of putting on my dress-coatee before I had quite grown out of it, and was forced to buy another, this time out of my own pocket. But the old man grows garrulous as the reminiscences of his youth crowd on his memory: 'tis a foible of old age. We cadets, I say, were full of spirits, but I think the young ladies on board were still more elated by the change to their new life. They, too, had most of them come fresh from school, and their prospects of advancement were still more extended than ours. We knew that we were merely cadets, and shortly to become ensigns, and although that no doubt was a splendid position, still there was a visible horizon to it. We knew indeed that even infantry officers kept horses, or at least ponies, in India; and each of us was taking out a brand-new saddle. Indeed, Tom Price, one of our number—poor Tom! he turned out a right-down good soldier, and was killed at the first relief of Lucknow—confided to us, after we had become friendly and communicative, that, in view to a speedy appearance on the Indian turf, he was taking out a racing-saddle, smuggled into his outfit, and the charge distributed over the other items, so that his governor knew nothing about it when he paid the bill. This was before trade had become honest: there was great competition among the outfitters in those days. But with all our aspirations, we knew that we were but cadets, and should be only ensigns at first; and judging from the appearance of some of our fellow-passengers returning from furlough, it was easy to infer that promotion in the Indian army was not very rapid. But the future of the young ladies was not subject to the conditions of promotion by seniority. There was a married lady on board, going

back to join her husband reputed to hold some appointment in Calcutta with a tremendous salary attached to it, who was still quite young, and whose jewellery was the admiration of all the other ladies. There was evidently no need that like should mate with like; what one young maiden had done another might do; youth was not incompatible with the enjoyment of a large income. Not, I am bound to say, that there was reason for imputing any such sordid ideas to these damsels: with them the sensation of liberty and entering on a new world was sufficient happiness for the time. It was plain that some of them at least had, like ourselves, just been emancipated from school, and they enjoyed the change just as much as we did. Indeed, I think they were almost too inexperienced and artless to think about love and marriage. We are all creatures of habit and association. To a young girl, whose relations with the other sex have so far been limited to being snubbed by her brothers, or scolded by her music-master, the germs of the tender sentiment are still only latent. True, they are marvellously soon developed. The little unfledged birds which, sitting helpless in their nests of a morning, still fed from their parents' beaks, by evening are perched independent on the topmost bough, hardly attain to a more rapid development than a school-girl may exhibit on a passage to India. Not, however, that we cadets contributed much to bring about the change in this case. We were boys at starting, and remained boys till the end. We were not the grindstones on which the young ladies sharpened their wits.

The first day down Channel was fine, with only a moderate amount of motion, and most of the passengers were on deck, although keep-

ing aloof from each other, partly from shyness and partly also because not feeling quite at their ease. But there was a very small muster in the saloon for dinner, and when next morning we got into the Bay, the decks were almost clear of passengers. The eldest Miss Dashwood was the only lady to be seen, and she sat on a bench very still, as if not particularly anxious for society. Still, I think, I might have struck up an acquaintance then and there; but her imposing appearance and fine figure made me feel shy of accosting her. I thought so handsome a young woman would need to quaff of more sparkling conversation than a lad like me could offer. I did not know till afterwards what a simple girl she was really, and that she would have been very pleased to talk to me in the absence of better company. But when we rounded Cape Finisterre, we ran at once into smooth water: an awning was got up to shade us from the hot autumn sun — a proceeding we were disposed to resent at first, the genial warmth was so pleasant; and as the steamer paddled quietly down the coast of Spain and Portugal, the passengers found their way on deck, and by the afternoon we discovered that the saloon, of which an engraving had appeared not many years before in an illustrated paper, making it look about the size of Exeter Hall, was hardly large enough for all the passengers on board. The ladies soon found their English autumn clothing too warm, and when we anchored at Gibraltar there was a great demand for trunks to be got up from the hold.

On the next stretch of our course, over towards Malta, the steamer's deck presented quite a gay appearance, from the freshness of the light dresses in which most of the ladies

now appeared. The Miss Dashwoods had so far been rather badly dressed: probably their friends, judging rightly that there would be no further need for warm clothes, had let them go in their old dresses. But now they had begun to tap the sources of their Indian outfit; and pretty girls though they were before, they certainly gained by the change. They were tall, buxom, healthy-looking girls, with bright eyes and clear complexions and rather full figures,—figures which promised indeed, as they grew older, to become too stout, but this was an afterthought—it did not occur to me at the time,—good hair, bright eyes, and open, intelligent, if not clever, features. And if happiness tends to set off beauty, certainly their charms received this addition. Never were two girls happier. Life on the Hindustan was evidently like a new revelation. All the young ladies on board enjoyed their ship-life, but the Miss Dashwoods more than any, because they were evidently unaccustomed to the society of gentlemen,—they told us afterwards they had come almost straight from school,—still less to the extreme politeness and attention bestowed on them from all quarters. The gallant old Admiralty agent pointed out all the places of interest on the coast, and lent them his glass to look through; the doctor gave them an order on the purser for champagne—the rules of the Company requiring that a medical certificate should accompany each issue of that wine, as a voucher in the accounts,—which the purser, with equal gallantry, was always ready to honour; and whenever they wanted to sit down on deck, every male owner of a chair would rise to present it for their use—the young ladies having come on board unprovided with these necessary articles. All the young ladies,

and there were several, must have had a very pleasant time of it; but I think the Miss Dashwoods must have enjoyed themselves most, for the reason already given, and because being the prettiest girls, they got perhaps more attention than any others. At first I think they were a little shy, perhaps it would be more correct to say a little bashful: but this feeling soon wore off, and without ever becoming exactly forward, for they were too good-tempered and good-natured to be rude or pert, they took the homage paid them as a matter of course, and were perfectly free and unaffected, and, I am bound to say, were also perfectly disinterested and impartial in their treatment of the gentlemen. They made no more account of Colonel Tassle, of the Lancers, who was a very great man in India, where dragoon regiments were scarce, or of Mr Fludyers, of the Civil Service, returning a bachelor from his furlough, and who seemed now disposed to make up for lost time, than they did of Markham, one of us cadets,—a strapping young fellow, and quite at his ease among all the ladies, with whom he was a general favourite. I think they liked, on the whole, the Admiralty agent best: the old gentleman was quite fatherly in his attentions, and he spoke with an air of authority, as became a naval officer on board a merchant vessel. As for me, I hardly spoke to any of the Miss Dashwoods or any of the young ladies on board, at first; not, I believe, that they would have been unkind, but that it would have required an effort to do so, and they were always so well employed. But it is possible on board ship to be out of a thing and yet in it; people throw off restraint a good deal,—and these young people would laugh and talk as freely as if those about them, who were not of

their set, were devoid of hearing, or were natives, which is the same thing. And so, without talking to the ladies, I used to hear them talk a good deal.

We had, of course, the usual day at Malta, making up parties to go on shore. The Miss Dashwoods, with Mrs Morris, who had charge of them, Colonel Tassle, Fludyers, and Markham, made up a party: I believe the Admiralty agent would have liked to join it, but professional duties kept him on board. The rest of us cadets, who went on shore together, met them several times while going about the town, the young ladies full of spirits, as usual, although not seeming particularly interested in the archæology of the place. They enjoyed the ices, however, of which they were partaking after their luncheon, when our party came into the *café* for the same refreshment. The colonel had gone to lunch with some friends at the barracks, and Mr Fludyers paid their bill with a lordly air. This was the first opportunity which had offered for the civil servant to display his power of purse; for on board the Hindustan we had all as much as, and more than, we wanted to eat and drink. Mrs Pierrepont, the wife of the civilian high up in the service already referred to, spent the day on board, notwithstanding the dirt and discomfort occasioned by the coaling. I think she was a little put out that Colonel Tassle did not offer to be her escort. The next evening, happening to be sitting near her on deck, I volunteered the remark that the Miss Dashwoods seemed to be enjoying themselves very much,—a remark occasioned by a peal of laughter, lively, if not vulgar, which reached us from a group collected about another part of the deck, and evidently emanating from one of the two sisters, but

which I could not distinguish, whereon the lady replied that their aunt would probably not approve of such enjoyment if she knew how they were going on. They were going out to an aunt whose husband was understood to hold, like Mr Pierrepont, a high appointment at Calcutta. Mrs Hawkins was a very particular person. "But what can you expect," pursued Mrs Pierrepont, "when they are put under the charge of such a person as that of Mrs Morris? I can't understand how their aunt should have permitted such an arrangement; but perhaps it was done without her knowledge: friends in England are sometimes so injudicious in these matters." To all this I expressed my assent. It was almost the first time that the lady had signified consciousness of my presence, and I felt flattered by her notice on this occasion, and ventured to lay down the general proposition that reserve and dignity were much more attractive in young ladies than forwardness and high spirits. I knew that I was a fatuous young goose, and that Mrs Pierrepont knew that I was; but the remark fell in with her temper, and she did not snub me, as I deserved.

We all went from Alexandria to Cairo by steamer, whence the transit across the Desert to Suez was effected in little two-wheeled omnibuses, drawn by four horses, and holding each six persons. The parties to travel together were made up beforehand. Mrs Morris, the Miss Dashwoods, and Mr Fludyers were of course in one party, and with them were joined Markham, my fellow cadet, and another gentleman. Colonel Tassle joined a bachelor party, wisely judging, perhaps, that a long night spent in a cramped car, bumping over the uneven sands, with ill-conditioned

teams of horses, was not a favourable condition in which to seek the society of ladies. And certainly, when we all arrived by instalments at Suez, Fludyer's appearance was not prepossessing; Mrs Morris, usually so blooming, looked worn and haggard; even the Miss Dashwoods seemed a little less handsome than usual, although their spirits were as lively as ever. As for me, I had somehow forgotten to join in a party in time—the parties were all made up before we got to Alexandria—and so found myself sharing a car with five other passengers, whom scarcely any one on board knew personally—brokers, or something of that sort—noisy fellows, who were always bawling at the stewards because the meals were bad, and generally took too much grog of an evening. But among every set of passengers there will always be found one or two social bullies of this sort, who find fault with everything, and abuse the servants, by way of showing in how much better style they are accustomed to live on shore. Nor need one go on board ship to see this form of snobbishness exhibited. I confess I looked forward with some misgivings to passing the night with these fellows; but they behaved less offensively than might have been expected.

At Suez we embarked on the *Oriental*, which lay a mile or two from shore, the only object in the bay. How different is the aspect of Suez now! The *Oriental* was another noble specimen of naval architecture—in other words, a fat old tub, doing her seven knots with an immense expenditure of coal. She was beautifully clean, however, with a flush deck unbroken by any cabins, and so giving a broad promenade fore and aft. Everything now betokened the East: the Lascar crew, the African stokers, the

Chinaman carpenter,—above all, the heat, especially to those bachelors of the party who were stowed away in the lower deck, the cabins which were lighted by a bull's-eye, never opened save when we came into port. Sleeping below was now impossible: even the ladies on the upper tier who had their ports open slept on deck, a part of which was partitioned off at night by a sail stretched across. But they had to retire below at the first break of dawn, as soon as cleaning decks began; and those of us who might awake at the first sound of the operation would catch glimpses of retreating forms flitting down the companion-ladder, clothed in white garments partaking of a compromise between what might be worn at day, and the lighter vestments suitable to English bedrooms. Then we denizens of the lower regions had our innings; for while the ladies by ship etiquette had to keep their cabins, more insufferable than ever by contrast with the cool night air they had just left, we could remain on deck till eight o'clock. Happy those who had secured a place on the skylight whereon to spread their matress: they could continue their slumbers for a time while the decks were being soused with water. But as the sun rose out of the sea, all would join in the bath afforded by the engine—and it was very refreshing to be pumped upon, even by water at 85°—parading in the scantiest of costumes until it was time to dress for breakfast. The descent into the lower regions was certainly an agony, resulting in a bath of perspiration which left one much in the same state of moisture as before. By eight o'clock the decks were ship-shape, and the ladies would reappear for the day,—the Miss Dashwoods, like the rest, in the thinnest of muslin dresses,

which showed off their pretty plump shoulders to great advantage; while Mrs Morris adapted her costume to the weather so thoroughly as to render the interior economy of her toilet apparent almost down to her waist. A loose and light fit she evidently thought becoming; and so it was. Mrs Morris was not much over thirty, and had a beautiful figure; but I could not help wondering whether the worthy surgeon-major, her husband, would have altogether approved.

Although it was so hot, our spirits—that is, of the younger members of the party—were quite unaffected by the weather. The sea was as calm as glass, and we had all got to be very intimate and friendly. It was a comfort, too, to be assured by the older passengers that the heat on board was much greater than anything we should encounter at Calcutta. We youngsters did not mind the heat a bit; if India was no worse than this we should think nothing of it, and we could not understand why the others should make such a fuss about it. And the heat notwithstanding, we all had excellent appetites, for satisfying which ample provision was made in a rough sort of way. Stewed tea and coffee, with biscuits, at half-past six in the morning; breakfast at half-past eight, with fresh rolls, and eggs, very eatable poached; a profusion of dishes, and light wine for those who preferred it to tea and coffee; at noon there was a slight luncheon, with cheese, sardines, and bottled stout; and then nothing further was supplied till dinner at half-past four. This was an elaborate meal, served in the good old fashion, with all the dishes put on the table together, to send up the temperature of the saloon a degree or two higher, while there was hardly room for the stewards run-

ning about against each other, with helpings obtained from dishes at opposing ends of the cabin. Everything was carved at table, and there was always a great run on the roast pork, the preliminary sacrifice of which took place on the previous evening, and might be witnessed by those smoking forward, near the part of the deck partitioned off for the butcher. The butcher was one of the few Europeans among the crew, and a much-employed member of it. The dinner was followed by dessert, with plenty of good strong port and sherry, and everything suited to the climate and the temperature; the P. and O. Company prided themselves on doing things in good old English style. Then there would be quoit-playing or single-stick, or mild gymnastic exercises, appropriate to the hour and to digestion, until tea-time—tea and coffee again, stewed in a caldron, with plenty of toast and liquid salt butter. This was served at seven. At nine, an array of spirit-bottles graced the saloon-table, with lemons, sugar, and iced water; those who preferred it might have hot water instead; and ham-sandwiches were supplied if asked for. We all partook heartily of these meals and refreshments, and then if any one was ill we put it down to the climate. And I have often since then noticed that in India the climate, and not the diet, is made responsible for all the illness there; nor is this mode of inference peculiar to India.

Rough profusion, then, was the order of the day on board all the P. and O. vessels, and if now and then a steward or two tumbled down dead, it was ascribed to heat-apoplexy. Poor fellows, theirs was a hard life! always below deck in a vapour-bath, and the profusion of wine and spirit bottles lying about

never gave them a surfeit of drink. Things have somewhat improved since those days, and especially the baneful practice has been discontinued of supplying unlimited liquor of all sorts; but the Company still stew their tea, and make every year many hundred hog-heads of undrinkable decoction of coffee. This reference to the issue of spirits reminds me to mention that we had parted with our dear old rear-admiral—the mail-agent—at Alexandria, he being attached to the Hindustan. The representative of her Majesty's navy on board the Oriental was a weather-beaten old lieutenant, who, alone among the ship's company and passengers, led a solitary life. He spent the day in walking up and down the deck, scarcely exchanging a word with any one. His meals he took with the rest, but sadly and in silence; and those who sat next him at table (we all of us kept the same places at meals throughout the voyage) knew no more about him than the other passengers. Whether his silence and solitary ways were the sequence of misfortune, or merely came from a dull nature, could not be told; but the poor old man looked to be very unhappy—the only unhappy person on board; for ship-life, if somewhat uncomfortable, and, for passengers, idle and useless, is certainly conducive to good spirits. It is impossible to feel sad in a crowd. Soldiers and sailors, squeezed up together in barracks or a ship, will always be careless and light-hearted. This poor old fellow was an exception. Whether he was single or married, or a widower, or whether he had any children, or even any friends, none of us knew. Possibly he had entered on life as full of hope and expectation as we youngsters had, and might at one time have walked

the deck as merrily as we did; but whether his disappointment came from failure within or from the force of circumstances, he was now simply a silent inoffensive sot. The one happy time in his day came at night. The old fellow might always be seen in his place when the ship's bell announced supper-time; and from the moment when the spirit decanters were set out he began to fill his glass with cold brandy-and-water, and resting his head on one hand while the other now and again was employed in raising the tumbler to his mouth, would go on sadly drinking for the full hour and a half allotted to this repast. The whist-playing around him, or the merry laughter of the young ladies when they came down between the dances on deck to make what they called lemonade for their partners,—lemonade composed of whisky and water, with lemon-juice squeezed into the glasses by their fair fingers, while they would not always refuse to put the mixture to their pretty lips, just for a taste;—all this noise, and the music above, did not appear to be heard by the old toper, although it may be doubted if the mind was not as ill-furnished as the battered frame in which it dwelt. At half-past ten the saloon-lights were put out, and the stewards—by this time not always as sober as they might be—bore away the decanters, and then the old lieutenant would stagger off to his cabin. He did not seem to feel the heat a bit, but always slept below, not appearing until breakfast-time, and having made what must have been a very simple toilet in his cabin. When the steamer entered port or was leaving it, he was at his place on deck to take charge of the mails; except on these occasions he had nothing to do. Admiralty agents are now a thing of the past, their place having

been taken by post-office clerks, who sort the mails on board; whether this old fellow held on until the abolition of the office, wandering to and fro like a besotted Flying Dutchman on the Indian seas, or whether brandy-and-water engrafted on old age hastened the natural course of decay, I know not; but the recollection of that dull sad silent old man amidst our gay and heedless company often comes up before me: he seemed to represent in an intensified degree the contrast so often since witnessed between the expectancy of youth and the realisation of old age.

I have mentioned the dancing. We began this after leaving Suez, the piano being brought up on deck from the saloon for the purpose; and the sea being perfectly calm, the amusement went on every night. When I say we danced, I do not mean that I did, although I contributed my humble share to the general amusement. The little instrument being only a cottage piano, none the better for its previous voyages, and without any sounding-board nearer than the coast of Arabia, did not give out a loud volume of harmony; and it was observed by the dancers in their pauses that some additional instruments would be a great improvement. On this one of my fellow-cadets bethought him that I had a fiddle, as he called it, on board among my luggage, and nothing would satisfy the dancers but that I should produce it; and the second officer—who had charge of the baggage, and played the concertina himself, but preferred dancing to playing—petitioned by some of the young ladies, got the case up next day from the hold, and in the evening I took my place beside Mrs Pierrepont, who had volunteered to play for the others, and produced an obligato accompaniment on my violin, which of course was not

difficult with dance-music. A knowledge of music was then a less common accomplishment among young men than it is nowadays, and my contribution to the stock of general amusement obtained for me a degree of consideration to which I had hitherto been a stranger. In fact, I became quite a popular person in a small way; and the young ladies stopping to fan themselves near to where I was sitting, would thank me for what they were pleased to call my beautiful playing, although, of course, it was nothing of the sort. The eldest Miss Dashwood, in particular, who was dancing with O'Farrell, the second officer, a blustering fellow with big whiskers, gave me a look of thanks from her bright eyes which set my heart a-dancing. "The violin is such a beautiful instrument for dance-music, isn't it?" she said; "not so expressive as the concertina, of course," she added—the reason being, perhaps, that O'Farrell had been playing Irish airs to them the previous evening, and singing, too, with an accompaniment on that trumpery thing of his; "the concertina is best for melodies, no doubt, but the violin is nice for waltzes and polkas; and it is quite wonderful how Mr Trotter plays them all out of his head. I never can play a note without my music." Indeed she could not play much even with it; a duet which the sisters had been prevailed on to play one evening in the saloon before we got to Suez, and which was apparently their only "piece" for playing in public,—airs from the 'Sonnambula,' arranged as a piano-forte duet—was not an impressive performance. But what are shallow accomplishments weighed against the charms of form and face, and the solid qualities of the heart? Cecilia Dashwood was as sweet-tempered as she was beautiful;

and as she would throw me now and then a kindly smile of thanks which could not be seen by the partner who bore her round, I felt with ecstasy that an understanding had been set up between us. Mrs Pierrepont also, who had held aloof from the general company, and was thought to give herself airs, became quite popular from her performance at the piano. I think she would have liked to dance herself, although, perhaps, it would hardly have been consonant with the position of the wife of a member of the Board of Revenue; but she refused Colonel Tassle the first time he asked her, and so maintained ever afterwards the dignified part of abstention. I think she was annoyed that he did not press her a little more; but he did not repeat the request, and went off at once to Mrs Morris, who was delighted to have him for a partner, and enjoyed dancing quite as much as any girl of the party.

Thus went on the even tenor of our voyage, everything, down to the calmness of the sea, partaking of the same monotonous character, broken only by the days at Aden and Galle, and the stoppage for a few hours at Madras. Here two of the cadets, who were posted to the Madras Presidency, left us, a staff sergeant coming off in a boat to take them away, which Markham, who was one of the two, did not half like. Fludyers, who was, I think, a little jealous of Markham and his good dancing and popularity with the ladies, for all that the latter was a mere boy, and who having made the voyage before, was acquainted with the usages of the Madras Presidency, had rather spitefully announced, the day before we got into Madras roads, that this procedure might be looked for; whereon Markham had

stoutly maintained that cadets being on the footing of officers, such a degradation was impossible: but the apparition of the sergeant in the first Massulah boat which came off, effectually disposed of the argument. What would have happened if Markham had declined to put himself in charge of the sergeant, and gone ashore by himself in another boat, I don't know. This custom of sending to fetch the cadets at Madras, which was continued so long as there were any cadets to send for, and any Company's army to send them to, probably arose out of some idle officer who was properly charged with the duty devolving it on a subordinate; and as Markham was not yet gazetted into the army, and had paid his own passage like the rest of us, he was really independent of authority until he chose to report himself. But the alternative did not occur to him, and the sergeant having good-naturedly offered to look after his baggage, he observed that it was a polite attention of the authorities to send some one to take care of his traps in this way; and he went off with the sergeant in the Massulah boat, trying to look unconcerned as the young ladies waved their adieus from the deck, where Fludyers, too, was standing with an air of ill-concealed triumph. Fludyers remained in possession, while the juniority of Markham was clearly established. Nor had the latter any opportunity of saying good-bye in private. It was whispered that Laura Dashwood had a preference for him; and certainly, instead of remaining on deck, she went below and waved her handkerchief to the receding Massulah boat from the port-hole of her cabin: but I suspect that both she and her sister were quite sufficiently occupied with the mere pleasure of their new life—the excitement, the

sociability, and the general attention they received—and that up to this time they were still fancy free. Markham was full of soldierly instincts, and burning to distinguish himself in his profession; and in the constant conversations we cadets used to have, he always maintained stoutly that the Madras army was the best of the three, and that the Hyderabad Contingent was the finest service in India. He had a cousin in the Hyderabad Contingent; and a coloured lithograph which he used to produce from his trunk on these occasions of an officer in that branch of the service, with a long tunic covered with gold embroidery, was generally considered to be strong evidence on his side; for we all supposed that the force in question was a part of the Madras army, a delusion still held by many persons, including most India Office officials. Markham's career, however, did not turn out to be so eventful as he expected; for having been posted to the Madras Presidency, he has never seen a shot fired, or had a chance, poor fellow, of killing anybody, or of being killed himself. Our ways now lay apart, for being attached to different Presidencies, we were as much cut off from each other as if we belonged to different armies; and we did not meet again till the other day, when he was at home on three months' privilege leave. Markham has grown fat, and every other word he uses is Hindustani. He is commanding the Bhowanipoor local battalion; Bhowanipoor is a little out of the way, he explained, and there is not much society there: but it is a great convenience for a man with a family never to be moved from one station to another; and then he was never bothered by inspecting officers. Nobody ever came to look at his battalion but

the Resident of Bhowanipoor, so he was his own master. He hoped to hold on for three or four years longer, when he should come into his colonel's allowances, and then he meant to settle at Cheltenham, where his wife and family were already established. Cheltenham was quite as cheerful as London, and much cheaper, and there were lots of old Qui Hyes to talk to there; "but what I am to do with all my boys," said poor Markham, "is more than I can tell. There are five of them to be put out in the world, and how they are to get there in these days of competition, I am blessed if I know. You and I got on very well without competition." Poor Markham! the enthusiasm with which he set out in life had evaporated under stress of circumstances: and yet he was to be called fortunate; for if his military career had not been eventful, he is eligible to hold on to the service until entitled to his colonel's allowance. The prospect in store for those who enter the army now, is to be turned adrift on a pittance when they are still too young to be idle, but too old to learn a new trade. Yet the youngsters who pass out of Sandhurst and Woolwich with this dismal future before them are just as light-hearted and hopeful as we cadets used to be.

Although as the Oriental drew near to her destination we were all full of excitement and eager to land, yet I think every one was sorry in a way when the voyage came to an end. We had all become real good friends on board; and although the life was monotonous, somehow the days did not seem long. But the natural impulse to look onward predominated; and indeed, as we steamed up the Hooghly, the brilliant green of the river-banks, in all the glory of the early cold weather, set off by the bright cloud-

less sky, made a scene which could not fail to kindle the desire among us new-comers to enter on the promised land, which looked so fair and joyous. Even the old stagers who had made the voyage before, got excited as the well-known beauties of Garden Reach came into view. There was great unpacking of boxes that morning; and the ladies were many of them so busy dressing for arrival, that they missed the scenes on which we youngsters were feasting, coming on deck again only as the steamer drew close to her moorings. Most of them had exchanged their light muslins for silk attire, while beautiful new bonnets had replaced the hats worn on board. Certainly the air was now cool compared with the heat of the Red Sea; but it seemed a pity to begin unpacking the cold weather outfit before we got on shore. Our fair companions appeared, however, to attach great importance to first impressions, and were arrayed, some of them, as if they had been princesses expecting a royal reception. The married ladies came out the strongest in this respect. The Miss Dashwoods evidently could not command the same resources of toilet as Mrs Pierrepont or Mrs Morris; but their pretty fresh faces and good figures sufficed to carry off their simpler dresses to great advantage. And indeed we did experience a sort of public reception. The mail-steamer in those days arrived only once a-month, and its advent occasioned considerable excitement at Calcutta, especially at the beginning of the cold season, when wives and daughters were arriving in great numbers. As soon as the firing of the gun from Fort William announced that the steamer was passing Budge Budge (the telegraph station a few miles down the river), all those who were expecting relatives and friends would order

their carriages and hurry down to Garden Reach to receive them: and even many who had no relatives coming would go down too; there would certainly be some friends or acquaintances on board. Thus we were quite surprised to see what a fleet of little boats surrounded the steamer as she was slowly warped to her berth, each with one or more ladies and gentlemen besides the native crew; and soon these had made their way on deck, which now became even more crowded than when we left Southampton. The partings of the passengers with each other, although hearty and affectionate, were very hurried, each little party hastening to leave the vessel as if everything depended on their being the first to get away, and a few minutes more or less in the lifetime to be spent in India were of extremest importance. But we are always hurrying through our lives in this way. The Miss Dashwoods were met by a tall pale gentleman in an alpaca coat and white trousers, who came on board attended by a native carrying an enormous umbrella with a white cover to it, and whom we at once understand to be Mr Hawkins, their aunt's husband, and who carried off the young ladies and Mrs Morris in a large boat with an alcove at one end, painted green, like an exaggerated gondola, and manned by eight rowers. Somehow, as I saw the boat going off, it seemed to create a moral as well as a physical distance between Cecilia Dashwood and myself. Many a kindling glance had she cast at me of late as she was borne round the deck by one partner or another in the dances to which I contributed the music: was the good understanding I believed to be thus silently established between us to be severed and come to nought? My only consolation was that the second

officer was too much occupied with his duties to be able to receive any parting adieux. Still I had no friends awaiting me, and felt for the moment depressed and forlorn, although, as the young lady had herself observed as we shook hands, we should soon meet again. But just then our fellow-passengers the Mackiesons—a merchant and his wife—came up to me, and finding that I was not expected by any friend, insisted on my going to stay with them. It would be pleasanter for me, they said, than going to the cadets' quarters in the fort. It would indeed: my scruples about accepting their invitation were soon overcome by the kindness with which it was pressed; and they drove me off to their beautiful house in Ballygunge, which, during their absence, had been done up and repainted inside and out, and looked as fresh and clean as if just built. But the bright green of the venetian blinds was surpassed by the splendid verdure of the lawn in front: the colour of Indian vegetation is a perpetual delight to the new-comer. The hospitality thus given, out of mere compassion for my lonely condition, and which lasted for a month before I went up country to join my regiment, has since been many times renewed, both in Calcutta and in their Scottish home, when Mr Mackieson retired from business. There is no place like board ship for making friends.

Needs not to say that I took an early opportunity of calling on the Miss Dashwoods, who were established in a fine house in Chowringhee, not then the dusty thoroughfare it has since become. They were sitting in the drawing-room with their aunt, whose reception of me I thought somewhat cold; and already it was plain that a chill had come over our intimacy. The

young ladies were no longer so unaffectedly demonstrative as they used to be on board the *Oriental*; nor, I am bound to say, should I have been displeased at their showing a little more reserve than they had been accustomed to display, if it had been exhibited to any one else. As it was, after sitting for about half an hour in the drawing-room—our conversation subject to constant interruptions from the coming and going of other callers—I took my leave, feeling as if the voyage was now a very long way off. And this feeling was intensified at the ball, given at the town-hall a few days afterwards by the bachelors of Calcutta, to which I escorted Mrs Mackieson, her husband not caring to go. The Miss Dashwoods were there, of course, radiant as ever, and, as I thought, even more charming than they used to be, being somewhat quieter in manner; and as this was the first occasion of my wearing uniform,—for in those days every officer at Calcutta, whether on duty or not, always appeared in uniform at such places—which I felt was not unbecoming,—I hoped, as I was not wanted to play, that I should be able to secure them as partners for at least one dance each; but they both assured me, each using an engaging smile, that their cards were already filled up for the whole evening; and I was fain to watch them from a seat which I occupied beside Mrs Mackieson, as I used to do on board the *Oriental*, although without my violin for company. I noticed that, except Lieutenant Hillyard, the Governor-General's aide-de-camp, who was one of the givers of the entertainment, all their partners wore black coats. It was a bitter satisfaction to me that the big-whiskered O'Farrell had no better success than myself, although he found

plenty of partners; but the times seemed all now out of joint, and I was glad when Mrs Mackieson, saying that she liked to keep early hours, and as I did not appear to want to dance, proposed to have her carriage called; and we went home long before the ball was ended. Yet there was one compensating moment, when, as I was with Mrs Mackieson in the refreshment-room, helping her to an ice, a gentle voice behind me said, "This is a delightful ball, isn't it, Mr Trotter?" and turning round, there was Cecilia Dashwood also putting spoonfuls of ice into her pretty mouth. I replied that it was indeed delightful, and that I had never enjoyed myself more in my life. I don't know whether the young lady spoke satirically or in good faith when she made the remark; certainly she was not a bit clever or inclined to say smart things, yet she could scarcely have failed to notice my dejected appearance. However that may be, she went on to say, "But this is not a bit nicer, after all, than those delightful dances on board the dear Oriental. How we used to enjoy those, and how beautifully you used to play for us!" She looked so kindly at me with her large eyes while she said this, turning round as her partner led her away to the dancing-room, that I had not another harsh thought about her. That look haunted me for a long time; and indeed I must plead guilty, young goose that I was, to cherishing—for long after I had gone up country to join my regiment—a delusion that my sterling, if not showy qualities, might only need a little more assurance to effect an impression on the amiable Cecilia's heart, and hugging to myself a secret purpose of going back to Calcutta at some later time to try my fortune.

Several months passed, and no

news reached my distant station of any of my fellow-passengers; but just in the beginning of the next cold season, the Calcutta papers contained the announcement that the wife of William Morris, M.D., Presidency surgeon, had presented him with a son, and of the marriage of Laura, youngest daughter of the late John Dashwood of London, Esq., to James Fludyers, Esq., Bengal Civil Service. Fludyers had a capital appointment at Calcutta, and was considered to be a very rising man, who might be Lieutenant-Governor one of these days, so that Miss Dashwood's aunt had reason to be quite satisfied with the match. But Cecilia still remained single; and such is the innate vanity of man, that I found myself dwelling more and more on the possibility that she might be secretly reciprocating my tender sentiments, and be waiting for me to make them known. She would indeed be a model of Calcutta constancy did she wait so long; for propriety forbade my opening my heart to her, and my prospects to her aunt, for at least another two years, when I should be of age, and might still perhaps be no longer junior ensign of my regiment. True, one of our ensigns was married, and the measure had been applauded by his brother officers, who subscribed to buy him a buggy and a silver teapot; but the bride was daughter of an old quartermaster of a British regiment at our station, who had been brought up to a simple style of housekeeping, and I felt Mrs Hawkins would take a different view of the requirements of married life from that held by the worthy quartermaster and his wife. However, the point was not put to the proof; for a few months later the same papers gave us news of the marriage, at the cathedral, Calcutta, of Lieutenant Joseph Hillyard,

Bengal Army, A.D.C. to his Excellency the Governor-General, to Cecilia Lucy, eldest daughter of the late John Dashwood of London, Esq. The announcement coming in the middle of the hot weather, when our station was nearly deserted, and there was nothing whatever to talk about, created an agreeable diversion in our monotonous existence; and having been a fellow-passenger of the lady, and so able to speak from personal knowledge, I was sensible of obtaining a certain amount of reflected consideration. The affair was a good deal discussed at our mess, and our senior captain observed that it was a very good match for any girl. Hillyard was a second cousin of the Governor-General, and the young couple would probably live at Government House; but the colonel said that these personal appointments were not worth much. The Governor-General's time was nearly up, and then Hillyard would be no better off than any one else, unless he got provided for first with a good appointment. And indeed I had reason to believe that these conflicting views of the case had exercised the mind of Mrs Hawkins; for bethinking me that one of my fellow-cadets was stationed at Barrackpore, I wrote to him and got full particulars in reply. Mrs Hawkins, he said, had been a good deal opposed to the match. She had always given the cold shoulder to military men, and looked very closely after her niece; but, of course, aide-de-camps were exceptions; no one looked to their marrying. Mrs Hawkins had wanted her niece to marry a Mr Doolittle, also, like Mr Hawkins, a judge of the Sudder Court, a widower, and not much more than forty; and the match would have been a very suitable one: so the

discovery that Miss Cecilia had given her heart to Hillyard took her aunt quite by surprise, and was a great disappointment. However, the Governor-General had disarmed her opposition by his gracious advocacy of the aide-de-camp's suit, and eventually the lady was quite won over. His Excellency had given the bride a beautiful Arab horse, and a number of other gifts, and had been present with all his staff at the wedding, which went off—for a hot-weather wedding—with great *éclat*. Hillyard was still acting as aide-de-camp, and living with his bride at Government House; but it was quite understood that he was to get a good appointment immediately, probably in the military secretariat. One of our fellows who knew Hillyard shook his head at this. Hillyard was a very good fellow, he said, but he wasn't clever enough for that; why, he could scarcely write a note of invitation correctly. But the colonel, who had been somewhat soured by disappointment, having been on regimental duty all his life, observed that this would be just the reason for putting him into the secretariat. Possibly the Governor-General took a different view of the responsibilities of patronage, or he did not see a likelihood of any vacancy occurring in that line; at any rate, in a short time, the Gazette announced the appointment of Lieutenant Hillyard to the vacant pension-paymastership at Futtehabad—a very good appointment for a subaltern, as the salary was consolidated and independent of the holder's standing in the service, although it did not lead up to anything better; and according to our colonel, the work was just about up to the mark of Hillyard's capacity. Any fool will do for a pension-paymaster, growled

the colonel ; it's only to sign your name and blow up your clerks.

Thus ended my day-dream. Years passed on, bringing events which gave us all something more to talk about than the little tittle-tattle which too often was our sole conversation—the great convulsion which swept so many of us away, and recast the conditions of Anglo-Indian society. After that season of excitement and hard fighting, which drove back the old humdrum monotonous times into the far-off distance, I made, like so many of the fortunate survivors, a new departure, getting both regimental promotion and staff-advancement. Those who were engaged in the turmoil knew less of what was going on elsewhere than the people at a distance ; and it was not always easy to make out, from the disjointed and interrupted accounts we got from time to time, who amongst our friends had escaped, or what adventures had befallen them. But I saw a bald account of the attack made on Futtehabad, and the flight of the residents—most of whom, it appeared, had succeeded in escaping to a place of shelter. Amongst these were mentioned Hillyard and his family. So he had a family. This was the only news I had heard of my old fellow-passenger since her marriage ; nor did I hear anything further for some years, except when I saw in the Gazette that Hillyard, whose old appointment had been abolished for lack of pensioners, was nominated to be a deputy auditor at the Presidency. So the two sisters would be brought together again ; for Mr Fludyers was now holding one of the principal civil appointments in Calcutta.

At last came the time for taking my first furlough home. I was on special duty in the south of India

when the happy hour arrived, and having sent in my report on the business for which I had been deputed there, I travelled down to the coast and took the homeward-bound steamer from Madras. It was the beginning of the cold season, when but few people are going home ; and when, going off in the early dawn with the mails through the surf, I got on board the steamer—a very different-looking craft from the old *Oriental*—as she lay rolling in the heavy swell, the captain, who was just got up to put the vessel under way, told me that there were not twenty passengers on board, besides the children.

I could not help being struck by the difference between the scene presented by the *Timur* and that which my recollection connected with the *Oriental*. It was too cool to make sleeping on deck desirable, and when I came on board there were no passengers visible ; but as the morning advanced they appeared one by one, with sober air and languid manner. Some were driven home by sickness ; others were leaving India for good ; all seemed tired and overworked, and to find a relief in idleness. It was not till the voyage was further advanced that we got to the point of even getting up an evening rubber. The officers of the ship, who knew many of the passengers, and had often partaken of their hospitalities in Calcutta, treated us all as if we were their personal friends, and to be looked after and made comfortable, but they adapted themselves to the tastes of their company. In their last voyage, when the steamer was crowded with outward-bound passengers, many of them, as in the *Oriental* days, making their first passage, the decks had no doubt been a scene of gaiety—private theatricals possibly, dancing certainly, in which the officers pro-

bably took an active part. But now they behaved in sympathy with their present cargo, and went soberly about their work, as if dancing were a frivolous amusement, and they, too, were tired and wanted rest. Happily, if no one was quite well, there were no cases of serious illness on board; and I noticed that the saloon bore a resemblance, in one respect, to that of the Oriental—the gusto with which all parties applied themselves to meals.

Another notable item of difference was that, whereas on board the Oriental all the passengers were adults, except two babies in arms, here the children were as numerous as the grown-up passengers, and by no means contributed to the condition of Nirvana into which the elder passengers would apparently have liked to bring themselves. This I soon found out. I came on board, as I have mentioned, before any other passengers were up, and having taken a bath and made my toilet in the roomy cabin allotted to me, I was sitting on the deck, the only occupant, enjoying the sense of quiet and the sea-breeze, when a child's head appeared above the companion-ladder, to be presently followed by its accompanying body, clad in a little frock very much too short, from which projected a pair of attenuated legs. The boy might have been perhaps ten years old, but was tall for that age,—and his lanky washed-out look added to the appearance of incongruity between his size and his dress. He was dragging a wooden horse by a string, and having gained the open deck, he began running along it, dragging the toy after him, and gambolling feebly as if representing the motion of the animal. A more perfect specimen of the typical Indian child I had never seen. His bloodless face bespoke a life passed

in the torrid plains of India; he had evidently not been brought up in the hills, and was certainly not going home a bit too soon. Then followed presently a girl, unmistakably a sister, who might be a year or so younger, and had just the same washed-out look in a slightly lesser degree. The little girl carried a doll. Then came up the stairs a stout nurse, evidently Irish, leading two more children, who looked to be about five and six respectively. To these succeeded an ayah, in charge of two still younger children, one a baby in arms. All the children were evidently of the same family. Last of all appeared the mamma. Possibly from having assisted in the toilettes of her numerous progeny, she appeared fatigued with the exertion of coming on deck, for she immediately sat down in an easy-chair and began to fan herself. The ayah took a place beside her on the deck, still holding the baby in her arms, while the other little one sprawled placidly by her on the deck, sucking the head of a lacquered elephant. The lady was sitting in front of me, so that I could not see her face, but I could perceive that she had a graceful, although very slight, figure, and that there was not too much of the pretty brown hair, somewhat untidily arranged. She wore a muslin dress, transparent enough to display the fair but very thin shoulders.

“Toony, darling,” called out the lady presently, to the eldest boy, in a listless sort of way, “don't go so far forward—keep near me; there's a good boy.” This was in Hindustani. The boy did not pay any attention to the caution, but continued his excursion forward, dragging the wooden horse, executing the while a feeble gambol with his lanky legs, his sister following him.

"Do go and bring Toony Baba back," said the lady to the ayah in the same language; "he will be tumbling into the engine-room." And the ayah, leaving the penultimate child by its mother, but still carrying the baby, pursued and brought Toony Baba back, accompanied by his sister, for whom the wooden horse seemed to exercise a sort of fascination. "Toony, darling," repeated the lady, "keep by mamma; there's a good boy,"—and Toony, obeying, began to canter sadly round the companion-staircase. Numbers three and four, however, did not appear so placid, but were already quarrelling. "What is the matter, nurse?" called out the lady, languidly, as the voice of the nurse, who was seated on the deck with the children by her a little way off, could be heard in scolding accents. "Sure it's Baboo doing it again, ma'am," called out the Irish nurse in response; "he's bating his little sister again. Don't you cry, Mothi darlin'," continued the woman, fondling the little girl kindly. "Naughty Baboo," said the lady, listlessly, fanning herself; "I shall ask the gentlemen to put you under the hen-coop as they did yesterday, if you behave so;" and the child thus apostrophised, creeping to a little distance from his sister, sat silent but defiant, sucking his thumb.

Just then the bell rang for breakfast, and the lady rising and giving the ayah some premonitory cautions about taking care of the children in her absence, descended to the saloon. The tones of her voice had sounded familiar to me, and as she turned round to go down the stairs I recognised the face. It was my former fellow-passenger, Cecilia Dashwood, now Mrs Hillyard; and before following her to the breakfast-table, I stopped to muse over this transfor-

mation. I must confess to having of late years almost forgotten her existence; yet now, when the old days were thus brought back to recollection, it seemed but a very short time since I had last seen her, walking the deck so fresh and blooming. There speedily ensued the reflection that here were half-a-dozen very palpable evidences of the length of time that had intervened. They afforded ample cause for change, and no doubt the time consumed in their production may have seemed long enough to the parties concerned. Each stage in the process had left its definite mark. Somehow I felt very little changed myself; I wondered if my old friend was conscious of how much time had changed her.

Mrs Hillyard was already seated at table when I entered the saloon, and as I passed behind her on the way to a vacant seat, I was about to stop and address her; but although she turned her head to look up at me I could not be certain if I was recognised, and so went on to my place. This was at the end of the table, but I was near enough to see that the lady's appetite was in good case. She made indeed a hearty meal, and in conversation with the other passengers near her was much more animated than she had been on deck. And she was still employed on her breakfast when I rose from table and went forward to smoke my cigar. But later in the morning, as I was passing the chair in which she was again seated, with the ayah and the Irish nurse and the children round her, Mrs Hillyard accosting me by name, asked if I had quite forgotten her. And we at once resumed our old friendly footing. She, too, began by reverting to the old Oriental times, observing, just as I had done inwardly, that they seemed as if only the other day. I could not for-

bear from glancing at the evidences of the passage of time which were scattered around her on the deck. "Oh yes," she said, laughing, "I know it is really an immense long time ago, and that I am quite an old woman"—here I made a deprecating gesture;—"oh yes, I know it is so, and I don't wonder at your not recognising me." But here I felt bound to interrupt, protesting that I had recognised her from the first, and was restrained from addressing her only from not feeling sure whether I should be remembered.

"Of course I knew *you* at once," she replied; "you are not a bit changed, except for your moustache, and being a little browned like all men get in India. You are quite a young man still, and I am an old woman; and yet that delightful voyage out seems like yesterday. I think that was the happiest time of my life."

I must have given an involuntary look of surprise, for she continued: "Of course I don't mean that; but still it was a very pleasant time,—no cares and anxieties; and what fun the dancing was! Didn't you enjoy the dancing? But no,—I forgot—you used to play for us: how good-natured you were, to be sure; and how beautifully you played! I hope you have got your violin with you,—not that we shall have any dancing this time, of course."

I lifted my left hand, from which a couple of fingers had been parted in the Mutiny, to explain that my violin-playing had been put a stop to. "Oh dear!" she said, "you are one of the sufferers. Ah, think what we went through, too! You heard of us, I daresay, and what an escape we had from Futtehabad; and our wandering about for four days in the jungle, with our four children, and all in that awful heat."

I turned my eyes towards the little group: all but the two eldest looked to date from the post-Mutiny era.

"Toony was there," she explained, in answer to the question I put, "and Missy Baba; but baby died from the heat—that is, the baby that then was—and poor little Tottee Baba never got over the exposure."

So these six now on board, it appeared, were the survivors from a family of eight. No wonder the poor lady looked rather worn and haggard; but she was still pretty, although extremely thin, and not very tidy in her dress.

Mrs Hillyard was very communicative; and before we had got much farther on the voyage, I knew as much about the history of her Indian life as if I had witnessed it. There was first the move to Futtehabad, after her marriage; and she enjoyed up-country life very much, and the riding—the Governor-General had given her a beautiful horse—and the sociability. "And Hillyard's appointment was a very good one for a subaltern,—eight hundred 'consolidated:' it seemed such wealth. We used to think that you could never get to the bottom of a bag of eight hundred rupees; but we soon found out how easy it was." Then, when the babies began to arrive, one after the other, the riding had to be given up, at first only as a temporary measure; but soon the inevitable fact had to be faced,—the riding-horse was not wanted, but money was; and at last the Governor-General's wedding-present had to be sold. Then the children were always getting fever. One hot weather she took them to the hills. "We gave up our house, and sold off everything to pay for the trip. But after all, our things only fetched a trifle, even our pretty knick-knacks and wedding-presents; nobody wanted

them, you see, in the beginning of the hot weather — however, the Mutineers would have had them, in any case, we hardly saved the clothes on our backs—and Hillyard, who of course had to stay behind, went and chummed with a friend, while I and the children—there were only three then—went to the hills.” But they could not afford this a second time; indeed the long *dâk* journey was quite ruinous. That was the beginning of their getting into debt. Then came the Mutiny; and they lost almost everything, barely escaping with their lives. It was then the poor little baby of the day died, and was buried in a hole hastily scratched out of the ground, as they made their hurried flight through the jungle; and a small coffin, in a deserted cemetery, contained another victim, a little later, to the same exposure. The babies, however, were more easily replaced than the other losses,—Master Baboo, it appeared, was born within a few days of his mother’s reaching a place of shelter; but their arrival did not tend to reduce expense, and then Hillyard’s appointment was abolished, and they were thrown back on a captain’s regimental pay, which made matters still worse. And so, when Hillyard, after a time, got another appointment at Calcutta, it was settled that they would not set up house-keeping again, but that she should take the children home—they were always down with fever, more or less, every hot weather—and that he should go and live at the club. This mention of Calcutta led me to congratulate her on her husband’s good fortune,—the appointment he now held being considerably better paid than his old one at Futtehabad. “But then,” she said, “look how expensive Calcutta is? Why, a thousand rupees

does not go nearly as far as eight hundred did up country; and then there was all the time we were without any appointment, and getting more and more into debt every month. And just fancy what this voyage home has cost us! and it had all to be borrowed, and we were ever so deep in the banks already. But what were we to do? We could not keep the children in the country any longer.” It was indeed high time that Toony and Missy Baba should go home, as any one might see from their colourless faces and lanky limbs, and all the children looked in need of change.

All this and a good deal more my old friend told me in the course of the day. She had not much energy for any active employment, but she was always ready to talk; and as I was a good listener, I soon got to know as much about the affairs of her husband and herself as if I had been living in close neighbourhood ever since she was married. Mrs Hillyard seemed to be a good deal oppressed by her numerous offspring, and quite unable to take care of them by herself, but yet to be saved from the wearing effects of such a charge by a sort of happy mental indolence, dulling the sense of worry which might otherwise have overpowered her. Her share in the management of the children was indeed purely passive, and was limited for the most part to injunctions in a listless tone to the nurse and ayah, less frequently to the children themselves. The eldest gave very little trouble. Toony’s spirits soon evaporated each morning, and he would sit down on the deck by his mother’s chair, quite tranquil, with no other occupation than holding her hand; happily so, for it did not appear to occur to the mother to try to amuse him or the

others in any way. Misse Baba was also very docile, having little more spirits than her eldest brother. The two troublesome ones were the third and fourth—Baboo and Mothi. They were always quarrelling with themselves or the other children, and would often need the interposition of the lookers-on. The young gentleman especially had more temper than all his brothers and sisters put together, and would use his teeth freely upon any passenger who interfered. Indeed he was known on board as the little “Shaitan” or devil, and fully justified the *sobriquet* by his savage outbursts. It was by a happy thought that one of the passengers had imprisoned him under an empty hen-coop during one of his ebullitions of rage, and the threat of repeating the punishment was the only thing that kept him under restraint. “So, Mr Stevens,” said Mrs Hillyard, coming on deck afterwards, “I hear that you have been putting poor little Baboo under a hen-coop again; how could you do such a thing?” But she did not seem at all angry, and the punishment was repeated more than once during the voyage, to the infinite comfort of all on board. None of Mrs Hillyard’s children, it may be mentioned, spoke a word of English; and the Irish nurse—a soldier’s widow working her way home after burying her husband and children, and engaged for the voyage almost on the day of embarkation—could not at first make herself understood by them, so that her ministrations were not of much effect. She was wonderfully patient and kind to them. She did not mind how much she was with them, she said, so long as they did not quarrel and bite each other. They reminded her of her own babies, she added; and indeed the excellent creature hardly left her charges for a moment. The children, how-

ever—and there were a good many others on board—did not interfere with the comfort of the adult passengers so much as might have been expected, for although they had the run of the deck, they were carried off at frequent intervals for their meals in the fore-saloon: they slept a good deal during the middle of the day, and they went early to bed. The main saloon also was sacred from their intrusion, and I soon understood why Mrs Hillyard liked to dally over her meals. It was not in her nature to be in a hurry over anything, and here at least she could have the children off her hands for a time. Who dressed and washed the little Hillyards I don’t know. The ayah was a willing creature as well as the Irish nurse; but the latter used often of an evening to be a good deal affected by the motion of the ship, and found a difficulty in keeping her feet even in the calmest weather; but the family were got to bed somehow.

I ventured to remonstrate with Mrs Hillyard about the way in which she spoilt the little ones, and especially about her always talking to them in Hindustani; but she retorted that bachelor’s children were proverbially well-behaved, and that it was all Hillyard’s fault. Hillyard—she always spoke of her husband by his surname—would never let them be punished or found fault with. He would not have them with him for long, he said, and he wanted them to remember their papa when they were parted, as having always been kind to them. Hillyard doted on the children, and would sit up all night when any of them were sick. And then he would always talk to the children in Hindustani—what was she to do? Yet, as I observed, the children would have to learn English sooner or later. She knew that, she

answered. She supposed things would come right by-and-by, but she dreaded the arrival in England. They were to go, in the first instance, to the house of Hillyard's father, a Warwickshire baronet. Her husband was a younger son, and had several brothers; but the only members of the family at home, besides her father- and mother-in-law, were two unmarried daughters. It was a satisfaction to know that the poor lady had a home to go to, for she had no relatives of her own in England, and besides being quite unfit to manage for herself, was apparently but slenderly provided with money; but I could not help sharing her misgivings at the result of the proposed arrangement, although from a different reason from that which caused her fears. She declared herself to be in great fear of her father-in-law, who, she was sure, would be dreadfully stern. But the fact that Sir Robert was himself coming from Southampton to meet her, seemed to argue a kindly disposition. I could not, however, help thinking that he might be a little shocked at some of her ways, pretty creature though she was. I even ventured to suggest that she should be careful not to drink much beer; but she replied that she could not do without it; indeed her doctor had ordered her beer twice a-day, after there had been a baby, which was in effect to give a prescription for constant application.

I have almost forgotten to speak of her sister; but of course my first inquiries, after renewing my acquaintance, had been after Miss Laura, now Mrs Fludyers. Laura, she told me, was wintering in the south of France. She had wretched health, and could never stay in Calcutta for more than a cold season at a time. "And I don't think," said her sister, "that she

is very sorry to get away, for she and Fludyers quarrel like cat and dog; I never could bear him myself. Don't you remember what a prig he was on board the *Oriental*? He has a vile temper; and then, you see, they have no children to keep things square in the house." I could not help thinking that squareness was hardly an appropriate term to express the condition of Captain Hillyard's household; but I understood what his wife meant, and felt that it would have been a merciful dispensation if the sisters could have divided Cecilia's share of children equally between them. However, Laura was to come to England in the summer, and then the two would meet again.

The assistance of a gentleman will always be useful to a lady travelling with children, and I was able to be of some little service to Mrs Hillyard on landing at Suez, such as securing a compartment for her in the train that conveyed us to Alexandria. Not, however, that there would have been any competition for the places in it, which the party of nine effectually filled; and I could not help wondering if Sir Robert Hillyard was a smoker, and would make that an excuse for taking his seat separately in a smoking-carriage on the way up from Southampton. Master Baboo inaugurated the journey by breaking the glass of one window in his efforts to climb out of the carriage, and his subsequent roaring could be heard above even the din of the noisy train; but happily the transit was made at night, and by the time we reached the first halting-place all the children were asleep, and Mrs Hillyard was able to partake of the refreshment brought to her carriage, in peace, if not in comfort.

It was at Alexandria I discovered that Mrs Hillyard was but scantily

provided with money, for she wanted to drive straight from the station to the harbour and go on board the steamer, so as to avoid the cost of staying on shore; but we found that owing to our steamer being a day before its time, the Southampton steamer had not arrived, and there was nothing for it but to go to a hotel. Guessing the cause of her embarrassment, I ventured to open the subject, and she confessed to having barely enough wherewith to fee the stewards at the end of the voyage. She believed some arrangement had been made by her husband for an agent to meet her at Southampton and make over the proceeds of a remittance which Hillyard was to send home; but the matter had a vague look, and it seemed pretty clear that the father-in-law would not only have to escort the party into Warwickshire, but to pay for their railway-tickets also. And as Mrs Hillyard knew as much about him, as that his family had been very expensive, and that he was not well off, this seemed an inauspicious way of making his acquaintance. I therefore pressed on her as much money as would carry her to her new home, and advised her on no account to let her husband's father be at any expense for the journey from Southampton. And the poor lady, after a little hesitation, thankfully accepted the small loan,—indeed, what else could she do?—assuring me that Hillyard would repay me at once. I am bound to say that he did repay me, although not at once, and expressed himself very gratefully about the kindness which he said I had shown to his wife and family.

These two days at Alexandria were, I think, the longest I ever spent. For the children, being now free from the rules of board-ship life, were running wild all over the

hotel—a mere pot-house in point of comfort—and perpetually in everybody's way. I took the four eldest out for a ride on donkeys in the afternoon, which gave their mother a respite. The two eldest enjoyed it in their languid fashion, but Baboo wanted to beat his donkey unmercifully the whole way, and swore vilely at the attendant boy because he attempted to restrain him. It was, I confess, with a sense of great relief that I saw the party safely on board the Southampton steamer, and then betook myself to the one bound for Marseilles.

Mrs Hillyard was to write as soon as she had settled down in Warwickshire, and tell me how they had fared on the rest of the voyage, and how she was doing in her new home. But the promised letter never came, and the next tidings I had of her was from her sister, whom I met one day in the following summer on the platform of the Clapham Junction station, where she was waiting with her maid to change trains. Mrs Fludgers did not recognise me at first, but when I introduced myself, she was very cordial; and during the five minutes' conversation we had I got a full instalment of the family history. Cecilia was in London, she said. The Warwickshire arrangement very soon broke down. The old people and the aunts did not take kindly to the children, and could I wonder at it? And so Cecilia had come to town, and as soon as she (Mrs Fludgers) had returned to England from the south of France, where she had been passing the winter, the two sisters had chummed together for a few weeks. "But the children were too much for me," she continued; "I have such bad health at times, my nerves really could not bear the strain." But Mrs Fludgers went on to explain that she was now bound to

the Isle of Wight, to take a house for the summer in which to receive her sister and family. The children would be out all day on the beach, she said, so that life would be more bearable with them there than when shut up in a London lodging. "Poor Cecilia," she added, "I wonder how she can stand it." Mrs Fludyers was beautifully dressed, and better preserved than her sister, and was still very nice-looking. I cannot say that she bore the appearance of great delicacy, but there was a sour look on her face, and also a sort of primness, as of one who would be particular about trifles. Altogether she was even more unlike the light-hearted merry girls of the Oriental days, than poor Cecilia with the burden of her six children and small means.

Having obtained the address from Mrs Fludyers, I called next day on Mrs Hillyard. Her lodgings were in a noisy thoroughfare not far from Paddington Station. The door was opened by a dirty maid of all work, and I was shown into the parlour from which, although it was nearly three o'clock, the remains of the mid-day meal—to judge from the fragments, an unsavoury repast—had not yet been removed. Presently Mrs Hillyard came down, with Toony and Missy holding each a hand. Though still untidy, she looked less so than in the loose garments worn on board the steamer; nor did she look so thin in her warm English dress, and there was a slight tinge of bloom in her pale cheek. The children, too, had gained already from coming home. Toony was listless and languid, but less so than before, and being clothed as a boy, looked more like one than the mere aggregation of arms and legs he used to be on board ship. Missy was still more improved, and was

becoming a pretty child, with a strong likeness to her mother. Mrs Hillyard was extremely pleased to see me, and undeterred by the presence of the children, who stood one on each side of her staring gravely, began at once to detail her Warwickshire experiences, and the reasons for coming away from her father-in-law's house, when interrupted by the sound of shrieks upstairs. "That's Mothi Baba," cried the mother, starting up,— "that naughty Baboo is teasing her again; excuse me for a moment,—the servants must have gone down to their dinner;" and quiet was restored and safety insured to the baby only by Mrs Hillyard bringing Master Baboo down-stairs with his sister Mothi. The young scapegrace was certainly improved upon his boardship form, although still the disturbing element in the household. And all the children looked cleaner than might have been expected, which I afterwards found to be due to the excellent nurse-maid supplied through Lady Hillyard's agency.

With four children in the room, and one of them Master Baboo, conversation now became impossible, so I proposed a move to the "Zoo" by way of diversion. And we set off accordingly, — Mrs Hillyard, myself, the four eldest children, and one of the maids, in a couple of cabs, leaving the infants in charge of the other nurse.

This proved a fortunate diversion, even Baboo's mischievous proclivities being subdued for the time by the wonders of the scene; and in the open air their voices were less oppressive, and it was possible to hold some conversation with the mother. Her explanation of the reason for leaving her step-father's house contained little more than her sister had already told me. The old people, Mrs Hillyard said, were so particular, and the aunts so fussy;

but it was easy to understand that the introduction of this new element into the orderly household of an elderly couple and the two maiden sisters-in-law was soon found too trying for long continuance. Mrs Hillyard was now in London lodgings until her sister could receive the party by the seaside. Her plans did not extend beyond that point. I urged that Toony at any rate should be sent to school without loss of time, as he could neither read nor write, and Mrs Hillyard admitted that she supposed this must be done after they came back from the Isle of Wight. On our return from the "Zoo" she pressed me to come in and have some tea; but with the recollection of the mid-day meal before me, I was selfish enough to decline the invitation.

I did not see Mrs Hillyard again until my furlough was drawing to a close, when hearing that she had taken a house at Richmond, I went down there one dull autumn afternoon to say good-bye. I was misled as to the house being leased: the party were still in lodgings, but there was a greater degree of comfort apparent, or, to be more correct, a smaller degree of discomfort, than in the lodgings she had first occupied at Paddington. Possibly also things did not look so dingy and untidy, when seen by the dim light of a November evening, as in the broad glare of a summer's day. Nearly eighteen months had passed since my last visit, and Mrs Hillyard seemed to have become younger instead of older, so much had she been set up by the English climate. The children also were like different beings, so strong and robust had they grown. Toony indeed I did not see, for he was at a boarding-school kept by a lady, and getting on famously, I was told, which I interpreted to mean that

he was mastering the elements of the three R's. Missy and Baboo went to a children's day-school hard by; the other three were still in the nursery. The day-scholars came home while I was sitting with their mother, and presently we all had tea together. Master Baboo was still a pickle, but school discipline had already toned down some of his more prominent eccentricities. After the meal,—a scrambling affair, garnished with very weak tea, for Mrs Hillyard was evidently not a good caterer,—the younger children were brought down to see me, and I was sorry to notice that the two nurse-maids with which their mother was furnished in the first instance had been succeeded by fresh ones,—a change not for the better. I was given to understand that these were the last instalment, and that there had been several intermediate changes.

Mrs Hillyard had been attracted to Richmond by the fact that an old friend of her Futtehabad days, now a widow, was established there, through whom she had made several acquaintances. She appeared undetermined whether or not to stop there, but at any rate she would stay in lodgings for the present; she found English housekeeping so troublesome, and English servants she could not manage: nurses alone, which she must have in any case, were worry enough. They were always wanting to change. "How I envy you going back to India," she said, as I was taking leave; "but there is no such luck for me. Hillyard says a double establishment is not to be thought of until he is clear of the banks, and has got some promotion; but he hopes to run home by-and-by on privilege leave. Well, you will be able to tell him all about us. I shall write and tell him to look out for you." I confess I said good-

bye to the poor lady with a sad heart. Without being at all what is called a motherly woman, she was fond of her children; yet her heart was in India and station-life, with its simple monotonous pleasures and easy sociability; and one felt that, so far as the children were concerned, they would be just as well off if put in charge of some careful person, and the mother set free to join her husband. It seemed a curious result of married life that the essential part of it should be thus brought prematurely to an end.

On reaching Calcutta, I paid, as I had promised his wife, an early visit to Major Hillyard, who was living at the club, and occupying a bedroom in one of the adjacent houses. I had only seen him once before, at the ball given on my first arrival in India, dancing with the fair Cecilia; when, notwithstanding my feeling of jealousy, I had been unable to withhold a mental verdict on his good looks, and when to be A.D.C. to a Governor-General seemed to my youthful aspirations the summit of military felicity. He was still a handsome man, but now both bald and stout. My visit being paid on a Sunday afternoon, I found him at home, sitting in his shirt-sleeves, writing what appeared to be a home letter, as indeed he presently said it was. Sunday being his leisure day, he devoted it to writing to the children. He wrote to one of them by each mail; this time he was writing to Toony. "Is this like him?" he asked, taking up a photograph from the table, and looking at it with moist eyes. "What a fine little chap he has grown, hasn't he?" and the poor fellow was visibly disappointed at finding I had not seen Toony. I was able, however, to corroborate the accuracy of the photographs of all the other

children, of which numerous specimens lay on the table in their little frames, representing them in various stages of development. "I have them taken twice a-year," he said. "I give my wife no peace unless I get them every six months,—it is the one extravagance I allow myself; and then I can see how they are getting on. This is the last one of Missy, my eldest girl; little darling, how like she is getting to her mother!" Hillyard seemed never tired of listening to my news of them—although, in fact, I had not much to tell. His wife was not a good hand at letter-writing, he said: although she never missed a mail, he hastened to add, still she did not always tell him the things he wanted to know about the children. "I shall get home and see them myself next year, I hope, or the year after—that is, if I can screw up enough to pay the passage. But living even as a bachelor in Calcutta is very expensive, however carefully one manages: I have only one room, as you see, but the charge is very high. And my wife finds England dreadfully dear," he continued; "and by the time I have provided my monthly remittance and other little liabilities"—I presumed he was here referring to his payments to the banks—"there is not much left for myself." It had not struck me when a visitor to Mrs Hillyard's uncomfortable establishment that it was on an expensive scale; but no doubt she might manage to muddle away a good deal of money without having much to show for it.

As I drove away after my visit, I could not help being impressed with the grotesque yet melancholy aspect of the situation. Half a dozen children growing up without a father; the mother, of no particular use to them, longing to be off to her husband, yet kept apart; while

he, poor fellow, respectable, honourable, and reasonably fortunate in his official circumstances, yet had nothing that he cared about in life. Six days of the week he passed in grubbing at office work of no particular interest, which any one else could do as well, and a good deal of which would probably be best not done at all, and the Sunday in sitting alone in his shirt-sleeves writing letters to the children who had already forgotten all about him. This, forsooth, was an Indian career. Had Major Hillyard been devoted to his profession, or attached to Indian interests of some kind to compensate for his exile, the case would have been different. But he evidently cared nothing about the country, or the army which he had practically quitted, or about his employment, except so far as it gave him a livelihood: he was simply a dull, respectable man, who would probably have been much happier earning his bread in some humble capacity at home, with his wife and children about him. He had finished with his marriage and his children, and the pleasant part of his career had come to an end at an age when men in England are just beginning to see their way to the comforts of wedded life, and a reward for their labours.

A few days after this visit I left Calcutta for my station up country, and saw Major Hillyard only once again, at a ball at Government House,—the place where in former days he had been thoroughly at home, and to which he had brought his wife for a while after his brief honeymoon at Barrackpoor, but where another company was now assembled from that which had known him in his aide-de-camp days, and where he now walked about, silent and doleful, as if his heart was elsewhere than in the gay scene before him.

My next visit to England was made on sick-leave, after a much shorter interval of absence than preceded my first return home. I had fully intended to call on Major Hillyard on my way through Calcutta, to see if he had any commissions for his family, but I was too much hurried to be able to do so. And I am bound to say that, when I got home, in the distractions of my visit—this time a brief one—I completely forgot all about them until reminded by meeting Mrs Hillyard in Regent Street, walking with her eldest daughter, now a very pretty little girl of about fourteen, with a rosy face from which all trace of the languid washed-out appearance it had worn on the voyage home had passed away. Mrs Hillyard herself was looking very well and blooming: the freshness of youth, indeed, had passed away never to return, but she was still a very comely woman, and had grown quite plump again. She was now living at Norwood in order that Missy might attend the classes at the Crystal Palace: they had been up for a day's shopping, and were now on their way to catch a train home, and there was only time to get a few hurried answers to my questions about the children. Toony—that is Willy, as she ought to call him—was at Wellington College, and was getting on capitally; and Baboo—that is Tommy—was also at school; the others were all at home. Yes, she was still in lodgings; her plans were so uncertain. She had been hoping to be able to go back to India again, but—and here she stopped talking, with an appearance of confusion.

It was not only that Mrs Hillyard had grown stouter; her figure had altered—the graceful waist had lost its slimness. Perhaps something in my manner added to the embarrassment she had already

expressed by hers, for she blushed and laughed as she said, "You know Hillyard has been home. He came on privilege-leave, you know. He was hoping to take furlough. The auditorship fell vacant, as of course you heard, and Hillyard ought to have got it. It would have been eight hundred a-month more, and have made us so comfortable, and he could have taken a year's furlough; but they went and put in another man over his head. Such a shame! And so he had to give up his furlough and come home on privilege-leave. Poor fellow, he got only five weeks in England, but it was better than nothing; and he did so enjoy seeing all the children. That was six months ago, and now," she added, again laughing and blushing, "my going back to India is put off for ever so long."

So much I was able to gather, amid the noise around us, as we walked down Regent Street together. But Mrs Hillyard now said that she must take a cab to catch her train, and, with a pressing invitation to go and see her before I went back—a visit which, however, I was not able to accomplish during my hurried stay in England—she and Missy drove off.

Returning to India by Bombay, I did not see Hillyard till a couple of years later, when business took me to Calcutta. He was still holding the same appointment there, and indeed was not likely to obtain preferment. Poor fellow, he was not quick at business, and the present head of his Department was junior to himself in the service. He was no longer living at the Club, but occupied a couple of rooms on the top-floor of the house rented for his office. And there I found him when I went to call. It was Sunday, and except that the

room was different, and that he had grown a good deal stouter and somewhat more bald, it might have been the Sunday following that on which I had last paid him a visit, more than four years before; for he was engaged, as then, in writing home letters, and the room, as then, was garnished with photographs. As I had not seen any of the children, except Missy, since he had seen them himself, my visit did not possess the same interest for their father as my previous one; but he did the honours of the different portraits with much heartiness, and I was able to respond sincerely to his praises of the good looks of all the young people. "You saw Missy yourself, didn't you?" he observed; "but that was two years ago. That was the *carte* of her at that time—taken when I was at home on privilege-leave. I brought it back with me. Very like her mamma, isn't she? and as tall now, within half-an-inch; and such a good girl, too!" And Toony, too, was a very good boy, continued the father, in reply to my inquiries,—a very good boy. And what form was he in now at Wellington College? Well, he wasn't at Wellington College now; he had left Wellington College,—the Major's voice fell here, and he spoke with a little hesitation. He did not quite know the rights of the case, he added; everybody said Toony was a very good boy; in fact, there couldn't be a better boy. His tutor said so, and the head-master, too; but somehow he wasn't quick at Latin and Greek, and those things. He couldn't quite make out the rights of it. His wife was not a good hand at explaining matters; but there appeared to be some sort of rule that if a boy couldn't do a certain amount of Latin and Greek by a certain age, he was not allowed to stay at the school. "It seems

rather hard," continued the poor father, "and I dare say Toony's having grown so fast had something to do with it. Why, he is two inches taller than me, and not seventeen yet. But we had to take him away from Wellington College, and put him under a tutor in St John's Wood, who is said to be very good at preparing boys for the army. It does seem rather hard," continued the poor father, "for a better boy never lived; and these crammers are dreadfully expensive; but it can't be helped. We must try to get him into the army,—what else is there for him to do?"

Conversation naturally passed on to the other children, as the likenesses of each were passed under review. "Yes," said his father, as I took up one of a boy in naval dress, "that's Baboo: of course his real name is Tommy, but they still call him Baboo at home. Yes, he's a sailor: he's such a high-spirited little fellow, nothing would satisfy him but he must go for a sailor. Yes, he is in the merchant service; he is making his first voyage to California; his ship must be about going round Cape Horn just now. I am afraid I shan't see much of him, poor little chap,"—and here the Major's eyes filled with tears;—"but for the matter of that, I shouldn't see much more of him if he were at home." This led me to ask Hillyard if he would not be soon taking his furlough; but he shook his head. He had managed to run home for a few weeks' privilege leave; but how was he to think of furlough, with all these expenses, and the school-bills getting heavier every year? He had been intending to have Mrs Hillyard out, but then there was the new baby in the way. Yes, that was the likeness of the new baby, taken when it was six months old—a fine little thing,

wasn't it? But the new baby made difficulties about travelling, and he supposed Mrs Hillyard would now remain at home until Missy was old enough to come out with her. He hoped to go home on privilege-leave again next year, or the year after. But it would be as much as he could manage.

As I rose to go, Major Hillyard asked me if I would not take some luncheon, and I thought looked sensibly relieved when I declined. He did not take luncheon himself, he said, and could only have offered me a biscuit and a glass of gin and soda-water. Perhaps we should meet again in the evening, I said. I was engaged to dine at the Club, and supposed I should see him there. No, he replied, he was no longer a member,—he found it too expensive. He only went there when some member asked him to dinner. But the Calcutta people were all very hospitable, and he dined out a good deal. Otherwise he should never see a soul from one week's end to the other.

Major Hillyard's rooms, if not supplied with much furniture, were at any rate bright and airy, and he himself was a healthy-looking, well-preserved man, although he appeared to have dried up mentally; for except when talking about his children, he had nothing to say for himself; nevertheless, the impression carried away from my visit was a very sad one. Here was a man whose life combined all the disadvantages of matrimony and bachelorhood, without the comforts of either. The case was perhaps the more striking in that, whether from habit or a phlegmatic nature, Hillyard seemed all unconscious himself that his lot was hard. He had indeed spoken rather strongly about the departmental supersession which he had undergone. But he took it quite as a matter of

course that he should be grubbing away, practising a life of rigid economy and self-denial, in order to provide for a family with whom his connection was practically limited to having contributed to its production. And although I had become very sensible, as I grew older, of the solitariness of my own life, and the cheerless prospect awaiting me in the future, when the time should come for returning finally to England, to find myself without home-ties or home interests; still, if anything would reconcile one to being an old bachelor, it surely would be the illustration of married life furnished by the husband of my old friend.

These reminiscences, however, are not intended to be about myself, except so far as the course of my life has brought me in contact with my former fellow-passenger and her family. Mrs Hillyard and I had already made two voyages together in P. and O. steamers, and by a curious coincidence I found myself once more making the passage in her company. Each voyage, by the way, has marked a stage in the progress of improved communication with India. When first we went out together, a cadet and a maiden, it was thought a great thing to get to Calcutta *via* Southampton in forty days or so. It was not so very long before that the only way of getting there was by a voyage round the Cape, lasting four or five months. On our return home the journey had been shortened by the establishment of the Marseilles route. Then came the opening of the railway from Bombay eastward, so that Calcutta could be reached in three days from Bombay, and the long trip saved round India by Ceylon and Madras. And now there was the still further shortening of the journey by the Brindisi route. I took that route

when I returned to India after my third furlough. But a good many passengers still elect for the longer and cheaper sea-voyage from Southampton, and among them on this occasion were Mrs Hillyard and her eldest daughter. The passengers by the two lines unite at Suez, those who come by Southampton getting there first, and being usually already on board the steamer for Bombay before the passengers by Brindisi arrive. This happened on the occasion in question. The steamer was lying out in Suez roads, and we were taken off to her in a steam-launch; and as we came up the side, Missy, as I found her mother still called her, was standing on deck. I recognised her at once, although I was not expecting to see her,—not so much from my recollection of the little girl last seen for a few minutes in Regent Street, five years before, as from her likeness to the well-remembered Cecilia Dashwood of my boyhood. She was so like what her mother had been when a girl, although to my mind not so pretty, that I could almost fancy for the moment time had stood still, and that it was the deck of the old Oriental, of more than twenty years before, that we were standing on. But the illusion was quickly dispelled as Mrs Hillyard herself appeared, and greeting me heartily, presented Missy to her old friend, whose face had naturally not been recognised by the girl. So at last Mrs Hillyard was going back to India. Missy had, in fact, been the determining cause of the step. The others were all old enough to get along without their mother, Mrs Hillyard presently explained, and she had placed them in charge of a lady who was devoted to Indian children, and to whom the elder ones, all at different schools, would go for their holidays. And the baby? I asked. "Baby!" said

Mrs Hillyard, "why, it is nearly five years old." "So Hillyard has not been home on privilege-leave again?" "How can you talk so?" replied the lady, laughing. "Of course not, and not likely to go on leave of any sort, until he gets his colonel's allowance, which will not be for ever so many years yet. And so I thought I ought to go back. You see, I had to think of Missy. She is getting on for nineteen. England is so full of girls, there is no chance of their settling; but of course you won't say a word to Missy about it; I don't want to put such ideas into her head; but you see, with so many of them all growing up so fast, one has to think of the future. Why Mothi—that's Lucy, you know—is fifteen, and almost as tall as Missy already. I don't want Missy to be an old maid: one has to think of the child's happiness, as I told Hillyard, when he wanted us to stay at home a little longer."

Reflecting while she spoke on the sort of life that the mother and father had been leading, I wondered if Mrs Hillyard deliberately contemplated the probability of her daughter's "settlement" taking the same form. I soon found that the caution given to me not to put such ideas into her daughter's head did not prevent her mother from herself making frequent references to the subject before the girl, who must have known perfectly well what was expected of her, and, probably in consequence, was somewhat deficient in the simplicity and freedom from self-consciousness which I used to think so engaging in her mother when at the same age. But the settlement of Missy was not the only motive for the return to India. I found that Toony (otherwise Willy) also was on board. He had failed to pass for the army, and was

going out in the hope of getting into the Indian police. "We must find something in the military line for Toony," said his mother; "that is the only thing he is fit for. The boy has no head for books,—he is like his father in that respect." Toony was an overgrown young fellow, with small head and very long legs, of placid disposition and uninquiring mind. He neither smoked, nor played whist, nor talked, nor read, but spent the day—when not at meals—sitting in an easy-chair watching the man at the wheel, or listening with perfect gravity to the conversation around, but without furnishing any contribution towards it,—just the same sort of boy as when, ten years before, he cantered feebly round the deck with short dress and long attenuated legs, dragging his wooden horse after him. There was a singular absence of qualities, positive as well as negative, about the lad, and it was easy to understand how he should have been unable to avoid superannuation at school, or to pass a competitive examination; while the assumption that because he was not fit for anything else he was therefore suited for the army, exemplified the proverbial partiality of parents in judging of their children. The poor boy seemed to be still under the influence of a too long retention in India as a child; and I could not help thinking that some one would have to commit a job if he did get into the police department, as was expected.

It was now time to inquire about the rest of the children, and I asked how Master Baboo, otherwise Tommy, the sailor boy, was getting on. "Ah, poor Baboo," said his mother, her face assuming a graver aspect,—“have you not heard about him? He fell overboard, you know, on his second voyage—skylarking, poor dear boy,

with the other midshipmen,—so the captain of the ship wrote me very kindly: he was always so high-spirited. They tried to save him; the vessel was in harbour; but he was washed under by the tide, they say, and he was never seen again." Poor little Baboo. So he, at any rate, was provided for. His mother wiped away a tear as she told me the story, but she ate a very hearty luncheon that morning, and indeed the boy was not of an engaging disposition, even to a parent: besides, the accident happened a long way off.

Although the voyage from Suez to Bombay does not occupy many days, the passengers find time to strike up intimacies, for there were a great many young people on board, and the sea being perfectly calm, dancing was carried on every evening; and as Miss Hillyard was borne round by her partners in the waltz, I was more strongly reminded than ever of the old Oriental days. Seen by the moonlight, she appeared the exact counterpart of her mother, although—unless my memory played me false—she was not so pretty as her mother had been, nor, to my thinking, so nice. She was a good-tempered, amiable, perfectly commonplace girl, with but little education and not much manner. Perhaps I had grown more critical. Certainly there was a self-consciousness about her from which her mother had been free. But her pretty face and figure carried off these defects. Missy soon found plenty of admirers, and it was plain that the desired settlement, if such a term could be justly given to married life in India, would not be long delayed.

And if this young lady came before me like the vision of her mother returned to youth, a disillusionising effect was produced by the appearance of Mrs Hillyard herself among

the dancers. This was on the second or third night after leaving Suez. "Ladies were so much wanted," she said to me, apologetically, as she stopped to fan herself; whereon I protested that there was no need for apology. Mrs Hillyard seemed to have taken a new lease of life, and although a good deal stouter than the Cecilia Dashwood of yore, was still very comely, and an excellent dancer; and I think many of the gentlemen found her a more agreeable partner than some of the younger ladies, for with her they felt quite at their ease. Whether it was the getting rid of the cares of a family, or whatever the cause, she certainly seemed to enjoy the voyage as much as any of the girls who were making it for the first time. Not that there was the smallest levity of conduct,—of that I believe she would have been incapable, even if the presence of her son and daughter had not been a sufficient restraint; it was merely that she appeared to enjoy the change of scene and life. Her manner withal was perfectly free and unaffected; and except that her voice was sometimes a little loud, and that one could have wished her appetite had not been quite so hearty, there was nothing to which exception could be taken. I should have put down her high spirits to the prospect of being again united to her husband after their long separation, but from certain indications that her feelings in this respect were not of a very rapturous kind. She no longer spoke of him as "Poor Hillyard,"—a man to be pitied for his doom to solitary exile: there was manifested rather a tendency to complain that she should find him changed. "I am told he has grown so stout and bald," she said,—"that's why he won't send me his photograph home, I know. I ought not to

complain of that, of course, for I am an old woman myself. Oh yes, I know I am," she added in rejoinder to the deprecating gesture by which, as in duty bound, I had negatived this statement. "Look at those big children of mine: only think, it's ten years all but a few weeks since I went home. It's a long time to be separated from one's husband, isn't it?"

"Barring the privilege-leave," I observed, and, as a slight blush suffused her rosy cheek, added, "Penelope and her husband were separated for twenty years; only in that case the lady stayed behind, while the husband went away on business."

Mrs Hillyard looked at me to see if I was serious or in jest, and then said, "It isn't the long time I am thinking of, but I hear that Hillyard is so much changed. He has become a regular misanthrope, they tell me,—never sees a soul in his own house, and won't even visit anybody else, but just lives solitary in his own bungalow. He tells me I must not expect any gaiety at Jungipoor,—you know he has been promoted to the Auditorship of the Jungipoor Circle, a much better thing than what he had at Calcutta. I don't care about gaiety a bit,"—this was a fib,—“but I do like a little sociability. If you are not to be sociable in the Mofussil, why, one might as well be back in lodgings in England! And there is no need to go on screwing so, and thinking about every rupee, now that he has paid off his debts and got such a much better appointment. I am afraid Hillyard doesn't half like my going out again; but Missy had to be thought of, and she could not go alone. But I don't feel at all certain how it will turn out."

Poor faithful Hillyard! The habits of economy and self-denial,

so rigidly practised for the sake of his wife and children till they had become a part of his nature, to be now brought up against him! And yet the wife, too, was to be pitied. She was going back to a different husband from the man that she had left behind. No doubt he was changed. As we grow old, our very virtues tend to become exaggerated, and our characters from this cause to become eccentric. Hillyard, who had suffered so much from want of prudence in money matters, had now grown over-cautious about spending.

I had, of course, made early inquiry after sister Laura. Just now she was at home, Mrs Hillyard said. She had made ever so many voyages to India and back, but had never stayed more than a few months at a time,—she had such wretched health. "I sometimes think," continued Mrs Hillyard, "it is just as well, for it gives Laura and Fludyers an excuse for seeing only a little of each other. She has not come out this cold season, because Fludyers is going to retire in March. But what they will do then, I am sure I don't know: it will look so odd if they don't live together when he is at home; but they are sure to fall out after a few weeks. It is his dreadful temper. He is very fond of Laura when she is away, and always makes her a handsome allowance,—so different from Hillyard, who makes a fuss over every rupee."

When the steamer came to an anchor in Bombay harbour, relations and friends put off to meet the passengers, among them Colonel Hillyard, who had travelled down to Bombay for the purpose. I had seen him only three years before, and was surprised at the change wrought in so short a time. It was not only that he had become

much stouter, or that he had so little of the soldier about him. This was not surprising, for he had done no military duty for a quarter of a century, although steadily rising all the time in army rank. The noticeable thing about him was his melancholy, soured look, combined with an anxious fussiness of manner. I did not, indeed, remark this at first, in the bustle of the greetings taking place all around on deck. I noticed only that both husband and wife were a little embarrassed at the meeting, as was perhaps only natural, although his greetings to his children were very heartily given. There was more opportunity for observation at the hotel, whither several of the passengers, among them the Hillyards and myself, repaired on landing. The meals there were served at the *table d'hôte*, and when the occupants of the hotel all met at dinner, there had been time for the first strangeness of the situation among the family party to wear off. The room was dirty and the dinner bad, and the whole arrangement in striking contrast to the comfort and cleanliness of the steamer, and it struck me that none of the newly-arrived passengers were much enjoying their first experience of land. The meal was far less sprightly than the dinners used to be on board, and the Hillyard family in particular were unusually silent. To Toony, indeed, silence came naturally, and Missy, who was between him and her papa, somehow did not find much to say; while Mrs Hillyard, who sat on her husband's right, although preserving the semblance of her usual even spirits, talked with her right-hand neighbour and across the table in a manner much more subdued than it was wont to be. I had come in late, and my place being some way down the table, I could

not share in their conversation, but I could hear the Colonel lamenting to the gentleman opposite that he had failed to get his wife's luggage through the custom-house that afternoon, and should be detained a day longer in Bombay,—“A nice hotel bill,” he added, “I shall have to pay with my large party, as if there had not been enough expense already.” The speech sounded ungracious; and the way in which he went back to the subject throughout the meal showed that there was some foundation for his wife's complaints that the practice of economy had developed into a passion.

Life at a Bombay hotel is certainly not very lively, and those of the visitors who repaired after dinner to the comfortable drawing-room seemed puzzled what to do with themselves. It was too early to go to bed; the room was not well lighted enough for reading, and the conversation flagged. I looked in through the open door, after smoking my cheroot, to see the Hillyard party sitting at one end of it, and wondered if the ladies were regretting the cessation of their usual evening dance. The Colonel perhaps felt all the awkwardness of a honeymoon thus taken in public, and having exhausted his questions about the children at home, was walking restlessly up and down with his hands in his pockets. Mrs Hillyard was yawning in an easy-chair; Missy, also in an easy-chair, was occupied in keeping off the mosquitoes with her fan; Toony, also seated, was staring straight before him, his little round face above the high collar looking even less expressive than usual.

This was the last I saw of the Hillyards, for I had been more fortunate than them in getting my baggage through the custom-house,

and started for my destination by the early train next morning. But my thoughts for the time often went back to them, and I wondered how far the experiment of a re-marriage of this sort would turn out. It would probably give most satisfaction at first to the husband; yet, if I mistook not, his wife's disposition was the more easily moulded of the two, and would the more readily adapt itself to new circumstances. But the matter did not long dwell on my mind, although recalled when, a few months later, the announcement appeared in the papers of Missy's marriage to a young officer stationed at Jungipoor. And I was thinking one day that the time must be nearly due

for the coming out of her sister Mothi, when I saw in the list of departures from Bombay to Southampton the name of Mrs Hillyard. "Mrs Hillyard, infant, and native female servant," ran the announcement. So then the second marriage had borne its fruit, and had in turn come to an end. I have wondered sometimes if Mrs Hillyard and I are destined to be ever fellow-passengers again, but it now seems hardly likely, for I see by the Army List that Hillyard will be entitled in a couple of years to his "Colonel's allowance," and then will be obliged to vacate the Auditorship of the Jungipoor Circle, and to go home himself for good.

FROM AFRICA :

SOUTHAMPTON, FIFTH OCTOBER 1880.

We pressed to greet him at Southampton Pier,
 Not vouching all his deeds and words compact
 Of wisdom; nor that all his censurs lacked
 Judgment and conscience; but to honour in FRERE
 One who feared God and knew no other fear;
 Who, deaf to Party, dared in every act
 To face the truth, and wrestle with stern Fact
 For England's weal,—ignoring wrath and jeer
 From Faction's bondsmen, dull to comprehend
 The Free, and chapmen in philanthropy
 Spiced high with slander.

Be it enough for me
 If dear ones, where my dust with dust shall blend,
 Write o'er it: *ELEEISON KYRIE.*

WHATEVER HIS FAULTS, SIR BARTLE CALLED HIM FRIEND.

MARCUS PAULUS VENETUS.

THE CLOSE OF THE AFFGHAN CAMPAIGN.

THERE are turning-points in every line of policy, at which even the most resolute statesmen are compelled involuntarily to pause and calculate the chances that may result from further progress. History never fails to mark such halting-places, and to sternly reflect upon the indifference or precipitancy with which they have been hurried over. As often as not these turning-points are passed unheeded, and blame is laid upon political fatality which should, with greater propriety, have been attached to national fatuity. These periods are the tests of statesmen and the crises of empires. They are opportunities which, when missed, no regrets can recall, no diplomacy can renew.

We have reached one of these points in the policy which we have had to pursue with regard to Affghanistan. As to this fact all parties among us are agreed; and so unusual a unanimity indicates the importance of the next step to be taken. The issue is one in which party controversy may well be sunk, party recriminations forgotten, and party prepossessions sacrificed to the future interests of the empire. There are three ends to be compassed out of the Affghan campaign which must commend themselves equally to Whig and Tory,—peace to Affghanistan, security to British India, and a termination to the jealousy and misunderstanding which constitute the problem going by the name of the Central Asian Question. The desirability of such results admits of no controversy; the means by which they are to be obtained are fair subjects of debate.

The close of the Affghan campaign brings us again face to face with difficulties very similar to those

which assailed us at its commencement. The war was entered upon in the first place, because the Ameer had openly insulted our Government after receiving a Russian embassy sent for the purpose of effecting an alliance; and secondly, because the condition of the Affghan people had become a source of present anxiety and certain future danger to British power in India. We were actuated by no aims of conquest or of territorial acquisition. We had every wish to abstain from interference in Affghanistan; and when events compelled us to cross the frontier, it was with the determination to exact only such safeguards as were necessary to prevent our position in India from falling under the influence of the hostile attitude of Cabul rulers, present and future. We had reason to believe that our purpose had been fulfilled by the conclusion of the Treaty of Gandamak, which, notwithstanding its short existence, must claim to be regarded as the embodiment of a wise and moderate policy. The mutiny at Cabul, and the course of events springing out of that disaster, however, made the treaty a dead letter, to the mutual loss of both India and Affghanistan. The chaotic condition of affairs at Cabul following the Ameer's abdication, the uncertainty where the Affghans were to find a capable ruler, and the difficulties attendant upon our own military position in their country, threw all plans for the future into abeyance. The change of Government at home which speedily followed, tended still more to the unsettlement of our Affghan policy; for though it fell to the lot of Lord Lytton to make excellent dispositions for the future maintenance of our in-

fluence in the Ameer's country, his viceroyalty came to an end before effect could be given to them. With the arrival in India of the Marquis of Ripon, the new Viceroy and Governor-General, the views which had hitherto directed our Indian foreign policy underwent a complete change. Since that event our aversion to interference in Affghanistan has been bitterly aggravated, while our eyes have at the same time been opened more widely to the dangerousness of its tribes.

The experiences of our two years' campaigning have at least brought home to us a sense of the importance which Affghanistan possesses as a State neighbouring to our Indian territory, and of the danger which it might prove when acting under any influences hostile to our views. Upon this point all authorities are agreed; and the next question to be decided is how we are to secure ourselves against future troubles from that country. This is the task which the Marquis of Ripon, in conjunction with the Cabinet at home, has to settle, and which his lordship will find not less delicate and difficult than his predecessor experienced it to be. In spite of the many revolutions which Affghan affairs have undergone since we entered the country, there is little change in the abstract character of the elements we have to deal with there; while the urgent necessity for preventing the Affghans from again becoming as dangerous to ourselves as they proved to be in 1877-78, has been increased rather than diminished by the issues of the campaign. Although at times flighty and theoretical in our public talk, we English are, on the whole, a practical people. We do not like to go to war, and we like still less to have fought without something tangible to show for our exertions. King Coffee's umbrella was well

enough in its way, for it was accompanied by a guarantee that we would have no more trouble from that quarter; but the gates of Ghuzni roused the national wrath, for a strong and unbroken power had been left behind in the Affghan mountains. What more than anything else made the recollection of the first and second Affghan wars distasteful to Britain was the fact that we had nothing to show for our campaigning: that we had shed blood and spent treasure without obtaining any moral or material advantage. We do not wish to dwell upon a topic so disagreeable, but it is important at this time to recollect that, had we established our political influence in Affghanistan eight-and-thirty years ago—as with a little more persistence we might well have done—we would have been spared the late campaign and long intervening years of anxiety. The experience of the past presents an unmistakable warning against the repetition of the same mistake on the present occasion. Unless we take substantial guarantees that Affghanistan is to be for the future a friendly and allied power; that its territories are not to be converted into a theatre of intrigue by any Government who wishes to menace our Indian empire, either for greed of territory or by way of creating a diversion in European politics; and that its administration shall be so conducted as to give peace and security upon our Indian borders,—the gallant lives that were sacrificed at Cabul and Maiwand have been a vain offering to their country.

We may presume, then, that it is the desire of men of all shades of political opinion, that for the future we shall be freed as much as possible from trouble on account of Affghan affairs; and that the Government of India shall be

made independent of the changes in feeling and policy which may come over their chieftains. But how is this immunity and independence to be secured? If we appeal to experience, the answer will be, Certainly not by abandoning the country to itself. We have already tried that course, and how did it answer? For fifteen years the Government of India was compelled to pursue a policy of distrust and suspicion which forbade the growth of friendly relations between the two countries; and it had, finally, to buy the goodwill of Dost Mohammed by a subsidy which, however agreeable to Affghan vanity and cupidity, could not be very gratifying to our own national honour. And when, in the very crisis of the Sepoy Mutiny, the Affghan sirdars were clamouring to be led against the English, and no voice but that of the late Azim Khan was raised in opposition, English power in Upper India was trembling in a balance which a feather-weight might almost have turned. Had the Affghans then poured down to join the revolt, we must have been swept from Hindustan before we were strong enough to make a stand in our own defence; or had the voice of a European Power given the faintest encouragement at that moment, can we suppose that the prudent warnings of Azim Khan could have prevailed against the warlike enthusiasm of the chiefs? The close risk which we ran on that occasion is not to be forgotten, either in forming a judgment of the war which is past, or of the settlement which is yet to be effected. We must remember, too, that we have no assurance, in the case of a similar crisis again occurring, that the northern neighbour of the Ameer of Cabul might not say the word needed to throw the Affghan tribes into the field against us.

And even when, after the Mutiny, we endeavoured to make closer approaches to the Cabul Government for the mutual interests of the two countries, we were met with failure at every step. We paid Dost Mohammed a yearly subsidy, which all Central Asia regarded as black-mail to secure us against his hostility. But in spite of this outlay, our borders were constantly harassed by his lawless subjects, necessitating expeditions, some of which, like that against the Sitana fanatics, had to assume the dimensions of a campaign. Then when, on the death of Dost Mohammed, the civil war broke out between his sons, and the Government of India stood calmly by on the platform of Masterly Inactivity, looking on while brother cut the throat of brother, can we say—considering the claims which Britain advances to be the champion of peace and humanity—that our position was creditable or dignified? Philanthropy was not then so cheap as it has since become. Nor can we say that Lord Lawrence's abandonment of Masterly Inactivity reflected greater lustre upon us than his original policy. No doubt it was prudent,—it recognised the new element of danger which the advance of Russia might add to the uncertain disposition of the Affghans; it was timely; for it ended the civil war, and moderated for a season the southward tendency of the Czar's aggression: but it was purely a selfish move, and undertaken through no commiseration for the desolated state of Affghanistan. Lord Mayo gave a more generous turn to the Affghan policy, and had he been spared to carry out his views he might have established our influence so firmly at the Court of Cabul as to have obviated the causes of the recent war. But all that he had gained

his successor Lord Northbrook lost, partly through blundering, but mainly by an incapacity to estimate the importance of the issues which he had to deal with, and by a slavish dependence upon the India Office, where a spirit of utter indifference to Affghan affairs at that time prevailed. The telegrams which Lord Northbrook sent from Simla to the Duke of Argyll afford incontestable proof that the Viceroy's highest ambition was to contribute to the credit of the Cabinet at home, irrespective of the results which his policy of masterly negligence might produce upon our relations with the Ameer. Before Lord Lytton entered upon office, Affghanistan had assumed towards us an attitude of studied hostility, which, coupled with the menacing aspects of Russian policy on its northern border, forced us to act in our own defence.

This rapid *résumé* is sufficient to show that the policy of leaving Affghanistan to itself has not brought us tranquillity in the past. Still less can we hope that a revival at the present time would afford us immunity from anxiety in the future. We have a ruler at Cabul from whose prudence and prospects of advantage at the hands of the British Government we may expect much, but can trust to nothing. He has been a refugee in the Russian camp, he has been a stipendiary of the Czar; and his experiences in exile may or may not have convinced him that a Russian alliance is preferable to a British one. We seated him on the throne, it is true, but he is probably conscious that he could have secured it for himself as soon as our troops had quitted the country. If he had not ability of himself to put down his competitors, we need not suppose that he will have power to reign long unsupported by us at Cabul.

We may do our best to cultivate his friendship and assist his aims without establishing any assurance that he will serve us should occasion occur for our requiring his aid. We have ceased to believe in either gratitude or fidelity influencing an Affghan; and we shall deserve to be duped if, in our future arrangements, we build upon the supposed existence of either of these qualities. We must also take the proximity of Russia into account as a new element which had not to enter into our plans when we last evacuated Affghanistan. We are quite willing to concede that she is free from all evil intentions against our Indian possessions; that she has no thought but to follow her own paths in Asia, and to leave us to pursue ours. But supposing the Czar's Government to be strictly unaggressive and honest so far as we are concerned, and to be desirous of co-operating with us in the work of Asiatic civilisation and development, we are conscious of many sources of difference with ourselves from which conflicting interests might spring. Russia, too, lies outside that inner concert of the European Powers in which it is our desire to be included; and should cause of dissension with Britain occur in Europe, she would be quite justified in seeking to turn our flank in India through the Affghan kingdom. The best security that we can have for preventing such a cause of quarrel is to put it beyond her reach; and now is the time when we ought to consider whether we cannot do so without displaying any unreasonable distrust of her Asiatic policy.

Our situation will be better understood if we recall the objects for which we went to war with Ameer Shere Ali Khan, and consider the modifications which subsequent events have made upon

our original policy. In making this retrospect we have no wish to revive old grounds of party contention, or to stir up "*ignes suppositos cineri doloso.*" We shall simply enumerate the facts as they bear upon our present difficulties, and endeavour to draw from them such counsels as they may afford.

Our Affghan policy in the recent war has passed through three well-defined stages, at each of which it has seemed possible that a final pause might be made. The first period ended with the Treaty of Gandamak, which, had it lasted, would have secured to us all that Britain could have desired from Affghanistan; the second embraced our march to Cabul in consequence of the murder of the Embassy, the occupation of the capital, the abdication of Yakoob Khan, and the settlement of Abdurrahman on the vacant throne; the third closes with the Candahar campaign and the evacuation of the country in pursuance of the policy of the Liberal Cabinet. It is this last stage that chiefly concerns our present inquiry; but to take it in all its bearings, we must go back to the circumstances under which the rupture took place between India and Affghanistan.

When Lord Lytton arrived in India the seeds of a quarrel with Ameer Shere Ali Khan had already been sown. We had bought his alliance, and he had refused to carry out the conditions attached to the payment. We had supported him at a time when, but for the English friendship and subsidy, his position at Cabul would have been a most precarious one. It was definitely understood that he was to hold no relations with Russian emissaries, or that at least he was to communicate any advances which they might make to him to the Government of

India. During Earl Mayo's viceroyalty the Ameer loyally fulfilled his pledges; but under the unfortunate régime of Lord Northbrook, our influence in Affghanistan was allowed to drift from its moorings. Russian communications were encouraged at Cabul, British counsels were treated with contempt, and every effort to recall the Ameer to the duties of his alliance only served to widen the breach. So critical were affairs becoming, so numerous were the attempts made by the Russian officials in Turkistan to intrigue with the Court of Cabul, that upon the entry of the Conservative Ministry into power it was considered necessary to arrange for placing British agencies in the country in order to watch over our interests in Upper Asia. Unhappily Lord Northbrook and his Council, instead of heartily endeavouring to carry out the recommendations of the Cabinet, did their best to oppose its policy. At this time there can be no question but that we could have intervened in the affairs of Affghanistan with great advantage to the Ameer and to ourselves. As yet Shere Ali had not wholly lost sight of the benefits of the British alliance, nor had his head as yet been turned by the unsettled condition of European affairs. We might then have offered him such equivalents as would have made him content to receive our agencies; and the Conservative Government would at that time have been disposed to make those concessions to his demands which the Liberal Cabinet had irritated him by refusing. Lord Northbrook, however, missed this opportunity, and engaged in discussions with the Ameer in which the Government of India had by far the worst, and which tended to throw Shere Ali still farther away from British friendship and more into the power of the Turkistan diplo-

mats; so that, by the time when his viceroyalty expired, he could only leave to his successor as a *damnosa hereditas* the well-ripened seeds of a conflict which only wanted time and favourable circumstances to bear an abundant crop of hostility.

The harsh construction which in the heat of party conflict was placed upon the course taken by Lord Lytton from 1876 to 1878, has now been superseded by the more intelligent judgment of Afghan affairs which our recent experience of the country has enabled us to form. We had no choice between allowing Shere Ali to shake himself altogether clear of his engagements to us, and exerting our influence in an authoritative manner to obtain from him the terms which were found to be necessary for our security in India. If we adopted the former course, it would have been with the certainty before us that the Ameer would at once fall into the outstretched arms of Russia, whose position at that time in Europe rendered the prospect of an immediate collision with England a very serious possibility. Had we become embroiled with Russia, it would have been crediting her with a political imprudence altogether alien to her character to presume that she would not seek to create a diversion in her favour on the north-west frontier of India. And if she had the will she had also the power to do so. By working upon the half-demented condition of Shere Ali, and the recklessness and fanaticism of his subjects, it would not have been a difficult matter for Russia to have precipitated the Affghans upon India, had Britain and she been unfortunately drawn into hostilities in the east of Europe. All this Lord Lytton had to take into account; for our ability to steer our way safely through the dangerous shoals of the Russo-

Turkish quarrel depended in a very great measure upon our position in India being placed on a footing of security. The other course open to the Viceroy was beset with difficulties, but it was clearly the one that it became the Government of India to take; and though it failed in securing peace, it provided us with honourable and reasonable grounds for asserting our influence in Affghanistan by arms. Every resource that diplomacy was possessed of was employed to recall Shere Ali to a sense of the obligations of his alliance. All the concessions and guarantees that he had asked in vain from Lord Northbrook were offered to him if he would on his part give us such guarantees of his good faith as the presence of British agents in his country was calculated to afford. We need not go over again the course of the Peshawur discussions to show that the Government of India exhausted every argument in its power to extricate the Ameer from the maze of intrigue in which he had allowed himself to be warped, or to show that our friendly counsels were met only by duplicity and open deceit. The evidence contained in the Blue-books is sufficient to warrant a belief that Shere Ali, by the time of Lord Lytton's arrival, had already so far compromised himself with Russia that he could not venture upon closing with the Government of India's propositions without provoking disclosures which would have damned him in the eyes of both Powers.

The assembling of a strong Russian force in Central Asia, and the appearance of Stolieteff's embassy at Cabul as a counter-move to the pressure which Britain was imposing upon the Czar's Government, immediately realised the worst anticipations which the Govern-

ment of India had formed of Shere Ali's disposition. That it was dangerous to British India to allow the Ameer to publicly declare himself as an ally of Russia at a time when Britain and the Czar's Government were at controversy, cannot now be questioned. We had either to reassert our claims to Shere Ali's exclusive alliance, which we had indeed purchased and paid for, or to wash our hands for good of Affghanistan and its concerns. The latter course would have certainly been the more agreeable, could we have dared to follow it. But no Government could have allowed itself to be thus ousted from Cabul by the very Power which its policy from the time that Lord Lawrence abandoned his position of Masterly Inactivity had directly aimed at keeping out of that city. No British Government, Liberal or Conservative, could have put up with such a state of affairs; no Viceroy, Whig or Tory, could have extracted from it a peaceful issue. Those who are unacquainted with the temperaments of the Indian races are apt to deride the idea of *prestige*, and underestimate the part which it plays in our position in the East. But there were more substantial interests at stake than *prestige*. Unless we held Shere Ali to his bond, and insisted upon the fulfilment of his pledges, we had to face the certainty of his country being converted into a hostile vantage-ground, from which our position in India could be weakened, and through which our ability to hold our own in European affairs might be impaired. Perhaps nowadays it will be concluded that Shere Ali's faithlessness and insolent evasion of his obligations afforded some ground for hostility; for certainly the Turk was not more impervious to the demonstrating squadron of Dulcigno than was the Ameer heed-

less of the solemn warnings of Lord Lytton's Government.

When we went to war with Shere Ali we had three main objects in view—to punish him for the insult offered by the forcible rejection of our embassy; to re-establish our paramount influence at Cabul; and to put a stop to the introduction of Russian influence there. The justice of these aims has not been challenged from any quarter worthy of being reasoned with. We had, moreover, other grounds entirely apart from the higher sphere of politics for desiring to bring about a more peaceful and settled condition of affairs upon the Affghan border.

Ever since the annexation of the Punjab brought us up to Peshawur and the Suleiman range, our frontier has been kept in a state of insecurity by the wild Pathan tribes of the mountains and passes, who indulge in periodical raids into our territory, pillaging our subjects and burning their villages. These predatory clans are the subjects of the Ameer of Cabul, who ought to be responsible for their conduct. But as since the death of Dost Mohammed there has been no Government at Cabul strong enough to enforce obedience in the outlying parts of the kingdom, we have scarcely ever insisted upon the Ameer's obligations to be answerable for the excesses of his subjects; and when we have appealed to him, as in the case of the murder of Major Macdonald, we have seldom been able to obtain satisfaction. When our first successes in the campaign made us master of the Affghan passes and of the country inhabited by the tribes which had given most trouble to the Punjab Governments, common prudence dictated to us the expediency of laying a firm hand on the territory. If the Ameer was unable to control his frontier,

we were justified, for the sake of our own subjects, in demanding that we should be allowed to take up such a position on it as would enable us to maintain a check upon his troublesome borderers, to put an end to forays into our territory, and to obtain a release from the necessity of sending punitive expeditions into the passes. The gain to the Government of Cabul would have been as great as to that of the Punjab. The extension of British territory above the passes would have reduced to order a number of tribes who have always been a source of annoyance and weakness to the Cabul Government, and would have enabled it to preserve peace and collect taxes in regions where its authority has hitherto been rated very cheaply. Upon this ground, then, apart from the military and political questions involved, we claim that our demand for a new frontier put forward after we had defeated Ameer Shere Ali was strictly just, and in the interests of both India and Affghanistan.

These objects of the campaign were quickly, to all appearances, secured. The gallant advance of our troops into Affghan territory soon laid the Cabul country at our feet, while the unfortunate fate of Ameer Shere Ali Khan more than atoned for the folly with which he had brought ruin upon himself, and war upon his country. With his death our rancour against the Cabul Government was extinguished, and we hastened to embrace the overtures of his successor to come to terms. The Treaty of Gandamak was concluded, with reasonable hopes that it would prove a solid bond of union between the two countries, and remove all the old standing grounds of mistrust which had so long kept them apart. It must ever be regretted that an agreement so excellent and states-

man-like should have been ruptured at the start by one of these outbursts which no human perspicacity could have foreseen. Had the provisions of the treaty been carried out, there can be no question but that it would speedily have transformed Affghanistan into a strong outwork of British power in India from a region of menace and danger at every season of embarrassment. It is no reflection upon the ability of those who framed the treaty that fortuitous accident at once rendered it inoperative. Chance is an element that no statesman can eliminate altogether from political affairs; but the text of the Treaty of Gandamak will still remain as a landmark to future governor-generals in their dealing with Affghan affairs.

The mutiny at Cabul, and the abdication of Yakoob Khan, cancelled the Treaty of Gandamak, although it cannot be said to have finally terminated its policy. Its extinction, we hold, must date from the entry into office of the Liberal Ministry. In the unsettled state of affairs caused by the despatch of a force to punish the murder of Sir Louis Cavagnari and his followers, it was of course impossible to immediately carry out the provisions of the treaty; but there is no reason to suppose that the Government of India saw any cause to change its views as to the ultimate applicability of the settlement to the condition of Affghanistan. On the contrary, the fresh proof that was now afforded of the treachery and instability of the Affghan character must have strengthened in the mind of the Viceroy his original conviction, that it was necessary to lay a firm hand on the country. Yakoob Khan had disappeared from the scene; but it was open to us to have made the same compact with his successor as a

condition of our recognition and friendship. Had the Conservative party remained in power, it would doubtless have insisted upon Yakoob's successor coming under the same obligations to us as Yakoob himself had entered into. But before a successor was forthcoming a change had come over our policy; and the campaign was destined to be wound up in a spirit entirely the reverse of that in which it was opened.

Time only can show whether the selection of Abdurrahman as the successor of Yakoob has been a fortunate or an unfortunate one for his country. In either case, the responsibility of the Conservative party is light, though our stake is unquestionably heavy. Instead of at once filling the vacancy at Cabul with a nominee of our own choosing, Lord Lytton waited until the feeling of the Affghan sirdars should of itself point towards a chief suitable for the government. But it may be questioned whether the final selection of Abdurrahman did not turn upon the fact that he alone came forward to press his claim, rather than upon any spontaneous liking of the Affghans for him as a ruler. Had not Ayooob Khan, maintaining his independence at Herat, been outside the competition, it is more than probable that the choice of the chiefs would have fallen upon him; or had Yakoob's son Musa been of an age to act for himself, he might very likely have been preferred to both of the others. Lord Lytton, however, wisely resolved to abstain from influencing the choice of the Affghans, and to allow them to select the chief whose government was most likely to secure the general support of their countrymen. He had convinced himself of the uselessness of attempting to bind the Affghans to ourselves by treaty or alliance. He proposed to

seek neither treaty nor alliance with the new Ameer, but by holding Candahar and the Kurum valley, to maintain an efficient check upon his actions, to reduce his power for evil to a minimum, and to be close by to arrest the first attempt to coquet with any foreign Power. But before the vacant throne could be filled, a change had come over the British Government,—the Liberal party had carried the elections, and, for the first time since the opening of the campaign, British policy in Affghanistan was left without any fixed principles to guide it, and the British forces without any definite object to achieve. Our position was practically abandoned to the mercy of circumstances; and it could hardly have been otherwise than that circumstances would speedily conspire against us.

To estimate the effect which the change of Ministry has produced upon the Affghan situation, we must revert briefly to the position taken up by the Liberal party in Opposition with respect to the rupture with Shere Ali, and the war which sprang from it. The Asiatic policy of the Conservative party was assailed with a virulence and unfairness such as no English Opposition had ever hitherto displayed. Every step that Lord Lytton's Government took was condemned, but no alternative course was suggested. The danger which sprang from the uncertain temperament of Shere Ali, coupled with demonstrations on the part of Russia which, in the critical state of European politics, could not but be looked upon as inimical, was not denied, but the Opposition refused to take it into account. British interests were sneered out of the discussion, and the action of the Cabinet and the Viceroy was explained by a reference to personal motives of an unworthy character.

These strictures and allegations were pressed with such earnestness of invective that they could not fail to make an impression upon those who had not an intimate knowledge of Indian foreign policy. But Mr Gladstone's palinode to his "dear Count Karolyi"—doubtless designed to be regarded as a circular note to the other members of the large body of statesmen whom he had bespattered in the course of his electioneering campaign—has since fully explained how little serious import was to be attached to the outcries raised during the era of agitation. Unfortunately, however, things were done which could not be undone, and remarks were made which could not be as easily recanted as the abuse of an allied and friendly Power. The agitation at home had a markedly mischievous effect upon the course of Affghan affairs. It impeded the efforts of Lord Lytton to bring the Ameer to reason, and doubtless encouraged him to provoke war, for the Affghans are by no means ignorant of what is said in England about their own country. It depreciated our victories, and could not conceal an outburst of exultation when the murder of Sir Louis Cavagnari and his companions seemed to have realised the gloomy forebodings by which the Opposition had sought to obstruct the Conservative policy. It seized upon the rôle of Masterly Inactivity which Lord Lawrence himself had timeously abandoned, and to which, had he occupied a position of responsibility, he would never have reverted as a popular platform from which to oppose the aims of Lord Beaconsfield's Cabinet. We cannot suppose that the Opposition ever seriously meant to take Masterly Inactivity principles with it into office, but it succeeded in identifying itself with them in the eyes of the constituen-

cies, and it dropped into power so unexpectedly that it had not time to feel its way with the Affghan question. The Gladstone Government, was however, soon destined to suffer seriously for the warmth with which it had advocated a Masterly Inactivity, and its present difficulties are mainly due to its past pledges in favour of this dogma. In the few short months during which it has been in power, it has already realised that the Affghans on their side will be no participants in such a policy.

We turn to the state of matters in which the Liberal Ministry found Affghanistan when they entered upon office. During the winter months General Roberts had made such good use of his position at Sherpur as to put down all the insurgent tribes and restore peace to the whole of the Cabul provinces. Sir Donald Stewart's march to Cabul and his victory at Ahmed Khel had cleared away the army and faction of Mohammed Jan. All armed pretensions to the throne had been beaten off the field; and the more influential chiefs were quietly waiting until the proper time came to choose an Ameer. Candahar was settled tranquilly under a ruler of the country, and the security afforded by the British forces had already begun to be largely taken advantage of by the traders and agriculturists. On the Indian side, Lord Lytton had made the most ample preparations against the occupying forces being in danger by a sudden outbreak, and reserves were in readiness to be marched up, should their presence be required, at a minute's warning. Only at Herat was Ayoob Khan showing signs of hostility; and the difficulties of his position throughout the winter, and the checks which he had received from comparatively small forces like that

of Ibrahim Khan of Chaknasur, warranted a belief that he would not venture far from his headquarters. With the opening of summer, however, his position began to improve, and the changes which now came over the British plans doubtless strengthened his hands. The Liberal Ministry had come into office; an entire change of policy was announced; a new Secretary of State was appointed, who had announced his intention to promote a complete and speedy evacuation of the country while our army was yet struggling in the field; and a new Viceroy was sent out primed with the principles upon which the recent Opposition agitation had been carried on.

To say the least of Mr Gladstone's Indian appointments, they did not indicate any feeling on his part that our affairs in the East were in a condition requiring either tact or ability. Lord Hartington, the new Indian Secretary, in the debates on the Afghan question had displayed in Opposition an ignorance of everything Asiatic, which, in the case of any other politician of the same experience in public life, would undoubtedly have excited general surprise. Lord Ripon was chosen, we may presume, rather on account of his religion than of the marked incapacity which he had consistently displayed in several important official appointments; and the selection showed the relative positions which the interests of British India and the goodwill of the Romanists held in the estimation of the Premier. The new Viceroy and the new Secretary of State found Afghanistan at their feet. Abdurrahman had crossed the Oxus and had lodged his claims for the throne, which Lord Lytton did his best to consider, although, from the time when the Gladstone Government entered upon office, his Excellency could scarcely be said to

possess a *locus standi* in Afghan policy. Abdurrahman was apparently in no hurry to enter on his kingdom. He knew that the new British Government had pledged itself to evacuate Afghanistan as speedily as possible, and he probably felt tolerably confident, in consequence, of his ability to secure Cabul either with or without our assistance. He had heard also that Lord Hartington had ostentatiously announced, on the part of his Government, that it was the intention of the British Government to quit Afghanistan, bag and baggage—to use the more expressive than elegant phrase of his chief; and he may have calculated that it would be more prudent for himself to avoid entering into engagements with a Power that was so soon to withdraw from Afghan territory, and to leave it alone for the future. We do not profess to know upon what terms the British friendship and alliance have been promised to Abdurrahman, or what pledges, if any, were required from him before our departure from Cabul. If we take into account the judgment of the agent by whom the negotiations were conducted, and his after-dinner utterances at Simla a week or two ago upon Afghan affairs, we are not likely to build extravagant prospects of peace and fidelity upon Abdurrahman's chances of answering our expectations.

Lord Lytton had barely left the country when a new and serious danger assailed the British position. Ayoob Khan, who had spent the winter at Herat in an attitude of independent hostility towards us, now began to gather a power which any Government with its eyes intent upon the scene of action might easily have discerned to be formidable. The season was well opened before there were any signs of serious danger from Ayoob. He had

had difficulties in holding his position during the winter. He was scarcely a match for the neighbouring chiefs with whom he entered into hostilities. It was not until after the Liberal Government had proclaimed its intention of abandoning Afghanistan at an early date that Ayooob found himself in a position to take the field at the head of a strong force. We are dealing with proved facts, and we only connect these two events chronologically, although we are by no means prepared to assert, until the contrary has been ascertained, that the rumours of immediate evacuation had nothing to do with Ayooob's movements, and with the hopes of those who joined his standard. At all events, it was the duty of a prudent Government to discount the effects which the tidings of an immediate evacuation might have upon the feelings of the Affghans, and to take ordinary precautions lest the suppressed ferocity of the people, which had been for the time kept in check by the presence of our troops, should burst forth with violence at the prospect of release. The Government, however, contrary to the warnings of all experience, and to the advice of every officer who knew the Affghans, seem to have built foolish hopes of winning the affections of the people and securing their friendship in gratitude for our forbearance. The result of Ayooob Khan's expedition from Herat speedily dissipated such idle anticipations.

It was not until some time after Lord Lytton had quitted office, and the Marquis of Ripon had been sworn in as Viceroy, that Ayooob Khan's movements betrayed any signs of coming into collision with our forces. In the last week of June the new Viceroy telegraphed to the Secretary of State that there

were "rumours of early movement of troops from Herat in the Candahar direction." Ayooob's policy was supposed to be, not to take the field immediately himself, but to send out a body of horse to raise the country in the direction of the Helmund, and act or not, according to the success of his emissaries. The Wali of Candahar was at Girishk with a considerable force, and ought not only to have been able to frustrate Ayooob's recruiters, but to afford the Government of India full and explicit intelligence of coming danger. It was, we had reason to suppose, his interest to do so, unless he had begun to despair of being able to hold his position when the British had quitted the country, and deemed it policy to temporise with Ayooob. The arrangements of the Government were also calculated to shake the confidence of both the Wali and his troops. Wali Shere Ali was on the west bank of the Helmund, and would naturally have to bear the brunt of Ayooob's attack. On 27th June the Viceroy telegraphed to the Home Government that in the event of Ayooob reaching Furrab, he proposed to despatch a force from Candahar to defend the line of the Helmund. At the same time, his Excellency signified his intention of moving up a reinforcement from General Phayre's reserve to strengthen General Primrose. The news from Herat, received at Candahar previous to the 1st July, all tended to confirm the rumours of the formidable character of Ayooob's expedition, but did not seem to have received sufficient evidence from Colonel St John, the Resident. On 2d July, however, a detailed account of his strength was in possession of Colonel St John, and at once telegraphed to the Supreme Government. Yet notwithstanding the more imminent

danger thus revealed, the Government did not think fit to strengthen the force which started from Candahar to the Helmund, under the command of General Burrows, on 4th July. This was a grave oversight, and one that has yet to be explained. Still more to be condemned are the orders under which General Burrows was directed to act. The Political Officer, Colonel St John, had issued peremptory orders that our operations were to be confined to the east side of the Helmund, and that the Wali, who was beyond the river, "must rely on his own resources." Colonel St John thus telegraphs to the Foreign Office at Simla the effect which he gave to these instructions: "I am writing to Wali not to risk collision with Ayooob's regular troops in Washir, but in absence of (orders?) not giving him definite assurance of active support from here." Was ever such a message sent to an ally in presence of an enemy? "Don't fight if you can help it, but if you have to fight don't depend upon us for help." What wonder, then, that the Wali's troops became demoralised, and that desertion, and ultimately mutiny, were the result. The Viceroy who could issue such an order would have a poor chance of escape if his competency came within the cognition of a court-martial. We put it to any reader of unprejudiced judgment to say whether or not the mutiny of the Wali's troops, which first left General Burrows's force at a disadvantage, and then led to the disastrous defeat at Maiwand, were not due to the policy enjoined by the Government of India in its telegrams of 27th and 30th June to the Resident at Candahar. Had our troops been left at liberty to cross the Helmund, and to co-operate with the Wali, in all human probability

there would have been no mutiny among the Affghan levies, and we would have been able to drive Ayooob back again to Herat. But the lines which the Government of India laid down insured defeat at the outset, and its subsequent course tended to secure that disaster should be ample and crushing.

Consider the position on the Helmund on the 12th July, when the Wali's troops first began to display signs of uneasiness. Ayooob's advanced guards were already at Washir, not more than fifty miles from Girishk, where the Wali was posted. The British brigade was halted on the opposite side of the river, with orders not to cross. Our Affghan allies could scarcely be supposed to relish the position in which they were placed, with an army far superior to them in numbers and equipments in front, and a river behind them, while the instructions of their friends on the opposite bank only amounted to protecting them after they had been beaten across the Helmund. A mutiny under such circumstances cannot excite surprise. What is more wonderful is the indifference manifested by the Marquis of Ripon and his Council at the effect which the mutiny of the Wali's troops would necessarily produce upon our position. The desertion of the Affghans morally strengthened Ayooob Khan, who by this time was only two or three marches distant, in the same proportion as it physically weakened General Burrows. The mutineers had, moreover, carried off all the stores which the Wali had collected on the Girishk side for the use of our troops. The Government was aware not only that General Burrows was now placed at a serious disadvantage, but that if Ayooob Khan succeeded in passing him, Candahar itself would be placed in serious jeopardy.

And yet nothing appears to have been done to strengthen either the garrison or the force in the field. In the last week of June the Government had called upon General Phayre to move up reinforcements, but apparently took no steps to see that he executed its orders with the necessary promptitude. Thus the careful arrangements which Lord Lytton's Government had made for reinforcing the Affghan garrisons at any critical emergency were entirely wasted in the hands of his successor and his advisers. From the date on which the Government at Simla received intelligence of the desertion of the Wali's troops, until the battle of Maiwand, eleven whole days elapsed,—time enough in the hands of any energetic administration, to have taken steps to obviate disaster, and to have transmitted such fresh orders to the field as would have left the troops free to pursue a line of action more in keeping with the necessities of their position. But during the interval the Governor-General appears to have sat down and waited calmly for the coming catastrophe; while the Commander-in-Chief contented himself with enjoining caution and telegraphing a few queries about General Burrows's position. It is very significant that the despatch of the Government of India to the Secretary of State, dated August 3, and giving an account of the operations of General Burrows's force, from the outbreak of the mutiny down to the disaster of Maiwand, has no action to record on the part of the Viceroy, no precautions to report on behalf of himself and Council, not a single expression of concern to warrant a belief that aught but the most perfect indifference was felt in the fortunes of our troops in presence of the enemy. Nor is there in the Government of India's despatch the faintest avowal of regret

for the calamity which had fallen upon a British force, and for the many gallant lives which had been sacrificed to the blundering policy of an administration that had not even a commonplace sentiment of sorrow to spare over their loss.

It is beyond the province of our present article to enter into criticism of General Burrows's conduct in the battle of Maiwand. The action was unfortunate in all respects—unhappy in the defeat of our troops, in the heavy loss of officers and men, in the consequent shock to our *prestige*, and in the encouragement which it afforded to the discontented part of the Affghan population. Now that the full accounts of the action have been received, it is evident that the Government were seriously to blame in committing a command to a general who had so little capacity for handling troops in the field. It is no excuse that the accident of General Burrows's position led to his being intrusted with the charge of the expedition to the Helmund. The system that assumes the capabilities of a general officer on negative evidence is not less blameworthy than the Government that carries it out in a season of emergency. Desperate as our position was at Maiwand, the accounts of the battle distinctly point to the possibility of retrieving it at more than one period of the action. Had a general of the skill and daring of Sir Frederick Roberts been in command, heavy as the odds were against us, our troops would have driven Ayooob Khan beyond the Helmund. We quite admit that there are circumstances which extenuate the forlorn position which General Burrows took up beneath the pounding fire of Ayooob's battery. He was neglected by the Supreme Government, which ought after the mutiny to have lost no time in encouraging him by hopes

of assistance, and by the despatch of strong reinforcements. He had no hope from Candahar, where General Primrose was evidently more anxious about his own position than concerned regarding the field force. He was unfortunate too in his political associate, who seems to have had a very meagre success in collecting intelligence of the enemy, and who apparently had not the capacity of forming a correct estimate of the news which was brought to him. It is even doubtful whether Colonel St John's instructions left the General in command sufficient freedom of action, and whether we may not point to Maiwand as another instance of the misfortunes which a divided responsibility must necessarily entail upon an army in the field. The correspondence from Candahar creates a strong impression that the Political Agent must have failed to give sufficient attention to General Burrows's repeated request to have his force strengthened, or to be allowed to fall back within a supportable distance of Candahar. These adverse circumstances a general of ability would have taken a pride in overcoming, but General Burrows's bearing seems from the opening of the action to have invited defeat, and to have wasted the desperate bravery with which the Horse Artillery and the 66th sacrificed themselves. With all the wish that the country usually has to take a lenient view of the misfortunes of a commander, the general feeling cannot fail to be that an unusually heavy responsibility for the Maiwand calamity must rest upon the British general.

If anything could tend to create a feeling of sympathy with General Burrows, it would have been the reception which the Maiwand despatches met with from the Government of India and the Commander-

in-Chief. We have already seen how greatly the Government contributed to the desperate circumstances in which General Burrows found himself; and its condemnation naturally savours of self-defence. Nor does Sir Frederick Haines's review of the despatch impress us much more favourably. His severe strictures upon both General Primrose and General Burrows only serve to suggest that a Commander-in-Chief who had implicitly relied upon these officers, cannot be himself entirely absolved from the consequences of their failure. Nay, more; there is reason to suppose that the Commander-in-Chief's instructions influenced General Burrows in giving battle to Ayoob, when he should rather have fallen back within a supportable distance of Candahar. On the 21st July Sir Frederick Haines telegraphed to Candahar that it was of the utmost importance that Ayoob should not be allowed to pass Candahar to Ghazni without being attacked; and two days later he wired permission to attack Ayoob if General Burrows considered himself strong enough. These instructions, which were really commands, are conclusive proof how little the Commander-in-Chief and the Simla officials appreciated the altered position on the Helmund. From the time that the Wali's force was broken up the danger had been transferred from Ghazni to Candahar. Events, moreover, showed that Candahar and not Ghazni was Ayoob's real objective, and that the Commander-in-Chief, in his instructions, was labouring under a serious misapprehension as to both the purpose of the enemy and our own position. But no error in judgment will apologise for the remissness of Sir Frederick Haines in not seeing that reinforcements were hurried on from

Quetta with the utmost speed to Candahar, before General Burrows's disaster had placed the garrison in peril.

The news of the Maiwand disaster appeared to have awakened the Home Government to a state of affairs in Afghanistan for which they were altogether unprepared. If Lord Hartington was not in entire ignorance as to the formidable character of Ayob's expedition, and the critical condition of General Burrows's force, he did his information gross injustice in the House of Commons. Fortunately the condition of Candahar did not leave time for deliberation. The panic-stricken town had to be relieved at once, and Lord Lytton's too long neglected reserves to be at once hurried up to the scene of action. But the questions which Sir Drummond Wolff and other members put from time to time during the beleaguering of Candahar plainly revealed the bewilderment of the new Indian Secretary. If Lord Hartington has the aptitude, he cannot have the inclination to apply himself to the hard work which is required at the India Office even at times of less difficulty than the present. As an instance of the official remissness under the new *régime*, we may mention the fact that the list of killed at the battle of Maiwand was delayed until long after the anxiety and suspense of the relatives of those who had been engaged had been put at rest from non-official sources,—an instance of callousness for which the India Office was responsible, and which, we believe, has never been chargeable to any previous Administration.

The splendid march of General Roberts, whose achievements all through the *Affghan* campaigns deserve a volume to do them justice instead of a passing notice in an article, more than justified the con-

fidence of those who felt convinced that he would secure the honour of relieving Candahar. Had the safety of the city depended upon the Quetta column, it would indeed have been in jeopardy; and we do not derive much reassurance from the arrangements which have been made for the command of the garrison that has been left in charge of Candahar, or from the political agency which at present directs our policy in that quarter. General Roberts's task was, however, confined by his instructions to raising the siege of the town. Had he been left unhampered by political instructions, we feel confident that he would never have paused until he had broken up the last fragments of the rebellious army, and stamped out rebellion between Candahar and Herat. It was no part of the policy of the present Government to avenge the defeat of Maiwand; and had Ayob been prudent enough to retreat to Herat, he would probably have been let go unmolested. Such, we apprehend, fairly represents the policy with the execution of which General Roberts was charged; for had his commission gone far enough he would doubtless not have rested until he had hunted Ayob down, and put an end to the possibility of his creating further disturbance. Brilliant as was the action with which General Roberts wound up the campaign, we doubt if we can regard it as a fair equivalent for our defeat at Maiwand, for the ghastly horrors of Burrows's retreat to Candahar, and for the humiliating condition in which our garrison there was so long cooped up. The fact that Ayob immediately re-established himself at the head of another power, and is now in a position to again menace the country from Herat, proves that his punishment personally was not heavy.

Candahar telegrams serve to confirm an impression that his victory at Maiwand has elevated Ayoob to the rank of a national hero in the eyes of his countrymen.

The immediate result of the battle of Maiwand was to upset the views of the Government with regard to the evacuation of the country. It is true that our troops were hustled out of northern Afghanistan in all haste, while as yet the issue of General Roberts's expedition was unknown; but even when Candahar was relieved it was obvious that we could not afford to take our departure. A few months' experience of Affghan affairs had opened the eyes of Government to issues that it could not or would not see in Opposition. It had in the first place to consider what would befall Candahar itself if we were to quit it. We have separated Candahar from Cabul, and given its Wali, Shere Ali Khan, solemn assurances that we would secure his independence in a friendly alliance with ourselves. How far the present Government consider the guarantee of their predecessors binding upon themselves, we cannot, of course, anticipate; but it is only reasonable that, as we induced the Wali to adopt independence, we should not leave him to the mercy of a stronger Power. It seems likely that Ayoob Khan has both the disposition and the ability to seize upon Candahar as soon as we turn our backs. Whether or not Abdurrahman is influenced by the same ambition, we cannot say. When he first appeared on the scene he obstinately refused all proposals to recognise the independence of Wali Shere Ali. As we do not yet know the exact basis upon which the British Government has concluded an alliance with him, we are ignorant of the footing on which he stands with

the Wali's Government. Abdurrahman, however, is too true a Barukzye to let pledges stand between him and the most prosperous province of the old Affghan kingdom, should a favourable opportunity present itself in the absence of the British to bring it again under the government of Cabul. These are considerations that immediately stand in the way of evacuation; and these same, or others equally strong, will face us when we reconsider the subject six months, a year, or ten years after. In fact, the condition of Affghan affairs, the interests of British India, and the future of Central Asian policy, have involuntarily forced the Liberal Government to put to themselves the question, "Shall we hold Candahar?" If this question admitted but of only one answer—if our duty to resume a policy of entire abstention from Affghan affairs were as clear as it seemed to be to the Liberal leaders when in Opposition—then our course would be perfectly straight. We ought not to linger a single day longer in Candahar. Every week spent in that city is an unnecessary and vexatious addition to our military expenditure. Let us not heed what becomes of Wali Shere Ali Khan or the chiefs who have compromised themselves by our alliance. Let Ayoob and Abdurrahman fall at each other's throats, and let us send civil letters to the survivor, hailing him as *de facto* Ameer of Affghanistan, until he in turn has met his match, whom we will next hail as ruler. Let us retire to the line of the Indus and "let the world slide." That is what Masterly Inactivity, as taught and practised by the founder of the doctrine, requires of us to do, if we are to adopt it as our political faith. If the Liberal Ministry means to

adhere to its original avowal in favour of this position, it would be mistaken weakness on its part to allow any unselfish considerations to detain our troops an hour longer in southern Affghanistan. But if it has been brought to see that its declarations were untenable, and that its duty is to consult the future welfare and peace of the country, and to replace British influence in Affghanistan upon the footing which it occupied in Lord Mayo's time, it will be the duty of all parties, Liberal or Conservative, to wish it hearty success in its endeavours. There are a variety of arrangements by which we may settle the future government of Candahar. We may restore it to Abdurrahman; we may maintain the Wali Shere Ali; we may even, as has been suggested, throw it in with Herat as a kingdom for Ayoob Khan, although the last-named arrangement would be apt to arouse angry recollections of the Maiwand defeat. Among the do-nothing politicians of the day there seems to be a feeling that the easiest way of getting rid of Candahar would be to hand it over at once to Abdurrahman. This would certainly be to clear our hands of it. But we must remember that no party professes to feel any confidence in Abdurrahman Khan. He may consider it for his interest to keep our friendship, or he may find a better market for his alliance in Russian Turkistan. To place the whole of Affghanistan in the unreserved power of a ruler who might become a creature of Russia would be at once to plunge us back again into those difficulties from which we found no outlet except by war. It may be doubted, also, whether we are morally free to dispose of Candahar in this offhand fashion. We separated it from Cabul, and erected it into an independent state under a

ruler of its own, who has not, so far as we are aware, done anything to forfeit his claims upon us. But the question who is to rule at Candahar matters very little. We do not want the province for ourselves. We want to see it settled under a good and popular ruler, who will administer justice to the people, secure them against disturbance, and develop the agriculture and industry of the country. We want some sort of guarantee for ourselves against Affghanistan being converted into a hostile power at a time when our hands are full in Europe; and this will most readily be obtained, not by longer standing aloof and playing at cross purposes with the rulers of the country, but by maintaining such a footing in Affghanistan as will enable us, without interfering with the people, to take note of all popular movements, to intervene with friendly counsels, to avert civil wars, to introduce the thin end of the wedge of civilisation, to wean the people from violence and bloodshed, and to secure for ourselves a position in High Asia that would serve as an outpost should troubles from that direction threaten the interests of India. All this would be secured by the maintenance of a moderately strong garrison in Candahar. Such a garrison would be a nucleus whence British influence would speedily pervade the country, and remove misunderstandings between ourselves and the Affghans. Its mere presence would go far to impose a check upon the bloody civil wars from which Affghanistan has so long suffered, and which have tended to cast discredit upon the British Indian Government as a civilised friendly power. Sir Donald Stewart's march from Candahar to Cabul, and his victory over the Mohammed Jan faction at Ahmed Kheyl, was in itself a clear proof of the com-

mand which a garrison at Candahar affords us over the Cabul country. It would save us at some future time, when Affghan policy was drifting into directions foreign to our interests, from the necessity of demanding permission to establish agencies in Herat or Cabul. It would not entail a heavy extra charge upon our Indian military expenditure, for with a garrison in Candahar we could reduce all, and perhaps abolish some, of our present military outposts on the Sindh frontier. With a garrison at Candahar, Affghanistan could never cause us uneasiness by isolating herself as she did before she last drifted into war; and we would be secured alike against internal intrigue in the country, and external influence from any other power. We should place a gate upon the great highway to India from Central Asia, of which the meaning would be quite intelligible to all powers moving in its direction. This would imply no mistrust, but would be a simple act of caution permissible to any prudent power.

The opportunity which is now opened up to the Government is

one that, in the nature of things, cannot present itself a second time until we have once more had to overrun the country. We can only abandon Affghanistan now at the certain risk of sooner or later having to subdue it again. This would be a contingency so much to be deplored that no price is too great to pay for a reasonable prospect of escaping it. We are wearied of Affghan wars; our Indian troops detest campaigning in that country; but Affghanistan, if again left absolutely to itself, must become a source of danger to India, at every point where the views of the Ameer and those of the viceregal Government diverge. The Government then does right to pause before rashly resolving upon the removal of its garrison from Candahar. Great events have sprung out of smaller issues. We may retain or quit our hold upon Candahar at our pleasure, but it may very probably depend upon the choice we now make whether, some time sooner or later, we shall have as free an option of quitting or retaining our hold on the line of the Indus.

THE UNLOADED REVOLVER—THE DIPLOMACY OF FANATICISM.

It is an old proverb that "History repeats itself;" but the student of history might ransack the archives of Europe in vain to produce a parallel to the diplomatic events of the last four months. It has been reserved for a political genius of altogether exceptional temperament to create a situation absolutely without precedent, alike in the negotiations which have led up to it, and in the singular character of the complications which it has produced. Considered from this point of view, there is a philosophical as well as a political side to the present phase of the Eastern question. It offers psychological problems even more insoluble than those which are presented by its diplomatic aspect; and we commend to the consideration of Mr Herbert Spencer an analysis of the moral processes by which the statesmen of Europe created the dilemma upon the horns of which they have since become impaled. How are we to account for the curious series of contradictions and inconsistencies which have characterised the political action of a great party in England, and into which, to a greater or less extent, five other European Governments have been betrayed? We have a Cabinet, the leading members of which have not only themselves passed through the most conflicting stages of policy, but have succeeded in persuading a majority of their own countrymen and the principal Powers of Europe to follow them. Twenty-five years ago we have these same men forming part of a Cabinet whose fundamental principle was antagonism to Russia, supported by an enthusiastic nation, in a war which had for

its object the maintenance of the integrity and independence of the Ottoman empire. Then, we have them governing the country upon peace-at-any-price principles; repudiating any action which should involve England in the affairs of Europe; abandoning their treaty rights; subjecting the nation to insult and political effacement, until its selfishness and timidity became a byword in Europe, was burlesqued upon the English stage, and finally produced a national reaction which led to their overthrow. Now, we have these same men menacingly insisting upon the fulfilment of treaty clauses in favour of obscure principalities; abandoning in the case of Albania the arguments based upon the rights of kindred nationality which induced them to cede a British dependency to Greece; throwing to the wind the plea of economic expediency by which they sought to justify national humiliation; forcing their country into the van of political strife; and, so far from shrinking from involving England in quarrels in which she can have no direct concern, assuming an attitude of dictatorship to the whole of Europe, and offering to its five greatest Powers the alternative of either submitting to this dictatorship, or being plunged into a European war. They have passed at a bound from being the most humble and forbearing, to being the most arrogant and intolerant, of European Governments; and with this extraordinary transformation of rôle, all their traditional friendships and antipathies have become revolutionised. The policy which a few years ago they considered to be essential to the

safety of the British dominions, they now hold to be effete and absurd. The Power they then expended national blood and treasure to preserve, they are now ready to spend blood and treasure to destroy; the Power they then endeavoured to ruin by a protracted war, they now seek to co-operate with as a valued and trusted ally, in achieving the identical object which they formerly fought against each other to prevent; and they have so stupefied and confounded the rest of Europe by this sudden *volte face*—so disconcerted all previous calculations, and overthrown all policy based upon the hypothesis of national political consistency—that the remaining Powers have been too bewildered to do anything but acquiesce in the new combination and submit to its guidance, until events should so shape themselves as to afford them the opportunity which has at last arisen for escape.

One Power alone has remained true to itself and to its traditions, and, unable in the whirl and confusion consequent upon such sudden and unexpected changes to see its way clearly in any direction, has rolled itself up in its prickles like a hedgehog, and allows the European pack to snap and bark round it to their hearts' content, instinctively conscious that in the degree in which it uncoils will the dogs of war be let loose upon it, and tear it to pieces; whereas, by allowing them first to prick their noses in unison, it indulges in the hope that they may ultimately fall upon and rend each other.

In the Prime Minister of England and the Sultan of Turkey the extremes of active and of passive fanaticism find their apotheosis, and as usual with fanaticism, it is stimulated in both cases mainly by the

prejudice arising from ignorance. It would, indeed, be difficult to imagine a more complete ignorance than that of the Sultan, of the conditions which surround Mr Gladstone, and of the influences under which he acts, were it not surpassed by the ignorance of Mr Gladstone of the conditions which surround the Sultan, and of the influences under which he acts. This was remarkably illustrated in his speeches in Mid-Lothian, in which he repeatedly reiterated the absurd and historically inaccurate statement that moral pressure had never been applied to Turkey by Europe without the Porte yielding. Had such pressure been applied by the late Government, he maintained, all the difficulties with which they had to contend might at once have been overcome; and it was upon this sincere but ignorant conviction that the whole policy has been based which has led to the present *impasse*, and which threatens to lead to consequences far more serious than the most gloomy anticipations could have predicted. It was unsound for many reasons. In the first place, Turkey has never made any important concession on the application of moral pressure alone by concerted Europe.

The battle of Navarino was not "moral" in any sense. The landing of a French army in Syria, by which the Lebanon concessions were obtained, was distinctly an act of physical force; while the attempt of the late Government to avert the Russian invasion by concerted moral pressure in the winter of 1876-77 was a decided failure, and an evidence in the opposite sense. Of course it is not true that Turkey has never yielded to diplomatic pressure, but it is not more true of Turkey than of any other European country. Indeed we question whe-

ther any Christian Power would have resisted united Europe to the extent that Turkey is now doing. At the present juncture there are special reasons why such pressure was certain to be inefficacious, but of these it is now evident that Mr Gladstone was profoundly ignorant. Ever since the accession of the present Sultan to the throne the action of the Turkish Cabinet upon public affairs has been diminishing, until it has now become a question on every serious occasion, not what the Government of Turkey will do, but what the Sultan personally will do. The same may, to a great extent, be said of England and her Prime Minister,—hence, in a diplomatic contest between these two important persons, everything depends, or should depend, upon the appreciation which they have of each other's executive power, and of the nature of the motives by which each is influenced. Now it is not probable that, in the earlier stages of the negotiations, either Mr Gladstone or the Sultan in any degree realised the personal nature of the struggle between them. The Sultan has been accustomed to take into consideration the character of the British ambassador for the time, whoever he may be, the disposition of the British nation, so far as he is informed regarding it by M. Musurus, and the influence on the points at issue of other European Powers. He has not identified all his troubles with a single man to the extent that he might have done had he been better informed; for it is not too much to say that if Mr Gladstone had never existed we should never have had a naval demonstration, and the consequences which, even though it may now be abandoned, it has tended to precipitate. On the other hand,

it is evident that Mr Gladstone was under the delusion that he had a reasonable body of men, called a Cabinet, to appeal to at Constantinople, and that among them there would have been some who were sufficiently enlightened to perceive the dangerous results which would accrue to Turkey from a policy of *non possumus* pushed to an extreme. He also had a general idea that a Turk was an oriental, and that all orientals were moral cowards, upon whom a game of brag might be played with success. This is true of all orientals who are not Moslems, but it is not true of Moslems; on the contrary, brag is the one weapon which, in the case of the Turk, always breaks in the hand of the man who tries to use it. Lead and gold are the two metals which can alone be absolutely relied upon; and the idea of a naval demonstration which was ostentatiously ordered to confine itself to moral evolutions would have appealed to the sense of humour of any Turkish Government. When that Government became concentrated in the person of the Sultan, it was no doubt presented to his Majesty by his immediate *entourage* in the comic light which would be most agreeable to him, and had about as much effect upon him as it would have to present a hair-brush instead of a revolver at the head of a burglar. It would have been impossible to devise a policy less likely to succeed with the Sultan, than that of shaking united unarmed, or rather unloaded, Europe in his face. Physically morbidly timid, the Sultan is totally inaccessible to moral alarm arising from concerted action of this sort. In the first place, there is no belief more rooted in his mind than that people who are suspicious or jealous of each other should be able to act

harmoniously in questions when their interests are concerned, except for a very limited period. His life is spent in experimenting upon human nature in this particular direction; and there is probably no man living who understands better how to work upon the baser motives which actuate mankind—especially oriental mankind. He is an adept in the art of “ruling and dividing,” and great success has inspired him with complete confidence in his skill. He has never, therefore, from the first, had the slightest belief in the concert of Powers; and for a policy based on this concert to succeed, it is essential that the subject of the experiment should have some belief in it. Not merely has he not believed in it, but he has manifested his contempt for it in successive notes, until at last he exploded a bomb-shell in the shape of an insolent ultimatum, which threw all the Cabinets of Europe into consternation, and exposed the fallacy which lay at the root of their so-called concerted action. Then it was, when he had practically divided the Powers, and had driven England and Russia into an attitude of physical coercion, that he listened to the representations of the German and French ambassadors, and consented to recur to the position in regard to Montenegro which he had taken up so long ago as April last, when he signed an *iradè* ceding to Montenegro the Kuchi-Krajna districts, including part of the plain of Podgoritzza, and the valleys occupied by the Grudi, Hotti, and Clementi Albanians. It was not under the pressure of any naval demonstration that he made this concession, which he always recognised as an obligation imposed upon him by the Treaty of Berlin—but of his own free will, as the result of negotia-

tions with the Italian ambassador; and an *iradè* providing for the cession of Dulcigno is not therefore to be regarded in the light of a triumph resulting from the policy of moral coercion. On the contrary, it is beyond doubt that the Sultan's mind was made up to cede territory to Montenegro long before the naval demonstration was proposed, and that this event had practically the effect of interfering with the negotiations which he had entered into with the Albanians on the subject. For in the convention agreed to, in what was called the Corti compromise, all the most minute details of the method of evacuation by the Turkish troops of the districts to be occupied by the Montenegrins were specified. The day and hour for the transfer were fixed, and the Turkish troops did actually evacuate the positions. The failure of the Montenegrins to occupy the ceded territory was entirely their own fault. A term of a certain number of hours was specified to allow time for a messenger to go to the Montenegrin camp and inform them of the hour when the positions occupied by the Turks were to be abandoned. At the appointed hour the Turkish troops evacuated the positions; but the messenger was delayed on the way, and when the Montenegrins advanced they found a small force of Albanians drawn up at the bridge of the Zem, who, hearing what was going on, had had time to collect there in order to dispute their passage. It has always been alleged that the messenger was purposely delayed in order to allow time to the Albanians to collect. This may or may not be the case—the Turks demanded a European Commission to inquire into it; but even if it was, the force collected was so small that there would have been no

difficulty whatever in the Montenegrins, who were far more numerous, forcing the bridge and occupying the abandoned positions. Had they done so, the Montenegrin question would then have found its solution, and we should never have had a Dulcigno question, though possibly we should still have had a naval demonstration, with even more disastrous results, applied to Janina and the Greek frontiers, which fortunately has now become impossible. The Montenegrins declined to take advantage of the opportunity of acquiring the territory ceded to them by the Sultan and evacuated by the troops, because their instructions have always been from Russia not to risk the life of a man, but to throw upon Europe the whole responsibility of procuring for them the territory secured to them by the Treaty of Berlin. Under these instructions they declined a skirmish in which they were certain to be victors, and retired before a handful of Albanians, who, encouraged by this display of weakness and the time thus afforded, proceeded to occupy the positions evacuated by the Turks: and in a few days, even if they had so desired, it would have been impossible for the Montenegrins to have overcome the resistance which would have been offered without great loss of life; but they showed no eagerness to do so. Indeed, the patience with which they have waited for Europe to force the Turks to hand them the territory they claim, and the horror of bloodshed which they have evinced all through the protracted negotiations, beginning with Plava and Gusinje and ending with Dulcigno, has been so remarkable as to put beyond a doubt the fact that they have been used as the instruments of Russia to embroil the Powers

pledged to the Treaty of Berlin. The object of Russia has clearly been, from the beginning, to make the fulfilment of a treaty, wrung from our diplomats, impracticable and an ultimate cause of strife; and it cannot be denied that she has played her cards very dexterously in this sense.

It is necessary to recall this episode somewhat in detail, because there is a disposition to regard every concession now made by the Sultan in favour of Montenegro as the result of a naval demonstration made in an Austrian port, whereas it has in reality been in spite of that demonstration and delayed by it. Not only did the Sultan agree before that demonstration to cede the above-named territory under the conditions described, and actually evacuated it, but he made the same promise with regard to Dulcigno, when the previous attempt fell through owing to the indifference of the Montenegrins. In the first days of August the Sultan announced his intention of ceding Dulcigno, in terms as decided as he has now again used. He was allowed until the 24th of August to fulfil his promise. Failing to do it in the stipulated time of three weeks, the fleets assemble to coerce him; he refuses to be coerced, and categorically withdraws from his engagement unless the naval demonstration is abandoned. The result of his defiant attitude is that it is postponed; and he receives private assurances from the German and French ambassadors that if he will only carry out his original intention he will have no cause for further apprehension of concerted pressure and naval demonstration in the points of the Eastern question remaining still outstanding. On this he renews the engagement he made in the beginning of

August; and the organs of the Government set up a pæan of triumph, as if the surrender had been made by the Sultan and not by Europe. It is, no doubt, of urgent necessity to the Government that the Radical press should do its utmost to twist defeat into victory; but the 'Neue Freie Presse' shows a more accurate appreciation of the situation when it says, "that Prince Bismarck by his late action at Constantinople broke the supremacy of Mr Gladstone, and cut the cord by which the English Prime Minister had so far dragged Europe behind him. He meant to cut down the Turkish upas-tree, and has succeeded in wounding himself." The plain fact remains, that the arrival of the combined fleets had the effect of postponing the cession of Dulcigno rather than of expediting it: and has given the Sultan an opportunity of exposing the hollowness of the European concert, of playing off one Christian Power against another, of turning the naval demonstration into ridicule, of flaunting before his Moslem subjects his contempt for united Ghiaourdom, thereby immensely increasing his *prestige*, and of postponing to the Greek calends the rectification of the Greek frontier.

With their usual incapacity for appreciating the nature of Moslem diplomacy, the Liberal organs instantly accepted the announcement of the surrender of Dulcigno as a great British diplomatic success, and attributed it to the alarm inspired in the mind of the Sultan by the threat of sequestering the revenues of Smyrna, and apparently believed on the 12th of last month that the transfer of the town would be prompt and unconditional. The fact is gradually dawning upon them that Mr Gladstone has not yet terrified the Sultan into alacrity of

compliance, or the abandonment of conditions which may still further test the value of the naval demonstration, and the possibility of blockading the Ægean ports.

That the foreign press take a very different view of the Ministerial triumph, so far as it has gone in the matter of Dulcigno, might be illustrated by innumerable extracts; but it will suffice to quote one from the 'Journal des Débats,' which may be considered as one of the most judicious and calm exponents of public opinion on the Continent:—

"Never," says that journal, "has the Porte shown itself more fertile in expedients than of late. It has achieved a triumph of which it could hardly have dreamed. It was not difficult, after the revelations of the press and the indiscretions, perhaps, of some of the Cabinets, to see that the so-called European concert was a mere soap-bubble, which would collapse at a puff of air from Constantinople. Having obtained what she desired, Turkey showed still further adroitness in appearing to yield on one point, assured as she was that for the moment no European intervention was to be apprehended in relation to Greece and Armenia. These successes the Porte, of course, owes to the smothered rivalries between the Powers; but it owes them, above all, to Europe's absolute need of peace, which Turkey has known how to turn to account. The advantages accruing to the Ottoman Government from its victory are immense. At home the Sultan will succeed in restoring his shaken throne, for the Mussulmans will be well pleased with Abdul Hamid for having shown such determination and energy at a critical moment. Abroad, too, the *prestige* of Turkey has been unquestionably raised. Audacity, under whatever form, is highly appreciated; and no one will deny that Turkey has that quality in a sufficiently high degree to make up for no small defect of strength. So much for what Turkey has gained from a moral point

of view. The material advantages resulting from her conduct are no less important. The Porte cedes Dulcigno to Montenegro, but it gains its point in regard to the other portions of the Montenegrin frontier, and, moreover, wards off the occupation of Smyrna and Salonica, upon which England and Russia seemed resolved. Add to this that Turkey now has little reason to be disturbed as to the Greek question, and still less as to the Armenian, and the principal advantages accruing to Turkey from her resistance are enumerated."

It cannot be denied that the Sultan has achieved all these objects at the price of surrendering what he always expressed himself willing in his own way and at his own time to surrender to Montenegro; and a wise Minister should have foreseen that, so far from expediting matters or paving the way for a solution of the questions still unsettled, the empty-revolver policy was the worst that could be pursued. But there were other reasons why a knowledge of local conditions should have convinced Mr Gladstone that this was so. It may be possible for the Sultan to induce the Albanians, by methods of persuasion, cajolery, or bribery, known to himself, to induce them to cede Dulcigno without a struggle—though this is extremely doubtful—if left entirely to himself; but it became far more difficult if they were dared to protect their own territory by allied Europe. Nothing could be calculated to excite a wild spirit of daring and defiance in the minds of a race as heroic as "the most heroic race in Europe," so much as the spectacle of the fleets of Europe blazing away at them from impossible distances while they were fighting the Montenegrins. It was a sort of safe running accompaniment of war, which would flatter their vanity to

the highest extent. They knew perfectly well that no disembarkations were to be allowed from the fleet; they were perfectly well aware that their positions were out of the range of the ships, or at any rate so nearly out of range that there would not be much danger, but immense swagger to be derived from being close enough to be fired at by allied Europe; and the transference of Dulcigno to Montenegro, under the guns of the fleets, was therefore a far more difficult matter for the Sultan to achieve than if the naval demonstration had not been threatened. But in addition to these considerations, there is another reason especially connected with concessions either to Greece or Montenegro, which renders a forcible disruption of his own territory against the wish of its population in favour of those countries a matter of extreme difficulty. And this consists in the necessity of considering the feelings of his own body-guard on the subject. The Sultan is a prey, not altogether without reason, considering the fate of his predecessors, to an abiding apprehension of conspiracy and assassination, and has surrounded himself with a body-guard drawn not from Constantinople or its neighbourhood, but from the mountains of Albania, and from a race in whom he has implicit confidence; and he is firmly and probably rightly convinced that, if he gave orders to his troops under Riza Pasha to fire upon the brothers and cousins of these men, his life would not be worth a day's purchase. He cannot dispense with them, because he believes his safety to depend upon their constant watchfulness, and he has therefore no alternative but to consider their feelings. To those who know the influences dominant at the Palace, the idea that any

number of European ships off the coast of Albania would induce the Sultan to risk his life, or that the cession of Dulcigno would be simplified by a demonstration of naval force, was an absolute absurdity. The moment that a great display of force should be made within gunshot of the Albanian position, the matter would practically be taken out of the Sultan's hands. His dignity would be outraged, his authority compromised in the eyes of his subjects. His personal safety would be endangered. The warlike enthusiasm of the local population would be excited to the highest pitch, and the spark probably flung into a magazine of combustible materials which might explode throughout the length and breadth of his empire. Reasons of state policy, therefore, no less than a sense of wounded pride, compelled him to anticipate so dangerous a contingency by meeting coercion with defiance, and of risking all in the hope of covering the bluster of his "bag-and-baggage" enemy with contempt and ridicule; and hence it is that there has from the outset been positively no excuse whatever for a policy which, it has now been proved, is utterly inapplicable to the solution of the Eastern question. Just as no Turk conversant with the rivalries of European Powers ever believed in the possibility of a European concert lasting long enough to culminate in physical coercion, so no foreigners conversant with the local conditions ever believed, from the day it was first talked of, that a naval demonstration off the coast of Albania would fulfil the expectations which had been based upon it.

The best proof that this is so is to be found in the fact that even Mr Gladstone would not again have the effrontery to tell the electors

of Mid-Lothian that those who denied that concerted moral pressure would force Turkey to yield Janina and Metzovo to Greece talked "absolute nonsense." It must be remembered that, inasmuch as the Sultan had always expressed his willingness to comply with the Treaty of Berlin, so far as Montenegro was concerned, he has persistently refused to accept either the recommendation of the Berlin Protocol or the later decision of the Conference in regard to Greece; and it was specially to procure Greece its increased territory that the policy of moral coercion and naval demonstration was proposed. So far as all the outstanding questions waiting for solution in the East are concerned, the Government is now, in consequence of this Montenegrin *fasco*, left absolutely without a policy, unless they are prepared to venture single-handed, or in alliance with Russia, on a war with Turkey. A concert of Powers for further action in the East is impossible; and even if it was, Mr Gladstone would be obliged to admit that he could no longer nurse the delusion that the Porte would yield to it. He has at least discovered that the whole theory upon which he reared his fabric, depended for success not upon a Cabinet of oriental moral cowards, but upon the will of one man no less "earnest," no less obstinate, quite as ignorant as he was himself, and whose policy of resistance was mainly based not on a desire for office or a thirst for vengeance on a political adversary, but upon the most powerful considerations of political expediency, personal safety, and religious fanaticism. And, indeed, when we come to review the theological side of the question, with which Mr Gladstone is eminently qualified to sympathise, it seems

difficult to understand why the Prime Minister, whose religious susceptibilities are so keen, should not take into account tendencies which are quite as strongly developed in the character of his Moslem antagonist as they are in his own. There are attached to the Palace Mollahs and holy men whose opinion upon the religious bearing of political questions his Majesty cannot ignore. The considerations which they involve strike at the root of his spiritual headship of Islam; and the allegiance of his subjects in a degree depends upon the manner in which he fulfils the sacred duties laid upon him in virtue of his position as Khalif. When, therefore, a council of Ulemas decide that to yield to concerted moral pressure on the part of the Ghiaour is to betray the highest functions of his office, he is bound to give weight to such a decision; and a *fetva* issued by the Sheik-ul-Islam is not a document that can be lightly cast aside. From the Sultan's point of view, strange as it may seem, Mr Gladstone is as "wicked," as "immoral," and as "utterly unprincipled" as Lord Beaconsfield is from Mr Gladstone's. An enthusiast in his religious bigotry, he views the political questions which involve the highest interests of his country from a narrow, ignorant, personal, and highly prejudiced stand-point, and is urged by the intense earnestness of his impulses to reckless expedients, of which a striking illustration is furnished by the Note of the 4th October presented by the Porte, and which was drawn up at the Palace, and, as we learn from the 'Times' correspondent, received the approval of his Excellency Bahram Aga, chief of the black eunuchs, an official who possesses a great ascendancy over the mind of his Majesty.

It is probable that, if the Prime Minister had realised from the first that practically he would have to deal with the Sultan alone, and how many points of resemblance in character existed between himself and his Majesty, he would never have indulged in the insane delusion that the latter would not yield to a concert of Powers, and concede the Greek frontier defined by the last Berlin Conference. We doubt very much whether the concerted moral pressure of all Europe would compel Mr Gladstone to enter a Cabinet of which Lord Beaconsfield was Premier; and yet, in expecting him to give up territory to Greece, he is demanding from the Sultan a concession which is quite as galling to all his most cherished susceptibilities. Hence, as far as it is possible to judge from the opportunities which have been afforded us of estimating the characters of these two most interesting natures, it is probable that, had Mr Gladstone been Sultan of Turkey, he would have acted almost exactly as that high personage has done. Indeed it was impossible to read the Note above referred to without being struck by a certain casuistical sophistry, which seemed to have a familiar ring about it, and bears a remarkable resemblance, in some of its more obscure and involved passages, to utterances to which we are so well accustomed.

How well, for instance, we know the tactics of confusing issues! The Powers try to pin the Sultan down to the question of Montenegro; but his Majesty, in his last Note, buries it in the mass of all the points awaiting settlement, and drags in Armenian reform, Turkish bondholders, Bulgarian fortresses, and all the rest of it. We almost think we hear Mr Gladstone replying to inconvenient "hecklers" on

the subject of the Disestablishment of the Scotch Kirk, and burying that unpleasant issue in a cloud of moral phrases on foreign politics.

It would be unjust, however, to the Sultan not to concede to his fanaticism a more patriotic character than that which characterises Mr Gladstone's. Perhaps the most remarkable distinction in the earnestness of the two men is to be found in the fact that his Majesty manifests upon every occasion a most ardent desire to protect his own empire and nationality; while Mr Gladstone expends his enthusiasm on other nationalities of every description, and manifests a most profound indifference to the interests of the British race and empire. Again the Sultan appears to have a sense of humour to which his great Christian prototype can lay no claim. There is something very comical in his apprehension, as stated in his last Ultimatum, that the Powers of Europe might apply moral pressure by means of a naval demonstration to extort the Russian indemnity. The manner in which he replied to the moral naval demonstration—which was not to fight, except possibly against Albanians,—by a moral military demonstration—which was not to fight, except possibly against Montenegrins—was a fine piece of irony. Altogether it is impossible to deny that Mr Gladstone has met his match; and while regretting it in the interests of peace generally, and of England and Turkey in particular, the lesson will not have been thrown away, if it has taught the British elector that violent denunciation, moral platitudes, and an overweening assumption of superior knowledge, clothed in well-rounded periods of "random rhetoric," do not necessarily convey sound political sense, or imply an accurate appreciation of facts; and

that diplomatic theories evolved, not from acquaintance with local conditions, but from an overpowering sense of injury at the hands of a political opponent, and the impulses of personal rivalry, may, when put into practice, land the nation in a dilemma in which it has to choose between a disastrous and unholy war or an undignified and humiliating retreat. That this is not a purely party or prejudiced view of the situation, may be gathered from the comments of the European press, which are the more valuable not only as they are more impartial and unbiassed by local party feeling, but because experience proves that the universal consensus of foreign public opinion is always more coincident with the verdict of history than the views which are to be gathered from the domestic press. What that opinion is may be seen from the following quotations. The 'National Zeitung,' a leading Liberal German paper, says that—

"The history of Europe is at the present time only to be understood from the standpoint of English party politics. If Mr Gladstone were obliged to turn back from the path he has entered upon, under the guidance of thoughtless passion, the Gladstone Cabinet and the Whigs would be in danger. That Mr Gladstone believes he owes it to himself and his friends to make a further venture after the first check we can well understand. The question whether Mr Gladstone is carrying on an English or party policy we must leave for England to decide. It seems to us as if his attitude far exceeded the limits necessitated by England's interests in the maintenance of her Asiatic position. The logical conclusion of what Mr Gladstone is doing is the entry of the Russians into Constantinople, and their firm establishment in Armenia and Asia Minor, in a situation threatening the road to India in front and flank. Probably Mr Gladstone and his English friends think it will not be so dangerous, that

this fire may be played with for a time with impunity. He is apt to exclaim, with Mercutio in 'Romeo and Juliet,' "A plague on both your houses!" The French papers have already worked themselves into an excitement contrasting with their previous calm attitude. We understand the task which the Conservative Powers in Europe have assigned to themselves in accompanying Mr Gladstone in his experiments as a sort of keeper to look after him, but we see them now apparently in danger of being infected by Mr Gladstone. We at least do not otherwise know how to explain the excitement of the French journals. For what interest can they take in an experiment? We will venture on no opinion as to the ultimate issue; but we foresee the possibility that an utterly aimless policy may lead where the promoters of this policy are least desirous of going. Mr Gladstone would have obliterated the memory of Lord Beaconsfield by the brilliancy of his own action: at present he has only furnished him with a foil which he did not possess while in office. The theological statesman has followed the novelist statesman, and Europe is united in regarding the exchange as a bad one. But when the Continental reader sees the most important interests of Europe dragged into the arena of English party politics for the partition of the East, this last point comes more and more into view."

In an article in the 'Cologne Gazette,' German dissatisfaction with the English Premier's policy is expressed in terms more than usually energetic, taking into consideration the staunch Liberal tendencies of the German journal.

"Mr Gladstone is a man who inspires no confidence. His presence at the head of the British Government is the cause of profound displeasure—of a highly prejudicial and undesirable agitation of public opinion throughout Europe. There is no action, not even the most unreasonable, that he may not be expected to commit; and as long as the might of England shall remain, like a soulless implement, devoid of will, in his

hands, every man on the Continent is justified in asking himself at night-time, "What will to-morrow's day bring to the world from London?" One can deal with wicked or stupid men, although more readily exposed in such transactions to errors than when one has to do with honourable and clever people; but the actions of a fanatic can as little be foreseen as those of a maniac. And Mr Gladstone is a fanatic. He pursues lofty, unattainable, mystic aims, and, in order to attain them, catches at the most unexpected expedients. Who, a few months ago, would have believed it possible that England should have suddenly renounced its policy of ages in the East, and, in complicity with Russia, should have displayed a ready alacrity to raise its sword in order to deal Turkey her death-blow? The menacing likelihood of provoking a monstrous world-conflagration did not deter Mr Gladstone from making ready to do this deed; nor is it any injustice to him to assert that, checked in his enterprise by the unexpectedly conciliatory behaviour of Turkey, he has most unwillingly returned his brandished sword to its sheath. We regard it as a great misfortune for England that such a man as Mr Gladstone should be tolerated in that country at the head of the Government; but we willingly recognise the right of our neighbours on the other side of the Channel to be happy in their own way. It has astounded us that English pride should have endured that the Prime Minister of Great Britain should have been forced to tender a formal apology to Austria for the insults he had heaped upon that Empire during his electioneering campaign. We believe that the immeasurable Irish difficulties into which England has been partially thrust by his blunders, and the 'Elective Affinities' existing between his aims and those of the worst European revolutionary elements, will sooner or later open Englishmen's eyes, and incite them to deprive him of the means of inflicting further injury upon his own country and the world at large. This, however, and other similar matters, are the affair of the British nation. Our cares are nearer to us still.

It is our desire to make ourselves independent, so far as possible, of the Gladstonian policy, in order that we may suffer from it as little as may be. We therefore hope that the considerable reserve of the Continental Governments, hitherto observed in the interests of peace, but a further maintenance of which might now endanger it, has at length come to an end; so that the people of Germany and Austria, at least, may be enabled to say with confidence, 'We will not allow ourselves to be humbugged into occupying Smyrna, blockading the Dardanelles, bombarding Constantinople, or other measures of that description, such as Mr Gladstone, only a few days ago, proposed to put into execution at an early date.'

The Berlin correspondent of the 'Times' tells us that, "a deepening dislike and distrust of the British Premier are beginning to be displayed throughout all Germany. Journals of every hue are unanimous upon this head, however much they may differ upon other things." The 'Conservative Post' declares that "he is pursuing a policy opposed to the highest interests of his country, which ought to be his primary consideration." The 'Revue des deux Mondes' describes him "as a prey to fanaticism, which age appears only to inflame, and which has often played him an ill turn," and remarks "that Mr Gladstone seems to have returned to power expressly to show that Lord Beaconsfield was a practical man endowed with the genius of positive diplomacy." The Continental journals are, in fact, teeming with complaints which practically amount to this, that so long as they are following Mr Gladstone's lead, they are between the upper and the nether millstone of rival fanatics. "Europe," says one of the papers above quoted, "allows Mr Gladstone to have his way just as one allows an impetuous and violent man to

reduce his actions to absurdity, by allowing him free hand, rather than attempt to influence him by rational considerations." While a German writer thus indicates the mode of treatment which he considers applicable to the "impetuous and violent man" in London, the Gambettist organ, curiously enough, on the same day, commented in almost similar language upon his great opponent. "The Note of the Sultan," remarks the 'République Française,' "has so exceeded all bounds, that it may be treated like the acts and words of those partially devoid of reason. . . . The Sultan's will is the sole obstacle in Constantinople. Wise and reflecting minds are not lacking who deplore, in an undertone, their sovereign's strange obstinacy." The same remark may even be said to apply to sage and reflecting minds in London in regard to their Prime Minister. "There are some," the French paper continues, "who ascribe it to a state of mental derangement, the signs of which are becoming more and more marked." Under these circumstances we have no difficulty in divining the Gladstonian remedy. "It is probable," says the 'Daily News,' alluding to the possibility of the Sultan's deposition, "that the solution of the question may, as we hinted some days ago, be found in this release of Turkey from the personal misgovernment under which she labours." The Turkish 'Vakit' and 'Terdjumni Hakikat,' writing under Imperial inspiration, have already suggested that this solution be applied to Mr Gladstone. Indeed, those who have had an opportunity of reading the articles of these papers cannot but be struck by the extraordinary similarity of the language which they employ with regard to Mr Gladstone, with that which the

English Radical organs apply to the Sultan. Thus, the press of all countries have come to understand that it is a duel of fanatics; and this it is which has created the extraordinary difficulty of the situation, and finally broken up the European concert. On the other hand, it has been due to these opposing forces that the concert was so long maintained. The Foreign Powers were afraid, by breaking it up before they had formed new combinations, of losing the control which it gave them over the actions of the British Premier, whose fanaticism is all the more dangerous because it is unconscious, and no man can predict to what lengths it may lead him. The Sultan, on the other hand, derives his strength from the consciousness of his own fanaticism—it is a part of his creed; and the only person who did not seem to know that it would give him a moral force which might culminate in a defiance of Europe was Mr Gladstone, who, if he had himself been a conscious fanatic, would have given the Sultan credit for a courage which has completely falsified his predictions. All this, however, did not simplify matters so far as Europe was concerned. The Powers found themselves dragged into the unknown by two proud and reckless spirits,—the one animated by the fanaticism of bigotry and despair, and the other of ambition and—earnestness,—and have not been slow to avail themselves of the opportunity afforded by the Sultan's defiance, to extricate themselves from so unpleasant a position. We have thus shown how a greater passive and conscious fanaticism may successfully resist an active but lesser and unconscious fanaticism, even when backed by the concerted moral force of Europe. So far, it has been a hand-to-hand

struggle between the champion of Christendom and the chief of Islam; and the conflict is by no means at an end. Having now alluded,—first, to the personal influences which operate upon the Sultan; secondly, to the religious sentiment under which he acts: we have still to notice the political considerations by which he is influenced,—first, in adopting that attitude of defiance and resistance which has amazed Europe in general, but Mr Gladstone in particular; and latterly, in yielding to Prince Bismarck. On the accession of the Liberal party to power, the Sultan found himself face to face with an entirely new combination of circumstances. He had been informed—unofficially, it is true—that, in the opinion of the Prime Minister of England “when he was in an irresponsible position,” it is in the interests of that country that the governing Turk should be ejected “bag and baggage” from Europe; and he had every reason to believe that his old ally was prepared to go to war in partnership with Russia to carry out this policy. When, in addition to this, he hears the Archduke Rudolph of Austria openly discussing the probability of Salonica being annexed to that empire,—when he knows that Bulgaria, Roumelia, and Macedonia are honey-combed with secret societies—that they have been supplied by Russia with officers, soldiers, and munitions of war; that Servia, Montenegro, and Greece are all collecting armies to invade his empire; and that the elements of a conflagration have been prepared, and the lighting the match is only a question of opportunity, and depends on the pleasure of Russia,—it is no longer a doubt in his mind as to what the intentions of Europe are with regard to Turkey. He perceives that the

process of its dismemberment is already begun in theory. The point he has to consider is how to make it the most difficult of achievement to the enemies, open and declared, by whom he is surrounded. He believes the enforcement of the Treaty of Berlin a mere pretext or blind to cover their hostile intentions. If they were in earnest to have it fulfilled, he naturally says, "Why do they not insist upon the fulfilment of those clauses which Russia, Bulgaria, and Roumelia ignore? Why do they force legality against me, but act with flagrant illegality towards me? Why seek to compel me to give provinces to Greece beyond the line suggested in the Berlin Protocol? and why seek to give the recommendation in a protocol the same binding effect as a clause in the Treaty?—and all this in defiance of a record in the 18th Protocol that, when Russia proposed at Berlin to give the Powers of Europe the right under the treaty 'to control and superintend the execution of it,' the proposal was rejected by a majority of votes." In the face of all this, it is not to be wondered at if the Sultan should look beyond the ostensible demands put forward by the Powers, and consider them merely as an insidious device to bring about the disruption they contemplate. "Why," he says, "should even the rectification of the Greek frontier satisfy my bag-and-baggage enemy, it will simply render my expulsion more easy: if I am to be kicked out of Europe, the sooner I resist the process the better: giving up portions of my empire piecemeal, under mere moral threats, may diminish it indefinitely, especially now that the aspirations of any petty neighbouring nationality are sufficient to justify the intervention of my European enemies. The sooner we

all throw off the masks under which we are diplomatizing the better." So he boldly cast it aside when he ordered Riza Pasha to resist the cession of Dulcigno, if need be by force—and thus paralysed the movements of the fleets, and kept them bottled up in an Austrian harbour. And we may be quite sure he will do the same again, should the Powers—which it is certain they will not—ever again attempt to resort to the tactics of Mr Gladstone. The Sultan has, no doubt, the assurances of Germany and France that there is no danger on this score, and having obtained from their ambassadors the promise that the principle of concerted pressure and naval demonstration shall be abandoned, he conditionally yields to the persuasion and consolatory assurances of Count Hatzfeld what he persistently denied to the threats of Mr Goschen.

But this, so far as Mr Gladstone and his policy are concerned, by no means clears the way for the future. It is scarcely possible to suppose that the Government, after all their preparations to coerce the Turk into ceding provinces to Greece, insisting upon reforms in Armenia, and forwarding Panslav aspirations, are to be contented with Count Hatzfeld's success, and abandon their whole policy of coercion. It is certain that the object of the naval demonstration was not to be limited to the partial fulfilment by the Sultan of a clause in the Treaty of Berlin, which he always announced his intention of fulfilling; and in view of the possible intentions of the Government for the future, it is as well to consider how their policy in the past has affected their relations towards the different European Powers. So far as Germany, Austria, and France are concerned, they may be considered to have

definitely separated themselves from the policy of Mr Gladstone, and formed a concert of their own. Indeed, the 'National Zeitung' leaves us in no doubt upon this point, but distinctly asserts "that Germany would protest against the action of Russia and England, if they proposed coercive measures against Turkey which amounted to a declaration of war. Prince Bismarck has caused this to be understood in London, and he has been supported in so doing by Austro-Hungary and France." In regard to Russia, perhaps the best indication which we have of the official political sentiments existing in that country is to be gathered from extracts from utterances of the press. These, considering their inspired nature, and the restrictions which exist preventing the dissemination of views which are not in accordance with official views, possess a significance which do not attach to journalistic opinions in any other country.

We have already shown that the European Powers are conscious that they have had all through this later phase of the Eastern difficulty to deal with two fanatics, who have now reached a stage when they produce upon each other the effect of a red flag upon a bull. While, however, Russia acts the part of a Spanish *picador* upon both, it has of late been the mission of Germany, France, and Austria, who foresee the dangerous consequences of their reckless defiance of each other's threats and promises, to endeavour to control or cajole the infuriated animals. It is manifestly in the interest of Russia to reopen the whole Eastern question indirectly through Montenegrin demands upon Europe, Panslavic agitation, and British impetuosity. Hence she counsels caution and suggests quibbles and dilatory pleas to

Prince Nikita, supplies the Prince of Bulgaria with volunteers and the munitions of war, and is profuse in her support of Mr Gladstone, while through her secret agents at the Palace she encourages the obstinacy of the Sultan. By these subtle and covert methods she hopes to hurry her traditional enemies to a catastrophe from which she alone can profit at their expense. Meanwhile the Russian press betrays its satisfaction at the dilemma in which England has been placed, and from which the only escape is to obey the behests of the Petersburg diplomats, with a cynicism which it takes no pains to disguise. Thus the 'Novoe Vremya' writes: "Of all the Powers, there remain but England and Russia who can act in harmony in regard to the Eastern question. But England herself does not know what to decide upon, and not having any direct and immediate interest in the Slavonic cause, must inevitably follow the suggestions of Russia, if only her desire to solve the Eastern question is genuine." Elsewhere we are informed from St Petersburg "that the Russian Government will agree to any steps proposed by the British Cabinet with the object of enforcing on the Porte the fulfilment of its obligations, provided that England takes the lead in such measures,"—which is not to be wondered at, considering that when the measures in which England does take the lead seem likely to result in humiliation and disgrace, they furnish our complaisant allies with grounds for unmitigated exultation: for what says the 'Novosti'?—"It is necessary to be able adroitly to profit by such a favourable complication of circumstances. Russia can at any given moment decide the fate of Turkey. Up to the present Russia has acted very

wisely, and has not in the least compromised herself. If the English press regards the failure of the naval demonstration as a shame for all Europe, it is not altogether correct. If anybody is stultified and made ridiculous it is England alone, by whose initiative was undertaken this unfortunate demonstration." And, again, "England has got herself into the same predicament Russia floundered into in 1877,—she must go forward—she cannot turn back. In front of her is war, at the back of her are the jeers and the sneers of Europe. Russia in 1877, enraged at the Porte's obstinacy, flung herself single-handed upon the Moslem foe. England in 1880 is more cautious; she wants now to drag Europe into the struggle with her. She seeks now, not to carry out the Treaty of Berlin, but the Treaty of San Stephano. Russia cannot wish more than this, but England must feel sorry she ever curtailed the San Stephano convention, since she it is who to-day thrusts it most effusively upon the Sultan."

"England," says the 'Golos,' "is quite prepared to take coercive measures alone and unaided, and in so far as she helped the Slavonic cause at the expense of Turkey, she would be playing Russia's game to the unbounded satisfaction of that Power."

This, then, is the extraordinary position into which Mr Gladstone has brought the country by his policy of moral coercion and alliance with Russia. Public opinion in that country is sneeringly telling England to carry out her Eastern policy for her, but at the same time warning her that she will keep an eye on her, lest she tries to get any advantage for herself out of her efforts; while Russian journals reserve to themselves the right of

openly laughing at the scrapes the Prime Minister is getting into in his attempts to undo the work of his predecessor, and carry out the policy of the Czar. The results of a Radical foreign policy so far has been to fill the foreign Cabinets with alarm and perplexity, to court insult and defiance from Turkey, and cover us with the ridicule and contempt of Russia. To the whole of Europe we present an inexplicable enigma. Hitherto, no matter what party has been in office, British foreign policy has always maintained a certain consistency and continuity: the policy of Lord Beaconsfield, so far as the East is concerned, was the policy of Lord Palmerston, and the most sagacious British statesmen of both parties have been agreed for more than a generation in their opinion as to the quarter from which Imperial interests were constantly menaced. It was so manifest that they were right in their appreciation, that the statesmen of every European Cabinet apprehended the grounds upon which the foreign policy was based, and in their diplomatic relations could rely upon England as a factor in European politics in a certain well-understood sense. Hence we could, in a given contingency, be counted upon as an ally; and European statesmen, in making their political forecasts, could depend with more or less certainty upon the position which England would take. Now all that is changed. We have become an unknown quantity, and there can be no doubt that an irreparable injury has been inflicted upon the *prestige* and moral standing of the country abroad, by this sudden abandonment of ancient landmarks, forsaking of traditional allies, and alliance with traditional enemies. But the effect of this uncalled-for

inconsistency extends far beyond the confines of Europe. All through Asia, where our most important interests are at stake, aversion has been substituted for popularity, and disappointment for expectancy. In no country is this more markedly the case than in the Asiatic provinces of Turkey. Here, where our *prestige* contrasted most strongly with that of Russia,—for it was founded on esteem, while hers was based on fear,—we are losing all the confidence and sympathy with which we have hitherto been regarded. It has never been sufficiently understood in England that there are really three great factors in Turkey. These are the Government, the Christian population, and the Moslem population. The error which has been made hitherto, both by Conservative and Liberal administrations, was in dealing with the first and second, to the exclusion of the third. This has been more especially the case since the last war, when the late Government endeavoured to carry out its Eastern policy by relying on the Government; while the present one follows the far more pernicious course of relying on the Christian population. The real power in Turkey lies in the Moslem population. If they have not exercised it, it has been because they have been withheld by a sentiment of religious allegiance to the Sultan. But it is a mistake to suppose that the venality and oppression of the ring of corrupt pashas at Constantinople is not as much execrated throughout the empire by the Moslems as by the Christians. It is a mistake to suppose that the rule of the Palace is not regarded with equal abhorrence by all classes, races, and religions in Turkey. It was hopeless for a Conservative Government to extract from the Palace, by per-

suasion, reforms which a Radical Government have vainly endeavoured to extort by threats, without invoking the aid of Moslem feeling, and appealing to Moslem interests; and nothing was easier than to do this. The administrative acts of the Constantinople executive have reduced the population to despair. The demonetisation of the metallic currency and other disastrous financial measures, the unjust imposition of taxes and extortion of tax-gatherers, and the corruption of the local officials throughout the provinces, would long since have driven any less devout and enduring population to revolt. They looked to England to secure them institutions at Constantinople and introduce reforms there—which might have been done by means of financial pressure—which should hold out some prospect of relief. The true moral pressure to exercise upon the Sultan is that of ironclads demonstrating, not in favour of Montenegro, but of his own population. If a fleet had appeared at the mouth of the Dardanelles whose mission it was to establish a financial commission at Constantinople, which should offer some hope to the army and navy of being paid the arrears which were due to them, and of compelling the calling together of popular Chambers at the capital, the Turkish fleet would have been far more likely to man yards, and the forts to present arms, than to fire upon us; while by the population at large, whether Moslem or Christian, we should have been hailed as deliverers. There has been no greater mistake made, and it dates back to the Hatti Humayoun of the Crimean peace, than this discriminating legislation in favour of Christians alone. We have never thought of investigating into the grievances suffered by the Moslem

population. Had we taken those into consideration at the time we exclusively occupied ourselves with Christian sufferings, we should have earned a gratitude which they were only willing and anxious to offer us. The remedy of Moslem grievances need not have prevented our dealing with those which pressed exclusively on their Christian fellow-subjects; but it was a fatal error to ignore them. Still more fatal is it now to treat the Moslems as though, because they profess the same religion, a solidarity of crime and responsibility was established between them and their rulers. It is, alas! too late to turn back from the disastrous path of exclusive sympathy upon which we have entered, and which has forced the Moslem population into a position of greater antagonism to their Christian fellow-subjects, and of greater sympathy with their corrupt rulers, while it has altogether disenchanted them of any hope of relief from the one European Power upon whom they depended, and who is certain in the not distant future to have most need of their confidence and affection. Not only has this most unfortunate impression of an indifference amounting to antipathy been produced throughout the Moslem population of Turkey and Asia, but it has spread throughout Islam, and found a strong expression and taken a deep hold upon our own Moslem population in India. Though not as yet outwardly manifested, there can be no doubt that the recent attitude of the British Government towards the Sultan and his Moslem subjects has produced a profound feeling of dissatisfaction throughout India, which must increase if moral pressure on Turkey is exchanged for physical action in alliance with Russia. Whether the country is prepared to support the Government

in a policy fraught with such fatal consequences to its position in Europe and its material interests in Asia remains to be seen; but that they cannot retreat from a course which must inevitably involve them in an attitude of active hostility to Turkey, without incurring the disgrace of utter failure so far as their foreign policy is concerned, is no longer open to doubt.

It is not hazardous to predict that the relief which they have derived from the Sultan's last *Irade* will be very short-lived. Whether Dulcigno be peaceably ceded or not, there are other points connected with Montenegro to which the Ministry are pledged, and which assuredly Russia will not allow to be forgotten. There is the frontier to the east of the Lake of Scutari, including the positions of Dinosh and Tusi, to which the Montenegrins have quite as good a claim as they have to Dulcigno, which awaits cession by the Porte. If the Montenegrins are to be put off with the village and district of Dulcigno, which comprises a few square miles of the neighbourhood, they will obtain nothing like an equivalent to what they gave up in Plava and Gusinje, awarded to them by the Berlin Treaty, or the Kuchi-Krajna district conceded to them under the Corti Compromise; and it is not likely that Russia, whose interest it is to keep the question until the Greek and Panslavic movements are ripe, will allow "the most heroic race" to be deprived of its treaty rights, without exciting the moral indignation of Mr Gladstone on their behalf. In fact, after all that he has promised, and after the lengths to which he has committed the country, to retreat without making another Dulcigno question out of Dinosh and Tusi would be a gross betrayal of the Mon-

tenegrins. Until the naval demonstration took place, be it remembered, the Sultan's attitude in regard to this part of the frontier was far less stiff than it has become since. Then what are we to say to the claims of Greece? And here, again, it is worthy of remark that last year, when the Greek Commissioners met the Turkish Commissioners on the Bosphorus with a view to the settlement of this question, the Turkish Government actually consented to a more favourable frontier than the Sultan did in his Ultimatum to Europe the other day. There have been no fewer than eleven different lines proposed from first to last in the course of these protracted negotiations, and the Porte has proceeded very much on the principle of the sibylline books, and offered a worse one every time. So much for the influence of the naval demonstration, so far as this question is concerned. There can be little doubt that, practically, the Greeks are farther off getting the coveted territory under the Philhellenic auspices of Mr Gladstone and Sir Charles Dilke, without risking a disastrous war, than they were under the administration of Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury; for there can be nothing more certain than that Europe will decline to press for it "concertedly." And Mr Gladstone must now admit that his concerted coercive policy, as applicable to Greece, is "absolute nonsense" to its fullest extent. Indeed, if we are to believe a late telegram from Constantinople, it would seem possible that coercion may be applied just the other way, for the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs is reported to have informed the German Ambassador that he is in possession of proofs "that England has required Greece, as soon as the

Dulcigno business is settled, at once to march forward and take possession of the districts ceded by the Conference. In this step England promised Greece material support." And certainly the warlike speech of the King of Greece the other day will go far to confirm this impression, and is not calculated to facilitate the negotiations now going on in the neighbourhood of Cattaro. Indeed, under these circumstances it is not impossible that Turkey may still make the cession of Dulcigno conditional, on a promise being given by Germany and Austria to protect her against the aggressive designs of England in regard to Greece; and, considering the announcement contained in the 'National Zeitung' which we have already quoted, it is not improbable that some such guarantee would be given. It will be a curious result of the concert of Powers, and the naval demonstration, if they are converted into a weapon against the policy by which they were forged, and if Mr Gladstone should turn out to be the real obstacle to the cession of Dulcigno, and should finally be compelled either to abandon all further pressure upon Turkey in regard to the Greek frontier, or to ask the country which has elected him as the great conservator of European peace, to undertake a crusade in favour of Greece against the allied powers of Turkey, Germany, and Austria. The coercion policy has caused Greece and England to hang by the same rope; and the outlook, so far as the territorial aspirations of the one nation, and the honour and dignity of the other are concerned, is gloomy in the extreme. As for poor Armenia, the prospect of reform there is absolutely *nil*, for the very good reason that the reform of that country by Tur-

key would render its annexation by Russia unnecessary: and as Russia has determined to annex it, she devises methods which are not difficult both at Constantinople and in Armenia itself to render reform impossible. It is the old story of Bulgaria over again, and will probably terminate in the usual climax of atrocities. Convenient Kurds may too easily be employed for this purpose to be neglected as instruments. The same principle applies to the whole of Turkey. England is now working in alliance with the Power who seeks the dissolution of the empire by fostering and stimulating its internal corruption, and inciting its disaffected populations to civil war. There is every reason to believe that we shall succeed in this humane and laudable enterprise, and that the policy of the Government will launch the Turkish empire into a series of horrors compared with which the atrocities of Batak will appear mild offences. With the

whole Christian population of Turkey in revolt,—which it is certain to be before many months, or possibly weeks, expire,—we may look for a *Jehad* or religious war as a necessary consequence, when every Moslem will turn upon the nearest Ghiaour. That this will spread into Asia is highly probable. That Turkey, in its death agonies, will involve first Russia and Austria, and then other European Powers, seems no less inevitable. All this is the necessary consequence of a policy of humanity and morality based upon ignorant prejudice and unreasoning fanaticism. And when it is too late, the masses which listened to those wild declamations of inapplicable moral platitudes, will awake to the consciousness that they have been grievously gulled and misled, and that the passions evoked by the fierceness of political animosities at home have led to a European catastrophe, from the disastrous consequences of which their own country cannot hope to escape.

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THE PRIVATE SECRETARY.—PART II.

CHAPTER IV.

THREE or four more days passed by, Clifford leading the monotonous life which was habitual to him, although finding his self-imposed labours growing daily lighter as his secretary became more expert. But during this time he did not see her again. Although eager to know more of her, shyness and indolence combined to prevent his breaking through what had become a habit of life. And the longer he kept aloof, the more difficult he found it to make an effort to alter the formal relations which had arisen between them.

One day, however, a visitor called at the Mansions and stayed some time. After he had gone, Clifford entered Miss Reid's room with a roll of paper in his hand. "What does H. Reid think of this?" he said, unfolding it, and spreading it on the table. An architectural design was drawn upon it.

"It looks very pretty," she observed; "but I am afraid I don't understand much about such things."

"Yes, it is pretty enough, but is

it suitable? You see what it is for? It is the village lodging-house about which there has been all this correspondence. What do you think of the arrangements? It is for the single working men in my part of the world, who are obliged at present to lodge in the married people's cottages, where there is no decent accommodation for them. I want you, please, to go through the plan carefully and say what you think of it."

"Would not an architect be the best person to consult on such a matter?"

"Architects are very good fellows in their way, but they never understand their own business. This plan as now drawn, is the final outcome of the architect's wisdom. I want you to pick holes in it by the light of your own common-sense, which I will back against that of most people, whether architects or otherwise."

"I am afraid you overrate my powers, Mr Clifford; but I will try."

"That is right. I shall often want you to help me in matters of

this sort; for, as you may have discovered, a good deal of my business is mixed up with architects and builders."

"And a good deal with lawyers. I hope, sir, you don't expect me to know anything about law?"

"No; you are only a woman after all, although you are so clever. No, I am afraid we can't get behind the lawyers; we are all of us at their mercy, and must allow them to blunder over our affairs as much as they please. My lawyers are not a bad sort of fellows, I believe, as the race goes; slow but steady, and not inordinately expensive. Well, you will look over these plans at your leisure, and compare them with my instructions. But now, what say you to this?" and he handed her a letter.

"It is an application for money," said Miss Reid, after she had read it.

"I get a good many of these."

"You do indeed, sir. Half your correspondence seems to take this form."

"Yes; they say the tramps always mark the gate-posts of the houses where they get anything given them, as a guide to let those who come after know where to find something to eat. I think the begging-letter-writers must have the same sort of freemasonry. A cynical friend of mine hardly ever gets an application of this sort; they find me out by every post. I suppose I am too easy and liable to be imposed upon." Then, as it struck him that his listener might take the remark to be meant to apply to herself, he hastened to add,—“But is this application a genuine one, do you think?”

Miss Reid read the letter and its enclosures over again before saying, “I certainly think it would be well to make further inquiry into the case before giving anything.”

“That is just what I propose myself. The question is, what is the best way of setting about it?”

“Why not go and see the people yourself?”

Clifford looked puzzled for a minute; then he replied, “This is just what I can't bring myself to do in cases of this sort. I suppose if I were a duke or a millionaire, it would be quite proper to transact business entirely by deputy. Being only a private gentleman of moderate means, it is perhaps foolish to do so; but indolence gets the better of me, and I have fallen into the habit; and not always having proper agents at hand, I am obliged sometimes to trust to impulse.”

“I am afraid so.” Miss Reid blushed a little as she said this, for her own appointment had been made in this way, which Clifford noticing, hastened to add,—“But impulse is often a very good guide, you see. But pray sit down,” for Miss Reid had been standing all this time by the table at which he was sitting. “You see, I had, like everybody else, to settle on a plan of life. I had been brought up to no profession, nor was there need to follow one. What was I to do? I had been doing nothing so long that I was eager for work of some kind. I was too old for the army; I was tired of the country.”

“Then you don't hunt?” interrupted his listener.

“No; I daresay I might have aspired to become in time a master of fox-hounds, which is the highest aim of ambition in my part of the world, for I come from a hunting country. But I have had but little experience in riding, and didn't like to make a beginning; so I have never hunted. Have you? You look very animated about it.”

“Never,” she replied. “But I used to be very fond of riding,—

but that was a great many years ago," she added more quietly, relapsing into her former respectful manner.

"A great many, I should think," he rejoined; "soon after you were born, I suppose," which little effort of humour drew out the first real smile he had seen on her grave and thoughtful face. "Well, as I say, I had to do something; so after more or less waste of time, it came about that, not having a regular profession, I thought I would try and do some good to my fellow-creatures. And so, in point of fact, I have gone in, as you must have found out already, for philanthropy—on a small scale."

"It is the noblest profession of all," exclaimed the young lady, with enthusiasm.

A shade of suspicion passed across Clifford's mind lest she should be trying to play on his vanity, and he continued: "Nay, but there is less nobility about it than might be supposed. My wants are simple, and it would be a positive trouble to spend my income in keeping up a large establishment. For sport, as I say, I have no taste; I have no need to save. What was to be done? Lolling about picture-galleries would not satisfy my conscience; and although fond of reading, one cannot read all day. A certain amount of business in the morning is an agreeable diversion. It is really, in fact, a sort of dissipation, to give one an appetite for idleness in the afternoon."

"Like a glass of bitters before dinner." Miss Reid looked quite serious. He could not tell whether the illustration was suggested in fun or earnest. He went on—

"But I am telling you only half the story, and making too much of myself. Really, my work has very little of the meritorious in it, for I shirk all the most troublesome portion.

I can't bring myself to do the personal part—I mean the going about to see all the people; the misery, and dirt, and squalor are too much for me. I am lessee of a court not very far from this. I believe the unfortunate inmates are much better off for their change of landlord, but I am ashamed to say I have never got to the point of seeing the improvement myself. I have started a little cottage hospital at the seaside for convalescents, which also I have still to visit."

"There, at any rate, you would find no squalor or dirt to annoy you."

"True, but something almost as bad,—gratitude. No, I don't mean that," he added eagerly, noticing a change in her face. "I am not a bit of a cynic, and I don't pretend to be one; I want to be liked." Here he glanced up at her face, which, however, showed no change. "But there would be a perpetual bobbing of curtsseys and scraping of forelocks, and then all the fuss got up by the people of the place. Once when I was intending to go down to see the hospital,—it is a mere cottage, you must know, although called by a big name,—the thing got wind, and the local newspaper proposed a demonstration in honour of 'the munificent benefactor,' with more of that sort of rubbish. Munificent benefactor! Why, when I think of the poverty there is in London, and how the cost of my club dinner to-day would keep a whole family for a week, I sometimes ask myself, what right have I to be living in even such comfort as I allow myself? Sometimes I am quite oppressed with a sense of my own selfishness."

"A great deal of the poverty in the world is the result of want of thrift. No amount of charity will make that good."

"True; but how much is unavoidable? I grant you that if no

working man or poor bank-clerk were ever to marry till he had provided an ample insurance in case of his early death, there might be no penniless widows and orphans; although, even then, what machinery are we to provide for these poor creatures always making safe investments of their little savings? But I am thinking of the unimproved world as it is. And the only practical plan for not making myself unhappy about its hopeless condition, is not to think about it, or at any rate not to keep my eyes open, but just to act by rule,—to put aside so much for the purpose, and to lay this out to the best advantage. That is just where my practice comes short of my principles. I am too indolent, and too——” he was going to add, “too shy,” but stopped himself—“and too idle to take the proper trouble to ascertain that the outlay satisfies this condition.”

“And so, no doubt, you are often imposed on?”

“No doubt. Still, on the whole, I hope I do good. At any rate, in a crude sort of way I satisfy my conscience, which is not exposed to the daily shock the person must encounter who goes about the parish preaching resignation to the starving poor, and then comes home to his comfortable dinner. Excuse my having talked so much about myself; but you would have found all this out sooner or later for yourself; and as I want your help, it is just as well you should know all about the business at once.”

As he spoke, he felt that his secretary, by her silence and respectful yet self-possessed manner, had been drawing him out, and led him to say a good deal more than he intended. All the confidence, so far, had been on his side, and to-day more than ever. He stopped here in his revelations, and continued—

“But now to come to this particular case. What should you say is the best way of verifying the man’s statements, short of personal investigation? It seems a deserving case, if it be true.”

“If you do not wish to go yourself, sir, would you like me to go and see him for you?”

“You? Do you know what sort of a place this is? I can tell from the address that it is one of the worst parts of London.”

“I am not afraid of going about London; I have had to go about a good deal in different parts of it, and it is not always from the lowest classes that one has most to fear.”

She spoke with a little heat and scorn, which impressed Clifford more afterwards than at the time. Just now he was full of the idea of utilising her services, and said—

“It is more a question of trouble than danger, I suppose. If you will undertake the job, I should be really obliged. Would you like Simmonds to go with you? But no, not Simmonds; if she once gets into the business, I shall never have any peace,—we should be perpetually invaded here by applicants for relief. But I could arrange to send somebody with you, if you wish it.”

“Thank you; but I am quite accustomed to go about London alone. I will start in five minutes, if the letters can stand over.”

“Have you been long in London, that you know it so well?”

“I have had to go a good deal about London; we used to live here,” she said, with some hesitation. “We are living at a little distance from town now.”

“Come, Miss Reid,—I have told you a lot about myself; don’t you think it is time to exchange confidences?”

Clifford spoke playfully, but Miss

Reid coloured, and, with some confusion, replied,—“I mentioned, the first day, that I was living with my father. I said I could give you references, if you wished.”

Clifford now felt ashamed of himself for having put the question, and hastened to apologise for what he termed his rudeness. Yet after she had gone on her errand, he could not but be sensible that he had done nothing unreasonable in seeking to know something more about the antecedents of a person in his confidential employment. “She must think me a thorough noodle for being so soft in the matter. I can feel that she sees me through and through, and I suppose I am an absurd mixture of carelessness and caution.” Clifford, although an egotist, knew himself. Yet in her presence any suspicions lest he should be giving his confidence rashly, at once passed away; and after this first mission, Miss Reid ceased to be merely a secretary, and began to be more and more employed as his agent and almoner. In fact, to interpolate such an agent, shrewd, active, and disinterested, between himself and the objects of his bounty, exactly suited his shy and indolent yet impulsive disposition. Miss Reid had plenty of time for the work, for she had soon found that in the capacity of private secretary there was really but little employment. The amount of correspondence which Clifford had found so embarrassing when he transacted it himself, stopping while he wrote to give his doubts and fancies play, and so often letting the day run by before he had cleared his table, was made light of, after the first few days, by his methodical assistant. Coming at ten, she would finish her day’s writing before luncheon, and then Clifford would discuss with her some of his various schemes for

doing good by stealth. Miss Reid was at first very diffident about giving advice; but when she did offer it, Clifford was generally made a convert to the good sense on which her opinions were based. And sometimes the whole afternoon would pass in this way; for there was no longer any hesitation on his part about going into the office, as Miss Reid’s room was now styled. On other days his commissions took up a good deal of her time.

It was on one afternoon that Miss Reid, returning from an expedition of this kind, after reporting proceedings, observed, in reply to his thanks—

“I am only too glad to find something of this sort to do. Do you know, sir, I was beginning to feel that I should hardly be justified in remaining here any longer.”

“Why, good heavens!” said Clifford, with excitement, “what has happened? Has there been anything unpleasant, any want of consideration?”

“Oh no, sir—there has been almost too much consideration, although there cannot be too much gratitude for it; but really, after what you said about the hard work in store for me, it seems quite absurd to be taking so much and doing so little.”

The deferential way in which she spoke, and the expressions of gratitude, were distasteful to Clifford, recalling the earlier days of their acquaintance, before their relations with each other had become established on their present footing, and when his manner at any rate had been forced and artificial. Of late there had been nothing of this sort. More than once, indeed, Clifford had been tempted by a natural impulse to adopt a tone of gallantry, natural towards a pretty woman, though somewhat awkwardly expressed; but any ad-

vances in that line had been promptly repelled. So long as he acted the master, his secretary was at once unreserved yet respectful; but she resented any approach to treating her on a footing of equality, still less as a lady suitable to be the recipient of attention: her abasement under such overtures repelled him more distinctly than even an appearance of indignation would have done. "You would not exhibit this gallantry to one of your servants," her manner seemed to say; "why do so towards me, who am, after all, only a servant?" Thus Clifford had come into the way of treating her as she wanted to be treated—as a very competent, and intelligent, and trustworthy clerk, but still only a clerk, and nothing more, without the idea of sex intervening.

"Your speaking of taking so much reminds me," he said, "that you have taken nothing yet, and that it is now past quarter-day; but I had not forgotten my debt," and taking out his pocket-book, he handed a cheque to her which he had already prepared.

The young lady thanked him, but looking at the paper, appeared surprised.

"It is for a broken period," said he, by way of explanation; "you did not come here till nearly half-quarter-day."

"Quite so; but is there not some mistake in the amount? I understood that the engagement was at the rate of two hundred——"

"Yes, but that was as private secretary for clerical work; I didn't mean that you should go tramping about London in addition for nothing. I quite intended to propose that the salary should be raised to three hundred when I first asked you to undertake this extra work."

"You can hardly call it extra work," she objected. "It is not

precisely of the kind for which the engagement was made, but the hours of employment are not longer than were mentioned at first. I think it would be better, if you please, to keep to the original terms."

"I fixed the original terms for myself, and not acting as agent for any one else; it is surely open to me who made them to modify them."

Still Miss Reid looked uneasy, and he fancied he could detect a disinclination to accept anything more than what she supposed to be the proper value of her services, or which would imply a gift or payment on other than business grounds. Clifford felt disposed to add that he got her companionship, making a change in his life of which every day made him more sensible, very cheap at the higher rate of salary, even if she gave no services into the bargain; but he knew instinctively that such a remark would be distasteful, so he said, instead, under a happy inspiration, "If it is more work you want, you shall have no room for complaint on that score. I have plenty in reserve. Here is a job, for example—but come into my room and I will show it you."

Miss Reid followed him into the study, which she had never entered before; while Clifford, unlocking a cabinet, took out a large bundle of manuscript. "See," he said, "this is the rough catalogue of the library of what was my—my uncle's house down in Northamptonshire. I made it when living there with him, and have always intended to classify the books properly when the leisure time should come, which, somehow, has never arrived. But if you will try your hand at it, I shall be very glad, for the collection is a good one, although all in confusion now. Sit down there," he continued, pointing to an easy-chair by the fireplace, while he set the

example by taking the one opposite to it. "But you must want some tea after your walk. I should like a cup too, although I have not earned it. Still I don't eat luncheons." And when Jane answered the bell, he ordered that refreshment to be brought.

"The library must be a large one," said Miss Reid, as she turned over the pages of the catalogue. "Did the list take you long to prepare?"

"From first to last it must have occupied a couple of years. I did it whenever I had spare time, which was not often, for my poor uncle"—Clifford paused a little at the word—"kept me very much in attendance on him. He was a kind-hearted man," he continued, in a lower voice, "but fidgety and exacting. He was a great invalid, and almost entirely confined to the house during the latter part of his life. And the life I led explains the habits which, I daresay, you think so contemptible in me."

Clifford said this, hoping his auditor would contradict him, but she remained silent, and he went on—

"The result of this secluded life was, that when my uncle died and left me his heir, I found myself friendless. My only relations are in America. My uncle quarrelled with all the neighbours, because he would not preserve the foxes. I believe he even ordered them to be trapped. Besides, we really had no permanent neighbours. Most of the houses round are only occupied in the winter months for the hunting; and the winter we used to spend at Torquay."

"But you had your school and college friends?"

"I never was at school—at least not at a public school. I was sent abroad when a boy to Germany, to learn the language, and lived in a

family where they all spoke English; and then, just when it was time to go to Oxford, my uncle sent for me to stay with him; and although he spoke of it as being merely a temporary arrangement, I could never get him to come to the point of letting me go away again. So I drifted on till his death. Most people will say that he made ample amends in leaving me his property—under conditions," added the young man in a musing tone; "but I often think I should have done much better if he had given me a couple of hundreds a-year, and allowed me to start in life like other young men. But here comes the tea—perhaps you will pour it out;" and as Miss Reid stood up to perform that office, and then handing him his cup, took her own and sat down again to assume her attitude of an attentive listener, the grace and dignity of her movements, the very rustle of her dress, gave him a sense of pleasure such as he had never experienced before. It seemed as if by her presence a subtle aroma of something indefinitely sweet now pervaded his lonely chambers. "How I have wasted the weeks," he thought, "living apart while we might have been together! And I said at first that she was not pretty! I see what it is. It is the mobile expression of her features which makes their charm; the face lights up with every thought, and it has lost the careworn look it used to have."

"Still," observed the young lady, breaking the silence, "you have managed to choose an occupation which might satisfy the highest aspirations. What profession can be nobler than to employ time and fortune in doing good?"

"Now she is wanting to flatter me," thought Clifford, a shadow of suspicion passing across his mind; and then replied, "It was practically the only occupation open to me."

Most ways of spending money were denied me. And somehow it leaves a craving unsatisfied."

"There are politics. Why not take them up too?"

"But think of the fuss and trouble that has to be gone through in order to get into Parliament—and the worse than trouble, the dirt that has to be eaten, the pledges, and, worse still, the speeches. And then the dreary life men lead when they get there,—the long hours wasted in profitless talk; the unutterable dismalness of modern debates! And the speakers have not even the satisfaction nowadays of thinking that people will read their speeches. But why talk of speeches? I should never have had the courage to open my mouth. I once took the chair at the meeting of a benevolent society, and I think nothing would ever induce me to go through such an ordeal again."

Thus they talked on, or rather Clifford talked, while his secretary listened, occasionally throwing in a remark or asking a question to keep the conversation going, when the maid brought in a letter. Clifford started as he recognised the handwriting, and held the letter for a time in his hand, looking at the address as if stupefied by what he saw. His companion, silently watching him, could not but see that he was greatly moved.

Presently he recovered his composure so far as to find words. "Who has brought the note, Jane?" he asked, still holding the letter unopened.

"A man-servant, sir, if you please; he is waiting for an answer."

"A servant with a note from my aunt," thought Clifford; "then she must be actually in England!"

This fact was announced in the note, which he now read. It was dated from Charles Street. "We arrived at Liverpool only yesterday

from New York, my dear Robert, and came on to town at once, straight to this house, which has been engaged for us for the season. We have taken over servants and everything, and find it quite elegant and handsome. Of course we are very tired after the journey, but I could not lose an instant in letting you know we were here; and Blanche and I hope that if you do not mind our being still at sixes and sevens, and are not *too much engrossed in your literary pursuits*, you will come and dine with us quietly this evening. Pot-luck, as your uncle would call it. I was almost forgetting to say your uncle could not come with us—immersed in business as usual—but he has promised to follow by-and-by. I must not add more, having so much to do. So with my own and Blanche's love, and her hopes *that you have not quite forgotten her*, and hoping to see you this evening at eight, believe me, my dear Robert, in much haste, your affectionate aunt, MARIA SCALLAN.

"P.S.—You will find your cousin a great deal altered; she is quite the woman now, of course. Whether for better or worse, you shall judge for yourself."

"I wonder did Blanche really send this message," he thought, as, still holding the note in his hand, his mind hurriedly took in the consequences involved in her return. A great change in his life was now impending; at any rate he was now to be suddenly called on to make an all-important decision, in which his cousin's fate as well as his own was involved, and which, although always more or less on his mind, had been but dimly kept in view during her long absence. Then he became aware of his secretary's presence, which this sudden announcement had made him for the

moment forget, and he became sensible also of a very distinct sensation of regret that the mode of life which he had begun to find so pleasant would now be liable to interruption. Then feeling instinctively the impulse to conceal her engagement from his aunt, he hurried out of the room to find the messenger, a footman in livery, standing in the hall. In answer to his inquiries, the man told him, what he had already learnt from the note, that the ladies who had come to take the house had arrived the previous evening. He evidently knew nothing about them or their relationship to Clifford; and the latter, after ascertaining so much, went into Miss Reid's empty room, and wrote a hasty reply, keeping the door open the while, and the man standing outside in the passage, and taking care to see that he left the house without holding further communication with Simmonds or Jane. Then he returned to his own room. Miss Reid was still sitting in the easy-chair by the fire; and the room, thus occupied, seemed to have a charm it had never before possessed. Somehow his companion had become suddenly invested with a new interest; and the feeling that he was no longer to be master of his own plans and ways of life, and that this connection must come to an end just when it was becoming so sweet and pleasant, struck him as a rude and unwelcome shock. Miss Reid, for her part, seeing that he was still preoccupied by what had passed, and feeling perhaps a desire to escape from her new position as a visitor in his room, took her departure at once.

Clifford sat pondering over the situation. The arrival of his relations was an event as unexpected as it was important to him; yet he found himself thinking still

more often about his private secretary, and considering how to keep his aunt in ignorance of the engagement, which he felt would be a necessary condition of maintaining it. Clearly Simmonds must be taken into confidence; and indeed the fact that his aunt and cousin had come to England could not with propriety be withheld from her. Simmonds had been in the service of his uncle, and knew the family history. Accordingly, after dressing for dinner, he rang the bell for her.

"Simmonds," he said, while she helped him to put on his overcoat, "my aunt and Miss Scallan have come to England. They arrived in town last night quite unexpectedly. I heard of it only this afternoon."

"La, sir, you don't say so! Well, it's not to be wondered at, I'm sure. I've been expecting to hear of their coming any time this last twelvemonth. The wonder is they have not come sooner, I think, and so much depending on it."

"They have taken a house in Charles Street for the season; I am going to dine there this evening."

"You will make my duty to Mrs Scallan, if you please, sir," continued the housekeeper; but she conveyed this message in a tone which was the reverse of dutiful. "And Mr Scallan," she continued, "has he come over too along with the ladies?"

"No, my uncle is to follow, some time soon."

"I suppose it will be soon, sir; there is not much time left before matters are settled between you and Miss Blanche. Why, it won't be many months before you become six-and-twenty, will it, sir? How the time flies, to be sure!"

"It goes quickly, indeed," observed Clifford. He moved towards the hall-door; and then, turning

round, said, with an appearance of unconcern—

“By the way, Simmonds, I do not propose to mention Miss Reid’s engagement to my aunt—that is, not for the present. Of course I should not mind its being known by her or anybody else, and I mean to tell my aunt by-and-by. But she may have prejudices about the occupation of women, about lady doctors and lady clerks, and that sort of thing, and might think it odd, don’t you see?”

“Yes, sir, perhaps she might,” said Simmonds, simply.

“Well, you will understand that I should wish the matter to reach my aunt first through myself. I should not like her to hear of it in any other way; it would look as if I were making a mystery of it.”

“Yes, sir, it would, no doubt,” again observed the matron.

“Which, of course, is not the least my intention,” he continued, a little confused. “What I would wish, therefore, is, that if any of my aunt’s people come here, you should arrange to see them yourself, and that there should be no gossiping between them and Jane.” And as Clifford got into his cab, he reflected with satisfaction that Jane had entered his service so long after his aunt went abroad, that she could know but little about the family, while the servants of the establishment in Charles Street were strange to both parties. If Simmonds could keep the latter at bay, whenever they came to the Alexandra Mansions, his secret would be safe, at any rate for a time. He thought he could count

on Simmonds; and indeed, between that worthy woman and Mrs Scallan there was no love lost. Battle had been joined between them in former years over the household affairs of the late Mr Clifford, which, although the housekeeper had been victorious, had left behind a flavour of ill-will. Moreover, any objections Simmonds might have felt to Miss Reid’s engagement in the first instance had been entirely disarmed by Clifford’s business-like way of conducting it,—the separate rooms, the communication by despatch-boxes, Miss Reid’s solitary luncheons, and all the rest of the arrangements in keeping. And although these had now undergone a change, this had come about almost insensibly; and in the absence of anything savouring of romance in the relations between employer and employed, the housekeeper hardly took more notice of Miss Reid’s coming and going than if she had been a man clerk; and although it had never happened before, it seemed quite a natural thing that the two should be taking tea together in Clifford’s own room. Miss Reid, for her part, had conducted herself so discreetly, being both civil and almost grateful for the attentions received from the housekeeper, while yet never encouraging any approach to familiarity, that if Simmonds did not actually like her, which could hardly be expected under the circumstances, she at least did not dislike her; and foreseeing a war in the future between Mrs Scallan and the private secretary, her sympathy was bestowed in anticipation on the side of the latter.

CHAPTER V.

Clifford drove up to his aunt’s house in a condition of mental excitement and nervousness suffi-

ciently justified by the situation. It was so long since he had had any communication with the family

that he had almost ceased to realise how intimately their interests were mixed up with his own. Their unexpected return came to remind him suddenly that the problem of his future must soon undergo solution one way or the other, and that the question had not the less inevitably to be faced because he had put it aside during their absence. Yet even now he did not know how far the final settlement of the great issue rested with himself. Did their coming intimate that he was to be set free from the tie which now bound him, or did it mean that the connection between them was now to be drawn closer? Surely the latter. At any rate, it portended that his course in life must now take a new departure; and therefore it was with feelings wrought up to a high state of tension, while also sensible of considerable embarrassment of manner, that he entered the house and made his way up-stairs to the drawing-room.

Mrs Scallan was alone in the room, and the effusive warmth with which she received him at once indicated—as indeed her note of the morning had done already—that reconciliation was intended, and that the condition of estrangement which had been maintained since they parted, five years before, and which had been intensified still later on his uncle's death, was now to be replaced by one of intimacy and affection. Clifford had always been disposed to think kindly of his aunt, and to ascribe her coldness towards him to her husband, knowing how completely she was subject to his influence. And now, whether acting under instructions or spontaneously, the lady received him with every appearance of cordiality, presenting a plump cheek to be kissed, and declared that he was immensely

improved in looks. "Yes, it is quite a sudden thing, our coming over," she said, in reply to his inquiries; "but you know Scallan—your uncle, I mean, and what a one he is for doing a thing all at once. He took it into his head that Blanche must be presented this season, and there was only one drawing-room more; so nothing would satisfy him but to break up our establishment in Fifth Avenue and that we should start straight away. So here we are, back in Old England. Scallan took this place by telegram—you know what a one he is for telegraphing—house furnished, use of plate, and servants and all; everything as it stands, and paid half the hiring in advance; and so here we are. Yes, it is all very handsome, isn't it? But you should have seen our house in Fifth Avenue. London looks so dingy after New York; but of course it's more fashionable, and then, in the States, you always feel that there is no aristocracy, and I always think it is such a want. Blanche is quite well, thank you; she will be down directly. She's got no maid yet, so takes a little long to dress. She will be delighted to see you, and I am sure you will be charmed with her. But you will hardly know her, she has filled out so. She was quite the belle of New York, I can assure you, although those American girls are so pretty. But she has not lost her heart yet, and she hasn't forgotten her cousin."

A certain tone of uneasiness in Mrs Scallan's rapid utterances betrayed her apprehension that this explanation of their coming to England would not be accepted by her nephew as the real one; and indeed it was impossible for him to be in doubt any longer as to the object of their sudden appearance. The silence which his relatives in

America had observed since his uncle's death might be taken to signify resentment at, or indifference to, the conditions under which his uncle had left his whole property to Clifford, to the exclusion of his own sister; and as the time approached when those conditions would take effect, and the silence was still maintained, it had fallen in with Clifford's somewhat dreamy and indolent character to assume that his relatives intended to hold him absolved from their fulfilment. But whether Mr Scallan was acting on a sudden impulse or from settled purpose, his intention was now evident. Clifford was to be held to the conditions of his late uncle's will; and the conviction that he was now to be called on to make a momentous decision did not tend to allay the feeling of nervous embarrassment with which he advanced to greet his cousin, who now entered the room.

Nor was that feeling allayed by the appearance of the young lady, in whom he with difficulty recognised the young girl of five years ago, who, although she was not sixteen, and he almost a grown-up man, used even then to treat him with scornful disdain. Mrs Scallan had not exaggerated in speaking of her daughter. Clifford remembered her as a slim, pretty young girl, giving promise of beauty. That promise had been amply fulfilled. She was now a radiant beauty. A figure which in a shorter woman might have seemed too full was in keeping with her height; that the waist was perhaps almost too slender for due harmony with the flowing lines above, was the only flaw in an almost perfect form. The face was pale, except for a slight flush on the cheek, but the pallor set off the dark lustrous eyes. Clifford had never before beheld so splendid a creature; and as she came into the

room, with a slow step and languid air, her beauty adorned by the rich dress whose only imperfection was that it was cut somewhat too low, Clifford involuntarily compared her with the more humble type of beauty lately before him. Miss Reid could not boast that dazzling pearl-white skin—it must be confessed he had never seen nearly so much of it as his cousin exposed to view—and her figure though slim and graceful, wanted the rich contours of the one now approaching. He might have added, but that he was too simple to know it, that Miss Reid did not enhance her looks with borrowed charms. For the delicate rose tint in his cousin's cheek and the lustrous darkness of the eyes, art had come to the aid of nature. But even without these aids she was a very beautiful woman. Can it be, he thought, that this splendid creature is destined to be my wife?

As Clifford advanced to greet her all his nervousness returned, and was not allayed when she gave him the tips of her slender fingers to touch, and greeting him with an air of languid indifference, as if he might have been a casual acquaintance, last seen the previous day, dropped into an easy-chair, and sat silent, as if there were no occasion to exert herself further. Clifford, too, could find nothing to say; even Mrs Scallan was disconcerted, and an awkward pause ensued, during which Clifford was asking himself why, if this was to be the lady's mode of greeting him, had she and her mother come all this way, and sent for him so quickly?

The silence was broken by the arrival of another visitor, announced as Captain Burrard.

"The Honourable Captain Burrard," whispered Mrs Scallan to her nephew, "son of the Earl of Chert-

sey; he used to be in the Guards. He was travelling in the States last fall, and we saw a great deal of him. Scallan was able to help him along with introductions. Blanche met him this morning when she was out shopping, and asked him to come round; but I wanted this to be only a family party."

Miss Blanche, however, appeared well pleased at the addition, so far as her manner conveyed any feeling. She certainly received the visitor more graciously than she had done her cousin, her languid face lighting up for the moment as she held out her hand without rising from her seat. Burrard, a good-looking man of about thirty, but inclined to slight obesity, and showing incipient baldness, displayed for his part none of that sense of awe of the young lady which Clifford was conscious of having manifested. He made his salutations to the mother with almost a patronising air, and shook the young lady's proffered hand with perfect ease and friendliness. Dinner being now announced, Mrs Scallan took his arm, and Clifford followed with Blanche. He sought in vain for something to say on the way downstairs, but no commonplace remarks came up, and the young lady did not assist him: it was a relief when they were seated at the round table below. But Mrs Scallan began to make so many apologies for any deficiencies that might be apparent in the repast, on the score of not having had time to get things square, that Clifford again felt quite uncomfortable, and at last Miss Blanche said petulantly, "Why make such a fuss, mamma? Captain Burrard knows that as well as you do;" whereupon the Captain observed airily that he thought things were all well enough considering,—adding, "I happen to

know something about the people you have taken this house from, and I fancy you will find their servants pretty well drilled, and the dinner, as we can all see, is quite in order." And Mrs Scallan, thinking she must have committed herself, dropped the subject. Indeed, the dinner and all the appointments were handsome, and the bill of fare would have sufficed for a much larger party.

The conversation turned at first on America, as was natural, and the people and places the others had seen there; and amid the references to suppers at Delmonico's, and visits to Saratoga Wells and other excursions, which it appeared they had taken together, Clifford felt himself to be metaphorically out in the cold. "But all this must bore you," said Burrard presently, looking across the table towards him, "unless, indeed, you are in the same line with your uncle, and go about as he does."

"No, indeed," said Mrs Scallan, "Robert has no need to work for his living like poor Scallan."

"Poor Scallan, indeed," replied Burrard; "no one need grumble at having to work like Scallan, when he does it on that scale and with such results. Mr Scallan," he continued, turning to Clifford, "is almost as well known as the President on the other side of the water; he is quite one of the great powers in the States, although an Englishman;—at least he has not become a naturalised American, has he?"

"Oh no," replied Mrs Scallan, to whom he had addressed the question; "Scallan is English to the backbone, although he is so much abroad, and so am I too."

"And is he as busy as ever?"

"Just the same: as Blanche said, we might just as well be in England as in New York, for seeing

anything of him. One day off to 'Frisco, and another to Chicago, and never writes a line to us when he is away—only telegraphs." Mrs Scallan said this in a somewhat aggrieved manner, and yet as if proud of her husband for neglecting her under the circumstances; then she added, "Scallan is such a one for telegrams, you know. We have had one telegram already since we arrived."

"You ought to go into partnership with your uncle," said Burrard, again addressing himself to Clifford; "there is a splendid opening in his line."

"Ah! that would not suit Robert at all," broke in Mrs Scallan, "he is such a one for books; we think he must be writing one. But why should any one work when they have got plenty without it?"

"Why, indeed?" said Burrard. "But the hardest fate of all is that of the man who hasn't plenty without it, and yet hasn't got any work; the paupers of younger sons, for example, like myself."

"Now you are laughing at us," said Blanche, who had so far remained silent, as if the conversation had no interest for her.

"The aristocracy have no need to work," interposed her mother, "and much better they shouldn't. That is the fault of the States. New York society is very elegant, some of it, but there is never a gentleman to be seen about the place in the daytime. I think a few idle gentlemen give such a tone to society."

"Very flattering to Mr Clifford and myself; for I gather from what you say that he too is an idler, belonging to what political economists call the non-productive classes. But are you getting your dress ready for the drawing-room?" he said to Blanche, turning the conversation.

"Have you spoken to the Countess about presenting us?" asked Blanche, showing for once a little animation.

"My mother will be most happy to do so, proud in fact, to be the means of introducing the famous beauty of New York to the London world."

Which in fact was not quite true, Lady Chertsey having consented to undertake the office only through her son's importunity, and on condition that she should not be required to make "these women's acquaintance."

"Ought we not to call upon her ladyship to thank her for her kindness?" asked Mrs Scallan; and Blanche, although she had resumed her listless attitude, listened eagerly for the reply.

"Not in the least necessary; besides, the first visit should come from her. My mother will do herself the honour of calling on you, as soon as she has knocked off some of her pressing engagements."

"That will be indeed kind," replied Mrs Scallan; "we shall be delighted to receive her ladyship, and will take care to be at home, if you will let us know when she is coming."

"Must mamma wear a low dress?" asked Blanche. "The Court milliner says so."

"The rule is absolute," said Burrard. "And you too," he added, turning to her, and speaking in a low voice, "will have to display your charms in broad daylight."

Blanche laughed, and said she supposed she should do as other people did.

Clifford meanwhile was getting to feel very indignant at what he deemed this insolence to his relations, and was on the point of overcoming his shyness so far as to be on the point of cutting in with a

rebuke of some sort, when Captain Burrard changed the conversation by remarking that he thought of going out again to America, after the summer, to shoot in the Rocky Mountains.

"Scallan will be able to help you there famously," cried his wife; "he will be in the way of helping you to get all you want. He has agents everywhere. He will be so delighted to see you again."

"The delight will be mutual," observed the Captain, in a tone which might be either serious or ironical; and then he added, "I shouldn't half mind stopping over there altogether, if your husband would take me as partner." Here again he might be either jesting or serious; but without dwelling on the subject, he said in a low tone to Blanche, "Don't you think I should make an excellent virtuous apprentice?"

"Very much so, you look so virtuous."

"And living in the house like all apprentices used to do."

"You would soon get tired of that."

"And of course finishing up my career in the orthodox way of the virtuous apprentice, made one of the family in every sense?"

Miss Blanche looked up for a moment at him, and then meeting his gaze, laughed and blushed a little. Clifford all this time had been engaged in conversation by his aunt, and could not catch what was said, although observing the looks that passed.

"And so you will not stay in England for the hunting this year," said Blanche presently, in a louder voice. "I thought you could not manage to live without it."

"What is a poor younger son to do? I have been unlucky with my mounts this season, and can't afford to replace them; so it will be

more economical to go to America. Besides, I may take to business there, and become a great millionaire. By the way, have you ever been to the Rocky Mountains?" he asked, turning to Clifford.

Clifford was obliged to confess that he had not.

"I thought you might have been. Every one goes so much everywhere nowadays. I thought you might have given me a wrinkle or two how to do the thing economically. But *you* can advise me about one thing, Miss Scallan—you can tell me what books to take. You know I must have something to read, in case it should come on to rain in camp."

"You had better take some French novels."

"French novels! Are you fond of French novels?"

"I dote on them," said the young lady.

"So do I, especially the improper ones; but then, you see, I should have to take a dictionary. I can't read French without a dictionary, you know, and then they would take too much room. French novels are printed so large. No; I want something good in a small compass; something to come and go upon."

"Why not Shakespeare?" suggested Clifford.

"Shakespeare? That's a capital idea! Yes, I will take half-a-dozen plays of Shakespeare. Now, Miss Scallan, please give me the names of half-a-dozen good plays." And he took a very small memorandum-book out of his waistcoat-pocket.

"Hamlet," said Miss Scallan.

"Hamlet," repeated Captain Burrard, entering the name in his note-book. "But, no: I have seen Hamlet acted, and very good it was, so I don't want to read it; please name another."

"Macbeth," said Clifford.

"I have seen that acted too ; but it was a long time ago. I think I could stand Macbeth over again."

"Othello."

"Othello ? I have seen that acted too ; but it was by that Italian fellow, and I didn't understand a word of it. Othello will do. That makes two."

"Richard the Third."

"Yes ; that will enable me to get up my English history."

"Henry the Fourth commends itself for the same reason."

"So it does ; that makes four."

"Five. There are two parts to Henry the Fourth."

"I don't think I could stand two parts about the same fellow. I'll take the second part, which will have the winding-up business. I want two more."

"Julius Cæsar."

"Capital ! he was a first-rate soldier, Julius Cæsar. Yes, I'll take Julius Cæsar."

"Coriolanus."

"Two doses of Roman history would be too much for one time. Won't you give me something lighter ?"

"Measure for Measure."

"Measure for Measure," repeated Burrard, completing the memorandum. "I say, you are sure that's an interesting one ;" and from the shrewd twinkle in his eye, Clifford could not help suspecting that the Captain's knowledge of Shakespeare was not altogether of the limited kind professed.

"You might get the whole of Shakespeare in one small pocket volume."

"Ah, but that won't do ; I must have plays with notes. I am such a fool that I shouldn't understand a word without notes. No ; six plays with copious notes will be the thing for me—each play separate. I suppose I can buy them separate ?"

"They are published in separate plays expressly for the Civil Service Examinations, with copious notes."

"That will be just the very thing for me. Not that I ever passed an examination in my life."

"I thought that the examinations for the army were very severe," said Clifford.

"So they are, awfully stiff ; but I got in before the days of competition. That is one of the advantages of having been born more than thirty years ago. I don't know what I should do if I happened to be born now."

"Is the Countess going to travel again this autumn ?" broke in Mrs Scallan, who had not been able to bear any part in the conversation when it took a literary turn.

"Autumn is a long way off, but they are pretty sure to establish themselves at Homburg as usual. The governor is safe to have the gout by the end of the season. He was an eldest son once, so it comes naturally to him."

"And has Lord Mount Burrard got the gout too ?" asked Blanche. Lord Mount Burrard was the Captain's elder brother.

"Oh no ; he is one of the new school, don't you know,—takes neither wine nor beer. But he is a little delicate here—tapping his shirt-front—and has been spending the winter in Algeria. Not much the matter, I fancy ; but his wife makes him take great care of himself, and quite right too."

"I wonder you don't go abroad with the family," said Mrs Scallan. "I suppose the ladies Emmeline and Gwendoline accompany the Earl and Countess in their travels ?"

"The poor younger brother would get his travelling expenses paid," suggested Blanche.

"I, oh no, never go about with my people ; they are all very well

at home, don't you know; but when they travel they take such a lot of servants and things that they are surrounded with quite an English atmosphere. They might just as well take a stock of English fog with them. No; when I travel I like to see something of the manners and customs of the people, and so I always go second-class, as becomes a poor younger son. That is the only way to pick up a little French or German, which they forgot to teach one at school. Eton modern languages are all very well, but they don't go very far out of England."

"What wine are you drinking?" said Captain Burrard to Clifford, after the ladies had gone up-stairs, helping himself to claret. "I observed that you took champagne at dinner. I like champagne well enough; but when you are not sure about your wine, a little claret is the least dangerous tippie. A sound taste in wine is evidently not among our fair hostess's accomplishments."

"I am sorry that you do not approve of the wine," replied Clifford, in a tone which showed that he was nettled at the other's way of speaking; "but perhaps my aunt has not had time yet to arrange for a proper supply."

"Your aunt? Upon my word I quite forgot she was your aunt. I am sure I beg your pardon, my dear fellow; the fact is, I have seen so much more of your relatives lately than you have, that it seems natural to be doing the honours of the house to you. But the fact is, nobody has any good wine nowadays. My mother does not drink wine, and my father durstn't; and the consequence is, that our people never have a drop of wine in the house fit to drink. It's the same everywhere, I think." And the Captain was so apologetic and disparaging

about the housekeeping of his own relations, that Clifford's rising anger was soon appeased.

When the gentlemen went up-stairs to the drawing-room, the ladies were sitting on opposite sides of it. Burrard established himself by Miss Scallan, with whom he carried on an easy conversation, sustained for the most part by himself, reclining nearly at full length in an easy-chair, and nursing one ankle on his knee, while he stroked his silk stocking affectionately. Clifford, finding himself thus forestalled, took a chair by his aunt, who began to ply him with questions about his way of life. So he had quite settled in London; and taken a flat on lease; and found it comfortable; and he had brought Simmonds down to be housekeeper; she hoped he found her honest; but the hope sounded like a prediction that Simmonds would prove to be the reverse. Clifford replied that he believed she was perfectly honest, and that, indeed, she had not much opportunity for being otherwise, save as regards the contents of his tea-caddy, for he took no meal except breakfast at home. But he would trust her with anything. They were none of them to be trusted, observed the lady—not, she dared say, that Simmonds was worse than others; perhaps not, but were all alike. That was the comfort of living in American hotels; you paid your bill and had done with it; but Scallan would go and take a house in Fifth Avenue, and the servants were the worry of her life. And now she had wanted to stay at the Langham; they could have been very comfortable there, and it would have been so cheerful, for some of their fellow-passengers had gone there; but nothing would satisfy Scallan but he must go and take this house, servants and all, just as it stood; took it by tele-

graph—he was such a one for telegraphing. And how was Clifford off for a man-servant? What! had he no man? How could he get on without a man? He had no work for a man-servant, and did not like one about the house? Mrs Scallan laughed a little disdainfully; her nephew was evidently a very peculiar young man. And how did he pass his time? Did he not even keep a horse? He ought to get a horse and ride in the Park every day. His cousin would be very glad to have him for an escort. She was going to hire a horse for the season. “Blanche!” said Mrs Scallan, in a louder voice across the room, “I am telling Robert that he ought to get a horse and ride with you in the Park. Captain, you must come and see these photographs we have brought from Niagara. We have brought a lot more, but they are not unpacked yet;” and so saying, Mrs Scallan led the way to a side-table. Burrard could not but follow, and Clifford summoned up courage to cross the room and take the vacant place by his cousin. He could not venture, however, to lean back at his ease as Burrard had done, still less to nurse his foot, but sat upright, and the chair being low, he found his legs rather in the way.

Blanche greeted him with a smile, her first encouragement, and which emboldened him to speak.

“Do you intend to ride regularly when in town?”

“Every day, I suppose; that is, every day when it is fine, and there is nothing else to do. Do you ride?”

“I have not been doing so, but I mean to; that is, if you would let me be your escort.”

“I should like it very much indeed.” The words were gracious, but not the manner; she could hardly have expressed more distinctly her perfect indifference,

as, with eyes half closed, she leant back in her chair. Clifford felt too crushed to offer any further remark; but after a pause, the young lady, as if feeling remorseful at her treatment of him, volunteered an observation which partially restored his equanimity. And so the conversation went on. His cousin appeared to be divided between a specific intention to please him, and a natural or acquired instinct to make herself disagreeable, and smiled on and snubbed him alternately in such a way that, if she had been anybody else, Clifford, shy man though he was, would have got up and left her. But he was not only impressed by her beauty; the indifference he had hitherto felt about her, whenever his thoughts had turned that way, was now replaced by a feeling of deep interest and a desire to come at a knowledge of his cousin's character. This so far perplexed him. He could not reconcile the open overture professed to him, in her coming at all, as well as in the little marks of graciousness she now and then vouchsafed to him, with her generally repellent manner. Was it that she believed him to be compelled to accept her on her own terms, and therefore desired to exhibit her own feeling of repulsion at the connection, and her sense of the sacrifice she was obliged to make? Did she mean to signify that she would accept him only because she could not help herself, and wished to take advantage of the knowledge that he also was ready to close the bargain on any terms? Or was her manner merely the natural petulance of a spoiled beauty? Clifford had not time to reflect whether, if the former supposition was correct, he might not be making his bargain on terms too dear. He was too generous to think only of himself; his predominant feeling was of pity for

her. Hard fate, he thought, for one so beautiful, if forced into a distasteful and incongruous union. Indeed, how much harder it was for her than for him! He would at any rate possess this radiant beauty, but what had he to offer in return? for he appraised very humbly his own attractions, personal as well as mental. And if he felt no keenness about the marriage, how natural that it should cause her horror and disgust! Still the contempt now and then expressed for him by her manner was hardly generous. At once pained and fascinated, Clifford kept his place, unable either by speech or manner to do justice to himself, yet unwilling to leave her side; and it was an extreme relief to him when Captain Burrard, pulling out a very small watch, declared that he had no idea how late it was, the evening had passed so quickly, and rose to go. Clifford following his example got up also, casting as he did so a shy glance of entreaty at his cousin, as if looking for one kind word at parting, to which she responded by a scarcely suppressed yawn.

Her face became more animated as Burrard crossed the room to take leave of her. "We may trust to you for the presentations?" she said, as she held out her hand.

"Oh yes, you may confide implicitly in me. I will arrange it all; you need have no trouble about the business."

"And about the introductions?"

said Mrs Scallan in a louder voice from the other side of the room; "you know we are quite strangers in London; we are looking to you to give us a start." And then, regardless of her daughter's indignant glances, she repeated: "You know we are quite looking to you to give us a start. Only give Blanche a start, and you may trust her to go right away with the best of them."

"All right," replied the Captain. "Miss Scallan shall have full justice done to her claims to distinction, I promise you. I'll bring some people to see you very soon,—some nice people, and all that,—and set things going for you; and then," turning to Blanche, and giving her another shake of the hand in a patronising way, "you will know how to do the rest."

"You must come and see us very often indeed," said Mrs Scallan to her nephew, as he was following Burrard out of the room; "mustn't he, Blanche?" she added, looking at her daughter, who had not seconded the invitation.

"Of course," said the young lady, looking anywhere but at him, and in a tone of voice which gave a direct contradiction to her words; then, as if with an effort, she added: "and you won't forget about the riding?" This time, however, accompanying her words with a beaming glance from the lustrous eyes, and a smile, the rarity of which worked upon poor Clifford its own fascination.

CHAPTER VI.

"Will you try a cigar?" said Burrard, as they left the house, offering Clifford his cigar-case. "You don't smoke? and a very good thing too. It's a bad habit, and deuced expensive. I can't afford it, but I do it. Its astonish-

ing how many fellows don't smoke nowadays. Are you for walking? if so, we may as well walk together—it's a fine night. I wouldn't mind sharing a hansom, just for once in a way; but cabs are against my principles; I can't afford them. A

very pretty little girl, little Miss Blanche," he continued, as they walked down the street together, "and so modest and unaffected and lively. You are in luck to be on terms of relationship."

Clifford was struck with the inappropriateness of the attribution, for his cousin was certainly not girlish or little; and without allowing himself to think of her as immodest and affected, the qualities opposite to these were hardly the most conspicuous about her.

"I don't mind telling you in confidence," continued the other,—"and here a pang of jealousy shot through his companion,—“that if I were a marrying man, I should have fallen in love with the little American long ago; but then, you know, for a poor younger son such a thing is not to be thought of.”"

Although the latter part of this sentence gave Clifford relief, he did not at all relish Captain Burrard's free-and-easy way of speaking of his relations; but that gentleman appeared so entirely unconscious of any intention of giving offence that he did not like to show annoyance, and the other quickly changing the conversation, the opportunity was lost of resenting the liberty. The Captain continued to rattle on till they reached the bottom of St James's Street, when he invited his companion to turn in for a few minutes at what he termed his crib. Clifford would have liked to accept the invitation; he had never made the acquaintance of an officer before, much less a Guardsman, but a feeling restrained him that he would be boring his host. A man of fashion like Burrard must have better occupation than to be entertaining a stranger like himself, with no conversational gifts. "Well, then," said the other, "if you won't take pity on my solitude, I suppose I must

look in at the club for a few minutes. I am sorry I can't ask you in there; we have a foolish rule against admitting strangers. I hope we shall meet again soon; we shall be sure to run across each other before long, London is such a small place. Good night."

Clifford felt a little elated by the friendly hearty manner of his new acquaintance, the first he had made in London of his own age, or with any pretensions to fashion. At his own club—to which he had been introduced by his trustee—the members were mostly of middle age, and even of these he knew scarcely a dozen. And yet, he thought, as he walked across the Park to Victoria Street, why should the Captain care to know me and want to renew my acquaintance? I am sure he cannot have found me amusing. Can it be that he is in want of money, and hearing that I am well off, he looks on me as a pigeon to be plucked? Such things take place very often in London, I believe. Clifford was innocent of the world, and suspicious. But his thoughts soon turned back towards his cousin; and passing in review all the events of the evening, he found himself in a state of mingled perplexity and fascination, which kept him awake until far into the night.

"Robert is not much changed," observed Mrs Scallan, as soon as her visitors had left the house.

"He is just as great a gawky as ever," responded her daughter, yawning sulkily from the depths of her chair, and arranging the folds of her dress, although there was no one present to look at it.

"Not gawky at all, Blanche; he is shy—and no wonder, after the way in which my brother kept him tied to his arm-chair. We must bring him out, and make him mix in the world of fashion."

A look of contempt passed over the young lady's pretty face, as if she held her mother's powers as a leader in the ways of fashion rather cheap. The latter continued, "I must give Robert a hint to wear a white tie at dinner, and to get some nicer shirt-collars; but he is not at all bad-looking if he were properly dressed. He only wants encouragement to bring him out. He talked away to me fast enough. By the way, he tells me he has got that woman Simmonds still with him. He keeps only her and a maid; he must have saved heaps of money already. He can't be spending five hundred a-year from the way he lives. But that's neither here nor there just now. I am afraid he has been put out to-night. Of course it is no good my being pleasant with him, if you won't so much as throw him a civil word."

"Oh, bother," said her daughter, pettishly; "I can't be always teaching bears to dance. I am sure I was civil enough; but I can't make conversation all by myself. What am I to do if he won't speak when he is spoken to?" And the young lady wound up her speech by another yawn.

"It was a mistake having the Captain here," observed her mother, presently. "How could you expect your cousin to come out when that rattlebrain was here to talk nineteen to the dozen? I must say, Blanche, I think you might consult me first, before asking people to the house in that offhand way, without even saying by your leave or with your leave."

"I am sure that Captain Burard's being here was the only thing that made the evening endurable. Fancy what it would have been if we had had no one but Robert here!"

"No one but Robert! I think that is hardly the right way to

speak, Blanche. You seem to forget that you may have many evenings to spend with no one but Robert, as you call it, before long."

"What is the use of reminding me of that? At any rate we need not have nothing but Robert now. It will be time enough to talk about that when it comes to pass."

"I must say, Blanche, if that is the way in which you are going to treat the matter, it is a pity we ever came over here."

"Was the coming over here my doing?" retorted the young lady. "I am sure I was quite ready to stay. New York is ever so much a nicer place than London. You can do as you like there, and don't need to be patronised by anybody."

"You should have said all this to your father, Blanche; you know I had nothing to do with it; you and he settled it between you. I must say you are rather hard on your poor old mother to bring her over here if you did not mean anything to come of it, and me such a bad sailor too." And Mrs Scallan began to whimper.

"There is no need to make a fuss about nothing, mamma," said the young lady, her voice assuming a more kindly tone. "There is no harm done, and there is plenty of time. Trust me, mother; I know my business, without being scolded and lectured to."

"I hope you do, my dear; I hope you do," replied her mother, making a feeble effort to keep the upper hand, but feeling that, as usual, her daughter was too much for her. "You know best, Blanche, no doubt; but all I can say is, there is no time to be lost. You know how anxious your father is about it. The very last words he said to me before sailing were,—'Polly,' says he, 'things may burst up any moment.' Those were his very words. You know what that

means. You know how we had to clear out of England last time; I declare I am sick and tired of these burstings-up. I would rather by far have a quiet place somewhere—I shouldn't care where it was—that I could be sure of, than be living in this sort of way, spending money right and left, and never knowing what day the money may not stop coming. I always feel as if I were on the edge of a volcano."

"I can't help my father's ways," said the girl, sulkily. She felt, too, in her heart the degradation of their position; but so long as her mother made complaints, it suited her wayward temper to appear indifferent. "I can't help my father's ways," she repeated; "what would you have me do?"

"It isn't what I want you to do: you wouldn't mind that, I know; but it's what your father wants. You saw his telegram yesterday: 'Find out Robert at once, and settle the business sharp.' That's what your father says. You may fancy you can do better; but how you will do it, I am sure I don't know. You may have the Captain dangling after you all the season, I daresay, if you encourage him; but he's only laughing at us—any one can see that. It was different in New York, where he was nobody; but here——"

"Captain Burrard is nothing to me," broke in Blanche sharply, for her mother's observation was too true not to be galling. You don't want to give up the drawing-room, I suppose? I don't care to go, if you don't. It will look rather absurd, of course, to give it up, after we have ordered the dresses, too; but it is just as you like."

"No, Blanche, I wouldn't hear of such a thing as giving up the

drawing-room," cried Mrs Scallan, anxious to pacify her daughter, although she understood perfectly that Blanche had no serious intention of giving it up; "I want them to see what a real beauty is,—and I am sure there is not such another in London as my Blanche, any more than there is in the States,—only don't let the Captain stand in your cousin's way. Robert admires you very much already,—any one can see that. But he will want some encouragement, of course."

"La, mother, how you go on! Of course I know that. They all want encouragement—in a way."

"Do they? Some of them seem to encourage themselves, I think. Well, all I can say is, I want to do my duty by you as well as your father; and where will you find another like your cousin, so amiable and quiet,—just the one to let you do exactly as you like?"

"A cousin, indeed! And in what sort of a way?"

"That is not his fault—and no one knows anything about it; and he has got the money, at any rate—a clear five thousand a-year, Blanche; and I don't suppose he spends five hundred. He seems to live like a hermit,—an old house-keeper and one maid. Not even a buggy and horse, or a man-servant,—just a couple of rooms, with that old Simmonds and a maid to look after them. He must have laid by ever so much already. And it ought to have been yours from the first. But that's neither here nor there. Five thousand a-year is not to be picked up in the streets, I can tell you,—and that's where we shall be one of these days, I believe: I often feel as if we were on the edge of a volcano. I declare I can't sleep at night sometimes for thinking of these burstings-up."

MR KINGLAKE'S NEW VOLUME.

THE most tragic and disastrous chapter of English military history since the peace of 1815 relates to the winter troubles of our army, which encamped in 1854 on the Chersonese. It was an experience of warfare which, at the time, struck agony, terror, and remorse into the heart of the nation, and will, we trust, stand as a warning to future generations against the errors which precipitated and intensified such "horrible and heartrending" calamities. It is fortunate that the historian who has devoted so much of his active life to the task of recounting that dire experience and accentuating that salutary warning, is himself a distinguished member of that political party which incurred the heavy responsibility for so much suffering, disaster, and peril. Mr Kinglake has no party bias against the ill-starred coalition under Lord Aberdeen. The tone of his book is fair; while it is clear upon every page that he has been laborious and conscientious. He has given a compressed but most clear and forcible account of all that our army endured. He has carefully searched out the real causes of the calamity, both original and immediate; and has investigated in a judicial spirit the question of responsibility. If he may be suspected of a partiality, it is one in favour of clearing Lord Raglan's memory from aspersions which were too broadly cast; if of an antipathy, it is against the conductors of the 'Times,' whose action at this crisis in our history stirred an amount of public feeling and of official

resentment, corresponding to the inordinate power which they ruthlessly exercised. But however that may be, the reader is under no necessity of surrendering his judgment to the author. Though Mr Kinglake's own conclusions are forcibly and skilfully presented, the materials upon which they are founded are fairly given; and it is quite possible to form an impression from the facts at variance with that which the author has formed, and vigorously as well as rhetorically expressed.

The whole of this disastrous period, comprised in Mr Kinglake's volume is so full of grave national warning, that we shall forbear any comments in a party spirit, and endeavour to imitate the author himself in approaching it from its purely national and historical side. The question is, How did it come to pass that the same people, whose fathers had conquered Napoleon and sustained for years the Peninsular campaigns, despatched their army to the Crimea so equipped and supplied, that, in the full career of victory, it nearly perished from off the face of the earth? How did it happen that out of 40,000 men, half were, after four months of winter, either dead or in the hospitals?—that the army during the winter underwent, in proportion to numbers, a fiercer havoc than that which ravaged London in the days of the great plague?—that, by April 1855, only 11,000 men remained of the original force, themselves not free from grave bodily ailment;

whilst of 29,000 invalided, nearly half perished in the hospitals or on board the invalid transport-ships? The sad answer is, that all this incalculable misery arose from evils which were in their nature too plainly "avertible," and yet under a system which renders it impossible to trace them to any individual delinquency, civil or military, at home or abroad.

Primarily, the Government of Lord Aberdeen must bear the responsibility and the censure. Outside the faults of system, and the break-down of the machinery of administration, there was grave political mismanagement. The Parliamentary Committee which sat to investigate the condition of our army, reported that the Administration which ordered the expedition "made no provision for a winter campaign;" that the expedition, "planned and undertaken without sufficient information, was conducted without sufficient care or forethought;" and finally, that "this conduct on the part of the Administration was the first and chief cause of the calamities which befell our army." Nothing which has come to light since that report has served in any way to mitigate the guilt thus laid at the door of the Cabinet. As regards personal responsibility, public opinion strove, at the time unsuccessfully, to convict Lord Raglan and the officers of his Staff. The Chelsea Board, which investigated personal charges, after the report of the Parliamentary Committee, exonerated five officers of high place and authority, whose conduct and efficiency had been impugned; and after months of patient controversy, during which it had examined the chief surviving officers of Lord Raglan's Head-quarter Staff, and Mr Filder, the Commissary-General, with materials more complete than were possessed

by the Parliamentary Committee, traced the true cause of the "avertible" sufferings of the army. They traced it to the failure of land-transport power,—a failure not caused by the want of horses and mules, but by the want of means of feeding them—*i. e.*, the want of forage. They declared that Commissary-General Filder was not responsible for that insufficient supply of forage; but that the Treasury at home was, owing to its omission to send out a proper supply from England. In this judicial finding of blame the Treasury acquiesced.

Mr Kinglake adopts these findings of the constituted authorities, but carries matters somewhat further. He condemns the inefficient strategy, which he imputes to the French, the result of which was to oblige our troops to winter in the Chersonese; and he denounces the whole system of army administration as it existed at the beginning of the war. Neither the one nor the other in the least degree exculpates the Ministry or the Treasury of that day. The Ministry, from the first, left out of sight the contingency of winter; the Treasury, at the critical moment, and to the last, omitted to send forage for our beasts of burden, and thereby destroyed our means of communication within the camp.

Before we go to the main facts of the story, it is well to bear in mind the system of war administration. It would not compare, as Mr Kinglake is careful to point out, with the system which existed from 1809 to 1815, under which Wellington gained his victories; during which time three forces were in operation, which formed no part of the mechanism by which England managed war business either before or since down to 1854. These three forces were,—first, the administrative labour which Wellington himself

undertook at the seat of war; second, the immense ascendancy which he had gained, and exercised from abroad, over the conduct of our war administration at home; third, the establishment of an under-secretary for war, devoted exclusively to the business of that department. This office was abolished at the end of the war, and the Ministry lost its control over the military transactions of the country. The army system, accordingly, reverted to its former condition; which it retained down to 1854.

What that condition was, Mr Kinglake is at some pains to describe. Our ancestors, he says, in order to provide against the danger of an army under the personal direction of a sovereign, decreed that there should be no standing army at all, and faced that enormous waste of military power which was involved in alternately raising and breaking up armies. The time, however, arrived when a standing army became essential. With its growth there came into collision the personal claim of the sovereign to command it, and the right of his constitutional advisers to control it. Military sentiment was in favour of the personal sovereign; the Ministers felt that in time of war power and responsibility must necessarily accrete to them. Meanwhile the control of our land forces was for a long time divided between the king and the king's Government. The dismemberment of our military administration resulted from the long-standing truce between the king and his ministers in reference to army government. The royal authority was administered through the Horse Guards, which "served as an office in which the personal king transacted his army business, and was scarcely, in any large sense, a department of State." The general commanding in chief was

supported by a well-chosen staff, with an organisation which he always maintained upon the footing of a headquarters camp. As the sinews of war could only be obtained from Parliament through the Ministers, the independence of the Horse Guards from parliamentary control was for all practical purposes more nominal than real, and in case of war the whole conduct of it must necessarily rest with the Ministry; military business, in matters of discipline and patronage, tending, on the conclusion of peace, to revert to the Horse Guards. From the peace of 1815 down to 1854, all the armies which England had used had been made to depend upon centres of administrative power established in India and the colonies; and thus the heterogeneous departments which resulted from divided authority in London were without any of the priceless experience derived from recent campaigns. The land-service part of the Russian war—that service which so miserably broke down—thus became dependent for its efficiency upon such concerted action between the war branch of the Colonial Office, the War Office, the Horse Guards, the Ordnance, the Victualling Office, the Transport Office, the Army Medical Department, the Treasury, and many other offices doing duty in narrower spheres, as the Duke of Newcastle or any other Colonial Secretary might be able to effect.

The Duke of Newcastle was the first Minister of State who was called upon to bring this concerted action into play. He undertook the department of War on its first separation from that of the Colonies. But in migrating from one office to the other, he left behind him the experienced officers and official machinery which belonged to the vacated department, and found himself in a set of empty

rooms that formed part of the Treasury building, from whence, without a staff or central machinery of office, he endeavoured to concentrate the dispersed administration of war.

Mr Kinglake draws a terrible picture of the difficulties which he had to encounter. And it is due to the memory of an unfortunate statesman to bear in mind the chaotic confusion into which he was plunged, when one recalls the signal disasters which overtook him, and the storm of public obloquy which eventually drove him from his office. If his object was to send out troops with guns, cartridges, clothing, provisions, he had to shoot off a set of requisitions to a variety of offices; which offices being themselves unable to fulfil all that was required of them, had in their turn to shoot off other requisitions to other departments. The peremptory "word of command" was superseded by a variety of more or less authoritative appeals, involving correspondence and argument.

In fact, we went into the war in March 1854 without a war department; and although we created a special Secretary of State for War some months afterwards, he remained without a department properly so called till after the horrible and heartrending distress of our army called loudly for public reprobation and ministerial solicitude. The Horse Guards and the Colonial Office possessed up to that time ultimate military authority; the finances of the army being administered by the Secretary *at War* responsible to Parliament. For the rest—

"in the ancient Tower of London, amongst the clubs in Pall Mall, in the Strand, in Whitehall, and besides in the neighbouring purlieus, there were nests of public servants transacting their respective bits of England's military business; some, for instance, in strength at the Horse Guards, some

holding the Ordnance Department, some ensconced at the Admiralty, yet engaged in land-service duties, some buried under the roof of the Treasury, others burrowing in several small streets, yet somehow providing for our army, pay, pensions, adjudgment of claims; the means of transport by sea; stores, clothing, equipments, recruits; surgeons, surgical implements, medicines; courts-martial, chaplains, Church services: but there was not, until war approached, any high overruling authority that bound up the aggregate number of all these scattered offices into anything like a real unit of administrative power."

In this state of the War Office at home, it was essential that Lord Raglan should exercise over the Government at home an ascendancy similar to that exercised by his illustrious chief during the Peninsular campaigns. But the Ministry included men of unusual personal authority, and Lord Raglan was far away. Moreover, the scrupulous fairness with which Mr Kinglake has written enables us to see that, however complete his exoneration of Lord Raglan in most respects, there were certain personal characteristics and deficiencies which prevented him from guiding the Ministry at home with the force, energy, and decision that the occasion demanded.

We will not go into the question of strategy. That belongs to earlier volumes. Science in the person of Sir John Burgoyne, and the French, overruled Lord Raglan's wiser counsels to attack Sebastopol at once. The English Ministry, in Mr Kinglake's graphic words, sent out the fated man, the fated gift (the siege-train), and the fated word (lay siege), and thus were responsible for the strategy which was unwisely adopted, involving the fatal necessity of wintering in the Crimea. The victors at the Alma, the potential masters of all the peninsula, except the stronghold

of Sebastopol, had by their "flank march," and the more or less siege-like measures which followed, deprived themselves of all the results of success except the spot of ground that lay under their feet. They had abandoned to the enemy almost the whole of the Crimea, including his line of communication; they had suffered Liprandi to close round their flank and encroach on their camp. They were hemmed in on their land side, encamped on the bleak open wold of the Chersonese, on a pittance of ground which afforded, in a country abounding in cattle, corn, hay, and wood stores, neither food, forage, nor fuel. The resources of the invaded country were wholly ceded to the vanquished, while the victors were dependent exclusively on aid brought to them from over the sea; upon the efforts, so far as the English army were concerned, of an Administration which had been forced into the war against their will, and conducted it with strict economy and no vigour; upon a commissariat system which depended upon the harmonious and complicated co-operation of numerous public servants, merchants, contractors, and shipowners.

It was at this crisis, at the moment of adopting this particular strategy,—probably involving a winter campaign,—that Lord Raglan should have vehemently insisted upon the wants of his army, during the rigours of the impending winter, being at once and energetically supplied by the Ministry. It is all very well to say that it was not his duty to teach the Ministers their business. He knew what Ministers are like, he knew the state of the war offices, he knew the reluctance of Lord Aberdeen and Mr Gladstone to incur the necessary expenses. The Allies were opening a new and unforeseen

chapter in the sequence of events. The Ministers, rightly or wrongly, relied upon his experience and his initiative. Under such circumstances, on the 8th August, he represented to them that the question where the Allied armies should winter was "one of some anxiety;" and on the 8th November, regarding that contingency as at length inevitable, he directed his commissary-general to "make provision accordingly." This was the somewhat phlegmatic manner in which a resolution was announced, which, according to Mr Kinglake, affected the health and wellbeing of the Allied armies, if not their very existence. It was, however, unfortunately but too characteristic of the man. Honourable, high-minded, zealously devoted to his army and his work, forty years of official life in London, and sixty-six years of age, had weakened the force of his will and the energy of his convictions. He allowed his strategy to be overruled, his roads to be unformed, his Ministers at home to be supine, and his allies to be remiss. He should have either carried out his plan (now known to have been the right one) of carrying Sebastopol with a rush; or should have peremptorily insisted upon his army being at once equipped for the winter, and upon the French rendering that assistance which their strategy necessitated.

With the Ministry at home, sleeping in the fool's paradise which Alma and Inkerman had occasioned, the Allies had placed themselves in a position in which they must mainly depend upon their own stores at home. Ministers were altogether too late in appreciating the true gravity of that position, and the enormous efforts which it required; and Lord Raglan failed in the energy of representation which the impending crisis re-

quired. Possibly he relied too much upon that secondary base of operations which was established on the shores of the Bosphorus, where magazines and hospitals were established, and whence no inconsiderable supplies were drawn. But that turned out to be a wholly insufficient base. The Government at home were obliged, too late and with an inadequate sense of the emergency, to "make provision accordingly." And then began the frightful tale of maladministration, disaster, and misery. First came the question of sea-transport to the armies. It seemed to be imagined that all the Government had to do was to go, purse in hand, to traders and ship-owners; but when contractors and shipowners are challenged to deal with customers whose wants are on a large scale they must have time—the very thing which the Government could not afford to give. The consequence was that the Government had to go on waiting and waiting, while the lives of the soldiers were hanging upon despatch. If they ordered 3000 new tents in November, it was April before the soldiers received any, and June before the contract was completely fulfilled. The whole available mercantile shipping of France and England proved insufficient to transport the increasing stores which were accumulating in the West for the use of the troops. It was long before the flow of supplies from the West to the East could be effected. Delay and confusion arose, so that, not merely were tents ordered for the winter delayed till June, but furcoats also, sent out by the Prince Consort to his brother officers of the Grenadier Guards, though promptly despatched, arrived only with the heat of summer. The insufficiency of steam-power curtailed the supply of fresh meat and vegetables, and yet had to be appor-

tioned between the competing exigencies of ammunition and fresh meat. Even at the latter stages of supply, the landing of the stores, disposing them in magazines, drawing them up to the camp, and then distributing them for use—the difficulties in the way were enormous. There was no sufficient harbour—merely the diminutive basin of Balaclava. The vast stores which constantly arrived had to be introduced into this small inlet, and then landed and stored in the narrow little fishing-place of Balaclava. From the insufficiency of harbour, the narrowness of the ledge, and the want of "hands," it resulted that an accumulation of supplies lay for weeks and weeks on board of vessels either within or outside the harbour. Then came the want of a road. The construction of a road, eight or nine miles long, from Balaclava, the port of supply, to our troops on the Chersonese, had been unfortunately delayed. This was a matter for which Lord Raglan was responsible. Mr Kinglake strenuously defends him, and considers that the break-down of land-transport must be traced to the absence of forage, and the consequent destruction of our beasts of burden. He puts the case in this way. It was hoped that Sebastopol would have been taken before the end of October, up to which time the dry clay road would remain firm and compact, though certain to be broken up shortly after that time by heavy and long-continued rains, so as to become impassable for wheeled carriages. There was, moreover, a well-designed, well-metalled causeway called the Woronzoff road in our possession, which led from the Chersonese to within two miles of Balaclava. Under these circumstances the metalled road, the absence of which was so disastrous later on, was not constructed. The

men were wanted for the siege; there were no tools; there were no means of hiring labour; and Mr Kinglake insists, as he says, with the concurrence of Lord Raglan's most hostile critics, that down to October 17th, Lord Raglan was never so circumstanced that he ought to have tried to construct a stone-laid road between Balacava and the camp. Mr Kinglake argues that, after the disappointing experience of October 17th, which proved that the fall of Sebastopol would not take place for some time, the small English army was nevertheless engaged to the utmost of its power in fulfilling plans of attack concerted with the French. In the next twelve days the enemy was taking the offensive, and the English troops were fully engaged in defending Balacava and the Inkerman heights, and had neither men nor time to spare for the construction of roads. Later on, when the last hope of Sebastopol falling had vanished, and the Woronzoff road had been lost to the English, Lord Raglan began his measures for constructing the metalled highway. Its need was imperatively urgent, for torrents of rain were converting the old road into a quagmire. Mr Kinglake considers that Lord Raglan should have forced his way out of the difficulty by a peremptory appeal to the French. Lord Raglan preferred the policy of endurance. The road soon became impassable for waggons; and while our means of transport were thus being reduced to such as baggage horses and mules could supply, those very horses and mules were themselves diminishing so fast as to be almost on the verge of extinction. Cold, wet, and hard work were killing off the beasts which we possessed, while want of forage was preventing the importation of fresh ones. The Turkish provinces

mainly provided chopped straw as forage, which was too bulky in proportion to its weight and nutritive power to be fitted for transport by sea. Recourse was had to England for hay, and a lamentable incident occurred. Mr Filder, the commissary-general, applied in the language of "suggestion" to the Treasury for 2000 tons. On the 22d September, the second day after the battle of Alma, he announced that hay and forage abounded in the Crimea, but that supplies could not be made available to any extent because of the Cossack cavalry. On October 10th the Treasury gave instructions for despatching one full ship-load of hay, writing to Mr Filder that it would depend on his subsequent reports what further steps were taken. In this way the whole of October passed before the first cargo went off, and down to the end of November only 270 tons had been despatched in lieu of 2000. The Treasury, as Mr Kinglake points out, could not have foreseen that the Allies would take the almost inconceivable course of abandoning the farm produce of the whole Crimea to a defeated enemy. His conclusion is, that the dispersion of our war-waging offices ought, in justice, to involve more or less a corresponding dispersion of blame. It was this omission of the Treasury, however, which was the most culpable act of the whole series, involving the most direct responsibility. The want of forethought of the Ministry was the original cause of disaster; the utter breakdown of administrative machinery was the next. But the want of this forage, for which the Treasury was responsible, was a most serious aggravation of all our difficulties.

Mr Kinglake then describes the process of feeding the armies, and shows that the actual provision of stores was good and almost com-

plete—though he draws attention to the circumstance that 20,000 pounds weight of lime-juice, sent out with a view to the failure in fresh meat and vegetables, reached Balaclava on December 19th, but was overlooked by the medical authorities, until Lord Raglan, six weeks later, when scurvy had already proved baneful to health and life, ordered that the juice should be issued to our soldiers as part of their daily rations. With regard to warm clothing, an immense supply lay anchored off Balaclava, but was destroyed by a tempest. The loss was replaced from Constantinople; but the want of land-transport between Balaclava and the camp interposed serious delay. The preparations for the care of sick and wounded were wholly insufficient. The London departments provided no sufficient ambulance corps; appropriated no sufficient, no well-fitted vessels to the care and transport of our stricken soldiery; sent out no artificers of the kind demanded; refused Admiral Boxer's wise prayer for a receiving-ship at Constantinople: and although, it is true, sending out a few of the men, and of the things that would be needed for general hospitals, they did not either construct such institutions themselves, or directly intrust the task to other servants of State. There were insufficient medical officers, no attendants upon our sick and wounded men, no hospital orderlies, while the chief of the medical staff was absent in India. Lord Raglan established a general hospital at Scutari. Later on hospitals were established in the Levant, and floating infirmaries in the Golden Horn. The greatest part of the hospital system became concentrated at Scutari, "rife with horror, and anguish, and death." The London departments omitted to send proper hospital furniture and stores;

nor was there any one who would assume the responsibility of purchasing the needed supplies at Constantinople. In addition to this scandalous neglect of the hospital arrangements, it appears that while Lord Aberdeen's Government lasted, no effort was made to protect the army by sending out skilled sanitary engineers. This was the condition in which our army, engaged in siege operations which they could not remit, awaited the grasp of winter on the bleak heights of the Chersonese. Then came the hurricane of November 14th, bringing into the camp of the Allies "unspeakable misery." Tents were torn to pieces, frightened horses broke loose, waggons were overturned, large quantities of food and forage destroyed. "Not only men fit for duty, but the wounded, the sick, the dying became exposed all at once to the biting cold of the blast, and deluged with rain and sleet." The trenches were flooded; no camp-fires could be lit; neither horse nor man could make head against the storm. A fall of snow succeeded; and many laid themselves down without having tasted food, and, benumbed with cold, were found dead the next morning in their tents. Mr Kinglake points out that Lord Raglan did all that it was possible in man to do to repair the consequences of this calamity; but the increase of sickness amongst the men, the death of the horses, and the loss of forage, remained as operating causes of further calamities. There was a hard winter that year in the Crimea which told heavily upon both Russian, French, and English. In addition to the devastation of the camp by the hurricane, the rigours of winter, and the want of due equipment for the men, there was also the huge crushing burden of overwork.

"Their outpost duties were always anxious and harassing, their toils with spade and pick-axe fatiguing; but more irksome than all, and much more trying to health, was the task of men serving as 'guards in the trenches;' men—too often wet through from the first—who there had to be sitting all night in postures which cramped their limbs with but little opportunity of moving except when some 'alert' called them up to meet an apprehended attack. To such tasks in the middle of winter our men were kept but too often for five nights out of six; and when it is remembered that besides his siege labours, the soldier had yet other duties, and, in particular, his duties in camp, and the toil of providing for his own wants, it will be granted by all that the burthen laid upon him was excessive—so excessive, indeed, and so long-continued, that, without a motive even more cogent than a desire to carry Sebastopol, the exaction of work thus severe would scarce have been warrantable; but the truth is, as we shall afterwards learn more particularly, that the siege operations, though, of course, in their nature aggressive, were still carried on at one time as a means of defence—nay, indeed, it may rightly be said, as the only good expedient that could be found for warding off a ruinous disaster."

As regards what may be called the preventible evils, although there was always at Balaclava after the first week in November a supply of warm clothing, yet from want of land-transport it was inaccessible to our troops, which lay at a distance of seven or eight miles, suffering from cold so intense that many were stricken with frost-bite. From want of hands dead horses frequently lay unburied close by the tents. Scurvy, cholera, dysentery, and fevers assailed the army, leaving to the stricken men, unless rescued by death, the unspeakable sufferings of a field-hospital, of the journey from camp to port, and of the embarkation, besides yet more horrible miseries. The result was

that, in February, out of 40,000 men nearly 14,000 were in hospital. In four months 9000 patients perished in the hospital, so that nearly 23,000 in all, during three months, were enrolled amongst the invalided. As regards reinforcements, the new-comers, all at once subjected to the hardships of this winter campaign, fell sick with appalling rapidity, and increased the assemblage of hospital sufferers. Whole regiments disappeared, or were reduced to a mere nominal strength. Of the 11,000 who remained on the Chersonese, it must not be imagined that all or even a great part were free from grave bodily ailment. Men would avoid the sick-list as long as they possibly could; for even in the field-hospital they would lie under single canvas upon the bare earth, or, at best, on brushwood, with a single blanket, in a closely ranged layer of men without any decent hospital service. If taken to the port of Balaclava they endured long delays; if on board ship, there was no adequate provision of space or equipment. In a sea journey of 300 miles they were thrown overboard in a proportion of eighty-five and then ninety in the thousand. If they reached the Levantine hospitals they met with frightful overcrowding, want of due ventilation, an appalling want of cleanliness, of attendance, of comforts, and of proper food. From October 1854 to April 1855, out of an average strength of 29,000 there perished in our hospitals or on our invalid transport-ships 11,652 men, of whom 10,053 died from sickness alone. Mr Kinglake traces all these sufferings to the excessive toil cast upon our men, to the want of land-transport, and to the absence of a real war department. He cannot honestly ascribe flagitious delinquency or default to any

public functionaries, civil or military. He condemns unsparingly the strategy of the Allies which compelled a winter campaign.

“Their chosen strategy led them to waste the priceless fruits of the Alma; to spare the ‘north side’ of Sebastopol; to abandon their conquest of almost the whole Crimea; to surrender to the enemy his all-precious line of communication; to give him back all those country resources—food, forage, shelter, and fuel—which armies commonly need; to abstain from attacking the south front of Sebastopol whilst it lay at their mercy and wait until it grew strong; to undertake a slow engineer’s conflict of pick-axe and spade and great guns, against an enemy vastly stronger than themselves in that special kind of strife; to submit to be hemmed in and confined by the beaten enemy; to let him drive them from the Woronzoff road—the only metalled road that they had between the plain and our camp; to throw away the ascendant obtained by a second great victory; to see in the Inkerman day a reason for not pushing fortune; and then, finally, in the month of November—too late, of course, for due preparation—to accept the hard perilous task of trying to live out through a winter on the corner of ground, when they stood there maintaining by day and by night a ceaseless strife with the enemy, but a yet harder strife with the elements. For each of those steps taken singly, there was ready of course, at the time, some reason fatally specious; yet, by all of them taken together, the Allies brought themselves to commit an enormous abdication of power, and condemned their suffering armies to the misery of this winter campaign.”

In this state of things it was necessary to mask our weakness from the Russians by giving to the operations of the remnant of our army an air of tranquillity, as though engaged in a tedious siege without suffering under exceptional cares. But it was in vain to endeavour to mislead the enemy’s spies as to the desperate plight of our troops when

both Lord Raglan and the war correspondents were transmitting to England the true state of affairs. Lord Raglan was, as Mr Kinglake points out, a man by nature both calm and sanguine, “having almost to a foible the habit of detecting a humorous element in the bearing of men over-wrought by anxiety.” Such a foible was, under the circumstances, a natural disaster. Never was a sense of humour more terribly misplaced. In his calm and sanguine way, he failed in vigorously forewarning the Home Government of what they might have to expect from a winter campaign. When he was overtaken by the horrors of a position which really baffles description, although, according to Mr Kinglake, he sent home “a complete repertory of all that a minister in London who was labouring for the welfare of an army, could usefully wish to know,” yet, according to the same authority, it was all so buoyantly worded as to chase away the gloom which it ought to have occasioned. Harsh facts were, by the subtle power of his language, and by the influence of a calm and sanguine temperament, so conveyed to the Ministers as to present a picture of animated successful labour. Our author gives his instance. “The roads,” writes Lord Raglan, “are in a dreadful state, not only on the ridge but on the way to Balaclava, and the passage of wheels if the carriage be loaded is next to impossible.” It would need but slight emphasis to bring home to the imagination of a secretary for war that this was a state of things importing dire distress, but that emphasis was never given; and an inexperienced Minister was as it were warned off the ground of strong resolutions and resolute efforts by the next sentence,—“Everybody is as busy as a bee,

in, and in the neighbourhood of, Balaklava, and efforts are making to get stores up by men and by horses." The Duke of Newcastle thus had all the sinister facts before him, and yet did not take the alarm which these very facts seemed to warrant. Parliament met on December 12th and adjourned on the 23d without having learned the state of our army.

At this crisis, the modern war correspondent—that *enfant terrible* to all military commanders—appeared upon the scene. He wrote under no restraint except that of his own sagacity and good feeling. He of course made disclosures which benefited the enemy, but in all probability the sufferings of that enemy equalled if they did not exceed our own, and thus warded off our destruction. Even as early as October 23d, the 'Times' had given offence to Lord Raglan by announcing that our losses from cholera were very great, by stating that the enemy's shot and shell reached a particular encampment, and by accurately describing the place where 12 tons of gunpowder were deposited, and other details which it was of the last importance to conceal from the enemy. It certainly will be a question in future wars whether, in the words of Lord Raglan, "a British army can long be maintained in presence of a powerful enemy, that enemy having at his command, through the English press, and from London to his headquarters by telegraph, every detail that can be required of the numbers, condition, and equipment of his opponent's force." Mr Kinglake severely condemns the continued disclosures which were made, and which contained, besides the matter above alluded to, "vivid accounts of the evils that obstructed supply, and of the hardships, the sickness, the mortality, afflicting and destroying our troops." Not merely

were these disclosures made and conveyed at once by telegraph to Sebastopol, but while the Allies were doing all in their power to mask their weakness, the conductors of the public journals at home, and especially the 'Times,' resolutely tore that mask away, and proclaimed in terms of horror, and possibly even of exaggeration, the miserable plight to which we were reduced. From a military point of view the proceedings of the 'Times' must have been exasperating and perilous, amounting almost to treachery, and Mr Kinglake appears to share that view; but there is another side to the picture. The Ministry at home were supine; public opinion nursed itself on the victories of Alma and Inkerman, and refused the idea of pending calamity. Lord Raglan was, on Mr Kinglake's own showing, over-sanguine, over-cheerful, averse from the use of language which would rouse the Cabinet to exertion and evoke the great national effort which the circumstances demanded. In this highly exceptional and most critical state of things it was, in our opinion, of no use for the managers of a powerful instrument like the 'Times' to halt between two opinions, and two courses of action. They had to make their choice, once for all and definitely, between a policy of concealment, which would have rested its hopes on Lord Raglan's existing force, on misleading the enemy, and on quietly sending out reinforcements and supplies; and a policy which staked everything, the safety of Lord Raglan's existing force and the future of the war, on an immediate, passionate, and resentful publication of all that had happened and was happening, which could rouse the horror and animate the efforts of the nation. To either course there were the strongest objections, and either course involved inordin-

ate risks ; but one or other *must* be adopted, and unswervingly persisted in. No sooner was the true state of the case laid before the public by the 'Times' and other newspapers than the British people were in agonies of pity and anger. They demanded a victim, and knew not where to turn for one. Mr Kinglake, with the eye of the historian, traces the distress to the compound generalship abroad which enfeebled our strategy, and to the compound government at home which enfeebled our war department. Critics at the time were content to inveigh against the want of system, which the civil, military, and naval administration, both at home and abroad, betrayed. Mr Kinglake fixes upon December 23d as the date at which the 'Times' and the public became frantic and terror-stricken, and at which Lord Raglan and the headquarter staff were first made the subject of invectives and accusations from which this volume successfully clears them. No doubt there was great exaggeration of invective, but it served the purpose of arousing, stimulating, and directing the national energy. So far as it expressed want of confidence in the military capacity and endurance of the army, history will dismiss it as a species of panic-stricken railing. Mr Kinglake has shown that the hardships which befell both officers and men were endured with heroism and contented devotion. The utter absence of complaining, even in the wretched hospitals which were provided for them, the cheerful acceptance by each soldier of every misery as inseparable from that stress of war which he had voluntarily accepted as an incident of military service, are skilfully portrayed ; and we extract this passage as summing up Mr Kinglake's account of the condition and fortitude of our men :—

“Although enduring privations rendered cruel by the stress of winter, and maintaining day after day—nay, week after week—nay, even month after month, those alternations of watchfulness and combat which constituted, if so one may speak, a kind of protracted engagement, our army from first to last did not lose a foot of ground, it did not lose a gun—above all, it did not lose heart, and—being happily never a day without biscuit, and cartridges—held steadily on to the time when, with recruited strength, it could once more become the assailant. Thus, apart from the passive virtue of fortitude with which our men bore their hardships, there was going on every hour a valorous conflict which, if destined to endure—and endure as we know it did—long enough to meet the hard exigency, would become a warlike achievement not easily exemplified in history.”

Mr Kinglake passes from this vindication of our troops to denounce the extravagances of the 'Times' as confessions of military weakness which injuriously lowered the character of the country—increased its difficulties with Russia, with its ally, and with the neutral States with which it was negotiating—and weakened also its influence in the matter of making terms of peace. The outcry shook the State and weakened the country ; but, asks Mr Kinglake, did it bring a greatcoat or a blanket, or any more food or drink, to any soldier on the Chersonese heights ? Mr Kinglake says that, amongst the chief measures of succour, it would be hard to find any which had not been set on foot before the outcry began ; and he enumerates at some length the evils for which he holds that outcry responsible.

First there was the vituperation directed against Lord Raglan and the chief of his headquarter staff ; the distrust with which the Home Government was inspired as to the commanders abroad ; the desire

that Government imbibed to escape censure themselves, thus failing in loyalty towards their general, whom at the same time they dared not recall; the necessity of appeasing public anger by the appointment of a House of Commons Committee, which seemed to place the direction of the war more and more under popular control. These, and the evils resulting therefrom, Mr Kinglake attributes to the extravagant outcry for which he holds the 'Times' responsible.

The hostility to Lord Raglan was shaped so as to exclude his responsibility for the acts or omissions of his headquarter staff; the chiefs of the staff were accordingly to be held responsible, and to expiate the winter misfortunes by being dismissed from their posts. Lord Raglan, as might be expected, treated with scorn the proposal for sheltering him behind his staff officers; but the notion unfortunately found favour with the Ministers, whose minds appear to have been completely thrown off the balance by the extremity of the national peril, and the roar of the popular voice. Down to the middle of December no confidence could have been more absolute than that which the Duke of Newcastle reposed in Lord Raglan. The Duke even asked Lord Raglan to advise him upon the choice of a general who, to meet the event of his being killed or disabled, should be secretly named as his successor. But then there came pouring in unofficial accounts of distress and disaster from the Chersonese, from which, according to Mr Kinglake, who has laboriously mastered all the official correspondence of the time, the Duke "could hardly have learned anything of really grave moment which had not before been imparted to him by Lord Raglan in drier figures and words. But the detailed

though fragmentary narratives, conveyed in their new poignant forms, impressed his mind more acutely than sober general statement; and perhaps it might be said not inaccurately, that what previously he only had known he now both knew and imagined."

Under the pelting storm of complaints which arose, the Duke became convinced of not only mismanagement and want of system at Lord Raglan's headquarters, but of grave dereliction of duty on the part of his chief officers. He frankly imparted that conviction to Lord Raglan. His doing so without asking for an explanation amounted to accusation; accusation by a Secretary of State was nothing less than authoritative condemnation of a general and staff still intrusted with the command of the army. The Duke felt the ground sinking from under his foot, and, according to Mr Kinglake, his letters show that the idea of disengaging himself from the cruel fate of a minister held answerable for the sufferings of our army, was running in his mind. For instance he talks of having "to bear the whole blame, but already public attention is turning to the officers and the camp;" and soon after the outcry began, he wrote to Lord Raglan, "I shall of course be the first victim to popular vengeance; and the papers, assisted by the Tory and Radical parties, have pretty well settled my fate already." In turning against Lord Raglan the Duke acted with the ready assent of his colleagues, those very Ministers who had ordered the invasion, who had approved the joint strategy of the alliance, and who had, down to that moment, reposed unlimited confidence in the generalship, the administrative skill, and the diplomatic tact of their general. Under the influence of this policy, the Duke formulated charges against

the Adjutant and the Quartermaster General, which only the dispersed state of the London War Offices prevented him from ascertaining at home were utterly unfounded. He then adopted the quaint scheme of the 'Times,' of trying to induce Lord Raglan to consent to a change of his staff, privately condoling with Lord Raglan upon the unfair and ungenerous attacks which were made upon him. The Ministerial complaints were on January 6th thrown into the form of an official despatch ready for parliamentary use; and Lord Raglan saw with amazement and grief that the Queen's Government, with whom he had been all along acting in close, friendly, intimate counsel, had, under the pressure of a newspaper storm, been converted into hostile critics and judges. He declined to shelter himself behind his chief staff, whom he warmly approved and supported, and resolved that nothing short of an actual recall should withdraw him from the command of his army in the time of trouble. Thus, says Mr Kinglake, the Ministerial plan of choosing victims was defeated, and some of the members of the Government were now inclined to throw the blame on Lord Raglan himself. His recall, however, turned out to be impossible, and thus the Ministry having failed to bind other victims for sacrifice, lay open, with nothing to shelter it, to the attacks which the meeting of Parliament was sure to bring. It is impossible to approve this conduct on the part of the Duke and his colleagues; but they, and not the newspapers, must bear the censure and the odium. The nation itself interfered between the Ministry, and the General on the one side and the army on the other. The Ministers threw the blame on their General; but the General refused

to shelter himself behind his subordinates, or to recriminate. The nation retained him in command, expelled their Ministry, and saved their army. When Parliament met, as every one knows, the famous coalition was dismissed from office by a majority of 157. Every fresh disclosure which has been made concerning its administrative acts and internal relations, has served to deepen the obloquy which overwhelmed it. The substitution of Lord Palmerston for Lord Aberdeen expressed the determination of the country to be strenuous in the conduct of the war; while the fate of the Duke of Newcastle was a warning to future administrators that they must contrive not to fail in the due supply of our army.

The new Government brought a great deal of fresh administrative energy to work, "and," says Mr Kinglake, "they were far from being so lost to all idea of patriotism as to be capable of withdrawing from the command of our army a chief upon whom the whole fate of the Allies was depending." In fact, the outcry still raged so furiously, that not merely did the House of Commons insist upon its Committee of public investigation, but a Ministry, presided over by Lord Palmerston, consented to act in the manner thus described by Mr Kinglake:—

"They retained Lord Raglan in the command of our army; but then also they ignobly left him unshielded by any good word of theirs against his rampant accusers, and even themselves took a part in hooting their absent general, still engaged in hot strife with the enemy; whilst, moreover, from his headquarter staff they resolved to chose the fresh victims required for appeasing our people."

Lord Panmure proved very tractable in the hands of the 'Times,' and trudged doggedly on, explaining how vain and foolish it was

to dream of attempting resistance; savagely hating all the time the yoke which he thought himself forced to bear. Without mastering the correspondence which he found in the office, he framed his despatch of February 12th under the influence of the double belief, says Mr Kinglake, that the Duke of Newcastle might have averted his fate by turning earlier on Lord Raglan, and that the public clamour directed against his most highly valued officers itself sufficed to disqualify them. In this despatch he accused Lord Raglan, without waiting for his reply to the Duke's despatch of January 6th, of not having furnished clear and succinct information as to the operations, the progress, or prospects of the campaign. He complained that Lord Raglan's notices of the condition of his army had been brief and unsatisfactory, and he condemned unheard both the Adjutant and the Quartermaster General, the latter in 'violent newspaper language.' The despatch contained this further sentence, which has roused the wrath of Mr Kinglake, for which he seeks to hold the Queen and Prince Consort, as well as the Ministry, responsible, and which, he says, the Duke of Wellington would have died rather than have penned: "It would appear that your visits to the camp were few and far between, and that your staff seem to have known as little as yourself of the condition of your gallant men." At the same time Lord Panmure privately wrote to Lord Raglan: "I wish to protect as far as possible the interests of the army, and to stand between you and those who are so angry with all that has happened." "From the proffer of a clandestine alliance thus made to him by his reckless accuser, Lord Raglan turned away in proud silence." Lord Raglan

replied in a powerfully written despatch, which wrung from Lord Panmure what Mr Kinglake calls a virtual though ill-fashioned retractation of his charges. General Airey, the Quartermaster-General, was declared by the Horse Guards to be Lord Raglan's right-hand man, and Lord Hardinge declared that he could not be taken from him without grievous injury to the public service; and Lord Raglan's firmness in standing by his staff was finally rewarded by this communication in a private letter from Lord Panmure on June 1st: "You shall hear no more from me as to your staff. I have told my colleagues that I acquiesce in your reasons for not submitting to a change, and that I will press it no further." General Simpson, who had been sent out as chief of the staff to report as to these much-maligned officers, sent word that there was not one of them whom he would wish to see removed, and that a better selection of staff officers could not have been made. The real fact is, that Ministers, newspapers, and the public felt that severe blame rested somewhere, and did not know where to direct it. The full investigation which the subject has since received shows that criticism at the time, official or otherwise, was very excited, and more or less blind. Mr Kinglake successfully exonerates Lord Raglan and his staff from the specific and even the general charges then made against them. But he lets us see very plainly that, although there was little or no individual delinquency, there was want of forethought and energy at home, absence of strategy and of overmastering will at headquarters in the camp.

Mr Kinglake draws a very sorry picture of the firmness and composure of our statesmen under a newspaper storm. The 'Times,'

however, was not responsible for that; but it is entitled to the credit of having imparted a stimulus and energy into the administration of the war which were of incalculable service. The whole nation was roused to a sense of its peril and that of the army; economy was for a time properly flung to the winds; our people were resolute to succour, rescue, and support their army. The effect of the measures which were taken was, that hopeful signs of improvement in the Chersonese became daily more encouraging. On 22d February 1855, 13,640 men were disabled by sickness or wounds. During the eight weeks which followed, that number was reduced by 5000. From that time onwards the advance towards good health was so steady and complete, that, during the last month of the occupation of the Crimea in 1856, the number of admissions to the hospital, computed in proportion to force, represented a ratio only of one to ten. Tested by the rate of mortality, the health of the army advanced from a state similar to that of the great plague of London to one on a level with that enjoyed by our great towns in England.

The way in which this came about was, that the difficulty of land-transport was removed—first, by metal-ling a piece of road one mile long from Balaclava to Kadikoi; secondly, by constructing a railway. Then a land-transport corps was formed and intrusted to Colonel M'Murdo. Cost what it might in energy and treasure, the Colonel insisted that the army must be enabled to move. His transactions became so extensive that the Treasury declared they must have a limit; but the Colonel repudiated limits, "till our rulers should either make peace or else provide our army with the needed carrying power." Accordingly, "from Spain in the west to Ar-

menia in the east, from Wallachia in the north to the Persian Gulf on the south," he purchased beasts of burden. Before the war ended, he had under him "a body of 17,000 drivers, of whom 10,000 were British soldiers—men not only competent to their more especial tasks, but armed and trained for fighting; whilst of horses, mules, camels, and dromedaries, he had more than 28,000." He thus got together a land-transport power which completely sufficed for the great wants of the army, with the means of raising it promptly to the yet greater strength required in case of active operations against the Russian army in the field.

Before either the metalled road or the railway was in use—before even the land-transport corps had been formed—by January 23d, the army was well supplied with warm clothing, which Lord Raglan had sent for to Constantinople after the hurricane of November 14th. Materials for giving our troops the advantage of wooden shelter had arrived, but could not be used from want of land-transport. In February the *Erminia*, a schooner belonging to Lord Ellesmere, sailed into port laden with the produce of what was called the Crimean Army Fund, with the honorary agents, Mr Tower and Mr Egerton, on board. They brought in the schooner, and on board two screw-steamers, "vast quantities of goods supplied by our people at home for the comforting of their troops in the distant Crimea." This fund had been started to provide for that purpose. The 'Times' Fund was collected to comfort our sick and wounded soldiers, the Patriotic Fund to provide for their widows and orphans. Tower and Egerton landed their thousand tons of goods. In order to transport them, more than a mile from the beach, to Kadikoi, across an ex-

panse of mud, with intervals of large detached stones, some wagons were lent them belonging to the railway contractors, and they obtained elsewhere mules, horses, and carts; and Lord Raglan assigned to them twenty stalwart men, who were described as Croats. With these means—without accepting aid from a single fatigue-party of English troops, and without drawing one ration of food for either man or beast—the splendid sailors of the schooner, under the organising activity of Tower, effected their difficult task. They then adopted a masterly and successful plan of distribution, under which the goods passed daily and smoothly into the hands of the soldiers. The whole business was a model of non-official successful administration, effected with speed and economy.

The miseries of our troops speedily disappeared before the awakened energy of their countrymen at home, whose newspaper storm was productive of as much good as the Balaclava storm of the 14th November was of ill. A more interesting account of these transactions than Mr Kinglake has given us, it would be impossible to conceive. It is one which is wholly uninfluenced by party bias, and ought to be studied in the same spirit. It recounts a terrible experience of maladministration; and by laying bare its causes, and the manner in which they operated, it serves as a salutary warning for all time against carrying into great military undertakings the utter want of forethought and the misplaced parsimony which are here displayed. They inevitably lead to disaster, and necessitate lavish expenditure. Not all the virtues of Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet, and the fame of its members, will lighten the curse of history upon its grave misconduct

of that war, which it so reluctantly and blindly undertook.

The volume, however, speaks for itself; and it is superfluous for a reviewer to endeavour to add to the force of the grave warning which it contains. It remains, however, to acknowledge, on the part of the public, the literary skill, the conscientious fairness, and the determined mastery of detail which this forcible narrative exhibits. One volume remains to complete a work which is unique in regard to indefatigable research brought to bear upon contemporaneous events, and the force and fire with which its animated personal sketches light up its abundant and inevitable detail. Mr Kinglake has reached that point in his history when the winter troubles are beginning to be replaced by happier circumstances, and the ultimate triumph of the expedition is beginning to dawn. The next volume will be in its substance and tone necessarily in marked contrast with the present; and its appearance will be anticipated with impatience and welcomed with pleasure. The severest portion of Mr Kinglake's labours is doubtless achieved. What remains to fill this important leaf in our national history will deal with a brighter period. Its successful accomplishment by the same hand is all that is needed to complete one of the most animated pictures of mingled disaster and triumph, with their accompaniments of strong national feeling and momentous personal vicissitude, which literature has ever produced.

We have already dealt with the practical result of the book; and it remains, in order to do full justice to its literary merit, to draw attention to the vivid sketches which it contains of the more active and marked personalities of

the time. It is in such sketches that Mr Kinglake delights; and they serve to maintain the living interest of his book, bringing the *dramatis personæ*, as it were, in their true flesh and blood before us. One of the very best is the sketch of the British soldier in the midst of preventable privation and suffering, surrounded by death and all the miseries which rendered existence impossible:—

“The true soldier or ‘paid man,’ as distinguished from the one raised by conscription, is indeed a man governed by feelings and convictions which at first sight appear strangely different from those of other human beings. Upon the humble rights that he has acquired by entering the army he insists with a curious tenacity; but as regards the other side of his wild romantic bargain, he performs it with unstinting readiness, paying down his vast stake, his freedom, his ease, his strength, his health, his life, as though it were nothing worth. Lord Raglan, when visiting the field-hospitals, used to ask upon entering each tent whether any of the men there collected had any complaints to make; and then it curiously happened that one of the sufferers answered by firmly alleging a grievance, but a grievance, strange to say, unconnected with the privations then threatening his very life,—a grievance based in general upon some question of ‘stoppages,’ and always concerning money. Thereupon Lord Raglan would promise that the question raised should be considered, and his attendant aide-de-camp (who on these occasions was generally Colonel Nigel Kingscote) used then to make a careful note of the complaint. This process was completed until all the complaints had been heard; but invariably they related to money questions.

“No man ever used to say: ‘My lord, you see how I am lying wet and cold, with only this one blanket to serve me for bed and covering. The doctors are wonderfully kind, but they have not the medicines, nor the wine, nor any of the comforting things they would like to be giving me. If only I had another blanket, I think perhaps I might

live. Such words would have been true to the letter, and also I imagine appropriate in the judgment of almost any civilian; but the soldier was not the man who would deign to utter them. He would hold the State fast to its bargain in respect to those pence that were promised him through the lips of the recruiting sergeant; but on the other hand, he seemed to acknowledge that he had committed his bodily welfare no less than his life to the chances of war, and would let the Queen have what he sold her, without a grudging word. Sometimes the brave men—I speak now of the men under arms—would do more than acquiesce in their sufferings, and detecting perhaps a shadow of care in the face of their honoured chief when he rode past their camp, would seize any occasion that offered for showing him that they were content. Thus, for instance, when asked by Lord Raglan whether his regiment had obtained its warm clothing, a soldier would not merely say ‘yes,’ but gratefully and cheerily add that that ‘was all they wanted.’”

Side by side with this tribute to the spirit which animated the British soldier, we must place another to the mode in which he was tended in his dire distress, and to the spirit which Miss Nightingale infused into the hospital management. After quoting Dean Stanley’s eloquent testimony to the manner in which her ascendant held good with the orderlies and all other soldiers who were strong enough to obey her, he continues, in reference to the sick and prostrate:—

“There was worship almost in the gratitude of the prostrate sufferer, who saw her glide into his ward and at last approach his bedside. The magic of her power over men used often to be felt in the room—the dreaded, the blood-stained room—where ‘operations’ took place. There, perhaps the maimed soldier, if not yet resigned to his fate, might at first be craving death rather than meet the knife of the surgeon; but when such a one looked and saw that the hon-

oured Lady-in-Chief was patiently standing beside him, and—with lips closely set and hands folded—decreeing herself to go through the pain of witnessing pain, he used to fall into the mood for obeying her silent command and—finding strange support in her presence—bring himself to submit and endure.”

And in a note Mr Kinglake adds :—

“At the time I am speaking of, the vast fame of the Lady-in-Chief had brought upon her an enormous number of ‘begging letters,’ but—I say it with delight—*there had never come one from a soldier.*”

Lord Raglan’s “nonchalant” demeanour, as it was erroneously called at the time, is thus described :—

“Lord Raglan was most days on horseback, either visiting his divisional camps or his hospitals, or going down to transact business at Balaclava, but he used on such occasions to ride with only a single aide-de-camp ; and since, also, as indeed we have seen, he commonly wore a plain forage-cap, and a wrapper so overfolding that it did not disclose his maimed arm, there was nothing to show a spectator, unless chancing to stand very near, that one of the two horsemen passing was the Commander of the forces. Under such conditions, of course, many officers and men, to say nothing of the newspaper correspondents, were able to say that they never saw anything of the general.”

The hatred of ostentation, which laid Lord Raglan open to so many mischievous comments, is set forth by means of the following humorous description of some charlatan general manipulating public opinion in his favour, through conduct of which Lord Raglan was incapable, and which was the exact opposite of that which he adopted :—

“If a charlatan general proposes to visit a suffering camp, he chooses a time when he knows improvement is ripe, comes clattering up to the ground

with a great cavalcade at his heels, shows himself in his well-known costume, seems to give a large number of orders, seems to crush one or two hapless functionaries with ferocious displeasure, calls up some (before chosen) soldier, tells the man he remembers him well at the battle of the Spheres, says he means to look out for him again at the battle of Armageddon, gives him either a cross or some coins, then gallops off, well assured that by the help of his salaried glorifiers acting vigorously on human credulity, he will pass for a chief who has almost wrought miracles ‘by the eagle glance of his eye,’ and the irresistible might of his will.”

Lord Panmure is sketched in a manner which seems to bring him life-like before us. The son of a headstrong tyrannical father, he was, on refusing to be absolutely estranged from his mother, compelled to take a commission in a line regiment, with a bare subsistence allowance. The effect of his “virtue, combined with privation, was to make him beyond measure savage.” When his thralldom was over, he quitted the army, studied, entered Parliament, worked hard, and became Secretary *at War* ; and was finally selected by Lord Palmerston to become Secretary of State in succession to the Duke of Newcastle. Mr Kinglake thus paints him :—

“Owing partly perhaps to the habit of meditating upon the attributes of his father, Fox Maule was mighty in curses, not simply and gently accentuating thought with a ‘damn,’ like the shrewd reflective Lord Melbourne, but arming himself with maledictions in an aggressive spirit, as though he would somehow wreak his vengeance upon many a lieutenant for the usage he had received in his youth. Rough-tongued and rough-mannered in the midst of courteous people, he was formidably equipped for attack ; but his resources in the way of defence were even more efficacious, for nature had so thickly encased him as to make his

mental skin quite impervious to the delicate needle-points with which a highly-bred gentleman is accustomed to correct its offenders. With all his roughness and violence, it would seem he had no base malignity, and was more, after all, the rhinoceros than the tiger of Palmerston's Cabinet."

Further on, his tameness under the pressure of the 'Times' newspaper is referred to:—

"The bearing of Lord Panmure towards the press was a good deal like that of a soldier taken prisoner by the enemy. He received his marching orders submissively from the sheets of the 'Times,' proceeded at once to obey them, and so trudged doggedly on, without giving other vent to his savageness than a comfortable oath and a growl. Whilst he trudged, he would even explain to any less docile fellow-prisoner how vain and foolish it was to dream of attempting resistance."

There is a most interesting description of the way in which Tower and Egerton effected the cartage and distribution of the 1000 tons of goods which they had taken out to the Crimea. Upon Tower devolved the task of wringing work from the Croats, and of compelling them to aid in carrying loads from the fort to the camp.

"His great eyes flaming with zeal, his mighty beard laden or spangled like the bough of a cedar of Lebanon, with whatever the skies might send down, whether snow, or sleet, or rain—an eagle-faced, vehement Englishman, commanding, warning, exhorting; swooping down in vast seven-leagued boots through the waters and quagmires, upon any one of his Mussulmans who, under cover of piety (when wanting a few moments of rest) stopped kneeling too long at his prayers. If any wayfarer, passing between camp and port, sought to learn what all the stir meant, he might be told perhaps orientally, by some of the bearers of burdens, that, 'The will of Allah—His name be it blest! had made them the

hard-driven slaves of the sacredly-bearded commander, the all-compelling, the sleepless, the inexorable Father of boxes—the Father of boxes more numerous than even the seed of Sheik Ibrahim after ninety and nine generations;' whilst the answer to any such question, if drawn from an English officer, was likely to be altogether neglectful of the spiritual element, and simply explain in five words that the cause of all the commotion was 'Tom Tower working his Croats.'

We will conclude with the description given early in the volume of the second Pitt in Downing Street, with an imperfect intelligence department, framing his warlike measures on such information as was within his reach, too often supplied from an interested source. No finer delineation is to be found anywhere of the cares and labours of the great Minister.

"From his own room in Downing Street, with an ample map spread out before him, and too often at his elbow some zealot enforcing the last new idea, he directed in this or that quarter the impacts of a far-reaching war. To protect him from visions and visionaries he had no wary mentors like those whose minds have been disciplined in a well-ordered War Department; and accordingly, when not either forming his great coalitions, or breaking up some league against England, he was a man drawn hither and thither by numbers of sanguine advisers with their souls in all parts of the world—some full of the opening there was in the patriotism of Holland invaded; some, however, soon after resolved that, instead of defending the Dutch, it would be better on the whole to attack them—to attack them in Ceylon, attack them in the Banda Islands, or Surinam, or attack them at the Cape of Good Hope; some yet later reverting to Dutchmen as a people, then called 'Batavian,' who ought to be invaded at home; many warranting a French restoration with only a little help on the seaboard; some, however, inviting our people to the north, and others to the west, and others,

again, to the south coast of France; then some, again, eager to attack the French fishing-stations in Newfoundland, far north; others savage against the French flag for displaying itself in the tropics, and pointing to the Isle of Goree; some planning a hunt against Frenchmen in the kingdom of Naples, others seeking to chase them in the States of the Church; some urging a small expedition for the alluringly mischievous purpose of cutting the dikes in Belgium; others pressing the invasion of Spanish Galicia and the seizure of Ferrol; some wanting our troops to be sent away yet further south, to land on the coast of Andalusia, and then lay hold of Cadiz; others urging that Bonaparte must be stopped in his Eastern adventure, and the French troops thrust out of Egypt; others pressing for an occupation of Swedish Pomerania, or showing that the half-hearted King of Prussia could be trusted to save himself from the fate of being devoured separately by aiding the defence of Germany, and that therefore to act alongside him a strong British

force should at once be sent into Hanover;—and all this while the inciters, whose policy avowedly lay in the acquisition of ‘islands,’ were busily importuning the Minister—some, for instance, entreating him to accept the proffered Corsica, others bent on Minorca, and others again on Malta; whilst yet others again in design transcended ocean expanses, pointing out the diminutive speck which marked Teneriffe on the charts, and maintaining that our people were for some reason bound as mariners to go out and seize the lone rock. Much more wondrous, however, than the number and variety of these counsels, was the fact that every one of them had in turn such strong sway as to make Pitt give it effect; and not now, even now, have I yet filled the curious list; for—worst of all—in those days came sons of Mammon intent upon what were then called ‘Sugar Islands;’ and, the grossest of the tempters prevailing, troops bitterly needed elsewhere were from time to time hurried off to die of yellow fever in the West Indies.”

DR WORTLE'S SCHOOL.—CONCLUSION.

CHAPTER XXII.—THE DOCTOR'S ANSWER.

WHEN the Monday came there was much to be done and to be thought of at Bowick. Mrs Peacocke on that day received a letter from San Francisco, giving her all the details of the evidence that her husband had obtained, and enclosing a copy of the photograph. There was now no reason why she should not become the true and honest wife of the man whom she had all along regarded as her husband in the sight of God. The writer declared that he would so quickly follow his letter that he might be expected home within a week, or, at the longest, ten days, from the date at which she would receive it. Immediately on his arrival at Liverpool, he would, of course, give her notice by telegraph.

When this letter reached her, she at once sent a message across to Mrs Wortle. Would Mrs Wortle kindly come and see her? Mrs Wortle was, of course, bound to do as she was asked, and started at once. But she was, in truth, but little able to give counsel on any subject outside the one which was at the moment nearest to her heart. At one o'clock, when the boys went to their dinner, Mary was to instruct her father as to the purport of the letter which was to be sent to Lord Bracy,—and Mary had not as yet come to any decision. She could not go to her father for aid;—she could not, at any rate, go to him until the appointed hour should come; and she was therefore entirely thrown upon her mother. Had she been old enough to understand the effect and the power of character, she would have known that, at the last moment, her father

would certainly decide for her,—and had her experience of the world been greater, she might have been quite sure that her father would decide in her favour. But as it was, she was quivering and shaking in the dark, leaning on her mother's very inefficient aid, nearly overcome with the feeling that by one o'clock she must be ready to say something quite decided.

And in the midst of this her mother was taken away from her, just at ten o'clock. There was not, in truth, much that the two ladies could say to each other. Mrs Peacocke felt it to be necessary to let the Doctor know that Mr Peacocke would be back almost at once, and took this means of doing so. "In a week!" said Mrs Wortle, as though painfully surprised by the suddenness of the coming arrival.

"In a week or ten days. He is to follow his letter as quickly as possible from San Francisco."

"And he has found it all out?"

"Yes; he has learned everything, I think. Look at this!" And Mrs Peacocke handed to her friend the photograph of the tombstone.

"Dear me!" said Mrs Wortle. "Ferdinand Lefroy! And this was his grave?"

"That is his grave," said Mrs Peacocke, turning her face away.

"It is very sad; very sad indeed;—but you had to learn it, you know."

"It will not be sad for him, I hope," said Mrs Peacocke. "In all this, I endeavour to think of him rather than of myself. When I am forced to think of myself, it seems to me that my life has been so blighted and destroyed, that it

must be indifferent what happens to me now. What has happened to me has been so bad that I can hardly be injured further. But if there can be a good time coming for him,—something at least of relief, something perhaps of comfort,—then I shall be satisfied.”

“Why should there not be comfort for you both?”

“I am almost as dead to hope as I am to shame. Some year or two ago I should have thought it impossible to bear the eyes of people looking at me, as though my life had been sinful and impure. I seem now to care nothing for all that. I can look them back again with bold eyes and a brazen face, and tell them that their hardness is at any rate as bad as my impurity.”

“We have not looked at you like that,” said Mrs Wortle.

“No; and therefore I send to you in my trouble, and tell you all this. The strangest thing of all to me is that I should have come across one man so generous as your husband, and one woman so soft-hearted as yourself.” There was nothing further to be said then. Mrs Wortle was instructed to tell her husband that Mr Peacocke was to be expected in a week or ten days, and then hurried back to give what assistance she could in the much more important difficulties of her own daughter.

Of course they were much more important to her. Was her girl to become the wife of a young lord,—to be a future countess? Was she destined to be the mother-in-law of an earl? Of course this was much more important to her. And then through it all,—being as she was a dear, good, Christian, motherly woman,—she was well aware that there was something, in truth, much more important even than that. Though she thought much of the

earl-ship, and the countess-ship, and the great revenue, and the big house at Carstairs, and the fine park with its magnificent avenues, and the carriage in which her daughter would be rolled about to London parties, and the diamonds which she would wear when she should be presented to the Queen as the bride of the young Lord Carstairs, yet she knew very well that she ought not in such an emergency as the present to think of these things as being of primary importance. What would tend most to her girl's happiness,—and welfare in this world and the next? It was of that she ought to think,—of that only. If some answer were now returned to Lord Bracy, giving his lordship to understand that they, the Wortles, were anxious to encourage the idea, then in fact her girl would be tied to an engagement whether the young lord should hold himself to be so tied or no! And how would it be with her girl if the engagement should be allowed to run on in a doubtful way for years, and then be dropped by reason of the young man's indifference? How would it be with her if, after perhaps three or four years, a letter should come saying that the young lord had changed his mind, and had engaged himself to some nobler bride? Was it not her duty, as a mother, to save her child from the too probable occurrence of some crushing grief such as this? All this was clear to her mind;—but then it was clear also that, if this opportunity of greatness were thrown away, no such chance in all probability would ever come again. Thus she was so tossed to and fro between a prospect of glorious prosperity for her child on one side, and the fear of terrible misfortune for her child on the other, that she was altogether unable to give any salutary advice. She, at any rate,

ought to have known that her advice would at last be of no importance. Her experience ought to have told her that the Doctor would certainly settle the matter himself. Had it been her own happiness that was in question, her own conduct, her own greatness, she would not have dreamed of having an opinion of her own. She would have consulted the Doctor, and simply have done as he directed. But all this was for her child, and in a vague, vacillating way she felt that for her child she ought to be ready with counsel of her own.

"Mamma," said Mary, when her mother came back from Mrs Peacocke, "what am I to say when he sends for me?"

"If you think that you can love him, my dear——"

"Oh, mamma, you shouldn't ask me!"

"My dear!"

"I do like him,—very much."

"If so——"

"But I never thought of it before;—and then, if he,—if he——"

"If he what, my dear?"

"If he were to change his mind?"

"Ah, yes;—there it is. It isn't as though you could be married in three months' time."

"Oh, mamma, I shouldn't like that at all!"

"Or even in six."

"Oh no."

"Of course he is very young."

"Yes, mamma."

"And when a young man is so very young, I suppose he doesn't quite know his own mind."

"No, mamma. But——"

"Well, my dear."

"His father says that he has got—such a strong will of his own," said poor Mary, who was anxious, unconsciously anxious, to put in a good word on her own side of the

question, without making her own desire too visible.

"He always had that. When there was any game to be played, he always liked to have his own way. But then men like that are just as likely to change as others."

"Are they, mamma?"

"But I do think that he is a lad of very high principle."

"Papa has always said that of him."

"And of fine generous feeling. He would not change like a weathercock."

"If you think he would change at all, I would rather,—rather,—rather——. Oh, mamma, why did you tell me?"

"My darling, my child, my angel! What am I to tell you? I do think of all the young men I ever knew he is the nicest, and the sweetest, and the most thoroughly good and affectionate."

"Oh, mamma, do you?" said Mary, rushing at her mother and kissing her and embracing her.

"But if there were to be no regular engagement, and you were to let him have your heart,—and then things were to go wrong!"

Mary left the embracings, gave up the kissings, and seated herself on the sofa alone. In this way the morning was passed;—and when Mary was summoned to her father's study, the mother and daughter had not arrived between them at any decision.

"Well, my dear," said the Doctor, smiling, "what am I to say to the Earl?"

"Must you write to-day, papa?"

"I think so. His letter is one that should not be left longer unanswered. Were we to do so, he would only think that we didn't know what to say for ourselves."

"Would he, papa?"

"He would fancy that we are half ashamed to accept what has

been offered to us, and yet anxious to take it."

"I am not ashamed of anything."

"No, my dear;—you have no reason."

"Nor have you, papa."

"Nor have I. That is quite true. I have never been wont to be ashamed of myself;—nor do I think that you ever will have cause to be ashamed of yourself. Therefore, why should we hesitate? Shall I help you, my darling, in coming to a decision on the matter?"

"Yes, papa."

"If I can understand your heart on this matter, it has never as yet been given to this young man."

"No, papa." This Mary said not altogether with that complete power of asseveration which the negative is sometimes made to bear.

"But there must be a beginning to such things. A man throws himself into it headlong,—as my Lord Carstairs seems to have done. At least all the best young men do." Mary at this point felt a great longing to get up and kiss her father; but she restrained herself. "A young woman, on the other hand, if she is such as I think you are, waits till she is asked. Then it has to begin." The Doctor, as he said this, smiled his sweetest smile.

"Yes, papa."

"And when it has begun, she does not like to blurt it out at once, even to her loving old father."

"Papa!"

"That's about it; isn't it? Haven't I hit it off?" He paused, as though for a reply, but she was not as yet able to make him any. "Come here, my dear." She came and stood by him, so that he could put his arm round her waist. "If it be as I suppose, you are better disposed to this young man than

you are likely to be to any other, just at present."

"Oh yes, papa."

"To all others you are quite indifferent?"

"Yes, indeed, papa."

"I am sure you are. But not quite indifferent to this one? Give me a kiss, my darling, and I will take that for your speech." Then she kissed him,—giving him her very best kiss. "And now, my child, what shall I say to the Earl?"

"I don't know, papa."

"Nor do I, quite. I never do know what to say till I've got the pen in my hand. But you'll commission me to write as I may think best?"

"Oh yes, papa."

"And I may presume that I know your mind?"

"Yes, papa."

"Very well. Then you had better leave me, so that I can go to work with the paper straight before me, and my pen fixed in my fingers. I can never begin to think till I find myself in that position." Then she left him, and went back to her mother.

"Well, my dear," said Mrs Wortle.

"He is going to write to Lord Bracy."

"But what does he mean to say?"

"I don't know at all, mamma."

"Not know!"

"I think he means to tell Lord Bracy that he has got no objection."

Then Mrs Wortle was sure that the Doctor meant to face all the dangers, and that therefore it would behave her to face them also.

The Doctor, when he was left alone, sat a while thinking of the matter before he put himself into the position fitted for composition which he had described to his

daughter. He acknowledged to himself that there was a difficulty in making a fit reply to the letter which he had to answer. When his mind was set on sending an indignant epistle to the Bishop, the words flew from him like lightning out of the thunder-clouds. But now he had to think much of it before he could make any light to come which should not bear a different colour from that which he intended. "Of course such a marriage would suit my child, and would suit me," he wished to say;—"not only, or not chiefly, because your son is a nobleman, and will be an earl and a man of great property. That goes a long way with us. We are too true to deny it,—we hate humbug, and want you to know simply the truth about us. The title and the money go far,—but not half so far as the opinion which we entertain of the young man's own good gifts. I would not give my girl to the greatest and richest nobleman under the British Crown, if I did not think that he would love her and be good to her, and treat her as a husband should treat his wife. But believing this young man to have good gifts such as these, and a fine disposition, I am willing, on my girl's behalf,—and she also is willing,—to encounter the acknowledged danger of a long engagement in the hope of realising all the good things which would, if things went fortunately, thus come within her reach." This was what he wanted to say to the Earl, but he found it very difficult to say it in language that should be natural.

"MY DEAR LORD BRACY,—
When I learned, through Mary's mother, that Carstairs had been here in our absence and made a declaration of love to our girl, I was, I must confess, annoyed. I

felt, in the first place, that he was too young to have taken in hand such a business as that; and, in the next, that you might not unnaturally have been angry that your son, who had come here simply for tuition, should have fallen into a matter of love. I imagine that you will understand exactly what were my feelings. There was, however, nothing to be said about it. The evil, so far as it was an evil, had been done, and Carstairs was going away to Oxford, where, possibly, he might forget the whole affair. I did not, at any rate, think it necessary to make a complaint to you of his coming.

"To all this your letter has given altogether a different aspect. I think that I am as little likely as another to spend my time or thoughts in looking for external advantages, but I am as much alive as another to the great honour to myself and advantage to my child of the marriage which is suggested to her. I do not know how any more secure prospect of happiness would be open to her than that which such a marriage offers. I have thought myself bound to give her your letter to read because her heart and her imagination have naturally been affected by what your son said to her. I think I may say of my girl that none sweeter, none more innocent, none less likely to be over-anxious for such a prospect could exist. But her heart has been touched; and though she had not dreamt of him but as an acquaintance till he came here and told his own tale, and though she then altogether declined to entertain his proposal when it was made, now that she has learnt so much more through you, she is no longer indifferent. This, I think, you will find to be natural.

"I and her mother also are of course alive to the dangers of a long

engagement, and the more so because your son has still before him a considerable portion of his education. Had he asked advice either of you or of me he would of course have been counselled not to think of marriage as yet. But the very passion which has prompted him to take this action upon himself shows, —as you yourself say of him,—that he has a stronger will than is usual to be found at his years. As it is so, it is probable that he may remain constant to this as to a fixed idea.

“I think you will now understand my mind and Mary’s and her mother’s.” [Lord Bracy as he read this declared to himself that though the Doctor’s mind was very clear, Mrs Wortle, as far as he knew, had no mind in the matter at all.] “I would suggest that the matter should remain as it is, and that each of the young people should be made to understand that any fu-

ture engagement must depend, not simply on the persistency of one of them, but on the joint persistency of the two.

“If, after this, Lady Bracy should be pleased to receive Mary at Carstairs, I need not say that Mary will be delighted to make the visit. —Believe me, my dear Lord Bracy, yours most faithfully,

“JEFFREY WORTLE.”

The Earl, when he read this, though there was not a word in it to which he could take exception, was not altogether pleased. “Of course it will be an engagement,” he said to his wife.

“Of course it will,” said the Countess. “But then Carstairs is so very much in earnest. He would have done it for himself if you hadn’t done it for him.”

“At any rate the Doctor is a gentleman,” the Earl said, comforting himself.

CHAPTER XXIII.—MR PEACOCKE’S RETURN.

The Earl’s rejoinder to the Doctor was very short: “So let it be.” There was not another word in the body of the letter; but there was appended to it a postscript almost equally short. “Lady Bracy will write to Mary and settle with her some period for her visit.” And so it came to be understood by the Doctor, by Mrs Wortle, and by Mary herself, that Mary was engaged to Lord Carstairs.

The Doctor, having so far arranged the matter,—having, as it were, laid a fairly firm grasp on the thing which had been offered to him,—said little or nothing more on the subject, but turned his mind at once to that other affair of Mr and Mrs Peacocke. It was evident to his wife, who probably alone understood the buoyancy of his spirit,

and its corresponding susceptibility to depression, that he at once went about Mr Peacocke’s affairs with renewed courage. Mr Peacocke should resume his duties as soon as he was remarried, and let them see what Mrs Stantiloup or the Bishop would dare to say then! It was impossible, he thought, that parents would be such asses as to suppose that their boys’ morals would be affected to evil by connection with a man so true, so gallant, and so manly as this. He did not at this time say anything further as to abandoning the school, but seemed to imagine that the vacancies would get themselves filled up as in the course of nature. He ate his dinner again as though he liked it, and abused the Liberals, and was anxious about the grapes and peaches,

as was always the case with him when things were going well. All this, as Mrs Wortle understood, had come to him from the brilliancy of Mary's prospects.

But though he held his tongue on the subject, Mrs Wortle did not. She found it absolutely impossible not to talk of it when she was alone with Mary, or alone with the Doctor. As he counselled her not to make Mary think too much about it, she was obliged to hold her peace when both were with her; but with either of them alone she was always full of it. To the Doctor she communicated all her fears and all her doubts, showing only too plainly that she would be altogether broken-hearted if anything should interfere with the grandeur and prosperity which seemed to be partly within reach, but not altogether within reach of her darling child. If he, Carstairs, should prove to be a recreant young lord! If Aristotle and Socrates should put love out of his heart! If those other wicked young lords at Christ Church were to teach him that it was a foolish thing for a young lord to become engaged to his tutor's daughter before he had taken his degree! If some better-born young lady were to come in his way and drive Mary out of his heart! No more lovely or better girl could be found to do so,—of that she was sure. To the latter assertion the Doctor agreed, telling her that, as it was so, she ought to have a stronger trust in her daughter's charms,—telling her also, with somewhat sterner voice, that she should not allow herself to be so disturbed by the glories of the Bracy coronet. In this there was, I think, some hypocrisy. Had the Doctor been as simple as his wife in showing her own heart, it would probably have been found that he was as much set upon the coronet as she.

Then Mrs Wortle would carry the Doctor's wisdom to her daughter. "Papa says, my dear, that you shouldn't think of it too much."

"I do think of him, mamma. I do love him now, and of course I think of him."

"Of course you do, my dear;—of course you do. How should you not think of him when he is all in all to you? But papa means that it can hardly be called an engagement yet."

"I don't know what it should be called; but of course I love him. He can change it if he likes."

"But you shouldn't think of it, knowing his rank and wealth."

"I never did, mamma; but he is what he is, and I must think of him."

Poor Mrs Wortle did not know what special advice to give when this declaration was made. To have held her tongue would have been the wisest, but that was impossible to her. Out of the full heart the mouth speaks, and her heart was very full of Lord Carstairs, and of Carstairs House, and of the diamonds which her daughter would certainly be called upon to wear before the Queen,—if only that young man would do his duty.

Poor Mary herself probably had the worst of it. No provision was made either for her to see her lover or to write to him. The only interview which had ever taken place between them as lovers was that on which she had run by him into the house, leaving him, as the Earl had said, planted on the terrace. She had never been able to whisper one single soft word into his ear, to give him even one touch of her fingers in token of her affection. She did not in the least know when she might be allowed to see him,—whether it had not been settled among the elders that they were not to see each other as real

lovers till he should have taken his degree,—which would be almost in a future world, so distant seemed the time. It had been already settled that she was to go to Carstairs in the middle of November and stay till the middle of December; but it was altogether settled that her lover was not to be at Carstairs during the time. He was to be at Oxford then, and would be thinking only of his Greek and Latin,—or perhaps amusing himself, in utter forgetfulness that he had a heart belonging to him at Bowick Parsonage. In this way Mary, though no doubt she thought the most of it all, had less opportunity of talking of it than either her father or her mother.

In the meantime Mr Peacocke was coming home. The Doctor, as soon as he heard that the day was fixed, or nearly fixed,—being then, as has been explained, in full good-humour with all the world except Mrs Stantiloup and the Bishop,—bethought himself as to what steps might best be taken in the very delicate matter in which he was called upon to give advice. He had declared at first that they should be married at his own parish church; but he felt that there would be difficulties in this. “She must go up to London and meet him there,” he said to Mrs Wortle. “And he must not show himself here till he brings her down as his actual wife.” Then there was very much to be done in arranging all this. And something to be done also in making those who had been his friends, and perhaps more in making those who had been his enemies, understand exactly how the matter stood. Had no injury been inflicted upon him, as though he had done evil to the world in general in befriending Mr Peacocke, he would have been quite willing to pass the matter over in silence

among his friends; but as it was, he could not afford to hide his own light under a bushel. He was being punished almost to the extent of ruin by the cruel injustice which had been done him by the evil tongue of Mrs Stantiloup, and, as he thought, by the folly of the Bishop. He must now let those who had concerned themselves know as accurately as he could what he had done in the matter, and what had been the effect of his doing. He wrote a letter, therefore, which was not, however, to be posted till after the Peacocke marriage had been celebrated, copies of which he prepared with his own hand in order that he might send them to the Bishop and to Lady Anne Clifford, and to Mr Talbot and,—not, indeed, to Mrs Stantiloup, but to Mrs Stantiloup's husband. There was a copy also made for Mr Momson, though in his heart he despised Mr Momson thoroughly. In this letter he declared the great respect which he had entertained, since he had first known them, both for Mr and Mrs Peacocke, and the distress which he had felt when Mr Peacocke had found himself obliged to explain to him the fact,—the fact which need not be repeated, because the reader is so well acquainted with it. “Mr Peacocke,” he went on to say, “has since been to America, and has found that the man whom he believed to be dead when he married his wife, has died since his calamitous reappearance. Mr Peacocke has seen the man's grave, with the stone on it bearing his name, and has brought back with him certificates and evidence as to his burial.

“Under these circumstances, I have no hesitation in re-employing both him and his wife; and I think that you will agree that I could do no less. I think you will agree,

also, that in the whole transaction I have done nothing of which the parent of any boy intrusted to me has a right to complain."

Having done this, he went up to London, and made arrangements for having the marriage celebrated there as soon as possible after the arrival of Mr Peacocke. And on his return to Bowick, he went off to Mr Puddicombe with a copy of his letter in his pocket. He had not addressed a copy to his friend, nor had he intended that one should be sent to him. Mr Puddicombe had not interfered in regard to the boys, and had, on the whole, shown himself to be a true friend. There was no need for him to advocate his cause to Mr Puddicombe. But it was right, he thought, that that gentleman should know what he did;—and it might be that he hoped that he would at length obtain some praise from Mr Puddicombe. But Mr Puddicombe did not like the letter. "It does not tell the truth," he said.

"Not the truth!"

"Not the whole truth."

"As how! Where have I concealed anything?"

"If I understand the question rightly, they who have thought proper to take their children away from your school because of Mr Peacocke, have done so because that gentleman continued to live with that lady when they both knew that they were not man and wife."

"That wasn't my doing."

"You condoned it. I'm not condemning you. You condoned it, and now you defend yourself in this letter. But in your defence you do not really touch the offence as to which you are, according to your own showing, accused. In telling the whole story, you should say: 'They did live together though they were not married;—

and, under all the circumstances, I did not think that they were on that account unfit to be left in charge of my boys.'"

"But I sent him away immediately,—to America."

"You allowed the lady to remain."

"Then what would you have me say?" demanded the Doctor.

"Nothing," said Mr Puddicombe;—"not a word. Live it down in silence. There will be those, like myself, who, though they could not dare to say that in morals you were strictly correct, will love you the better for what you did." The Doctor turned his face towards the dry, hard-looking man and showed that there was a tear in each of his eyes. "There are few of us not so infirm as sometimes to love best that which is not best. But when a man is asked a downright question, he is bound to answer the truth."

"You would say nothing in your own defence?"

"Not a word. You know the French proverb: 'Who excuses himself is his own accuser.' The truth generally makes its way. As far as I can see, a slander never lives long."

"Ten of my boys are gone!" said the Doctor, who had not hitherto spoken a word of this to any one out of his own family;—"ten out of twenty."

"That will only be a temporary loss."

"That is nothing,—nothing. It is the idea that the school should be failing."

"They will come again. I do not believe that that letter would bring a boy. I am almost inclined to say, Dr Wortle, that a man should never defend himself."

"He should never have to defend himself."

"It is much the same thing. But I'll tell you what I'll do,

Dr Wortle,—if it will suit your plans. I will go up with you and will assist at the marriage. I do not for a moment think that you will require any countenance, or that if you did, that I could give it you."

"No man that I know so efficiently.

"But it may be that Mr Peacocke will like to find that the clergymen from his neighbourhood are standing with him." And so it was settled when the day should come on which the Doctor would take Mrs Peacocke up with him to London, Mr Puddicombe was to accompany them.

The Doctor when he left Mr Puddicombe's parsonage had by no means pledged himself not to send the letters. When a man has written a letter, and has taken some trouble with it, and more especially when he has copied it several times himself so as to have made many letters of it,—when he has argued his point successfully to himself, and has triumphed in his own mind, as was likely to be the case with Dr Wortle in all that he did,—he does not like to make waste paper of his letters. As he rode home he tried to persuade himself that he might yet use them. He could not quite admit his friend's point. Mr Peacocke, no doubt, had known his own condition, and a strict moralist might condemn him. But he,—he,—Dr Wortle,—had known nothing. All that he had done was not to condemn the other man when he did know!"

Nevertheless, as he rode into his own yard, he made up his mind that he would burn the letters. He had shown them to no one else. He had not even mentioned them to his wife. He could burn them without condemning himself in the opinion of any one,—and he burned

them. When Mr Puddicombe found him at the station at Broughton as they were about to proceed to London with Mrs Peacocke, he simply whispered the fate of the letters. "After what you said I destroyed what I had written."

"Perhaps it was as well," said Mr Puddicombe.

When the telegram came to say that Mr Peacocke was at Liverpool, Mrs Peacocke was anxious immediately to rush up to London. But she was restrained by the Doctor,—or rather by Mrs Wortle under the Doctor's orders. "No, my dear; no. You must not go till all will be ready for you to meet him in the church. The Doctor says so."

"Am I not to see him till he comes up to the altar?"

"On this there was another consultation between Mrs Wortle and the Doctor, at which she explained how impossible it would be for the woman to go through the ceremony with due serenity and propriety of manner unless she should be first allowed to throw herself into his arms, and to welcome him back to her. "Yes," she said, "he can come and see you at the hotel on the evening before, and again in the morning,—so that if there be a word to say you can say it. Then when it is over he will bring you down here. The Doctor and Mr Puddicombe will come down by a later train. Of course it is painful," said Mrs Wortle, "but you must bear up." To her it seemed to be so painful that she was quite sure that she could not have borne it. To be married for the third time, and for the second time to the same husband! To Mrs Peacocke, as she thought of it, the pain did not so much rest in that, as in the condition of life which these things had forced upon her.

"I must go up to town to-

morrow, and must be away for two days," said the Doctor out loud in the school, speaking immediately to one of the ushers, but so that all the boys present might hear him. "I trust that we shall have Mr Peacocke with us the day after to-morrow."

"We shall be very glad of that," said the usher.

"And Mrs Peacocke will come and eat her dinner again like before?" asked a little boy.

"I hope so, Charley."

"We shall like that, because she has to eat it all by herself now."

All the school, down even to Charley, the smallest boy in it, knew all about it. Mr Peacocke had gone to America, and Mrs Peacocke was going up to London to be married once more to her own husband,—and the Doctor and Mr Puddicombe were both going to marry them. The usher of course knew the details more clearly than that,—as did probably the bigger boys. There had even been a rumour of the photograph which had been seen by one of the maid-servants,—who had, it is to be feared, given the information to the French teacher. So much, however, the Doctor had felt it wise to explain, not thinking it well that Mr Peacocke should make his reappearance among them without notice.

On the afternoon of the next day but one, Mr and Mrs Peacocke were driven up to the school in one of the Broughton flies. She went quickly up into her own house, when Mr Peacocke walked into the school. The boys clustered round him, and the three assistants, and

every word said to him was kind and friendly;—but in the whole course of his troubles there had never been a moment to him more difficult than this,—in which he found it so nearly impossible to say anything or to say nothing. "Yes, I have been over very many miles since I saw you last." This was an answer to young Talbot, who asked him whether he had not been a great traveller whilst he was away.

"In America," suggested the French usher, who had heard of the photograph, and knew very well where it had been taken.

"Yes, in America."

"All the way to San Francisco," suggested Charley.

"All the way to San Francisco, Charley,—and back again."

"Yes; I know you're come back again," said Charley, "because I see you here."

"There are only ten boys this half," said one of the ten.

"Then I shall have more time to attend to you now."

"I suppose so," said the lad, not seeming to find any special consolation in that view of the matter.

Painful as this first reintroduction had been, there was not much more in it than that. No questions were asked, and no explanations expected. It may be that Mrs Stantiloup was affected with fresh moral horrors when she heard of the return, and that the Bishop said that the Doctor was foolish and headstrong as ever. It may be that there was a good deal of talk about it in the Close at Broughton. But at the school there was very little more said about it than what has been stated above.

CHAPTER XXIV.—MARY'S SUCCESS.

In this last chapter of our short story I will venture to run rapidly over a few months so as to explain how the affairs of Bowick arranged themselves up to the end of the current year. I cannot pretend that the reader shall know, as he ought to be made to know, the future fate and fortunes of our personages. They must be left still struggling. But then, is not such always in truth the case, even when the happy marriage has been celebrated?—even when, in the course of two rapid years, two normal children make their appearance to gladden the hearts of their parents?

Mr and Mrs Peacocke fell into their accustomed duties in the diminished school, apparently without difficulty. As the Doctor had not sent those ill-judged letters he of course received no replies, and was neither troubled by further criticism nor consoled by praise as to his conduct. Indeed it almost seemed to him as though the thing, now that it was done, excited less observation than it deserved. He heard no more of the metropolitan press, and was surprised to find that the 'Broughton Gazette' inserted only a very short paragraph, in which it stated that "they had been given to understand that Mr and Mrs Peacocke had resumed their usual duties at the Bowick School, after the performance of an interesting ceremony in London, at which Dr Wortle and Mr Puddicombe had assisted." The press, as far as the Doctor was aware, said nothing more on the subject. And if remarks injurious to his conduct were made by the Stantiloups and the Momsons, they did not reach his ears. Very soon after the return of the Peacockes there was a grand dinner-party at the palace,

to which the Doctor and his wife were invited. It was not a clerical dinner-party, and so the honour was the greater. The aristocracy of the neighbourhood were there, including Lady Anne Clifford, who was devoted, with almost repentant affection, to her old friend. And Lady Margaret Momson was there, the only clergyman's wife besides his own, who declared to him with unblushing audacity that she had never regretted anything so much in her life as that Augustus should have been taken away from the school. It was evident that there had been an intention at the palace to make what amends the palace could for the injuries it had done.

"Did Lady Anne say anything about the boys?" asked Mrs Wortle, as they were going home.

"She was going to, but I would not let her. I managed to show her that I did not wish it, and she was clever enough to stop."

"I shouldn't wonder if she sent them back," said Mrs Wortle.

"She won't do that. Indeed I doubt whether I should take them. But if it should come to pass that she should wish to send them back, you may be sure that others will come. In such a matter she is very good as a weathercock, showing how the wind blows." In this way the dinner-party at the palace was in a degree comforting and consolatory.

But an incident which of all was most comforting and most consolatory to one of the inhabitants of the parsonage took place two or three days after the dinner-party. On going out of his own hall-door one Saturday afternoon, immediately after lunch, whom should the Doctor see driving himself into the yard in a hired gig from Broughton—but young Lord Carstairs. There

had been no promise, or absolute compact made, but it certainly had seemed to be understood by all of them that Carstairs was not to show himself at Bowick till at some long distant period, when he should have finished all the trouble of his education. It was understood even that he was not to be at Carstairs during Mary's visit,—so imperative was it that the young people should not meet. And now, here he was getting out of a gig in the rectory yard! "Holloa, Carstairs! is that you?"

"Yes, Dr Wortle,—here I am."

"We hardly expected to see you, my boy."

"No,—I suppose not. But when I heard that Mr Peacocke had come back, and all about his marriage, you know, I could not but come over to see him. He and I have always been such great friends."

"Oh! to see Mr Peacocke?"

"I thought he'd think it unkind if I didn't look him up. He has made it all right; hasn't he?"

"Yes;—he has made it all right, I think. A finer fellow never lived. But he'll tell you all about it. He travelled with a pistol in his pocket, and seemed to want it too. I suppose you must come in and see the ladies after we have been to Peacocke?"

"I suppose I can just see them," said the young lord, as though moved by equal anxiety as to the mother and as to the daughter.

"I'll leave word that you are here, and then we'll go into the school." So the Doctor found a servant, and sent what message he thought fit into the house.

"Lord Carstairs here!"

"Yes, indeed, Miss! He's with your papa, going across to the school. He told me to take word into Missus that he supposes his lordship will stay to dinner." The maid who carried the tidings, and

who had received no commission to convey them to Miss Mary, was, no doubt, too much interested in an affair of love, not to take them first to the one that would be most concerned with them.

That very morning Mary had been bemoaning herself as to her hard condition. Of what use was it to her to have a lover, if she was never to see him, never to hear from him,—only to be told about him,—that she was not to think of him more than she could help? She was already beginning to fancy that a long engagement carried on after this fashion would have more of suffering in it than she had anticipated. It seemed to her that while she was, and always would be, thinking of him, he never, never would continue to think of her. If it could be only a word once a month it would be something,—just one or two written words under an envelope,—even that would have sufficed to keep her hope alive! But never to see him;—never to hear from him! Her mother had told her that very morning that there was to be no meeting,—probably for three years, till he should have done with Oxford. And here he was in the house,—and her papa had sent in word to say that he was to eat his dinner there! It so astonished her that she felt that she would be afraid to meet him. Before she had had a minute to think of it all, her mother was with her. "Carstairs, love, is here!"

"Oh mamma, what has brought him?"

"He has gone into the school with your papa to see Mr Peacocke. He always was very fond of Mr Peacocke." For a moment something of a feeling of jealousy crossed her heart,—but only for a moment. He would not surely have come to Bowick if he had begun to be in-

different to her already! "Papa says that he will probably stay to dinner."

"Then I am to see him?"

"Yes;—of course you must see him."

"I didn't know, mamma."

"Don't you wish to see him?"

"Oh yes, mamma. If he were to come and go, and we were not to meet at all, I should think it was all over then. Only,—I don't know what to say to him."

"You must take that as it comes, my dear."

Two hours afterwards they were walking, the two of them alone together, out in the Bowick woods. When once the law,—which had been rather understood than spoken,—had been infringed and set at naught, there was no longer any use in endeavouring to maintain a semblance of its restriction. The two young people had met in the presence both of the father and mother, and the lover had had her in his arms before either of them could interfere. There had been a little scream from Mary, but it may probably be said of her that she was at the moment the happiest young lady in the diocese.

"Does your father know you are here?" said the Doctor, as he led the young lord back from the school into the house.

"He knows I'm coming, for I wrote and told my mother. I always tell everything; but it's sometimes best to make up your mind before you get an answer." Then the Doctor made up his mind that Lord Carstairs would have his own way in anything that he wished to accomplish.

"Won't the Earl be angry?" Mrs Wortle asked.

"No;—not angry. He knows the world too well not to be quite sure that something of the kind would happen. And he is too fond of his son not to think well

of anything that he does. It wasn't to be supposed that they should never meet. After all that has passed I am bound to make him welcome if he chooses to come here, and as Mary's lover to give him the best welcome that I can. He won't stay, I suppose, because he has got no clothes."

"But he has;—John brought in a portmanteau and a dressing-bag out of the gig." So that was settled.

In the meantime Lord Carstairs had taken Mary out for a walk into the wood, and she, as she walked beside him, hardly knew whether she was going on her head or her heels. This, indeed, it was to have a lover. In the morning she was thinking that when three years were past he would hardly care to see her ever again. And now they were together among the falling leaves, and sitting about under the branches as though there was nothing in the world to separate them. Up to that day there had never been a word between them but such as is common to mere acquaintances, and now he was calling her every instant by her Christian name, and telling her all his secrets.

"We have such jolly woods at Carstairs," he said; "but we shan't be able to sit down when we're there, because it will be winter. We shall be hunting, and you must come out and see us."

"But you won't be there when I am," she said, timidly.

"Won't I? That's all you know about it. I can manage better than that."

"You'll be at Oxford."

"You must stay over Christmas, Mary; that's what you must do. You musn't think of going till January."

"But Lady Bracy won't want me."

"Yes, she will. We must make her want you. At any rate they'll

understand this; if you don't stay for me, I shall come home even if it's in the middle of term. I'll arrange that. You don't suppose I'm not going to be there when you make your first visit to the old place."

All this was being in Paradise. She felt when she walked home with him, and when she was alone afterwards in her own room, that, in truth, she had only liked him before. Now she loved him. Now she was beginning to know him, and to feel that she would really,—really die of a broken heart if anything were to rob her of him. But she could let him go now, without a feeling of discomfort, if she thought that she was to see him again when she was at Carstairs.

But this was not the last walk in the woods, even on this occasion. He remained two days at Bowick, so necessary was it for him to renew his intimacy with Mr Peacocke. He explained that he had got two days' leave from the tutor of his College, and that two days, in College parlance, always meant three. He would be back on the third day, in time for "gates;" and that was all which the strictest college discipline would require of him. It need hardly be said of him that the most of his time he spent with Mary; but he did manage to devote an hour or two to his old friend, the school-assistant.

Mr Peacocke told his whole story, and Carstairs, whose morals were perhaps not quite so strict as those of Mr Puddicombe, gave him all his sympathy. "To think that a man can be such a brute as that," he said, when he heard that Ferdinand Lefroy had shown himself to his wife at St Louis,—“only on a spree."

"There is no knowing to what depth utter ruin may reduce a man who has been born to better things.

He falls into idleness, and then comforts himself with drink. So it seems to have been with him."

"And that other fellow;—do you think he meant to shoot you?"

"Never. But he meant to frighten me. When he brought out his knife in the bedroom at Leavenworth he did it with that object. My pistol was not loaded."

"Why not?"

"Because little as I wish to be murdered, I should prefer that to murdering any one else. But he didn't mean it. His only object was to get as much out of me as he could. As for me, I couldn't give him more, because I hadn't got it." After that they made a league of friendship, and Mr Peacocke promised that he would, on some distant occasion, take his wife with him on a visit to Carstairs.

It was about a month after this that Mary was packed up and sent on her journey to Carstairs. When that took place, the Doctor was in supreme good-humour. There had come a letter from the father of the two Mowbrays, saying that he had again changed his mind. He had, he said, heard a story told two ways. He trusted Dr Wortle would understand him and forgive him, when he declared that he had believed both the stories. If after this the Doctor chose to refuse to take his boys back again, he would have, he acknowledged, no ground for offence. But if the Doctor would take them, he would intrust them to the Doctor's care with the greatest satisfaction in the world,—as he had done before.

For a while the Doctor had hesitated; but here, perhaps for the first time in her life, his wife was allowed to persuade him. "They are such leading people," she said.

"Who cares for that? I have never gone in for that." This, however, was hardly true. "When

I have been sure that a man is a gentleman, I have taken his son without inquiring much further. It was mean of him to withdraw after I had acceded to his request."

"But he withdraws his withdrawal in such a flattering way!" Then the Doctor assented, and the two boys were allowed to come. Lady Anne Clifford hearing this, learning that the Doctor was so far willing to relent, became very piteous and implored forgiveness. The noble relatives were all willing now. It had not been her fault. As far as she was concerned herself she had always been anxious that her boys should remain at Bowick. And so the two Cliffords came back to their old beds in the old room.

Mary, when she first arrived at Carstairs, hardly knew how to carry herself. Lady Bracy was very cordial and the Earl friendly, but for the first two days nothing was said about Carstairs. There was no open acknowledgment of her position. But then she had expected none; and though her tongue was burning to talk, of course she did not say a word. But before a week was over Lady Bracy had begun, and by the end of the fortnight Lord Bracy had given her a beautiful brooch. "That means," said Lady Bracy in the confidence of her own little sitting-room up-stairs, "that he looks upon you as his daughter."

"Does it?"

"Yes, my dear; yes." Then they fell to kissing each other, and did nothing but talk about Carstairs and all his perfections, and his unalterable love, and how these three years could be made to wear themselves away, till the conversation,—simmering over as such

conversation is wont to do,—gave the whole house to understand that Miss Wortle was staying there as Lord Carstairs's future bride.

Of course she stayed over the Christmas, or went back to Bowick for a week and then returned to Carstairs, so that she might tell her mother everything, and hear of the six new boys who were to come after the holidays. "Papa couldn't take both the Buncombes," said Mrs Wortle in her triumph, "and one must remain till midsummer. Sir George did say that it must be two or none, but he had to give way. I wanted papa to have another bed in the east room, but he wouldn't hear of it."

Mary went back for the Christmas and Carstairs came; and the house was full, and everybody knew of the engagement. She walked with him, and rode with him, and danced with him, and talked secrets with him,—as though there were no Oxford, no degree before him. No doubt it was very imprudent, but the Earl and the Countess knew all about it. What might be, or would be; or was the end of such folly, it is not my purpose here to tell. I fear that there was trouble before them. It may, however, be possible that the degree should be given up on the score of love, and Lord Carstairs should marry his bride,—at any rate when he came of age.

As to the school, it certainly suffered nothing by the Doctor's generosity; and when last I heard of Mr Peacocke, the Bishop had offered to grant him a licence for the curacy. Whether he accepted it I have not yet heard, but I am inclined to think that in this matter he will adhere to his old determination.

THE INDIAN FAMINE REPORTS.

DURING the last hundred years there have been thirty-six visitations of scarcity, in varied degrees of intensity and for varied periods of duration, extending over varied areas of the Indian peninsula, occupied by dense or thin populations. Since India came under the imperial rule in 1858, there have been six famines. These have attracted much attention in England; they were all treated in different ways, with more or less success: there was a general feeling that the method of treatment should be uniform, and that better arrangements were required for saving life. It was therefore resolved in 1877 to appoint a Commission "to collect with the utmost care all information which may assist future administrators in the task of limiting the range or mitigating the intensity of these calamities." The task was difficult. A few remarks on the Report will explain how it was carried out, and show the value of a document that has been "presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of her Majesty." It will be handed down as a full history of past famines, and as a guide for their future treatment. It will remain with the ruling powers to determine whether the following observations will in any way tend to modify some of the impracticable arrangements suggested by the Commissioners.

It is proposed in this paper to follow the order of the Report* as far as possible; to make such remarks as various sections demand; to point out certain omissions in the famine history; and then to conclude with some general remarks.

The instructions referred to contain a difficulty. Information was wanted to assist in limiting "the range" of famine. Where was this to be found? The Commission sought it in meteorology.

"All Indian famines are caused by drought," is laid down as an axiom. The subject of rainfall connected with sun-spots is then entered upon. "All terrestrial meteorological phenomena closely depend" on the heat derived from the sun, and the fluctuation of rain seems to be "in some measure synchronous with those periodical variations in the condition of the sun which are indicated by the varying extent or number of sun-spots; and the recurring cycle of about eleven years" according with "the period of sun-spot variation."

This cycle is not true. The table at p. 22 registers six droughts and famines of varied duration in the twenty years of imperial rule. There was a great famine in 1833-34, over the same area as that of 1876-77. Here are cycles of over forty in one case, and over three years in the other. It is therefore impossible to say that famines are the effects of sun-spots.

Has it not been forgotten that the sun is a general factor? If the spots cause action on this earth, then the action of drought, if due to sun-spots, must be general; but drought is always local. Is there not an analogy here to the two tails of the calf as being due to the comet, and the double-headed chicken to the eclipse?

The Report goes on to say, "No power exists of foreseeing the atmospheric changes effective in pro-

* Report of the Indian Famine Commission: Part I., Relief—1880. Report of the Committee on the Riots in Poona and Ahmednagar—1875-76. Report by James Caird, Esq., C.B., on the Condition of India: with Correspondence. 1880.

ducing the rainfall, or of determining beforehand its probable amount in any season," so as to be of any practical use. But "within the last few years a very satisfactory system of meteorological observations has been established all over British India." It is suggested that this department should be maintained, strengthened, and improved, so as to supply information to the officers connected with agriculture or famines. Such aids should, however, be used with due caution, and a "more sound and accurate knowledge of the causes and mode of occurrence of the periodical rains" should be diffused "among all classes of the community."

It is therefore suggested that India should pay for a department which has not now, and probably never will have, any knowledge of the coming rain-quantity. The American meteorologists circulate useful forecasts of weather, because the area of land information is extensive, and the wind-currents are pretty well known. India has no information from the ocean as to the evaporation or condensation for the south-west, and no information from China or Siberia of a coming north-east, monsoon. As placed before us by the Commission, the whole of this meteorological theory may be dispensed with.

The present writer, when in India, had many opportunities of watching the advent of the south-west monsoon, and formed the following conclusions, which may be taken for what they are worth.

Evaporation is always going on from the ocean. There must be moisture in the air. The condensation of this moisture depends upon the temperature of the air. If the condensing stratum is high, the moisture rises to it. If that stratum is low, the condensation takes place there. When the clouds roll up

along the ocean surface, they impinge upon the land with a great electric disturbance. When the fleecy clouds fly high, there is no electricity. In the latter case there is little or no rain, in the former a great deal. The line of Western Ghats, of varied height, from 2000 to 8000 feet, catch the clouds, and receive a copious rain. When the clouds are thus caught, they roll down the eastern slope, and rain falls over the great area of India's plain. If the clouds do not catch the mountains, they pass rainless over the plains. Therefore the higher the mountain the greater the chance of rain in the valleys and the plains.

As far as weather-changes, rainfall, and the general condition of the crops are concerned, it was formerly the custom for the division native officers to send weekly reports to the British officer in charge of the district; it was sufficient for all current revenue business. A collector could at any time know of a deficient rainfall; but as he had no means of knowing what quantity of food was in store, he could never be sure that a famine was at hand. This difficulty still exists.

The population of British India is put down at "190 millions." "Disastrous consequences" and great "difficulties" in famine times are found in the fact that the great mass of the people depend on agriculture. A failure of rain is a failure of labour, wages, and food. "The complete remedy for this condition . . . will be found only in the development of industries other than agriculture, and independent of the fluctuations of the seasons." The population being in excess of the demand for necessary field-work, "eat up the profits that would otherwise spring from the industry of the community. It is not surprising that in a country

thus situated material progress is slow."

It may be remarked here that it is very surprising; but India has been brought into this situation by connection with richer people. Fifty years ago hand-loom rattled in every Deccan village. It has been said that they existed all over India. There were weavers who did nothing else, and ploughmen wove their cloth from their own cotton. Thirty years ago those looms were gone. No cotton-spinning helped the gossip at the ryot's door: men and women wove their cloth from their own cotton grown on the cheap soil of India, carried 200 miles on bullocks' backs, transported over the long black waters, converted into fabrics on British looms, and brought back again to be part of the clothing of a half-naked Indian. Did not Mr Caird know this, and all the history of free trade in cotton, when he signed his name to that sentence, "*Material progress is slow*"? If he did, and if the present condition is disastrous, *Material ruin is rapid* would have been a truer conclusion to the section.

There is another point in the above quotation that must be noted. Why is the population in excess of demand for necessary field-labour? A wide field opens out on this question. Volumes might be written on the increasing and decreasing races. Libraries might be filled with the details of field-work. Harvests, home consumption, storage, and export, all have their histories; but our observations must be very limited. When the Land Revenue Survey began to give land to the occupiers in Western India (1836), there was a rush of people to the plough; the unfortunate weavers were mostly absorbed, and *ooprees* (strangers) took up land—some for *bonâ fide* culture, some because

their new possessions became security for old and new debts. The production of food and the population increased. The assessment on the land was lowered, but more revenue was collected. The people were happy, and the Government was contented. About 1851-52 a new impetus was given to the population by railway-works and higher wages for labour. In 1862 the demand for Indian produce raised the prices, and in July 1864 the Government of Bombay wrote—"There never was a time during the known history of Western India when land suitable for the growth of grain was in greater demand than during the present period of high-priced, unskilled labour." In course of time this demand decreased, and at the same period the harvests were deficient. The creditors claimed their bonds; the ploughman had to give up his land under the civil laws of 1859. In 1875 the cultivators rebelled against their creditors, and in 1877 the increased population of the Deccan were thrown into a famine by a natural drought that extended over the same area as that of 1833-34, with a greater intensity, and with a smaller stock of food in store. These populations in the Bombay and Madras provinces had therefore increased by natural and accidental causes. They had been thrown out of labour and food by nature and by the laws. The Famine Commission finds the people in excess of demand, and the object of its Report is to multiply them.

"Of the rate of increase in a population, little is known at present;" but "the effect of famine in checking the increase of numbers is less than is often supposed." It is believed that India, as an unaffected whole, will find food for affected areas without much pressure. The demand is roughly calculated; the

quantity available for storage, export, and consumption of the richer classes, is put down; and it is believed that the local stocks "commonly suffice for not less than three months' consumption of the local population."

Forty years ago the revenue officers in the Deccan calculated, on good data, that an average harvest laid up a store of food sufficient to tide over the next harvest; but there were always cultivators who never stored enough for that period. A scanty rainfall reduced these classes to distress. This distress must be much increased, and the price of food must be much enhanced, if only three months' supply is kept in store. The danger for the future is touched on, and a remedy is suggested. Waste lands are to be reclaimed, agriculture is to be improved, irrigation is to be extended, and there are "reasonable grounds of confidence for the future." Touching these suggestions lightly as they come, it may be said that many attempts have been made to reclaim waste areas, some with, some without success, because no preliminary efforts were made to clear the jungles or purify the water. If some attention is paid to these points, all the rest will follow on. Improvement in agriculture follows improvement in the people: at present they are deteriorating. Irrigation has been considered a certain remedy for famines, but there is much to be said against it. Canals from perennial rivers insure water, but many rivers in India depending on the yearly rainfall become so low that they cannot be used. The works for canals are expensive: a remuneration is obtained by an assessment on the land irrigated, or by the sale of water. An ordinary food-crop would not pay; exportable produce is therefore raised, and

the proceeds are satisfactory. The food-area is decreased. *Anicuts* or canals, on rain-supplied rivers, may give valuable crops in ordinary seasons; but these fail in times of drought. Tanks and wells come under the same difficulty. Ordinary food is not produced in rainy seasons from artificial reservoirs. These fill, but food-crops grow without them. In dry seasons they partly or entirely fail; and it is only now and then that they can be used for growing ordinary food. Natural irrigation is used for food-crops; but this fails in dry seasons. In 1833-34 the wells in the Sholapur country nearly all failed. In 1877-78, between the Poona and Ahmednagar districts, they did not fail. Of course a certain quantity of irrigation is a food or money aid to the proprietor; but as in all available seasons it reduces the area of food-production, or does not become remunerative, it follows that artificial irrigation must not be much extended at present, and cannot be depended on as a remedy for famine.

We now have to consider the export of Indian produce. The export of food-grain, excepting rice, is said to be small, "because other countries do not consume the millets of India." The 'Pioneer Mail' of 23d Sept. 1880, tells us—"Between October 1878 and February 1879, 490,000 maunds of Juar and Bajree were exported." Northern India is said to export wheat, grain, pulse, and other spring crops. In the 'Mail' of 19th July 1880, the figures of the trade of India for the year ending the 31st March 1880 are given. The exports of merchandise reached the values of the respective years—

" For 1876-77 are	£60,961,632
" 1877-78 "	65,185,713
" 1878-79 "	60,893,611
" 1879-80 "	67,168,861 "

The year following the famine had a decrease; but the last season showed a great increase. Raw cotton, opium, wheat, and jute expanded; tea and tobacco declined. The 'Pioneer Mail' of 23d September tells us that the trade between the United States and India, imports and exports, shows "an increase of 183 lacs of rupees in four years."

The Commissioners seem to argue, that because the actual exportation to foreign countries of food-grain is small, that this enormous exportation of soil-produce does not affect famines. It is overlooked that an enormous area of land capable of bearing food-crops is thus used for other purposes. Food-grains must therefore decrease in quantity and increase in price. This increase necessarily happens when the hand-to-mouth population can get no labour and no wages. The ordinary rate of wages does not seem to be given in the Report, but in the provinces they may be put down at $1\frac{1}{2}$ or 2 annas. Mr Caird tells us the labourer "gets the same dole that he got in the last generation." He allows that they have risen in centres of industry, and the Government of India accepts the situation. The general rate of wages is therefore low, about 3d. per day. The price of food varies—in one place indicating famine, in another prosperity. Famine prices vary: in ordinary years common food-grain is put down at 20 to 30 seers per rupee, equivalent to 25s. to 17s. per quarter of 500 lb.; in time of great scarcity it will rise to 63s. or 50s. per quarter, and even higher,—and "these prices will generally admit of import with commercial profit" from foreign countries. The labouring classes on wages could not maintain themselves at these rates, and with no wages they fall at once into a

famine. There may be food in store with the *buniah*, and with well-to-do cultivators; but the famishing classes must fall back on the assistance of the Government, even in average harvest seasons, partly because the land is used for exportable produce, and not for food. Thus we come again to the future requirements of an increasing people with decreasing food, the possible contingencies, and the proposal for storage of food.

This storage and its cost are discussed in the Report, and insisted on in the dissent from that Report, signed by two of the members. The plan proposed is to store food in good seasons: the yearly cost is put down at £800,000. A supply is to be always ready, because a famine "may occur in any year." But difficulties are foreseen in the management, in the interference with trade, in its effect upon the morals of the people. It is thought that private storage is sufficient, that railways will help to make it available; but internal communication must be attended to. Actual destitution must be met with employment and wages or by gratuitous relief, the food to come from the traders.

The dissenting members think that not only is storage of food expedient, but necessary. The points are argued as closely as the evidence allowed. The population requiring storage is put down at 40 millions. The calculations in section 156 are objected to, but the surplus is taken as providing in twelve years of storage enough "to feed 300 millions." But when famine does come, "the barest sufficiency of supplies can be obtained" at quadrupled prices; and therefore "the alleged surplus must be greatly overestimated."

The dissenting members do not mention how long stored grain will

keep good. We have seen it taken out from the *peus* (underground granaries) black and unfit for food in three years. The dissenters say, "as famines come but once in twelve years," their stores must go on accumulating to meet the probable demand. It would not be safe to try so long a storage. When grain is put into the *peus* in a very dry condition, it keeps well; but the natural fermentation of grain in a closed-up cellar was in former days a constant cause of loss of life by entering the pit before it was ventilated. It was an ordinary custom to keep a two years' stock for local consumption; but the same causes which lead the Commissioners to insist on the improvement of communication, have already acted on the producing areas by facilitating export, and encouraging the growth of exportable crops. When there were no roads and no carts in the outlying villages; when great herds of Brinjaree bullocks gathered the grain and carried it into the cities; when there was a transit duty on all grain,—the food of the Deccan ryots was sold at 40 seers per one rupee. The difference is striking, and one is inclined to accept the conclusion of the dissenting members that storage of grain in good seasons would be advisable. There seems, however, to be an error somewhere: the dissenters use eleven or twelve years as a fixed famine cycle; but in the table, page 22, six periods of drought lasting over one or two years are recorded, all within twenty years. This chance of constant recurrence of rain-failure destroys the accuracy of the calculations, so that neither the dissenting members nor the majority of the Commissioners can be trusted on the storage question. It may be observed here, that in one place the population is given at 190,000,000,

and in another at 181,350,000; while 58,300,000 are given at another place as the numbers affected by famine during the last century. The rate of mortality for the last thirty years, for which time alone an estimate of any value can be given, "did not fall short of 10,000,000." Here again we find "the ultimate effect on the growth of the population is much less important than might at first sight have been supposed." This storage question will be noted again.

"The practical recommendations" must now be looked at, but only in those parts where the benefit is doubtful, or where the evil is evident. At present the collector is the chief famine supervisor; all the district and village officers are under him. As the chief magistrate, all the police are under his orders. He has, or ought to have, an intimate knowledge of all that goes on in his charge. He is the first British officer who necessarily obtains all local information of a coming famine. Formerly he obtained from his divisional native officers a weekly report of rainfall and the condition of the crops. His information was sufficiently full for his arduous and responsible duties. He knew what village roads or walls wanted repair, and what tanks required cleaning out. He was, in fact, a ubiquitous officer, with a general knowledge of the condition, political, economical, and statistical, of the districts under his charge. It is necessary, for the proper discharge of his duties, that he should be the paramount executive.

A famine code is now to be prepared, "to secure uniformity of system." It has been allowed that conditions vary in every province, therefore each must have its code. "Prompt and decided action" is necessary. "The local codes of famine relief should be laid before

the Supreme Government;" and, being sanctioned, "the entire responsibility" of due relief should rest with the local governments—a "financial check" only being retained by the Supreme Government, with a "general power of correcting errors." The limits, therefore, of local authority "should be clearly defined at the outset." It may be observed here, in passing, that as novel cases and questions must arise in every famine, it will be as well to give a wide margin to this delegated authority, in order to prevent unnecessary delay.

The Commission see that it is impossible to secure all that may be wanted by any "system of measures;" and it is suggested that the "prearranged plan be placed definitely and permanently under some special branch of the secretariat,"—this office to have charge of all famine records, to note results, and collect information or statistics on the general condition of the people, for the purpose of supplying Government with a report "in a uniform and intelligible manner," and for "conveying orders." A corresponding secretariat office would be under the Viceroy in Council. This department would most certainly interfere with the prompt action that is so necessary in famine times.

These offices "would not necessarily involve any great increase of expenditure." They would be called "the agriculture department." As the recurrence of famines is put down in the Report as a cycle of eleven or twelve years, the famine commissioner and the director of agriculture, both of special activity, and assisted by the "co-operation of all departments," would not apparently have much to do; but if under the imperial rule famines and poverty become chronic and perennial, then the Commissioners

have laid down a good deal of work. Medical and sanitary officers are to be busy; the administration of railways is to be "closely watched;" some one will have to see that irrigation is used "for the preservation of the food-crops," and, as far as possible, for their extension. But "the efficiency of such a special department will depend mainly on the completeness and accuracy with which the vital agriculture and economic statistics" are collected in villages, and compiled in each subdivision and district. To carry out these views, there are to be "supervisors of village accountants" where necessary, "visiting each village in turn;"—and over these "there should be a special officer in every district, to see that the supervisors did their duty, to test the agricultural returns, to examine market-prices, to look after the population in the records of births and deaths; food-stocks, fluctuation in trade, loans, and rates of interest; the demand, supply, and wages of labour." These officers, while generally subordinate to the collector, would be specially under the orders of the agricultural department, in respect to the system on which their returns are to be prepared." The director of agriculture is to control all this machinery, and is to be selected for his knowledge of the agricultural classes. "All these officials, and a certain proportion of the special officers in each district, should have been prepared for their duties by a technical training in scientific and practical agriculture."

We then come to the relief duties. Work and wages are to be given "promptly," before the people have lost strength from want of food, and "needful steps should be taken to induce all destitute persons . . . to come to the

places where employment is offered." The work should be simple labour, under the officers of the "Public Works Department," assisted by the civil officer, under the general control of the collector, who is to be responsible for all relief in his district, except arrangements of a technical nature. Economy is to be considered,—“the wage should be adjusted from time to time so as to provide sufficient food for the labourer's support.” The minute consideration bestowed by the Commissioners on the details of these suggestions is sufficient proof of the ability and energy employed on the duty; but there can be no doubt that a complex matter is made more so by the increased establishment—doors are opened to fraud, bribery, and conspiracy, with the consequent delay in action. It is even suggested that the “wage should be paid, if possible, daily, otherwise at intervals of not more than three or four days, and the payment should be superintended by a thoroughly trustworthy officer.” Then they talk of classifying labour according to physical conditions; care should be taken that work does not depress morals or strength, and families are not to be broken up. All these details are entered into as if the men of the Commission had heard them for the first time.

We feel justified in this suspicion of their ignorance on a reference to the table at page 24. There are blanks in it, and these “more frequently mean that there is no information on record, than that nothing ought to be entered under the heading in question.” In the famine of 1832-33, the cost to the Bombay Government is blank, but the loss of land revenue is entered as Rs.981,200. Now, information on this point must have been recorded in the Sholapur office, at

Poona; in the office of the revenue commissioner, northern division; and in the revenue department, Bombay. It will therefore be as well to give a brief memorandum of the action taken at that time. It will be seen that all the points now suggested as novelties were considered, and the main point, the unity of the population, was not forgotten as it now has been.

Some time in 1833, the writer was left in temporary charge of the sub-collectorate and the *adawlut*, including the jail, as fourth assistant to the collector of Poona, on the special duty of inquiring into the arrears of revenue from the time when the Deccan provinces came under the government of the East India Company. The duty impressed upon him the necessary homogeneity of very heterogeneous races. It was self-evident that the common *cumbie* or *ryot*, could not exist without the money-lender, or the *soucar* without the *ryot*. Therefore the Government, so far as it was dependent on the land revenue, could not exist without both. At that time a famine broke out suddenly in the Sholapur districts, and starving people flocked into Sholapur. Immediate action was necessary.

A *darbar* was arranged, the city merchants were summoned; they all paid taxes at that time. The fact of a famine was accepted by the assembly. The merchants were asked if the food-stock in hand was sufficient to meet the possible demand. It was pointed out to the meeting, and it knew very well, that the maintenance of the labouring classes was the maintenance of themselves. After a consultation, and an estimate of demand, they said—No! They were then called on to provide the deficiency. Government would give employment, and pay the bills for food. This was agreed to. One *pancha-*

jet was appointed on the spot to make out the ration account, another to calculate the probable numbers; and in consultation with another part of the assembly, it was arranged that the starved-out labour should be at once employed in cleaning out the city tank, then nearly dry—in repairing the broken walls and roads. The *adawlut* was to supply the necessary tools from the jail stores; and as the duty of collecting revenue was in abeyance, clerks and *peons* were drafted from my district offices to superintend the work. The labourers were divided into gangs of twelve—one to be selected by themselves as *muccadam*, headman. One *peon* overlooked several gangs. Clerks visited all the works twice a-day. They issued ration-tickets to each gang. Each *muccadam* drew the morning and evening food from the nearest *buniah*: these men made temporary shops. A superior officer selected the daily locality for labour. The police officer superintended the labour-gangs. One of his subordinates overlooked those who could not work. The city *mhometdar* supervised the ticket-clerks, and compared their ticket-books with the tickets given in by the *buniah*s as vouchers for their daily bills. A fixed ration was drawn up, with a weekly tariff. This was prepared by the merchants, subject to the approval of the officer in charge of the district. A brief report was sent in direct to the Government, and a copy through the usual channel. Details may not have been given, but they were all entered in the office-book at the time; and that document would have been forthcoming now if the Commissioners had not imagined that their own “carefully considered series” of questions were sufficient to elicit all the required information.

The Report is destitute of infor-

mation as to the merchants who supply food, and we are forced to gather the present feeling towards these useful people from the official Report ‘On the Riots in Poona and Ahmednagar in 1875.’ These merchants are mostly money-lenders; and, says this Report, chapter iii. sect. 38, clause 3, “The average Marwari money-lender is not a pleasant character to analyse; his most prominent characteristics are love of gain, and indifference to the opinions or feelings of his neighbours. His business . . . would tend to degrade and harden even a humane nature, which his is not.” There are many accusations in this Report against money-lenders as a body; and it is very unfortunate for Government and the people that such a feeling should be authoritatively published. Every magistrate in western India has had these classes before him for fraud, perjury, forgery, assault, and murder. They were not worse than similar classes in other countries; and on the occasion now alluded to at Sholapur in 1833, they (chiefly Lingayet Brahmins) were very useful, very merciful, and careful to save the Government from any unreasonable expenditure. They had to import food-grain from Goojerat and Khandesh, all on pack-bullocks or *tat-toos*; but the impression, at this distance of time, is that it was sold to the working-parties at unremunerative prices. It may be considered for a moment what British rule has done to make the merchants what they now are. In 1836 their house and occupation taxes were remitted, with a promise never to reimpose them. In 1838, or thereabout, the transit duties were taken off. In 1836 the Land Revenue Survey gave land in fee-simple to the pauper occupant. This became security for more loans—it brought more money-lenders into the country.

In 1859 the civil laws were altered. The 'Report on the Deccan Riots,' sect. 104, says: "The creditor has more than all the protection usually accorded by civilised codes. . . . The agricultural debtor has no loophole whatever." Is it strange that *soucar* and *buniah* should use the law that we gave them, and the opportunity that we offer? Is it strange that that astute man, the late Sir George Wingate, should have written in 1852, "The facilities which the law allows for the realisation of debt have expanded credit to a most hurtful extent" (p. 31, Deccan Riots). "The prosperity of the ryot is no longer necessary to the prosperity of the village money-lender. . . . Mutual goodwill and confidence have been succeeded by mutual distrust and dislike" (p. 45). The laws were not changed for the benefit of the *soucar* when those words were written, and Sir George could not confess that the sop wanted by the money-lender was the land that had been given to the ryot by his own action. The cancer had become dangerous in twelve years: the ryots had overdrawn; enmity was growing to that point so much desired by the *soucar*; the Government made the law in 1859-60 that dropped the sop into the open *soucar's* mouth. "But," say the Indian Government, in reply to Mr Caird (p. 19), quoting Sir Henry Maine, "each step onwards was supposed to be suggested by the experiences of the past; no step was taken till it was believed to have the approval of the local Indian experts most in credit. There never was a system which, after the first, grew up less at haphazard than that under which India is administered and governed." He (the *soucar*) is now the owner of thousands of acres wrung from pauper owners by decrees of civil courts, and is reviled

because, like Shylock, he has claimed his bond.

These are the people to whom allusion is made in the Famine Report: "We have no doubt that the true principle for the Government to adopt as its general rule of conduct . . . is to leave the business of the supply and distribution of food to private trade." It is not supposed that the traders in all regions are in the same condition as they are said to be in the Deccan, but the Commissioners speak generally,—“Every interference by the Government with the operations of trade . . . must be prejudicial to the growth of those habits of self-reliance which it is so essential for Government to encourage.”

It was this very encouragement that was given to the trade at Sholapur. And this system of using the existing trade for the food-supply has, we believe, been always adopted in Bombay; and it was chiefly the extraordinary methods of procuring food in Bengal in 1874, and the uncertain procedure suggested by that method, which made it seem necessary to send a commission of inquiry to India.

Notwithstanding all the reasoning that runs through these Reports, and the letters from Mr Caird, these papers convey nothing new to practical men, unless it is in the way to meet the increased cost of "improved administration." We have endeavoured to show that the new suggestions are theoretical, useless, or mischievous; but the additional charge seems to be put down at £800,000 yearly, and something over "£100,000" for new offices and famine charges—say £1,000,000 in all. In the present financial condition of India, no new establishments are required; there is already a statistical office, from which the collector

can obtain any information which his own staff could not supply, but the collector must be the chief authority in his own province. The Report ends with a "belief" that the extra expenditure, instead of leading to "inconvenience, will be followed at an early period by material improvements"—increasing the power of contending successfully with the terrible scourge of drought and famine to which the country must be ever liable."

In the last section of the dissent, signed by Messrs Caird and Sullivan, there is a sentence that must not be handed down to history without notice: "The complete break-down that occurred in the last famine was but a repetition, on a larger scale, of the failure which has characterised the administration of every Indian famine in this century, with the single exception of that in 1874." It has been shown above that the Commission had no information as to the expenditure for the famine in the Bombay territory, 1833-34. As far as the most afflicted province was concerned, Sholapur, it was met with success by the very measures now suggested, with the exception of money wages. It is easy to trace the origin of the opinion given as to the Behar and Bengal famine of 1874; but, in the opinion of lookers-on, no famine administration was worse conducted as to its interference with trade, its management of stores, and its reckless waste of money, than that which was taken out of the hands of the executive departments, and controlled by the Viceroy. It would have been well if the Commission had gone into the detail of that famine administration. If they had, it must have been held up as a beacon to be avoided in the future. As they did not do this, it seems

as if the express duty for which they were paid had been neglected. The same may be said of Mr Caird. He was instructed to consider agriculture—he reported in sixteen pages on "The Condition of India"!

We now venture on a few general remarks. Droughts must come, and famines of greater or less extent and duration must happen. Populations vary: in Bengal the food-production is scarcely sufficient for the people in an average year; in other provinces it has been barely enough, and of late years very little has been kept in store. The reason of this will be seen presently. The result is, that present famines come more suddenly and unexpectedly than formerly. As population increases, this liability must grow with it. With the increase of exportable produce, as shown above, there must be a decrease of food-produce. As the demand for food increases with the population, the price of food must rise; but as the supply of labour is now more, and will be far more, than the demand, the wages of labour will not rise. At the present moment they are perhaps at a lower value than in any other region of the civilised world—barely enough to live on. There is, then, a growing condition of chronic poverty. In addition to this, every man with any security is in debt to the village *soucar*, either on his own account or for his ancestors. Many are bond-servants (slaves) to their creditors. If there is no work at home, they are let out, and even sent to relief-works, with an understanding that a portion of their wages is to be given to the master. In average seasons there is home-work to be had; but the moment field-labour ceases from drought, too much rain, or conclusion of

harvest, the hand-to-mouth populations are in want. Formerly some cultivators, with small stores of food in baskets or in *peus*, assisted their poor neighbours; they had also a chance of food by wood or grass cutting. These two chances are now closed, and there is nothing left for a man to do at home. In ordinary times there may be casual occupation for a few in the large towns, but in times of scarcity this fails.

There are, then, famines of money and famines of drought; and without taking an extravagant view of the present condition of the cultivating class in India, they seem to be more unhappily situated than at any previous time. As far as the Deccan is concerned, another class of people are in a worse condition than they were fifty years ago. We allude to the hereditary village servants and artificers. When these people were dependent on the field-produce of their village, getting an uncertain quantity of food from each ryot, it was to the interest of both parties that good work should be done and a liberal payment made. When this old system was broken up in 1836 by the substitution of a money payment, there was not enough to live on in many instances, and therefore no inducement for the artificer to do good work. The hereditary artificers were often thrown out of work, whole classes left destitute, and the pauper population was increased.

The Land Revenue Survey thus broke up two social ties of long standing, the mutual dependence of ryot and artificer, and of ryot and *soucar*. The connection had come about by the natural gravitation of social molecules; time had worn off the accidental asperities, and up to 1835-36 the wheels rolled round

without friction: there was no necessity for throwing the great machine out of gear. But novelties were attractive; unsuspected agencies were at work; the poor ryot was to be freed from all future misery. The *soucar* found a greater attraction in the land than in the person of the ryot; and, as his yearly measure of grain was no longer paid by the ryot, the artificer did not care to labour for him. A great revolution began then. More mischief was done in endeavouring to stop gaps in 1859. Whole populations were then placed under the tender mercies of the *soucar* and the grain-dealer; and in 1874-75, the Viceroy of India smashed the broken wheels to pieces by showing that the famished nations were dependent on him and not on their old neighbours. The Deccan tires flew off in 1875, the spokes rattled in the shrinking nave.

Mr Fawcett described the situation, as reported by the 'Times' of 16th June 1880: "At the time the East India Company was abolished, many safeguards against extraordinary expenditure, and many securities for economy, were swept away; and the safeguards and securities which had been substituted for them had to a great extent proved impotent." The East India Company had cracked the egg; the imperial rule has broken it. We have already had two Commissions of "king's horses and king's men," the egg has not been "put together again," and another Commission has been talked of to inquire how the egg was broken.

One of the securities alluded to by Mr Fawcett requires some observation: the instructions to the Famine Commission touched upon it, and it is talked of in the Report very lightly. In other places

it has been held up as a certain remedy for famine. Irrigation is alluded to; and the curious part of the subject is, that the whole question is so little understood by those who write about it. A repetition may be useful.

There is in India natural and artificial irrigation. As a rule, food is not produced on the latter for the people, because the assessment requires a more valuable crop. Food, chiefly rice, is produced on the former. In bad seasons the artificial irrigation has been used to supplement food at an enhanced price. A pauper famine is, however, more aggravated than mitigated by artificial irrigation, and the natural irrigation fails in dry seasons. In ordinary years all common food is produced by the rainfall, and therefore all land artificially watered does not produce food, but reduces the food-growing area in some provinces. It is not, therefore, advisable to increase artificial irrigation, except in provinces where rice is the food, and where the supply of water is sufficient for two crops in the year. This is not always the case; but the Commission did not touch on the subject, and therefore we can only speak from general knowledge. If the water-supply depends on a tank, it is sure to fail in dry seasons; if it depends on a river, that often becomes useless from the failure of one monsoon: and over the whole peninsula to the south of the Indus and Ganges valleys, the great rivers that water the vast area are entirely dependent on the rainfall on the mountains of Central India—in Bhopal, Rampoor, and Nagpoor provinces. Below the Taptee to Cape Comorin all the rivers come from the rainfall on the long line of Western Ghauts, and two dry seasons reduce many of these long

rivers to trickling streams and deep pools. The great irrigation-works on the lower Godavery were in danger of failing in 1877. These contingencies were beyond the notice of the Famine Commissioners, but they seem essential to the prospects of the future.

It is obvious that the increasing value of Indian exports throws money into the country; but the tendency is to decrease the quantity, and increase the price, of food. The increase of irrigation is therefore an increase of famine in a general view, though it may decrease personal and local distress if there is food to buy.

When producing populations come into trade contact with non-producing nations, the benefit to each ought to be equal by exchange of commodities. But if the demand for certain produce interferes with the production of necessary food, it would seem necessary for the ruling power to modify the action of trade by some politic measures. The increasing demand for Indian produce in foreign countries is a proof of mercantile profit; but if that profit is an agent for famine, or a factor in reducing the area of food-production, it seems fair that something should be contributed from that mercantile profit—or, in other words, by the consumer—to the maintenance of those producers who are deprived of their food by the actions of trade. The subject expands here beyond the scope of this paper; but as there is no escape from the fact that more than sixty million pounds sterling value of produce is yearly exported from India, the question may be put to the authorities—Should not that value contribute something to the maintenance of those producing populations whose food it helps to reduce? As famines do not come every year,

there is no necessity for a high demand; but if one-eighth per cent were raised by export duty on the whole, a nucleus for a famine fund of about 375,000 rupees yearly might be funded. This does not seem to have been thought of, but it is feasible: the export is there, the Custom-house does the duty, the Treasury receives the money, and the only thing to be done would be to deduct such amount as may be determined on from the receipts, and credit it to the famine fund. In making a licence system for a famine fund, the authorities did not assess it with due care; and hence the fraud, oppression, and omissions that are so constantly complained of.*

In making their elaborate but useless calculation for a famine fund, the Commissioners do not seem to have discovered that a "Dharun Puttee," or famine-tax, existed in the Deccan under the rule of the Peshwa. It was taken off in 1836, and never had been collected by the Government of the East India Company; but its history would have been useful.

There is another point connected with trade that deserved some attention. The value of Indian exports is given above at over sixty million pounds sterling. It was lately discovered that transit duties were levied on goods for export by the municipal *octrois* on the road: it has, we believe, been put a stop to as an illegal levy. These duties, however, did not prohibit export; the goods, therefore, realised a profit. It must not be forgotten that all exported raw produce is produced from the lightest taxed land, and by the cheapest labour, in the world. As a matter of course, the actual producer is remunerated for his labour by the sale of his commodity; but if the commodity sells at

a profit, surely the merchant and consumer may be expected to contribute something in the way of duties on these exports, for the reasons already given. If an export duty is objected to, the same end can be obtained by making a light cess on all lands occupied by exportable crops. The unfortunate licence-tax, as it now stands, might then be abolished.

India has not been specially fortunate in its finance ministers; and it seems strange that neither this department nor the Famine Commission thought of using the old machinery for the storage of food, and giving the privilege of storage to the most respectable merchants in those districts where famines are common. This suggestion is not put forward as a sure remedy, but as much more sure than the plan of the Commissioners. There was formerly, and probably there still is, a head trader in every market-town. He used to fix the market-prices of food and other things. In some places this man had certain privileges admitted by Government, and he took the lead in initiating municipal boards. It seems possible that this social official might be designated by some honorary title, to be hereditary during good conduct, and to be trusted with the yearly storage in his district of such quantity of food-grain as might be thought advisable to meet the possible demands in his circle of a season of scarcity,—this scarcity to be determined by the municipal board, where there is one, and by the head merchant (*shait*) in council with the collector, in other districts. A fee should accompany the title, to be renewed on each succession. The reimbursement would come from sales in bad seasons, and the weekly tariff of food would be adjusted by the same au-

thorities as above. The fees of office should be credited to the famine fund. As Government would be the paymaster in such seasons of scarcity, there would be no risk of loss, as prices must rise in scarce seasons. If there happened to be a run of good seasons, the Government could afford to remunerate the famine storekeeper for any *certain* loss by resale of old stores.

One misfortune in the documents under consideration is, that they lay down the law dogmatically, and as if the subject had not been thought of and digested long ago. This results naturally from not examining old records, and from contenting themselves with oral evidence, and answers to questions from those thought competent to give them. The latter only referred to their own experience, and any native evidence is generally given to suit the audience. Few people are better judges of this than the educated Brahmins; and we can see the scene before us as the precautions for checks on supposed dishonesty, the necessary safeguards, and the labour test, were talked over with these astute men. It is long since we found out that if you suspect a native of India you are sure to be deceived; if you trust him, you are not; but in the case of the famine at Sholapur, no labour test was wanted, nor was there time to try one; the wages for the light labour required were a ration, defined by a native jury as sufficient. Notifications were sent to all villages, and the applications for labour on the published terms were deemed then, and should be deemed now, a sufficient test of poverty and starvation. If money is given, no test can exclude some who are not driven to the famine-works by a dire necessity.

If great public works are opened

to relieve famishing populations, and British officers are in command, it becomes an object with them to get on with the work. Two things are then liable to happen, both of which are better avoided,—1st, a ready acceptance of able labour; 2d, over-labour for inability. Again, if skilled superintendence is used for unskilled labour, either the patience or the strength of the superintendent is sacrificed. In 1877-78, on the Dhond and Munmar railway relief-works, one officer died on the spot, two soon after leaving the works, and one came to Europe ill. The detailed superintendence of all works should be intrusted to natives. They could be confided in to do such work as they were told to do nearly fifty years ago. It would be strange if that confidence cannot be justified under the greater number of Englishmen, and under a supposed better rule. Our district treasury officers are trusted with lacs of rupees: is it not paltry to suspect native clerks of defrauding starving labourers? The Report under consideration seems to have no confidence in famine management, unless by British superintendence and great expenditure. This is very unfortunate, at a moment when England is anxious to repose more trust in her Indian fellow-subjects.

We must now conclude this ancient story. It began in the time of Abraham, 3778 years ago. About two hundred years later the Egyptian famine took place. Confidence was placed in Joseph: he stored up the food and sold it; he gathered all the money from the people, then the cattle, horses, and asses; the people then became his slaves: he removed them from one part of the country to another, and settled their payments, from the seed that he had given, at one-fifth

of the produce. Instances are known where Indian traders have taken at the rate of 250 per cent; but the English Government would not enter into this lottery. The whole situation is very old: exaction began between Esau and Jacob, slavery in the sale of Joseph. David illustrated the present when he wrote, 3165 years ago, "Let the extortioner catch all that he hath, and let the strangers spoil his labour."

All this is now done, and a season of drought visits the land. Its produce has gone to other lands; there is no food for the poor; there is a famine from no rain and no money. Undigested policy, party laws, and free trade—or, in other words, the force of circumstances—have done all this.

The Commission was appointed for the purpose of giving information to enable the Indian authorities to meet future famines. Some of the outlines of famine history have been put together, measures now in use have been recommended for continuance. The two dissenting members tell us that the late attempts to save life in the famine

of 1877-78 were "a complete breakdown," and were but "a repetition on a large scale of the failure which has characterised the administration of every famine in this century, with the sole exception of that of 1874." In that year multitudes of people were fed, as the price of food was beyond their means; life was therefore preserved by an extravagant supply of food, a reckless waste of money, a vast loss of morality among the poor, a great disturbance of trade, and a sad exhibition of distrust. If any executive officer had allowed such things, he would probably have been dismissed the service.

We conclude by drawing attention to the famine relief plan outlined above, and would suggest that it should be applied to small local circles where necessary, under the control of the officer in charge of the district, either in communication with the governor direct, or through the usual channels. Collectors as a rule are fully competent to meet these emergencies, and any interference with them destroys that authority which ought to be paramount in their province.

FROM THE SICILIAN OF VICORTAL

I.—A DEDICATION.

LIKE spray blown lightly from the crested wave
 To glitter in the sun,
 So from my heart love gave
 These airy fancies to the eyes of a beloved one.
 But who shall guess
 From the blown foam that in the sunbeam shines
 What secret stores there be
 Of unsunn'd sea?
 Ah! how much less
 The depths of what I feel from these poor broken lines
 I dedicate to thee!

II.—REFLECTED HEAVEN.

The mountain-tops above the mist
 Like summer islands lie—
 Now we together both were blest
 If thither we could fly.
 And you, while at
 Your feet I sat,
 Would gaze into the skies;
 But I would be
 Content to see
 Their glory in your eyes.

III.—SUMMER IN WINTER.

Winter is it? Summer splendour
 Never was so fair to see!—
 All because a maiden tender
 Gave to-day her heart to me.
 Heaven a happy lifetime lend her,
 Long, and from all evil free;
 For the graces that commend her
 Make her life the life of me.

IV.—LOVE TEST.

Lassie wi' the face sae bonnie,
 An' the bricht bewitchin' ee,
 Is there, tell me, is there ony
 Danger I can dare for thee?

That I lo'e thee thou mayst know it,
 But it's hard for me to bear
 A' my love till I can show it
 By some danger I maun dare!

V.—THE VIOLET'S GRAVE.

The woodland! And a golden wedge
 Of sunshine slipping through!
 And there, beside a bit of hedge,
 A violet so blue!

So tender was its beauty, and
 So douce and sweet its air,
 I stooped, and yet withheld my hand,—
 Would pluck, and yet would spare.

Now which were best?—for spring will pass
 And vernal beauty fly—
 On maiden's breast or in the grass
 Where would you choose to die?

VI.—FELIX, FELIX TER QUATERQUE!

Shout and sing, ye merry voices
 Of the mountain-forest free!
 What, but late, were jarring noises
 Now as music are to me!
 Earth in bridal bloom rejoices,
 Heaven benignly bends to see!
 He, beloved of her his choice is,
 Blest of all the boys is he!
 Blest of all the world of boys is
 He that's telling this to thee!
 Shout and sing, ye merry voices!—
 Fill the forest with your glee!

VII.—SUMMER EVE.

It is the hour when all things rest:
 The sun sits in the bannered West
 And looks along the golden street
 That leads o'er ocean to his feet.

Sea-birds with summer on their wing
 Down the wide West are journeying,
 And one white star serenely high
 Peeps through the purple of the sky.

O sky, and sea, and shore, and air,
 How tranquil are ye now, and fair!
 But twice the joy ye are were ye
 If one that's dead companioned me.

VIII.—SERENADE.

Awake, beloved! it is the hour
 When earth is fairyland;
 The moon looks from her cloudy bow'r,
 The sea sobs on the sand.
 Our steps shall be by the dreaming sea
 And our thoughts shall wander far
 To the happy clime of a future time
 In a new-created star!

Arise, my fair! a strange new wind
 Comes kindly down from heaven;
 Its fingers round my forehead bind
 A chaplet angel-given.
 I'll sing to thee of the dawns to be
 And the buds that yet shall blow
 In the happy clime of a future time
 Which only the angels know!

IX.—THE FUGITIVES.

Dear love, we have left them behind us!
 Behind us, and far below!
 They will search a month ere they find us
 In the hill-wood where we go.

Listen! . . . that is the voice of the forest,
 It is whispering us words of cheer:
 Ah, my heart, when my heart was sorest,
 Has often been healed up here!

Why do you cling to me, darling,
 And bury your face in my breast?
 You may well be at ease where the starling
 Has grown a familiar guest.

The forest and the mountain
 And I are old, old friends,
 And the wild birds and the fountain
 And the sky that over them bends;

And the friends of my youth and my childhood,
Thou maiden of the sea
That hidest thy face in the wild wood,—
How could they be foes to thee?

Look up, my own heart maiden!
No foot of man comes here;
'Tis tenantless as Eden
Throughout the tranquil year!—

But I am nearly forgetting
Old Philip and his wife:
From sunrise to sunseting
They lead a simple life.

'Tis sixty years since he brought her
To share his board and bed;
And they had a son and a daughter—
But *she* is long since dead.

And the boy became a soldier
And marched to the wars away:
And the old couple grow still older
In the wood here where they stay.

How brightly your eyes are shining,
And but the trace of a tear!
With your cheek on my arm reclining,
Dear heart, you should have no fear.

They sit far up on the mountain
Beside their clean-swept hearth,
Where the river is only a fountain
And heaven is nearer than earth.

The goodwife knits her stocking,
And Philip should trap the game;
But he's old, so the birds are flocking
And the blue hares are quite tame.

The mother thinks of her daughter
And her hair that outshone the sun;
But Philip dreams of slaughter,
And of his wayward son.

There is none, you know, to advise her,
Excepting her prejudiced mate.
Ah, heaven! the mother is wiser
As love is better than hate.

So the mother knits and fondles
In fancy the flaxen hair,
While Philip a sabre handles,
And starts in his sleep in his chair.

How far to their cottage is it?—
A good hour's climb, I should say:
Of course, we must pay them a visit,
And they're sure to ask us to stay.

So now, sweetheart, if you're rested,
We'll farther up the wood:
Many a night have I nested
Here in the solitude.

It's grand in the wood in the sunlight
As the sunlight's falling now,
But I like it too when the wan light
Of the moon is on each bough.

Look back! she is floating yonder—
I saw her between the trees
When their fringes were drawn asunder
By the fingers of the breeze.

How naked and forsaken
She shrinks through the blue day-sky!
At night, never fear, she'll awaken
And lift her horn on high.

Look up through the boles before us,
And the long clear slanting lines
Where the light that shimmers o'er us
Is sifted through the pines!

It's a good hour yet till gloaming,
And then we've Selené's light;
And it's pleasant this woodland roaming
In search of a home for the night.

Give me your hand, my darling!
We're safe in the solitude;
In the world beneath us there's snarling—
There's peace in the mountain wood.

WINTER SPORTS AND PLEASURES.

THERE is a luxury, no doubt, in life in the tropics; and when we are shivering in our English damp and fogs, the islands of the South with their balm-scented breezes will flit before us in visions of the earthly Paradise. We are alive to the charms of cloudless skies; of the checkered shadows under flowery groves in landscapes lit up by floods of sunshine; of myriads of brilliant stars reflected in sleeping seas landlocked within reefs of coral. We can sympathise with the feelings of the tempest-tossed adventurers who, after beating in the teeth of Atlantic gales into the Unknown, exchanged the decks of their straining caravels for a time of blissful repose in the islands of "the Indies;" as we can imagine those seductive memories of the Cytheræan Otaheite that incited the mariners of the *Bounty* to their memorable deed of violence. But the tropical Edens have their shady sides for men who have been bred in more bracing latitudes. It is all very well for the sensuous aborigines to live in each glowing hour and take little heed of the morrow; to gather their fruits from the boughs within reach of their hands; to dispense with clothing in disregard of decency; to swing their hammocks of fibre anywhere out of the sun, and dream away the days and the feverish nights. The life must pall sooner or later on men with whom energy is inborn; the heat is enervating, and saps the strength, which is the source of health, good spirits, and self-satisfaction; and the lotus-eating immigrants, after a time, might be driven to seek refuge from weariness in suicide.

Englishmen have a happy knack of adaptability, and can acquit them-

selves with credit under most conditions. They made the fortune of our fervid West Indian colonies with their own before the abolition of the slave trade and of the sugar duties. They have conquered an empire in Asia and kept it, in spite of the relaxing atmosphere of the plains of Hindostan, where they must swelter through their duties in baking cantonments or stifling courts of justice, and struggle for a troubled sleep under punkahs. They have settled Queenslands, and Georgias, and Guianas, with many a province more or less swampy and sultry; they live, as they make up their minds occasionally to droop and die among mud-banks, mangroves, and malaria, at the mouths of rivers on the Gold and Grain coasts. They take cheerfully by battalions and batteries to scorching rocks, at such stations as Gibraltar, Malta, and Aden, which might be marked on an ascending atmospheric scale as hot, hotter, hottest. Nevertheless, and naturally, they will always show to more advantage in the least genial of latitudes. We have nothing more thrilling in the national annals—though foreigners, by the way, have been running us hard of late years, as the Dutch and the Scandinavians did in former centuries—than our stories of arctic adventure. We see the hardy navigator—an amphibious cross between the bull-dog and the sand-fish, with the tenacity of the one and the dash of the other—standing out into the polar fogs and ice-floes in the bark that was but a cockle-shell in point of tonnage. The timbers might be seasoned oak, and the rude fastenings of well-hammered iron, yet a casual nip of the ice must crack its sides

like a walnut-shell. We see the rough skipper and his crew clinging to the tiller and the frozen shrouds, in seas that sweep the deck from stem to stern, and weather that would tear any canvas into ribbons. In the safe little sea-boat, that is slow at the best under sail, they have to bide their time and possess their souls in patience as they lie becalmed under the lee of the ice-cliffs, or dodge the set of the ice-packs. There was scarcely room to "swing a cat" in the tiny cabin that just served as a refuge. Over-tasked and short-handed as they were, they had often to turn in "all standing," ready to answer the boatswain's call at a moment's notice; and they expected the inevitable arrival of the scurvy on salt junk, weevilly ship-biscuit, and new rum. Preserved meats and lime-juice were as yet undreamt of; and their medicine and luxury was the quid of tobacco, at once the best of sedatives and stimulants. It is a long stride from those forlorn-hopes of adventure to the well-found and strongly-manned expeditions we have lately been sending out to the Pole. But even with all the appliances that science and experience can suggest or liberality supply, the lives of arctic explorers must be trying at the best; and the soundest constitutions are strained if not shattered. Yet the only difficulty in finding the crews is the picking and choosing in the crush of volunteers; and cheerfulness under perfect discipline does its best to command success, though the sole distractions out of doors through the long dark winter, are constitutionals along the snow-paths kept clear to the "observatory," or sledging-parties carried out with heroic resolution.

For when you change passive endurance into a grapple with difficulties, the spirit will rise irrepres-

sibly to meet them. We have travellers wrapped in the casings of furs and woollens they dare not cast, facing the frozen blasts on the steppes of Tartary, or scrambling up the highest passes in our hemisphere—those gutter-pipes which drain the "Roof of the World."

We can recall a dozen stories of recent winter-travelling adventures, where we may be sure that the pleasures predominated over the pains, though the adventurers, who were gently born and bred, must have suffered as intensely as they endured doggedly. Such as Lord Milton and Dr Cheadle hewing their way, with "Mr and Mrs Assineboine," through the precipitous forests on the banks of the Fraser River; Major Butler likewise setting his face to the westward across "The Great Lone Land;" Mr Andrew Wilson carried as an invalid on a litter, along slate-cornices on precipices under the hanging snow-masses in the Himalayan "Abode of Snow;" or Major Burnaby, in his ride to Khiva in the cold that was almost too much for his Cossack guides.

What go far towards nerving the men of the North to the enjoyment of their winters, or of arctic weather, are the pleasures of hope and of contrast. Even the *employés* of the Hudson Bay Company have the prospect of basking through their long summer day; and the hardest of us would scarcely care to cast in our lot for life with the Esquimaux. Shaw and Forsyth, and the travellers who have crossed the Hindu Kush, looked forward to a welcome in the Vale of Kashmir, or in the rich vegetation that encircles Kashgar, sacred to the admirers of the Arabian Nights; while Burnaby, when he had left the steppes behind him, drew bridle among the gardens and pomegranate-groves of the Khivan

canals. Tourists in Europe have experienced delights of the kind when, after the damp and gloom of a raw Roman winter, they have taken their first spring rides in the Campagna, when it was bursting almost before their eyes into one vivid blush of violets; or when, after a long day and night passed in the old-fashioned *diligence* in the frozen wind on the heights of the Morena, they have rubbed their eyes, with the break of dawn, among the fountains and orange-trees of sunny Cordova. A balmy breath of spring in winter is soothingly refreshing as an oasis in the desert. But comparatively very little heat goes a long way with most Englishmen; and in a really tropical climate they generally feel at their worst. Even an unusually warm summer in England makes the life of too many of our fellow-creatures a melancholy spectacle, till they begin to pick up again with the shortening days.

Very different it is in the beginnings of "our old-fashioned English winter" with men who have wealth, health, and strength in moderation! We believe it is the lightness of feeling, following on the first steady fall of the temperature below the freezing-point, that explains those effusive rhapsodies on "seasonable" jollity which characterise our popular Christmas literature. We are really in excellent spirits, and perhaps the bracing air has gone to our heads. We see everything not precisely in *couleur de rose*, but in the dazzling radiancy of sparkling frost, and are in the humour to listen to absurdities and sentimentalities as sound enough sense to be fitting to the time of year. But it is the modern school of Christmas writers who are become sickly, stilted, and sentimental; and for that Dickens is chiefly responsible. He began so admira-

bly in a flow of natural humour and pathos, that he was encouraged to parody himself, and so the picturesque of 'Pickwick' and the city idyl of the 'Christmas Carol' came down to the level of the latest of his Christmas annuals. But the early Christmas pictures by masters of genius must touch sympathetic chords in every bosom, and make misery itself often feel sadly mirthful in memory of the frolics of happier times. Without going further back in our literature, take Scott's famous introduction to the sixth canto of 'Marmion'—

"Heap on more wood!—the wind is
chill;
But let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still."

The ring of the metre sounds like the church bells to a devotee, or the dinner-gong to a hungry man. What a striking picture of the kindly joviality that levels ranks and sets a truce to cares! The baron's hall, where the flames from the great log-fire that went roaring and crackling up the vast chimney, flashed their light on merry faces and burnished flagons. The stately baron in the chimney-corner, unbending for once; the "heir with roses in his shoes," flirting with village maiden with redder roses in her cheeks; the boar's head, bedecked with bays and rose-maries, grinning on the festal board among sirloins and huge bickers of plum-porridge, and was-sail-bowls bobbing with the roasted crabs; the tales of the hunting-field by flood and fell; the stories of venerable, time-honoured superstitions that made the hearers shudder even in that merry crowd; the mumming, the singing, the laughing, and the dancing, while the winds that howled and whistled through the trees and the loopholes in the battlements, drove the smoke-

wreaths back again down the chimney, and scattered the sparks from the blazing roots. Little recked kinsmen, tenants, and cottagers, of trifling inconveniences like these, in those Christmas gambols that

“Could cheer

The poor man's heart through half the year.”

Some centuries later, and in ‘Bracebridge Hall,’ we see how our old English fashion of keeping Christmas impressed a sympathetic American. The New Englanders, as Mrs Beecher Stowe shows in her ‘Pogonuc People,’ have a pretty notion of perpetuating those traditions that were carried over the Atlantic in the Mayflower, although the early Pilgrim Fathers were Puritans. But in a new country, with the go-ahead energy that has grubbed the forests and split the trees into shingles; with its practically-minded men and its hard utilitarianism, its brand-new buildings and its bald-faced meeting-houses, the associations must be lacking that give the season its solemnity. There are no old squires and old Master Simons; no old blue-coated serving-men bred under the roof-tree of the hall; no old polished mahogany dining-tables, or old family portraits whose burnished frames are brightened up for the occasion with mistletoe and holly-berries; no cellars of rare old wines and ales that flow at the festal Christmas-tide like water; above all, no quaint old Norman church, where the pews of oak and the medieval monuments have been as yet undesecrated by the æsthetic restorer. Then Dickens popularised the Bracebridge Halls—we will not say that he vulgarised them—in his delightful sketches of the Manor Farm. For though we fancy “the fine old host” dropped his *h*'s, though he welcomed that very rough diamond,

the inimitable Bob Sawyer, as a familiar friend, and extended his hospitalities to a seedy strolling actor like Jingle, — nevertheless the Manor Farm must live in the memories of Englishmen and their descendants *in sæcula sæculorum*. We cordially echo the hearty sentiment of Mr Weller: “Your master's a very pretty notion of keepin' everything up, my dear. I never see such a sensible man as he is, or such a reg'lar gen'l'm'n;” as we assent to the grateful utterance of Mr Pickwick, when sitting down “by the huge fire of logs, to a substantial supper and a mighty bowl of wassail”—“this is indeed comfort.”

But the whole of the winter sketches, of which that supper on Christmas Eve is but one in a series, are as delightful as they are characteristic of manners that are departing. The drive along the frost-bound roads on the outside of the Muggleton mail, after the cod-fish and the barrels of oysters had been forced into the gaping fore-boot; the change of horses at the inn in the market-town—it was only a slow coach, we must remember—when Mr Pickwick and Mr Tupman came so near being left behind, when they had run up the yard to refresh themselves at the tap; the walk along the frozen lanes to the farm; the meeting with the house-party, the reception, the supper, the rubbers, and the hot elder-wine to follow; the wedding next day, and the breakfast that sent the poor relations to bed. Of course there is a dash of Christmas romance in the pretty fancy that elderly gentlemen fresh from town could hold out through the rustic hospitality of the farm, and rise each successive morning all the brisker and the brighter for it. We should surmise that Mr Pickwick must have been troubled by nightmares

after those late and heavy suppers ; while Mr Tupman was the very subject for flying twinges of the gout. But there can be no question that, for keeping dyspepsia at bay, there is nothing like country life and jovial company at a time when you feel bound to feast and make merry ; and there are charmingly natural touches in that scene on the ice which preceded Mr Pickwick's immersion in the pond. It is a rough English translation of the hearty communion of a Scottish curling-match. Old men become boys again in the biting air, and take to frolicking like cart-horses turned out in a meadow. "Ceremony doffs her pride" at the Manor Farm as in the baronial hall ; and there are old Wardle and the fat boy, Mr Pickwick and his faithful Sam, Messrs Snodgrass, Sawyer, Winkle, &c., all "keepin' the pot a-bilin'," and following each other along the slide as if their very lives depended on it.

Such bright winter pictures have, of course, their sombre side. You tumble out of bed to see the country covered with a dazzling mantle. Every twig and slender spray is enveloped in icy tracery. There are festoons of icicles depending from the window-sashes, and the panes are interlaced with a delicate fretwork that may shame those masterpieces of Moorish art that are still the marvels of the connoisseur. Sparkling in the cold sunshine, it all looks cheerful enough as you contemplate it from a comfortably warmed room, unless, indeed, your soul be set upon hunting, and your horses are fretting in their stalls. But even in the country your pleasures may be dashed by reminders of the existence of suffering. There goes a thinly-clad urchin under the windows, shrugging his shoulders together, and blowing upon his frost-nipped fin-

gers. The birds are gathered into ragged balls on the boughs ; the blackbirds and starlings are hopping gingerly about on the lawn, like so many jackdaws of Rheims, blighted under the ban of the church ; the very tomtits seem limp and depressed ; while the robins, pressed by the cravings of appetite, come almost tapping at the windows as they ask for their crumbs. After all, it may be hoped that the sufferings of those country creatures are nothing worse than may be endured and soon forgotten. These birds will be fed from the breakfast-room windows, and there are still hips and haws in the hedgerows for their fellows. The boy has had a morning meal before turning out of his cottage, and there are worse maladies in the world than chilblains, while exercise will set youthful blood in circulation. But your thoughts travel away to the poor in the great towns, who must rise to fireless hearths and shiver on short commons. After all, such sufferings, like the poor themselves, will be always with us, and in winter time the souls of the well-conditioned must be exceptionally open to melting charity. If you cannot help being bright and cheery yourself, you feel the more bound to consider your less fortunate fellow-mortals. Christopher North put it very neatly and truly in one of the 'Noctes' for this month of December. He had been eulogising winter, *more suo*, over a blazing fire before the well-spread board in the blue parlour at Ambrose's ; and the Shepherd had been chiming in with the praises of cold and curling,—beef and greens. Tickler, sitting in moody reserve, strikes a dissonant note. "This outrageous merriment grates my spirits. 'Twill be a severe winter, and I think of the poor." North answers—"Are not wages good and

work plenty, and is not charity a British virtue?" And we trust that, in this season of 1880, we may write a cheerful article on winter pleasures without feeling sympathies or conscience unduly weighted. We hope that work will be plenty and wages good, for trade is steadily, if slowly, reviving, and the useful virtues of providence and temperance have been growing with the working classes since 1825. Charity is still a British virtue; while institutions that were then unthought of have been founded, and the organisation of dispassionate relief has been indefinitely extended. We remember, for our comfort too, as a fact incontestably established by statistics, that cold is far less destructive than damp to life and consequently to health; and in the fitful climates of an English winter, we can have but the choice between the one and the other. So let the readers of 'Maga' be free-handed with their cheque-books and their purses, and they may give themselves over with easy minds to the joys and the buoyancy inspired by the season.

Even in the metropolis, setting the chances of accidents aside, a hard winter may not be altogether unexciting. There is always something impressive in gatherings in a great city under circumstances that are at once picturesque and unfamiliar. Last winter we came very near to witnessing a repetition of those grand historical *fêtes* of the Ice-king, when fairs were held on the frozen Thames, and oxen roasted whole were washed down from flowing hogsheads. Had it not been for the works of the Thames Embankment, the brackish tide might have been bound in iron fetters. We missed that stirring spectacle by a hair's-breadth; but before now we have seen skating on the Serpentine by torch-light, when a Lon-

don feast of lanterns seemed in course of celebration between Albert Gate and Kensington Gardens. The wolves and hyænas were disporting themselves with the lambs—or, in other words, the hordes of roughs from the east were mingling amicably with shop-lads and decent artisans and gay young gentlemen from the clubs of the west. The police mustered strong in case of need, but what were the scattered members of the blue-coated force among so many? There were noise and horse-play, and boisterous merriment; and we do not say that pockets were not lightened here and there, or some differences settled by interchange of fisticuffs. But on the whole it was a gay and a good-humoured mob; and even the ladies who ventured out upon the side walks could admire the humours of the night without much risk of insult. A whole school of Rembrandts and Schalkens would have found endless subjects for their brushes. The bands of skaters skimming along in open order, and the hockey-players, swaying blazing torches overhead, leaving the splashes of flaming resin in waving beauty-lines behind them, till the air and ice seemed to be studded with flights of Brobdingnagian fire-flies; the illuminated circles and the fiery crescents, where a space had been cleared for the graceful evolutions of amateurs surrounded by admiring spectators; the girdling rings of carriage-lamps along the drives; the rows of chairs and tables, with their constellations of candles, where skates were being strapped on or stripped off; the glowing stoves of the hot-chestnut sellers and baked-potato men; the horn lanterns on the roving wheelbarrows, with oranges and apples and lighter refreshments; the cracking of vesuvians and kindling of pipes; the reddening cigar-tips

circulating in their myriads; the reflection of the flickering volumes of light cast faintly and fitfully in the floating fogs,—all made up a strange carnival of fire, to the crash of many kinds of Cockney music, from brass bands and barrel-organs to accordions and concertinas.

It is but a night ticket taken at King's Cross or Euston Square, and we shift the scene to the north of the Border. You roll out of the berth in the "Pullman," or shake yourself clear of your wrappings to contemplate the December morning breaking on the sea or the landward wastes. Sea blends with sky and vapour with dull grey fallow, till you can hardly tell where one begins or the other ends. But there are bright streaks in the reddening horizon to the west, which slowly break into golden bars, and then the disc of the ruddy orb of light rises in all the promise of his frigid glories. It is in the assurance of a life-giving winter day that you hear the hoar-frost crackle under your chilly feet on the railway platform. The double dogcart is in waiting with the roughed horses: strip their warm clothing, and give them their heads. They spring forward, rattling the pole-chains, breathing smoke if not flame from their nostrils like the swifter coursers of the sun overhead; and far and near may be heard the echo of their hoofs as they rattle, regardless of their back sinews, along the iron roads. For the black frost has laid a veto on field-labour, and most of mankind who work out of doors must take a holiday perforce. The ploughshare is frozen fast in the crisp furrow; the ditcher might splinter the point of his pickaxe before doing another yard of his drain; the farm pond must be broken to let the animals drink; and as the partridges have gathered to the shelter of the rick-yards, so

the snipes and every species of wild-fowl have taken to the shrunken rills of slow trickling water.

It is an involuntary holiday; but is the parish to stand idle on that account, or draw chairs and stools into the ingle-nook to gossip and doze and keep the fireplace warm? Not a bit of it! It is not every day that the canny Scotchman has the chance of giving himself over to enjoyment with a clear conscience. Dreepdaily has challenged Bodencleuch to a curling-match; and already the players, with an admiring tail, are striding forward over hill and moor, from all the airts, to the trysting-place. The laird, hospitable as he is, somewhat hurries you, nevertheless, over a hearty Scotch breakfast; for he is to act skip or headman himself for his players of Bodencleuch, while the stalwart schoolmaster from over the march, discharges a similar office for the men of Dreepdaily. A sharp walk through the policies and past the kirk takes you to the curling-pond. It is a merry scene, set in a frame of silver, that you look down upon from the angle of the path that leads over the brae from the kirk-style. The pond lies in a hollow, at the foot of a broomy knowe, that in the fresh fragrance of the spring is covered with yellow blossoms. Now all nature is as deathlike as well may be. Everything below and around is clothed with a chilly winding-sheet, stretching under the steel-blue glitter of an almost cloudless sky. But long before, you had heard the clamour of voices sounding deep and shrill in the rarefied atmosphere, and now you look down on such a gathering of rural worthies as Burns might have sung or Wilkie painted. A burst of welcome greets the laird and his friends, followed by a respectful though a momentary hush. Place for the kirk, and there is the

parish minister, and likewise his reverend brother of the Free persuasion; and there is the stout schoolmaster of Dreepdaily, famed as a curler far and near, who dwarfs his "shilpit" but energetic compeer of Bodencleuch. The minister's man, who is likewise precentor, will soon have an opportunity of showing that his sonorous bass is good for other things than pitching psalmtunes; for it is not for nothing that "the curling" is known as the "roaring game." There are farmers who cultivate and graze their 500 acres; and crofters who club with a neighbour to hitch up a single "pair of horse." There are keepers from the hill, and woodmen from the plantations; cottagers who get their living among the dikes and the ditches; "mason lads" who have been frozen out of their work; the tailor who has slipped from his board, the shoemaker who has cast his apron behind him, and the smith who has been lured away from his forge, though they might all have been following their indoor avocations. There are poachers and village scant-o-graces, somewhat shamefaced, and in the meantime on their best behaviour, but feeling that the occasion brings them temporary absolution; and herd-boys and "hafflin' callants," and *id genus omne*. Seldom elsewhere will you see such a meeting of folks of many ages, and ranks, and creeds, and callings, meeting for once on a footing of the most fraternal equality, and indulging in the fullest liberty of joviality, without forgetting good manners and mutual regard.

But if the assembly struck you as being somewhat boisterous in the morning, you ought to see and hear it in the afternoon. The well-pitted sides are bringing the match to a close in the lengthening shadows of the surrounding hills, and excitement has risen to

fever-height. The dull roar of the curling-stones on the keen ice is accompanied by the frenzied shouts of the partisans as some shot of great moment is being played. Respectable fathers of families, and kirk-elders to boot, are dancing as if they were on hot girdles, and possessed by demons. The stone delivered, or, rather, barely dropped, from the strong arm of Sandy the smith, is gliding forward on its fateful mission. "Soop her up! soop her up!" "Na, na; let abee! let abee!" The brooms are being flourished over the shapely brown boulder from the Burnock Water, by fingers that burn to lend it legs and direction. The voice of the skip dominates all: "Leave alane! leave alane, will ye? She's a' there, right enough!" And suddenly, as the stone has skirted the very edge of one of the enemy's surest guards, a tremulous movement is to be detected in the handle. The crafty player, with a dexterous turn of the wrist, has communicated the hitherto imperceptible "side." The stone, in a graceful parabola, curls gently inwards, takes an "inwick" off the inner edge of another, and circles in to lie "a pot-lid" on the very tee. What yells of applause and triumph rend the air! "Shift that if ye can, my lads!" shouts Bodencleuch in friendly mockery; while Dreepdaily chafes and rages in wild but impotent disgust. That great shot of the smith's has decided the "end" and the game; for in vain does the schoolmaster—with the laird following to neutralise his play,—try to break a way to that winning stone through the advanced-guards of Bodencleuch.

The smith has his meed of praise in the meantime; and he will have added a cubit or more to his moral stature when his health is drunk with all the honours, at the curling supper

in the evening. A grand festivity that supper is, which might gladden the soul of any epicure who came to it with a curler's appetite and digestion. "Beef and greens; Oh, Mr North, beef and greens!" ejaculated the Ettrick Shepherd, in a rapture of joyous retrospect. And what spreads these are to sturdy and hungry men, who perhaps seldom taste butchers' meat from one week's end to the other! When it is cut and come again as the huge carving-knife heaps the steaming platters with Gargantuan slices embosomed, like the curling-ponds in summer, in circling hills of green; when the kettles are singing on the hob; when the square case-bottles of mountain-dew are revolving swiftly round the table, and the smoking tumblers are being drained to song and speech, and jest and story. What matter that the jokes are old? Like the straw-coloured spirits, they are all the better for that. Temperance may be an admirable virtue in the abstract, but away with such heterodoxy as total abstinence. No man would set his face against it more stoutly than the minister, whose presence is sanctifying the mirth as he has blessed the bountiful meal. How can a group of men, who, though they have frames of iron, are pleasantly wearied with healthful exercise, be "a hair the waur" for drinking in moderation? Say their own spirits are a trifle elevated when they go home, the very goodwives will scarcely gloom at them once in a way; and the fostering of good-fellowship and neighbourly feelings must be a clear and positive gain in any case. It is not the jovial curlers who will say no to that, as they sing "Auld acquaintance," with arms crossed and hands linked, when breaking up before any of them have overtly exceeded.

From curling to cock-shooting, in the alliterative point of view, is a natural transition. While the curling-ponds in the east and south have been bearing for many days, the fresh water in the milder climate of the west coast is still rippling to each gentle breeze. But while the curling sports are still in full swing, a letter reaches you from Argyllshire by agreement. The frost has come at last, and in earnest, and the cocks will be following it in flights. Already their harbingers are scattering about in many a hanging copse and many a corrie on the heather braes. And one fine morning a select party of friends, gaitered and shooting-booted, is sitting down to an early repast in a lonely shooting-lodge on the shores of Loch Fyne. A lonely lodge we say; and indeed the sole drawback to the spot is the difficulty of finding beaters in that romantic wilderness. However, the old keeper has done his best, and has mustered, by hook or crook, half-a-dozen of ill-matched mortals, from a leggy, shock-headed Celt, who has turned out in the scantiest of tattered kilts, to a short-set boy who, in an ordinary way, acts aide-de-camp to any poacher, or shepherd, or gillie. A grander beat than ours, in point of picturesqueness, it would be difficult to find; and it is as dear to the cocks as to lovers of nature. The ground falls in a succession of long tumbling slopes from the ridge of heather-covered hills to the shores of the loch. From each eminence the eye naturally travels down the estuary as it winds away among the mountains, round promontory, creek, and bay. Most beautiful of all, perhaps, is the immediate foreground. What tempts the woodcock are the multiplicity of springs, and the variety of streams that come down an endless succession of parallel

ravines, with rocky banks that are overgrown with wood in many spots. Here the water is leaping down staircases of stone, under mossy cornices fringed with icicles. Elsewhere you can barely hear it murmur as it is lost to sight under the drooping firs and the birchen boughs. And everywhere in those tiny valleys are gushing landsprings, which convert the turf around them into a tiny morass, where the mud will be softened for the "long-bills" in the mid-day sunshine. Between these Scottish nullahs are patches of Highland jungle, — the dwarf oak, and the birch, and the spruce and silver fir, interspersed with old and gnarled hollies, and interwoven with matted brambles; while the open glades in the heather are dotted over with outstanding trees like the Alpine *wettertannen*, and with beds of withered bracken, in all the winter hues of their reds and yellows.

Even had our force been drilled and trained to work together, it would be no easy matter to handle it cleverly. The very retrievers at heel sometimes "come a cropper" in scrambling down the sides of ravines; and should a cock be flushed while you are setting your face to the "stey brae," the bird is sure to go away unscathed. Moreover, though there is no snow to speak of, each stone and root is varnished over with its coating of treacherous ice, that gives hold neither to foot nor hand. But there seems to be a providence that saves sportsmen from sprained ankles, and each fall is only a subject for merriment, though the occasional plunge over mid-thigh in a "moss-pit" is a more serious matter. But soon the shooting begins, and the fun becomes fast and furious. Instinct tells you where to seek for the cocks,—in these sloughs of de-

spond where the surface is greenest; but the dropping them needs judgment as well as quickness. The bird shoots gently upwards, with that swift and stealthy flight of his, sweeping round the nearest convenient stem, or jerking and dipping through the tree-tops. Shall you shoot sharp, or give him time? that is the question, often answered amiss on the spur of the moment. There is delay, besides, in recovering the fallen; for there is but little scent to help the dogs, and it is hard to judge distances in the rank bracken or heather, where a cock lies like a needle in a bundle of hay. Then comes another cause of complications and cross-purposes. For roe are plentiful, though hares are scarce; and a roe may be crouching in his lair under any one of those fir-boughs; while each isolated bit of oak-coppice is well worth beating out. So one barrel is sometimes loaded with B. B, while the other is charged with the shot which must serve in case of need for either cock or pheasant. Mistakes will happen notwithstanding presence of mind; and a woodcock may be triumphantly threading the scattering charge of buckshot, while the stern of a deer, at a range of forty yards or more, is being tickled by the light pellets of No. 5.

Nevertheless the bag mounts; the roe have been bled and hung to trees to be retrieved again; and in spite of immersions, scratches, and falls, beaters and guns are in the highest spirits. Brief space is given for lunch, since days are short and distances are considerable. And we have yet to beat out the famous oak-coppice that hangs upon the side of an almost precipitous valley. How the beaters are to work their way along, where even monkeys with prehensile tails might be puzzled, is for their consideration. They scramble

in somehow at the one end in faith, and we trust that they will struggle out at the other. Close beating is a sheer impossibility: but it is hoped that the game, being unsophisticated and seldom disturbed, may rise or go forward in place of running back. Three of the guns are to manage above as best they can, while the fourth follows the bed of the stream at the bottom. It is almost worth coming all the way to Loch Fyne to have a single shot at an old blackcock in these circumstances. Up he rises from among the rocks on powerful wing, his jetty plumage glistening in the sunbeams, skimming the feathering firs with the sweeping pinions that propel him like a rocket shot from a mortar. Clean missed in a flurry by the first gun — cleverly killed by the second; and borne ahead for fifty yards or so by his acquired velocity, you hear him crashing through the branches in the depths, and can mark his course by the showers of ice-dust.

In the dark inclement days of the winter, the moors and forests are left very much to their native denizens. Even the keepers and gillies, when not under surveillance, are inclined to fight shy of the upper hills; and the shepherds, who have to face much fearful weather, strive to keep their flocks in the more sheltered valleys. For there is something appalling in a Highland snow-storm, when the day is darkened with feathering snow-flakes and the air laden with icy drift; when the winds howl down the passes and shriek in the wildest fury as they are caught in the glens and the corries; and when snow-slips and small avalanches are happening everywhere, engulfing each living thing that comes across the path of their descents. Then fox and wild cat take refuge in their earths in the

recesses of the cairns, howling and mcaning with cold and hunger; and the winged game cower together in the lee of the braes, or scrape for a precarious subsistence on the more exposed banks that have been laid bare by the storm. When the snowfall is suspended and the "lift has cleared," the shepherd must go abroad in fear and trembling. Too many of the fleecy flock so dear to his memory are lost to sight, buried deep under the heaps of gathering snow-wreaths; and in many a quiet nook and corner of the winding stream the backwater will be choked with submerged corpses.

Death is never far from the man who is out in a Highland snow-storm, and it is a risk that the sportsman will not lightly encounter. But *en revanche* there are often, in the dead season of the year, long spells of settled and most exhilarating weather, when the grouse sit wonderfully in the "black frosts," and an active walker may fill a bag satisfactorily. Then, seen in the bright sunlight, the clear summits of the highest hills may exercise an irresistible fascination on him, and he decides for a bold dash at the ptarmigan. If he go by the barometer and sage advice, he may make the expedition tolerably safely. The work will be hard, of course, but scarcely so severe as one might fancy. For by judicious strategy the ascent may be made by the slopes where the snow-sprinkling is comparatively thin, and along ravines whose gravelly and slaty sides offer a comparatively easy footing. And having once surmounted the lower zone of perpetual snow, the sportsman will find himself "travelling," as the Scotch say, on natural causeways that have been swept by the winds, and which are roughly paved with what looks like the *débris* of

a stone quarry. Nor should it be so much the sport you look to on those occasions, as the splendour of the sky effects, the grandeur of the scenery, and the romantic excitement of the whole undertaking. Down in the valleys are morning mists and darkness. The bottom of that deep chasm you have left to the right, and where you heard the harsh croak of the raven, is filled with billowy volumes of vapour; but already, though the sun will be invisible to you for half an hour to come, the tops of the "Rocky Mountains" for which you are bound, are glowing in all the hues of the rainbow. When the sun does burst into sight, the dazzling radiance of the landscape becomes almost painful, and it is a relief to rest the aching eyes on the shadows thrown here and there by some boldly projecting cliff. There are animated objects enough of interest as you press forward, though there is no time to loiter. The grouse cocks rise wild with their cheery crow. Now and again, as you climb by the banks of the stream, you cross the tracks of the night-hunting otter or the wild cat, or almost surprise those little parties of ducks that have been feeding at their ease in a sequestered pool. As the snow gets thinner, and you leave the region of heather for the stones, the tracks of the mountain-hares are more frequent, and soon they are starting before you each twenty yards, sitting up, kangaroo-like, in their quaint curiosity, and inspecting you with complacent interest over their shoulders. Considering the impossibility of carrying them away, knocking them over would be wanton bloodshed. You would gladly have bestowed a barrel on that magnificent hill-fox, with the sinewy body and the feathering brush, who, though he supplies his larder as a rule with

the hares, must have taken toll many a time from the firstlings of the flock, judging by his size and grand condition. But before you have time to snatch your gun from the gillie who has relieved you of it, he has vanished round the corner of the nearest ridge, to reappear by-and-by on a more distant slope, going pleasantly within himself at a comfortable canter.

The actual ptarmigan-shooting in itself is, it must be confessed, somewhat tame. Although there is little difficulty in finding the birds at first, since they are pretty sure to get up shy and wild, yet they will often return nearly to the spot from whence they were sprung, and wait your second approach comparatively calmly. And as they have a trick of dropping sharply behind the rocks where they rise, you need not scruple to shoot them sitting. But there is something grandly exciting in the sport all the same, as you go scrambling among the rocks and fallen boulders; taking jumps that in cooler blood you would eschew; setting the serious chances of fractured limbs at defiance; and keeping on your legs in shooting attitude as best you can, while swaying your breech-loader in the air by way of a balancing-pole. The sense of taking one's diversion aloft in the blue empyrean, far above the normal regions of a Highland cloudland, is in itself exhilarating enough; and the air you inhale is light as laughing-gas, without being so rarefied as to try the lungs. Then the white ptarmigan, flushed from their perch on the cliffs, go circling beneath your feet round splintered pinnacles and buttresses, eddying over the abyss in the drift of the vapours, like a flight of storm-pigeons. Plunging the eye far down into the profound, there is nothing but those circling specks

for it to rest upon, between the slab on which your shooting-boots are slipping and the slopes of heather some couple of thousand feet below. As for the glories of the prospect, you may turn your face as you will. To the north and east stretches a seemingly limitless extent of trackless moor, forest, and sheep-farm, where hill and valley, till they confound themselves in the snowy distance, are veined by the black blotches or lines that mark the lakes or the rivers and burns. Southward you follow the course of the great strath, while through sharply defined vistas in the far-away chains you distinguish the plains of the fertile Lowland counties. And westward, beyond the waters of a hill-embosomed estuary, are the grand outlines of those mountain-masses of granite that beat back the surges of the tempestuous Atlantic.

It is a natural descent from the clouds, or where the clouds ought to be, to the Lowland coverts. We are in the great preserves, where hares in herds and troops of hand-fed pheasants invite the attention of banded poachers, and provoke heartburnings in parishes that ought to be peaceful. Should big *battues* rank among winter pleasures? Hardly, in the sense in which we are writing this article; and poetically as picturesquely, there is a terrible bathos in the droop from days among the ptarmigan in the upper air, to the massacre of pheasants running tame between your boots. Besides, anybody but an enthusiast in slaughter must be *ennuyé* by standing up to the ankles in the half-frozen mud of the rides, or blowing upon numbed figures at some draughty corner, though he may comfort himself with the assurance that it will soon be a "hot" one. Far more to our mind is the rough-and-ready fun to be found in ferreting in a keen frost. The

little party are all on the *qui vive*,—from the guns and the keepers with spades and ferret-boxes, to the cock-eared terriers who are admitted to participate in the sport, and the more sober-minded retrievers who form the reserve. Hardly a breath of air is stirring: you may almost hear the flutter to the earth of a withered leaf, and so everything is in your favour. And there is something in such commonplace or vulgar amusements as rabbiting and rat-hunting that recommends itself to the vagrant instincts of humanity. For ourselves, we have ferreted in all manner of circumstances, from wheat-stacks and crumbling barns upwards. In the mounds under the gnarled boughs of the oaks and thorns in a venerable park, where the rabbits burrowed amicably in the hollow stems among the jackdaws; and might either make an unexpected appearance at some fungus covered cranny overhead, or shoot out of some unsuspected bolting hole under the withered fronds of the bracken. We have shot on the face of a brae sloping to a precipice dipping sheer into a lake, where each rabbit, as he was rolled over, crumpled into a ball, and pitching over the brink was picked up by a boatman in waiting; in the dikes dividing fields in the northern Scotch counties, where the piles of loose granite that had been cleared off the land were honeycombed by labyrinths of galleries—where ferrets had to be sent in by the half-dozen to cut the lines of communication, and whence the inmates would scuttle at intervals like the fragments of a bursting shell. And of course we have ferreted in all weathers. But to our fancy, as we said, the pleasantest form of the sport is in the perfect stillness and purity of the clear winter day, in the banks and hedgerows of a richly

wooded Lowland country. It is a very fair match, on the whole, between the guns and the rabbits. Scene — for example — under the skeleton canopy of a spreading oak, the leafless twigs forming a lace-work against the sky, with a straggling hedge in front and a bramble-grown ditch beyond. The burrow dates from days immemorial; some of the holes have been enlarged by the colony of badgers that take up their quarters there from time to time; and the outlets are so many and in such unlikely spots, that any attempt at a systematic blockade is impracticable. *Dramatis personæ*: a couple of guns standing back to back under the oak; two others, similarly posted in the field beyond the ditch; three keepers bending in varied attitudes over the burrow, previous to rushing towards the stem of the oak to bestow themselves out of the way; three ferrets who have disappeared in the bowels of the earth; a couple of veteran terriers, their heads twisted on one side, almost to the dislocation of their necks, and each nerve in their bodies quivering with excitement; with as many retrievers that are scarcely less interested, though they do their best to keep up some dignity of deportment. So far as the mere ferreting goes, the terriers, Spice and Ginger, had better have been left at home, since they are more likely to tumble into the way than not. But they are useful in hunting out a ditch or a hedge-bottom; and a miss here and there is of little consequence. *Conticuere omnes; intentique ora tenebant*. The tails of the ferrets have been deliberately dragged out of sight; and all is silence in the meantime.

But as we feel, it is the ominous silence that heralds earthquakes and convulsions of nature. There is a faint scraping and a shuffle beneath our feet; the shuffling is

succeeded by a rushing to and fro; the scraping grows into a portentous rumbling, as if a working party of gnomes, with picks and wheelbarrows, were mining the foundation of the ancestral oak. The grumbling echoes of that subterranean chase are now here and now there. If the distracted terriers were to follow their bent, they would be dancing over the surface of the ground like a couple of globules of quicksilver. Even the sportsmen, although they have time to think, or because they have time, are conscious of something of the flutter that thrills on the nerves when a covey of black-game is whirring up all around one. The rabbits have realised there is danger above, and are loath to be forced by any amount of hunting. You can conceive the sudden agitation in those peaceful tenements below, with the stealthy enemies, all teeth, claw, and sinew, following up the remorseless chase with slow, malignant ferocity. Now some stout old buck must be standing fiercely at bay, his bristling back set to the end of a burrow, and his fore-paws hammering viciously at his assailant. You can follow the shifting fortunes of the single combat, for there seems to be but a sod between you and the lists. Next there is a rush of desperation; he has taken a flying leap over the ferret, and is gone by. Then a second fugitive shows his head above ground only to jerk it back again; while a third bounces out of one hole, like a Jack-in-the-box, to take a flying leap down another. But at last the general *sauve qui peut* begins. There a rabbit makes a rush for the ditch, and gains the covered-way of matted weeds and thorn, closely followed up by the yelping terriers, to be hustled out again a little lower down; while a companion dares a straight dash across the open, to be cleverly stopped in due

course. The winding-sheet of snow is rent and torn as rabbits tear their way out of hidden issues, to land themselves in the middle of scattering charges; there is a quick rolling fire, with sharp clicking of the barrel-hinges as the smoking breech-loaders close on the cartridges; a shower of icy particles from the bushes, falling on the curly coats of the retrievers; a scattering of floating flick, a cutting of twigs by the driving shot, a crimsoning of the spotless surface. Then the shooting dies away and ceases, as the bolting draws to an end. The terriers are come back from their mad bursts of excitement, with panting tongues and heaving sides: the keepers gather up the slain which the retrievers had already been collecting for them; and finally, the ferrets reappear one by one, blinking their fiery eyes, and licking their encarmined jowls, to be caught up by the napes of their necks and deposited snugly in the boxes. The exciting melodrama is at an end, so far as that burrow is concerned, when we move on to another, where the scenery has changed with the circumstances. In the hurry and crush of incidents; in the strained expectation, passing through quick sensations to the sanguinary *dé-nouement*, keeping all the faculties on the alert, and the blood in swift circulation, there is no time to think of being chilly. And then, when you feel you have had enough of it; when the lights on the landscape begin to fade as the sun sinks down in the cloud-bank to the westward; when the ferrets, gorging themselves on the game they have grappled, begin to hang in the holes in spite of powder-flashes, till the keepers have to exercise their shoulders in digging among the stones and roots,—you have only to lay down the gun and walk briskly

home to the library. If we desire to enjoy luxurious converse with a favourite author, who will bear dozing over, since we half know him by heart, we find nothing more delightful than that time before dinner, when, after some hours of moderate exertion and exposure, we mingle listless reading with languid reverie, and intersperse both with an occasional nap.

Very different from the dawdling over rabbiting is wild-fowl shooting. The one may be enjoyed in moderation as a distraction; as an agreeable digestive after a comfortable breakfast; as a whet for indolent literary by-play and for dinner, after the fashion of the *avant-table* in Russia or Scandinavia, where spirits and piquant trifles are served up as appetisers. Wild-fowl shooting is a serious business, and we do not know whether, any more than the *battue*, it ought to be included among winter pleasures. For our own part, we should be inclined to say no; but it is certain that it becomes a passion with those who devote themselves to it. The successful wild-fowler needs something of the qualities that set up a Hercules going forth upon his labours. In the first place, he must have enthusiasm bordering upon an abiding frenzy. He must have no ordinary endurance, with a constitution of iron; he must have keen eyes and steady nerves; he must have coolness and presence of mind to temper his eagerness; and, before all things of course, he should be a deadly shot. In the pursuit of ordinary game; the "hit and miss" man may enjoy himself as much as his "crack" companion. But it is heart-breaking in wild-fowling, after having intrigued, manoeuvred, and toiled for a single family shot, to see the birds fly away without a feather of their plumage being ruffled. The practical wild-fowler

should be as clever with his gun as the juggler who goes through his feats on the slack-rope. Ashore, he must shoot when he has been shivering, in spite of his bodily powers; when his feet have been frozen to his stockings, and his stockings congealed in his boots; when he is slipping about in treacherous mud, in a pair of "mud-shoes," or boards that are attached to his boots like sandals; or when he has sunk over the knee in shifting sands, or has been surprised by a chance while fording a sea-creek. Ten to one, the flight he fires at may come travelling down wind at something from twenty to forty knots an hour. And what a weapon he has to carry! We believe that the most accomplished modern experts declare by preference for a five-bore; and none but those who have been initiated can realise what it is to carry so ponderous a piece of metal through a long day's heavy walking in the face of blustering weather. Even the most accustomed shoulder may ache, and the bare recoil must often be serious. And if the fowler has to contend with such difficulties ashore, what must it be afloat? In loch-shooting, of course, if you can, you will choose a calm day, and so your difficulties are lightened in place of being aggravated. But off the coast, though scarcely a zephyr may be stirring, there may, nevertheless, be a heavy groundswell. And then you must take aim from a dancing platform, and make your flying practice by knack or instinct. Imagine a man shooting grouse on a drive as he balanced himself on the oscillations of a seasaw, and you have a moderate notion of the chances of sea-fowling under circumstances that are fairly favourable.

Then for the requisites in point of constitutional hardihood. Mild weather saddens the fowler's heart,

and his spirits go up with the fall of the thermometer. It is indispensable that he should dress himself warmly, yet, for his own sake, he must not make his wrappings too cumbersome. He will have to crawl or worm himself along when making his stalk, and yet he may have to lie *perdu* for minutes or half-hours, more or less, without moving a muscle. Even in a boat he must not so over-hamper himself with top gear as to prevent the heavy gun coming easily to his shoulder; and yet a bitter wind blowing off the sea or the salt-marshes may be searching his marrow through pea-jacket and jersey. Keeping the feet dry is out of the question; and his only certainty about the best pair of waterproof wading-boots is, that they will infallibly doom the wearer to partial immersion. Gloves, as everybody knows, are sadly in the way when it comes to fingering a lightly-set pair of triggers; and half-frozen feet and half-frost-nipped fingers must trouble the calm pleasures of expectancy.

The successful wild-fowl shooter must necessarily be an enthusiast; but we believe that most gentlemen who take to the sport, follow it more or less in *dillettante* fashion. That is the experience of Mr Colquhoun, the veteran author of 'The Moor and the Loch,' who observes that the rustic who has only the single barrel of an old-fashioned weapon to depend upon, grudges no expenditure of patience in the attainment of his ends. He has familiarised himself with the haunts and habits of the wild-fowl, and lays himself out deliberately to circumvent the birds. He watches for a pot-shot, dwells deliberately on his aim, and, for the most part, does damage proportionate to the pains he takes. While the gentleman, somewhat impatient

of delays and inconveniencies, and trusting to the killing powers of his tool, with the reserve of a second barrel, often scares the birds in his rash approaches, or fires too precipitately at an excessive range. Mr Colquhoun's advice for wild-fowl shooting on inland lakes, is as simple as it will be found to be satisfactory. After expatiating on the birds' quickness of hearing, &c., recording his observations as to their keenness of scent, and counselling the sportsman as to his equipments, he tells him how the stalk may be most surely accomplished. When you have detected the birds you propose to try for, take their bearings exactly by marks upon the shore in relation to another placed further inland. Then make a *détour* to come unperceived behind the inner mark. From that of course the final approaches have to be made, with an astuteness even greater, if possible, than that which is indispensable in deer-stalking. Should there be divers, you take advantage of their temporary disappearances to run forward between times to a succession of ambushes like the "stations" of some pilgrimage to a Catholic shrine.

Often, no doubt, there is excitement enough in that sort of sport; but to us, considering the suffering that may be involved, too much is staked on result. As in deer-stalking, through no fault of your own, you may be balked even of a miss at the last moment. We like better another form of the sport mentioned by Mr Colquhoun—as, indeed, to what does he not make allusion in the encyclopædia he has so picturesquely christened?—when questing for ducks. You follow the springy drains, keeping fifteen yards from them, and about forty in advance of an attendant who walks close to the trench. It is deadly work covering the plump,

full-fed mallards and their mates as they first rise in their heavy flight; and there is intense satisfaction in surprising a wild goose. When gathered into flocks, as you see them generally, the geese are among the most suspicious of created things; and the man who has stalked a flock with its vedettes and sentinels set, may plume himself on no ordinary achievement, unless some lucky accident has befriended him. While a wild duck, fired at from an ambush in the gloaming, as he wings his strong flight overhead to his favourite feeding-grounds, is as hard to hit as he is hard to kill. Even heavy pellets, striking at certain angles, have an extraordinary knack of rolling themselves up harmlessly in the down.

We scarcely care to diverge to long-shore shooting, which, though by no means an uninteresting subject in itself, is a sport left for the most part to professionals. It may be followed, by the way, with great success in the Dutch polders and marshes; in the sand-dunes of the Flemish seaboard, and in some of the north-western departments of France. On the mud-flats and sands in our own eastern counties, and on the sand-banks and bars at the mouths of the brackish estuaries, among the floating sea-weed, in sharp frosts at the commencement of the winter, the bag may be filled with a wonderful variety. Stalking along under cover of the sand-hills and sea-walls; stealthily turning along the bends of the creeks, where the waters are sinking with the reflux of the tide; crouching in bloodthirsty expectancy as you see a flight skimming towards you along the beach,—you may kill herons, curlews, ducks, and plovers, with many a species of diver and wader, of which some may be as rare as the most of them

are common. Nor shall we embark on board one of the handy little yachting craft, of which the crew is but one man, with possibly a boy, but which, nevertheless, have most elastic accommodation below, while there is actually room on deck for the dingy, which is often towing astern. The cabins of these are snug places enough, as they are assuredly compact; but the owners, amateurs and town-bred though they may be, always strike us as being among the most venturesome of British mariners. We take it for granted that the skipper is proof to sea-sickness, and it may be assumed that he is equally confident that he was never born to be drowned. For to say nothing of the notion of being capsized in a squall, which he would scout as an outrageous impeachment on his seamanship, there are the probabilities of his grounding upon a bank in one of the fogs, which are accompaniments of the weather most favourable for sea-fowling. He pursues his sport on the borders of the crowded waterways, where fleets of coasting craft are continually plying; and may be awakened out of the sleep he has dropped into on his watch, to find his boat cut down to the water-line, while he is being submerged by a strange cutwater. Moreover, he may have to run in a sudden gale for moorings in some river-mouth or harbour of refuge, by no means always easy of attainment. As a set-off against these probable or problematic dangers, is the "pleasure" of alternately sitting up in the biting air on the deck, glass in hand, behind a swivel-gun or a battery of heavy breech-loaders; and diving down into the tiny cabin to be toasted before facing a fresh spell of the cold.

We have been writing of winter sports and pleasures to be followed

for choice among the frost and snow; but, oddly enough, the winter sport *par excellence* of the English gentleman comes to a standstill in our genuine winter weather. A frost is not unwelcome to the fox-hunter in the spring and after an open season, when he has well-nigh ridden his horses to a standstill, and half his stud is gone on the sick-list. But frost in November or December, when the winter is young and hopes are fresh! It is certainly not quite so trying as it used to be in the days of the mail-coaches and post chaises, when the hunting man in the Midlands was practically storm-bound in the streets of a dull provincial town; when the sole resources were over-eating and hard drinking, the billiards by day, the rubber by night, and smoking countless cigars in the stables in dismal contemplation of the hocks of the steeds. Now a man takes his ticket to town by express train, and while he finds a sympathetic chorus of growlers in his club in St James's, is always within reach of a telegram. But even comparatively fortunate as he is, that season of suspense is a sore trial to him. His sweet temper is fretted with hope deferred. He goes to bed restless, after anxious looks at the skies, and sees his horses casting themselves in their stalls in his perturbed nightmares; or wakens in disappointment from Tantalus-like dreams, where he has been following the hounds to the music of the horn. To make matters worse, notwithstanding these worries of his, in place of losing flesh he has been laying it on. When men of frugal minds have been calculating weights somewhat too closely in making their purchases, half a stone more is a great annoyance. But such time of probation must come to an end, and at last the weather has shown unmistakable signs of

relaxing. A tremor of expectancy has run through the hunting counties, and the first meet after the yielding frost has been advertised to come off at the kennels.

And we do not know that the successors of the immortal Leech could find more inspiring subjects for their pencils than in the humours of the grand gathering after the involuntary rest. It has become apparent that the weather has fairly broken, and there is even some prospect of scent on the grass and the fallows. There is a general coming up from all parts of the country; for though squires and farmers have had their more serious avocations to distract them, yet they too have been vexing their souls over missed chances of sport. Each man is on the *qui vive*, and the horses are decidedly more so than is agreeable. Even the cover-hacks seem to have quicksilver in their heels, which is all very well; and the horses in the vehicles of many fashions which are pressing forward to the muster, are tossing the foam about their chests and rattling their frothing curb-chains. Sober old hunters, warranted steady when sold, and carrying certificates of irreproachable character in their faces and ordinary demeanour, are indulging in gay and unaccustomed gambols; while the giddier youngsters, although they may "be free from vice," are showing themselves playful as kittens, and as full of tricks as so many monkeys. We think it is Mr Benjamin Buckram, who remarks in 'Mr Sponge's Tour,' in discussing the character of the redoubted Hercules, that if a gentleman gets spilt, it does not much "argufy" whether it is done from play or vice. And not a few gentlemen now seem to be much of that way of thinking, as their mounts, catching the contagion of excitement in the crowd, disport

themselves like fresh-caught mustangs from the Texan prairies. Here is a silken-coated young one on his muscular hind-legs, gracefully improving on the antics of a dancing-bear, and threatening to topple back upon a rider who has scarcely nerve to bring him back to his bearings. Another, arching his crest and tucking in his haunches, shows an English edition of the Australian buck-jumping trick; while most of them are lightly laying back their ears, or shooting flashes out of the corners of their eyes, and not a few are unpleasantly ready with their heels. But if it is all in good temper on the part of the steeds, the same can hardly be said of the riders. The jostling, and the chance of a humiliating accident, throw some gentlemen off their mental balance, who are already uneasy as to the "safety of their seats;" and it would appear that some lowering clouds are flitting across the general hilarity. But the hospitality of the worthy master brings incipient unkindness to a check. The meet at the kennels means a meeting on the lawn, where the disappearance of the frost is demonstrated conclusively by the cutting up of the turf and furrowing of the gravel. The long tables are spread in the old oak hall, under polished rafters and scutcheoned panels, and among family portraits. The genial host goes about among his scarlet-coated guests, hail-fellow-well-met with everybody; and the ladies of the household, as they do the honours of the tea and coffee, light up the sombre old banqueting-hall with their smiles. There is a pretty lively clatter of knives and forks, intermingled with the clash of cups and glasses. Those who do not sit down to the more substantial fare, gather round the decanters on buffets and sideboards; while the

liveried serving-men are busy out-of-doors handing brimming tankards to yeomen and outsiders. If the horses are full of fire and oats, their exuberant spirits will soon be counterbalanced by the circulation of jumping powder among the gentlemen of the hunt; and if sharp retorts were bandied a few minutes before, there is a universal drowning of all unpleasantness. Only, should there be a find, and should the numerous field get fairly away with their fox, a wise man will do well to take a line of his own, though at the chance of having to face some extra fencing. A crush in a lane or a cannon in a gap, may possibly entail awkward consequences.

One of the show meets of the season is a characteristically English spectacle, which must impress the intelligent foreigner who desires to study our manners or to pass our choicer horse-flesh in review. In a good country, whether in the shires or the provinces, he will see as high-bred hunters as money can procure; while some of the hacks and the pairs in phaetons and double dogcarts, are models of symmetry and style after their kinds. He will be struck by clean-built thorough-breds that look smaller than they are till he comes to see them extending themselves over formidable fences, and laying the wide-stretching enclosures behind them in their stride. He will admire the serviceable animals that carry those substantial farmers, who manage to see a sufficiency of the sport though they stick for the most part to gates and lanes; and transfusing their

intelligence into the instinct of the fox, ride knowingly to points rather than in the line of the pack. And he will understand the universal enthusiasm for the sport when he marks how the rag-tag and bobtail turn out for the fun from the market-towns, the villages, and the solitary hamlets, mounted upon anything, down to broken-kneed ponies and ragged-coated donkeys fed on furze. But our article, as we have remarked, lies rather in the snow than in sloppy pastures and holding fallows. So we shall not follow the hounds as they draw from cover to cover; and as for the tale of the run, has it not been often written by men who were themselves unapproachably in the foremost flight, but who are gone beneath the turf they used to gallop over? The shades of the departed warn us to be silent, from Nimrod of the 'Quarterly,' mighty among literary hunters, to the lamented Colonel Whyte-Melville, so lately lost by an accident in the hunting-field. The hunting-field in the south, as the curling-pond in the north, brings many classes together in a kindly communion of tastes and sympathies; and long may it continue to do so. The greater and the more unreserved the genial intercourse of this kind, the less is it likely that revolutionary legislation will sow dissensions among those who ought to be friends—will banish all but utilitarians from rural England, and subvert the time-honoured landmarks that our fathers have religiously preserved.

PAULO POST FUTURUM POLICY.

WITH the approach of the winter season, the time seems fairly to have arrived for examining the success of the Liberal policy to which the country so light-heartedly committed itself in the spring-time. Churlish Conservatives, who have not the fear of Cambridge University before their eyes, may be tempted to rub up their Greek and recall Æsop's fable of the grasshopper and the ant. The Liberal party have piped and sung persistently throughout their halcyon days of spring and summer, and may fairly be invited to dance to their own music through the coming winter.

There appears, however, unfortunately, to be as little harmony amongst our present rulers as amongst that more important body of performers, the Powers of Europe, in whose concert Mr Gladstone aspired to the honourable post of conductor. Whilst the Prime Minister at the Guildhall discourses on the primary necessity of maintaining law and order in Ireland, Mr Bright and Mr Chamberlain are speaking words of scarcely veiled sympathy with Irish seditious agitators; and whilst Mr Gladstone says at the Guildhall that the Treaty of Berlin "was a treaty that promised to confer great benefits upon Europe; and that we" (the Liberal Government) "at once declared our intention to address ourselves to the purpose of endeavouring to secure the execution of an instrument which was due to the policy of our predecessors," Mr Chamberlain, a week later, tells a Birmingham audience that the "authoritative mandate of the country to Mr Gladstone was an emphatic condemnation of the pol-

icy of the late Government," and instructed him "to reverse as far as possible a policy which the nation had condemned."

We willingly leave to the Prime Minister and his President of the Board of Trade the task of making these apparent contrarieties agree, and shall regard the subtle explanation which will no doubt be forthcoming, with little more than academical curiosity. We say this on the assumption that the Cabinet have not agreed to differ amongst themselves on so important a subject as the foreign policy of their country; and that they will be able to demonstrate to Parliament that the two Ministers whose words we have quoted really meant one and the same thing. But it is of importance to know which of the two seemingly divergent lines of statesmanship is to be pursued. Six months ago we should have attached the greater weight to Mr Chamberlain's language; but after the Austrian, Cyprian, and South African recantations, we cannot feel sure that our versatile Prime Minister may not one day pose as a great War Minister. It is a curious instance of the irony of circumstances to read in foreign newspapers, French, German, Austrian, and Italian, that a universal feeling of relief is manifested all over the Continent because the English Premier, the inveterate opponent of a "spirited foreign policy," the modern David, the slayer of the Jingo Goliath, has unexpectedly intimated his reluctance to let slip the dogs of war on Europe. Will any honest man deny that Mr Gladstone overthrew the late Administration on the ground that their policy was a turbulent and

reckless one, calculated to involve their country in foreign complications? Will any one demonstrate that his own policy has not been one of restless interference—of threats against a State (Turkey) with which we are at peace—of insult, per Mr Chamberlain, to a Government with which he found England on the most cordial terms of friendship? In short, what Liberal statesman will show us that it is the Tory party who has troubled Israel, and not his own house?

Throughout the last session of Parliament the leaders of the Conservative party consistently abstained from raising any debate on foreign politics, because the newcomers advanced the weighty and reasonable plea that time must be allowed them to shape and carry out a practical policy, the onus of which had devolved upon them at an unexpected moment. Again and again were we told, "We are acting in perfect concert with Europe; wait a little, and see what we will do." Well, we have waited six months and more, and are wellnigh as much in the dark as ever. The only light afforded to this free constitutional country has been the negative evidence of the Austrian Red-book, which certainly fails to substantiate the Ministerial contention that they have acted throughout in harmony with the rest of Europe. Our own memory may be as short as that of our political opponents, yet we surely accurately remember the denunciations levelled at the Conservative Ministry for keeping the country in the dark as to their policy. Are we to be dependent for the future on foreign publications for an explanation of what is being done in our name?

Responsible statesmen, and the voice of the public press, have attributed to Mr Gladstone a proposition to commit an act of war

against Turkey by seizing certain property belonging to that Government. The charge has never been denied; and Great Britain is literally in this position (assuming the accuracy of a story oft repeated and hitherto uncontradicted), that her Prime Minister, coming into office as a peace Minister and champion of open diplomacy, has, to the best of his ability, and without consulting Parliament or the nation, plunged his country into war. Most happily, Continental statesmen were cooler and clearer-headed than the English Premier; and a crying scandal has been averted through their prudence and moderation. A strict account will be demanded from the Government when Parliament meets, of all the circumstances attendant on this "Smyrna dues" question.

Let us briefly examine the Ministerial explanations and defence of their present position. Their parrot-cry is, We are pledged to carry out the provisions of your (the Conservative) Treaty of Berlin. The Liberal versions of the term "Treaty of Berlin" recall to our mind the celebrated fire described by Sir W. Scott in his 'Bride of Lammermoor.' In that novel the old family retainer burns up some rubbish at his master's castle on the plea "that this fire will be an excuse for asking anything we want through the country; this fire will settle many things for the family's credit that cost me daily the telling of twenty lies:" and he adds, "in some sort a good excuse is better than the things themselves." In this latter sentence we are disposed cordially to concur, when we think of the "things themselves" Liberal foreign policy has conferred upon us in the shape of Crimean, Chinese, Abyssinian, and other wars.

As regards the former portion of Mr Caleb Balderstone's remarks, the Treaty of Berlin has undoubtedly

been a godsend to the Radicals, who contrive with much ingenuity not only to make it an excuse for "asking anything they want through the country," but also to present it under two totally different aspects to their constituents.

When a Ministerial orator is replying to any strictures a Tory may venture to make on the policy of coercing Turkey, he is apt to say, "We are simply carrying out your own policy: the Treaty of Berlin is your work; we take it up loyally as the legacy you left us, and are endeavouring faithfully to execute it." But, not unfrequently, he goes on to say in the next breath, "As for the Conservative Government's boasted Berlin Treaty, they are entitled to no credit for it; all the valuable provisions of the Treaty were inserted at the instance of France or Russia," as the case may be.

Now we cannot permit such assertions to pass unchallenged. If the late Administration are to be held to have simply dictated the terms of the treaty to which their signature is affixed, they are necessarily entitled to the full credit of the provisions of it affecting the interests of the Eastern Christians, which are usually represented by the Liberal party as the special contributions of other Powers to the settlement of south-eastern Europe. If, on the other hand, the Tory plenipotentiaries are to be held as having acceded with reluctance to the article affecting Montenegro, and the recommendation regarding Greece, they are surely within their right in taking exception to the course Mr Gladstone seems to wish this country to adopt—namely, that of taking the lead in Europe in carrying out these particular provisions by force of arms. We are perfectly ready to concede, granting for the sake of

argument that the latter hypothesis is correct, that it would not be unreasonable for Liberals to taunt Conservative statesmen with bad faith if they should refuse, when called on by the other Powers, to join in executing a treaty to which they had set their hands. It is not necessary, however, at this moment to enter upon the question exactly how far we might be bound to go in executing a treaty *par voie de fait*, if called on to do so; because it is not contended that the other Powers who are held up to us as the Christian patrons have, with one exception, suggested to us that we should make war on Turkey. The fault Conservatives find with the Ministry is, that they appear anxious to drag other nations forward in a hostile enterprise in which our honour and interests are not specially concerned.

In connection with this topic it is worth while to devote a few lines towards pointing out an ingenious attempt made by our political opponents to show that our responsibilities towards Greece and Montenegro are identical. Indeed many Liberal speakers, trading on the sentimental affection Englishmen are supposed to entertain for a country immortalised by Homer and by Byron, do not hesitate to insinuate that the claims of Greece upon us are even stronger than those of Montenegro. They base this assertion on two facts,—first, that during the progress of the Russo-Turkish war we advised Greece in her own interest to abstain from attacking Turkey; and secondly, that the 13th Protocol of the Berlin Treaty recommended a certain territorial cession by Turkey to Greece: and Article 24 of that Treaty provided that if Greece and Turkey could not agree on the rectification of frontier suggested in the Protocol, the great Powers re-

served their right to mediate. Now what, in all this, gives Greece a claim to ask for our armed assistance against an old ally? As regards the first point, she had value received. Her money and the blood of her soldiers were saved. It must not be forgotten that, independently of the greater or less resistance she might have met with from Turkey on land, her sea-coast, her Piræus, her very capital, were exposed to the attack of the powerful Turkish fleet. As regards the claim conferred by the Treaty of Berlin, the principle of a cession of territory to Greece by Turkey is conceded, and always has been conceded, by the Ottoman Government. The great Powers expressly abstained from positively declaring that such and such districts must be ceded; they laid down authoritatively the new Montenegrin frontier, but only recommended, with a formal reservation in Article 24 of the Treaty, a particular new line of Greco-Turkish frontier.

Sir Stafford Northcote did well, in his recent speech at Bristol, to intimate, not merely to Greece, but also to her Majesty's Ministers, that the Conservative party would resolutely oppose any armed intervention on the part of this country for the mere purpose of extending the Greek frontier in a particular direction. Since the days when Byron sang, the complexion of Eastern politics has totally altered. We have good grounds for asserting that there is no real animosity between Greek and Turk. Both are menaced by that new factor in European affairs, the Pan-Slavistic movement. That common danger should unite them; and if Greece does, as she not unreasonably may, look forward to the ultimate inheritance of Constantinople, her wisest statesmen must feel that it must be an affair of generations

rather than of years before she is strong enough to grasp the dazzling prize. An attempt to pluck such a pear before it is ripe is far more likely to lead to its total loss than to any other result.

The question of the Montenegrin frontier is somewhat different. Lord Salisbury has been severely attacked for his declaration that it was a matter that did not concern this country whether Montenegro got possession of Dulcigno or not. Yet in the sense in which he spoke he was entirely right. Lord Salisbury asserted that it was the duty of Turkey to make the cession, and that he desired to see it made. That is the Conservative programme as fully as the Liberal. Turkey signed the Treaty of Berlin; and although that treaty expressly provided that Dulcigno should be restored to Turkey, yet, as she has subsequently agreed to cede Dulcigno in lieu of the cessions specified in the treaty, and as this arrangement has been assented to by the other signatory Powers, the Porte is clearly bound to fulfil its engagements. No Conservative statesman would have the smallest right to support the Ottoman Government in an attempt to evade their promise. But we cannot leave out of sight the question of our own relative obligations towards the other Powers of Europe in this matter. Montenegro has always ostentatiously posed as the special *protégé* of Russia. It will hardly be denied that it was at Russia's instigation that she took up arms against Turkey. The late Government unquestionably viewed with regret the result of the Russo-Turkish war—the outbreak of which they strove hard to prevent. The Conservative Administration fully recognised the urgent need for Turkish reform; but they sought to attain that end by peaceful means, and

means by which Turkey might have been truly strengthened rather than prostrated. But Russia saw her opportunity, and precipitated hostilities. The States of Servia and Montenegro profited by her victory. Now the Liberal party seek to figure as rival patrons of those two countries. Mr Gladstone affects to believe that by zealously pressing upon Turkey the execution of the provisions of the Berlin Treaty relating to Montenegro, he can detach the latter Power's allegiance from the Russian to the English Government. We do not believe the statesmen of Cettigné are as simple as he supposes.

Does the Prime Minister hope to persuade the Montenegrin Government that England would, under any circumstances and under any Government, have sanctioned the making of an unofficial war upon Turkey by British subjects and officers fighting on behalf of Montenegro? Yet it is to the flame thus kindled by Russia that Prince Nikitá owes his accession of territory. It is only reasonable for him to hope that history may repeat itself, and to prefer solid pudding to Mr Gladstone's empty eulogies of the valour of his subjects.

We hold, therefore, that Lord Salisbury was perfectly justified in saying that England would be none the worse off if Dulcigno were not surrendered. Turkey would have broken her word, no doubt; but if we are to go to war to punish every State that breaks faith with us, what are we to say to the tearing up of the Black Sea Treaty and the annexation of Khiva? If our readers will refer to Lord Salisbury's despatch of July 13, 1878, enclosing the signed Treaty of Berlin, they will see that the question of the Montenegrin frontier is not treated as one in which England has any peculiar interest. A treaty

drawn up by six Powers conjointly, whose views are divergent, must be in the nature of a compromise. English special wishes, let us say, are considered in the delimitation of Eastern Roumelia; French, in the recommendation regarding the Greek frontier; and Russian, in the concessions to Servia and Montenegro.

As long, therefore, as the Conservative leaders abstain from encouraging, directly or indirectly, the Turkish Government in its neglect to fulfil the treaty, they are fully entitled to point out to their own countrymen that England will suffer no material harm from the non-execution of a particular provision; and they are also within their right in protesting against their successors, under cover of the pretext that they are carrying out Conservative policy, seeking to embroil England in a foreign war, in a matter in which we have no vital stake. If the doctrine we have here laid down seems to any of our readers to require vindication, we would refer them to the Liberal leaders' speeches *passim* on the occasion of the tearing up of the Black Sea Treaty by Russia, and their able arguments to prove that we were not bound to resent by force of arms the violation of a treaty in which (according to their contention) we had no special interest.

Before closing this article, we may devote a few general remarks to what we have ventured to call the *Paulo post futurum* policy of the present Administration.

At the moment of writing these lines, the cession even of Dulcigno has not been accomplished. With a somewhat strange sense of humour, Mr Gladstone capped a course of six months' energetic policy by reading a telegram from a foreign sovereign on the subject, amidst "roars of laughter," at the Guildhall ban-

quet. Whether the position of a Minister, whose course of policy is rewarded by what his audience and he himself appear to consider a mere jest, is entirely satisfactory and dignified, we leave to the Prime Minister to decide. Hitherto the result of the Liberal Government's foreign policy is represented by a cipher; and this makes it difficult to calculate what they may accomplish during their tenure of office, since the product of nought, whether multiplied by six months or six years, is unchanged.

How does the Liberal Ministry, which six months ago entered into possession of time-honoured Downing Street amidst a flourish of trumpets which proclaimed it the wisest, strongest, and honestest of Administrations, now stand before the country? As for its wisdom, it consists at home in having disgusted moderate Liberals with their advanced comrades, and in having set the two Houses of Parliament by the ears; abroad, the members of the Cabinet alternately threaten and fawn on Austria and Germany. As for its strength, its representative in Ireland can only ask for "sympathy" from that class of our fellow-subjects who claim from him the bare right to be protected from assassination; abroad Mr Gladstone—the heaven-born Minister who was to set right these disjointed times—does not now "despair" that the European concert, in which he has ceased to play first fiddle, may effect *something*.

But the strongest ground remains—the Tory who may steal Mr Gladstone's reputation for wisdom and for strength may steal trash; but he who filches from a Liberal Cabinet its good name, assails its most sensitive but most impregnable point. We will recall the denunciations of Lord Beaconsfield's secret policy of the outrage

on the House of Commons alleged to have been committed by the fact that negotiations were conducted, and important political steps taken, without its knowledge. Mr Gladstone had much to say as to the necessity of abandoning Cyprus and the Transvaal; but, above all, the late Ministry were impeached for their secret agreement (so called) with Russia prior to the meeting of the Berlin Congress. The iniquity of these acts was a household phrase in the mouths of our present Ministers. Now to test these virtuous sentiments by facts. What information has as yet been vouchsafed by the Foreign Office to Parliament as to our policy abroad? Were it not for the publication of the Austrian Red-book, the country would have had nothing but newspaper rumour to depend on. We can remember the vituperation bestowed on the Tories for summoning Indian troops to Malta without the knowledge of Parliament; but we search in vain for the record of the communication to that assembly, or to the country at large, of the act of war Mr Gladstone is said to have contemplated and proposed to Europe—namely, the confiscation of the Smyrna dues.

We are content to pass over the retention of Cyprus and the Transvaal, and will allow the Ministry the excuse that when they ceased to be a body of "irresponsible" gentlemen, they found in the pigeon-holes of Downing Street evidence to satisfy themselves of the necessity for swallowing their own words and "keeping a grip" on their predecessors' acquisitions. But there is one topic on which it appears to us the Conservative explanation of their policy, simple and sufficient though it be, has not been fully developed. We refer to the Salisbury Schouvaloff agree-

ment. To judge from the language that Liberal leaders have habitually applied to this document, the ordinary reader might suppose that Congresses were in the habit of assembling without a vestige of prearrangement as to the subjects of their deliberations. Now what was this agreement? Let us recall facts. The Treaty of San Stefano had been concluded between Russia and Turkey, and contained certain provisions absolutely inadmissible by England, and others to which she strongly objected. There were two courses open to her to obtain modifications of the treaty—either by force of her own arms, or by the consensus of European opinion. She selected the latter, and the fact of the assemblage of a Congress of European Powers to revise the Berlin Treaty was England's substantial triumph. But, on the other hand, Russia naturally said, "We will not go into a Congress without some security that your object is neither a mere delay to get ready for war, nor an intention to deprive us of the entire fruits of our victory." The Tory Ministry had then to consider if they would incur certain war by allowing the Congress to fall through or not. They appear to have decided thus: "Certain points," they said in effect to Russia, "we insist on peremptorily,—on others we have a strong opinion, which we hope may be shared by other Powers; we shall press those points at the Congress, but will not make their rejection a *casus belli*. It was a reasonable and legitimate hope on their part that other Powers might have so far backed them at Berlin as to have induced Russia to abandon at least a great portion of her ultimate acquisitions. In this hope, however, they were disappointed; and as Russia was not amenable to argument, the Cyprus

Convention was our reply to her territorial gains in Asia Minor.

In connection with this subject it is well to lay clearly before the country what was at that time the real position of the Conservative Ministry towards Russia. They were alternately represented by their opponents either as a body of men duped by the superior sagacity of General Ignatieff and Count Schouvaloff, or as makebates bent on stirring up a quarrel in defiance of the solemn promises and honourable undertakings of a peaceful Emperor and a sisterly country, whose only fault in Tory eyes was a chivalric enthusiasm for the cause of Christianity.

Neither view appears to us correct. No Government could wish to embroil their native land in war for the mere lust of blood—they were bound to search anxiously for means by which a *modus vivendi* could be established with Russia; but they were equally bound not to neglect the lessons of history, and to remember that circumstances had occurred not ten years ago which had proved so irresistible that the Czar of Russia's solemn personal word of honour had yielded to their force. Russia stood towards England in the position of one party in a lawsuit towards another. There need be no enmity between a plaintiff and a defendant, but there is a wide diversity of interests; and the lawyer who should neglect every means to strengthen his client's case on the plea that his opponent was too noble to profit by any technical advantage he might derive from his negligence, would certainly be held to have grievously failed in his duty.

The Russian forces occupied in 1878 an advantageous position at the gates of Constantinople; had they obtained possession of that city, the Black Sea might have been

closed to English vessels, our trade with Asia Minor ruined by the application of the prohibitive Russian tariff; and, worse than all, the Dardanelles Straits turned into a shelter for Russian men-of-war desirous to harass the Mediterranean or hinder the passage of our ships through the Suez Canal. We do not say this *would* have happened, but it *might* have occurred—the contingency could not be overlooked; the Russian Government had yielded once to temptation in Khiva: and had an English Ministry allowed themselves to be cozened a second time, no censure that could have been pronounced upon them would in our opinion have been too severe. They rightly held prevention to be better than cure, and the verdict of history will undoubtedly sustain their judgment.

Our immediate object, however, is not to discuss the wisdom of the Tory policy, generally speaking, towards Russia, but the honesty or dishonesty of the signature of the agreement with the Russian ambassador.

Mr Gladstone's followers call it deceitful and immoral. Did they ever hear of the Conference of London of 1870? Do they know that prior to that Conference Russia had torn up the Treaty of Paris? and will any Liberal statesman assert that the Conference (ostensibly called together for the revision of that treaty) did not meet with the foregone understanding that the particular clause objectionable to Russia was to be eliminated? Take again the case of the Geneva arbi-

tration, and the presentation and rejection of the American indirect claims. Will Mr Gladstone tell us that it was not a matter of pre-arrangement between the British and American agents that those claims should be presented *pro forma* to the tribunal, and disallowed on the ground of want of jurisdiction?

We do not write this for the purpose of censuring the acts just referred to performed by the last Liberal Government, but merely to prove, as we could do by many other instances, that in coming to a species of understanding with Russia in 1878, the Conservative Government merely followed ordinary diplomatic precedent in similar cases.

It is therefore impossible to commend even the honesty of Liberal statesmen who condescend thus to vilify their opponents for following a track they have themselves marked out. It is painful for an Englishman to have to censure the foreign policy of his own Government; far rather would we pray for a time when, under the simple watchword of "Our country's honour and interests," Liberal and Tory might unite in the determination to prefer their fatherland to their party. But so long as, for the sake of driving a political foe from office, the Radical party does not scruple to sacrifice their country's welfare on the altar of faction, so long will the Tories use every legitimate method to prevent the abrogation of the position their ancestors have built up for the empire.

IRELAND OUR REPROACH.

WILL any among us deny the proposition that we Britons, though abounding in power and wealth, allow ourselves to be continually fretted and hindered by the lawlessness of about three millions of persons, or one-tenth of the whole population of the three kingdoms? The disaffected portion of Ireland is the unsound part here intended: our figures may be disputed, but the exactness of them is not essential to the argument. Ireland, which might be a bulwark of the empire, is a source of weakness thereto, a perpetual sore, hitherto immedicable by any skill that we possess. In justice to ourselves, we must say that we have acted upon our own favourite theory, that the rulers must be in fault, to the very point of absurdity. We have gone on removing grievance after grievance (so called) without obtaining the very smallest recognition of our goodwill. For sixty years we have been endeavouring to conciliate Ireland, but in vain. The cry of Ireland against Great Britain is as shrill, now that there is not a shadow of a grievance to point to, as it was before the first step was taken towards relief of her disabilities. Our efforts may have liberated our souls with regard to our own consciences; but as regards Ireland they have been absolutely fruitless.

Neither is this simply a sentimental matter. It is not merely that we have anxiously courted the kindly regard of Ireland, and failed to touch her affections. It is our misfortune (or fault) that the disaffected, irreconcilable portion of that island is turbulent as well as irresponsible, aggressive and violent rather than cold. The law of the

land there is proclaimed a tyranny; men refuse to obey it; they band themselves together to resist it, and to enforce resistance to it. It is morally certain that no amount of concessions to the cries and pretensions of Ireland would satisfy her; they would probably only render her more exacting, more unreasonable, more ungovernable. She—that is, her troublesome population—has found out that a strong conspiracy to resist and violate the law can reduce the risk of law-breaking to something very small, as long as laws are framed to suit peace-loving communities rather than lawless districts. She has found that crime and resistance to the law, briskly sustained for several months, are very likely to obtain for her the object of her latest clamour; and, as if her own instincts were not keen enough in this direction, she has been assured by the present Prime Minister that law-breaking is the way to success. She is infested by agitators whose own interests and whose notoriety depend wholly upon keeping her in a state of irritation. She is incapable of seeing for herself that orderly behaviour, and respect for and conformity to the law, are the most likely means of freeing herself from the poverty and unhappiness which infallibly attend her insubordination; and those who alone can gain her ear will never suggest to her such ideas as obedience and patience. Here, then, is a call for speedy and stern action on our part.

We trust that we shall not be misunderstood. It is not our contention that nothing in the way of indulgence or reform should be conceded to Ireland. But we say that

no reform or indulgence should be given in exchange for obedience to the law—in other words, that nothing of the kind should be wrung from the Legislature by crime and rebellion. Complaint of grievances and breach of the laws are two very different things. For the one there is a legitimate mode of expression; for the other there should be no toleration at all. We are, on this side the water, perfectly familiar with demands and agitations for changes in the law; but then these are not accompanied by assassination and outrage, as they are in Ireland. It is one thing to make reasonable complaints and demands, and quite another to break existing laws. A broad distinction should be made between what Ireland wishes and asks for, and what Ireland does. If her deeds are unlawful, they must be punished, and repetition of them prevented, no matter what her demands may be. Let her obey first, and then let her prefer her complaint. At present she is disobedient and ungovernable; and her insubordination must be considered before, and independently of, her grievances.

There are men,—men who know well how to express their opinions,—who tell us that the present state of things—the wretched, scandalous state of things—is, after all, Ireland's own affair. She is the only, or, at any rate, the principal, loser by it. If Great Britain could only induce her to consider her ways, and to intelligently follow after her own prosperity, Great Britain would be only too glad and too ready to assist in the work of regeneration. But if Ireland will not be persuaded; if, deaf to reason and defiant of consequences, she is resolute to pursue the suicidal course on which she has for long been adventuring, then on her eyes be it; we would have saved her if we conveniently,

and with not too great trouble, could have done so; it is only herself that she is wrecking; why should we, if she will not hear reason, perform the thankless office of dragooning her into order, of enforcing her wellbeing by an approach to martial law? She will never understand that any such action is taken out of pure goodwill to her; she will only accuse us still more violently of oppressing her. Let us not, therefore, incur the trouble of keeping her quiet, or earn her augmented curse; but let us leave her to her fate, to suffer adversity, and to learn in that bitter school, if she can learn anywhere.

We must say that we have been surprised to read arguments of this kind, and that we have lived hitherto in a very different belief. We have been, and we still are, of opinion that Ireland's behaviour is not simply Ireland's affair; that we cannot allow Ireland to ruin herself, or to proceed in wilfulness or anarchy beyond a certain limit, lest she in her infatuation should bring evil upon Great Britain. And we suppose that, as we dare not to throw Ireland wholly upon her own resources, and to cast her loose, we act unwisely in not making her feel constantly the curb which, in extreme cases, we must tighten upon her. The way in which she wishes to go is a way that we shall never approve, and never suffer her to walk in as far as the goal which she proposes to herself; then why let her walk in that way at all? why make a pretence of giving her her head, when we know that, sooner or later, we must bring her up with a sharp check? Seeing that we cannot leave her wholly to her own imaginations and courses, it would surely be kinder and wiser to keep her always subject to discipline, and not to allow her fits of licence

to be followed by fits of coercion. We presume, then, that the argument to which we have referred rests on an unsound basis. We say that we cannot — that we never shall — allow Ireland to (as the proverb says) “make her own bed and lie on it.” Great Britain claims the right to retain Ireland as an integral part of the United Kingdom; and she claims the right of restraining in Ireland deeds, speeches, and writings which may tend to the damage of the kingdom generally, or operate as bad examples in other parts of the empire. If then Ireland must, in the most essential matters of State, be under the control of the sister island, it is due to her that her political life should be altogether regulated by British counsel. We have no right to give her just so much line as shall entice her to folly. We know that we must govern her. Let us govern her thoroughly. Britons may shut their eyes to this their duty, but they never can relieve themselves of it; and ‘Maga’s’ exhortation to them is that they address themselves to it as a very serious duty indeed, and that they allow no perfunctory performance of it.

If we at all act up to our own principles, the knowledge that it is our duty to govern Ireland effectually will be sufficient to make us do it. But we are not left wholly to a sense of duty; our honour, our dignity, begin to be involved in our successful government of Ireland. Foreign countries have found out, and do not fail to reproach us with, our disgraceful failure in that respect. And we may expect these reproaches to become more stinging and more frequent as our unskilfulness may become better known. For we have a knack of inviting the retorts of foreign Governments by the merci-

less criticisms, and often by the active interferences in their affairs which we delight to exercise, just as if we were perfect ourselves, and a model of able and efficient government. We love to throw stones, forgetful that we live in a glass house. Foreigners, if they have hitherto not often noticed our inconsistency, are at any rate now waking up to a sense of it, and are likely to cast it in our teeth. Austria is said to have done so pretty sharply once; and we have heard that the Sultan, when being lectured by Mr Goschen as to the proper mode of ruling, replied, “You English at least ought to have some fellow-feeling with me, because you have got an Ireland which you cannot rule. Now I have got some fifteen Irelands; that is my case.” John Bull, the universal physician of governments, must heal himself if he would silence the sarcasms and invectives of the patients for whom he loves to prescribe.

Now Great Britain, one supposes, can put away this, her reproach regarding Ireland, whenever it may please her determinedly to do so. With her power and her wealth she may certainly decree and effect that an island lying so close on her flank shall cease to be a hornet’s nest to her. This, as a general proposition, we expect that no one will deny. If to keep Ireland quiet by any possible means—even to the extent of extinguishing the insurgent population—be the problem, there is no doubt that it can be solved. Only that we should never think of solving it in a savage, unintelligent manner. We must do it with the very tenderest hand—with rose-water, it would seem, from the nonsense which is sometimes said and written on the subject; but we all agree that it must be done by patient firmness, and

not by vindictive violence. And herein—that is, in the very restricted means which we allow ourselves—lies our difficulty. Because, when it is explained that the cure must be wrought with the utmost consideration for the patient whom it is desired to reform, not to crush, the foregoing proposition ceases to be self-evident. Power means a good many things besides men and ships, and arms and money. Knowledge is power: and there, we fancy, is the rub—we do not *know* how to manage Ireland.

But, as we expect it to be objected, it is altogether a mistake to assume that the government of Ireland has never been attempted except by coaxing and weak indulgence. We have grappled Ireland ere now with the strong hand; trodden down her rebellion with our men of war; coerced her disaffection by stringent laws: yet our sternness had no better result than our complaisance. We grant this, and reply that our wrath was as much without knowledge as our petting. In the last century (to go no farther back), we wreaked vengeance on rebellious Ireland; we punished her sharply: but though that punishment might be reckoned an expiation for past offences, it could not, without further treatment careful and judicious, bring about a reformation. Much patience and knowledge were required for that, and these were not forthcoming. More than once in the present century we have passed repressive laws—laws very good in themselves, but ineffectual, inasmuch as they were timidly enacted and enforced; inasmuch as they were accompanied with an amount of puling and whining which proved to all the world, and especially to those whom they principally concerned, that our hearts were failing us all through; and inasmuch as they were never persisted in long

enough to bear good fruit, or even to convince the unruly that we were in earnest. Our desire seemed always to be, not so much to gain a good result from the law, as to find the earliest possible excuse for repealing it without thought of what was to follow. In short, we have never tried to this day a steady, persistent, inexorable enforcement of the law that will insist, before all things, upon the law being respected, that will be turned aside by no countercharge against the law, that will convince the unruly of the folly of fencing and tampering with the declared will of Great Britain.

Great Britain can enforce the law upon Ireland if she will. But it requires something more than the mere volition. She must be at some pains, she must go a little out of her beaten track, before she can prescribe for the distemper of Ireland with a chance of healing it. For it is a truth that the very institutions which we have established for the maintenance of order, freedom, and improvement, and which minister to those greatest ends on this side St George's Channel, are impotent for the same ends on the other side—nay, are made the very means of encouraging and perpetuating disorder. The great stronghold of Irish disaffection, disobedience, and ungovernableness is the House of Commons of the United Kingdom—not of its own will, but by the unfortunate concurrence of things. Let this truth be perceived and accepted, and we shall have made an important step on the road to that knowledge which may help us to the disburthening ourselves of Our Reproach.

Obedience to the law ought not to be a subject of debate in any legislative assembly. That the laws must and shall be obeyed is

an axiom which ought to precede the making of law, and which it becomes law-makers, of all men, to hold as sacred and unquestionable. But however readily our legislators may consent to this axiom that it is good, certain it is that in practice, and as regards Ireland, they have failed to act up to it. The emulations of party find, in the disgraceful condition of Ireland, only too convenient a lever for raising political capital. When a Ministry, impelled perhaps by the rising of the tide of crime above the usual mark, ventures to act with some little vigour, immediately the Opposition is penetrated by the wrongs of Ireland, denounces the execution of the law there as the most pitiless tyranny, and declares that what will pacify Ireland is not severity, but indulgence and redress of wrong. On the other hand, should a Ministry, by weakness and fear to execute the law, have allowed the law-abiding portion of the Irish people to be murdered and outraged in larger proportion than ordinary, in order to court the rebellious, it is in a pitiable strait, denounced by the Opposition as tolerating anarchy, almost without protest, and afraid to enforce the law lest its party interests should be compromised by its doing so. The prize for which parties contend, and the advantage which they dare not forego, are the votes of the Irish members—all, or nearly all, of whom are on the side of the disaffected.

But in regard to a matter of such consequence as this, which affects the peace of a large portion of the United Kingdom, and the well-being of all of it, there is no stretch of imagination in supposing that English legislators might be ready to sink their differences, and to consult, not the advantage of party, but the good of the nation. There

is no doubt that, if they should do so, and should continue their united action, they would soon make an end of Irish grievances and Irish insurrection: they would put away *Our Reproach*. But if long experience be any guide in such matters, there is no probability whatever of parties preferring the national good to the Irish vote. As readily might two generals in the field agree to refrain from outflanking each other, or to conduct the war without powder and shot! No; we must put out of our minds, as an unattainable object, the hearty, efficient government of Ireland by Parliament, except under the strongest pressure.

Parliamentary government is not suited to all peoples in all times,—it is surely no treason to say as much as that. We do not govern India by a Parliament; Jamaica is not governed by a Parliament; and we could cite other less conspicuous instances. Government by other means than Parliament is, then, not unknown to our empire. Yet we Britons hold the Parliamentary system to be the perfection of government; and whatever we may tolerate at a great distance from home, we cannot even think of a people living (and rioting) under the very shadow of the Lion, as it were, and yet deprived of this greatest of political blessings. We, having this world's great good in the form of Parliamentary government, could not bear to see our Irish brother have need of the same, and shut up our compassion. But it is surely some answer to such an observation as this, that Parliamentary government has signally failed to make Ireland prosperous, peaceable, contented, or happy. A form of government which is found wanting in so many respects cannot be such a very great blessing; and the

suspension of it may scarcely be regarded as a hardship. We venture to say, then, that we might signally promote the wellbeing of Ireland if we were to relieve her of direct Parliamentary government.

Does this solve the difficult question? By no means. It is only a step towards solution. It may be wise to be off with the old Government before we are on with the new; but it would be wise also, before putting away the old, to consider what the new ought to be. It ought assuredly to be a Government appointed for a fixed and not for a short period, in order that it may last long enough to carry out fully its new methods, whatever those may be. By being assured of its term of existence, it will be independent of the fluctuations of party politics in the House of Commons, and able to pursue its way undisturbed; not compelled to save its own life by making sacrifice of its duty, but free to give its whole attention to the regeneration of Ireland. Its chief business would be to make the law respected, and to adequately protect life and property. The accession of such a Government to office would be a blessed event for the peaceably-disposed Irish. And peaceably-disposed persons from other lands would venture their lives and capital in Ireland when it should be known that protection was assured there for a fixed and extended term, and that the arm of the law would not be subject to the oscillating majorities of Parliament. If capital could get only fifteen years protection assured to it, it would probably, before the expiration of that period, have been able to take order for its own future maintenance. For the persons who would, in ordinary course, attend the migration of capital, would be, for the most part, friends of order; so that the law-abiding

population would have a tendency to increase, and after a time it might equal or outnumber the rebellious. Idleness, one great bane of Ireland, would decrease on the introduction of capital. There would be no miraculous, sudden change; but with industry humming all around him, it would be impossible for the Irishman long to keep to his habit of lying listless on the floor, and nursing vengeance against the British Government for evils which are the consequence really of his own thriftlessness and insobriety. Indeed, such a Government would be able to cure all the prominent evils which now disgrace Ireland, and disgrace us whose duty it is to govern Ireland.

For the form of government, it may be (say) a Viceroyalty and Council, with this proviso, that it must be established for a certain term of years, and it must be endowed with very large powers. It must fulfil a fixed term in order that law-abiding habits may take root, and that lengthened security may be given to those who would introduce and uphold industries and improvements; and it must be powerful, that it may summarily suppress attempts to resist or to break the law. Whether or not the Viceroy should be considered a member of Administration, and should go out of office with his party, or whether his should be a non-Ministerial appointment, and he should remain in office after the retirement of the party who appointed him, would be a question for those who might undertake to carry out the scheme. We should prefer that the Viceroy should not be a party man, but that he should be selected as being generally fit for this very responsible office, and irrespective of party. It may occur to many that an able soldier, not known as leaning very decidedly to

either side in politics, might well fill the post.*

The Viceroy may be required to govern according to the laws as they stand, so long as they may be obeyed; but he ought to have power to alter them temporarily in ways known to these islands—such as suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act—whenever and wherever the disturbed state of the country may appear to him and his advisers to require such alteration. It may also be necessary to arm him with authority to try offenders otherwise than by jury. Indeed his powers must be great; and therefore the utmost circumspection would be required in selecting him.

The essence of the scheme, however, would be, that Parliament should be pledged to its continuance for an appointed time. Of course, we do not mean that the ruler should for his term of office be without control. He must not

overstep the limits assigned to him; but within those limits let him be very little fettered. If he be the able man that, as we contend, he ought to be, there will not be much danger in giving him a large discretionary range.

By this method, or one like it, the affairs of Ireland would cease to be the daily care of the British Legislature. There would, if the Viceroy should be a man of sufficient qualities, be no playing fast and loose with the government of that island. Ireland would cease to be a handle for party operations. The trade of the Irish agitator would be gone on this side the water. Law-abiding Irish subjects would be protected by the law, instead of being left to the tender mercies of secret confederacies which will not allow them to exercise any of the rights of free men,—to buy or sell, to work or cease from working, to dwell on this pro-

* While this article was being corrected for the press, we were gratified to notice a letter from Lord Headley to the editor of the 'Standard' newspaper, dated November 9th, in which views very similar to ours as to the form of government necessary for Ireland are set forth. His lordship's opinions have been formed during the experience of a long residence in Ireland; and we regard them as a strong support to our suggestions, with which they coincide. We take the liberty of extracting two or three paragraphs from Lord Headley's letter:—

"Truly, Ireland requires exceptional legislation, but the exceptional legislation should be that of a mild despotism, as compared with the so-called constitutional government which suffices in the other home portions of her Majesty's dominions.

"I hold it to be a very satire on the meaning of the verb 'to govern,' and an abuse of the word 'constitutional,' to accept the proposition that it would be unconstitutional to govern Ireland on a different system to that which obtains in England or Scotland. To say that it is impossible to do so, is a confession that no strong Government, if honest, could make.

"Thus, then, the Irish gentlemen who would be loyal, and the gentlemen from Ireland who would not, join issue on one common point.

"Exceptional legislation we both clamour for. 'Give us Home Rule,' cries out the latter; 'Ireland to the Irish, and we shall have prosperity.' 'No,' exclaims the former; 'for the result of Home Rule appears in facts and figures in this letter; rather extend to us a gentle but despotic arm from the mother country.'

"I venture to offer these remarks as coming from one who has made it his business and pleasure to live amongst the people in the fullest sense of the idea for the last seventeen years; and personally, more especially in regard to the relations with my own tenants, my affection hitherto has been well repaid. I am not, therefore, afraid of being misinterpreted by those whose opinion I value when I raise my voice for a mild despotism, being well assured that, for the present at all events, it is the only form of government which can protect an impulsive, generous-hearted, but too sanguine and excitable a race from a class of adventurers which from time immemorial has known only too well how to turn these good qualities to the furtherance of its own vicious ends."

perty or on that, to give evidence in courts of law,—except as the conspirators shall dictate. The lawless would cease to occupy all the care and thought of the governing power. Grievances, complaints, would have to be referred to the Viceroy, and dealt with by him. The Houses would, for a period, wash their hands of Irish politics; the debates in the Commons would, in all probability, recover something of their ancient dignified and respectable character.

But the great effect of the change would be in Ireland itself. The Viceroy should be charged, as a first duty, to prevent, to repress, and to punish crime; to control agitation; to curb, if necessary, the press. The use of the lash ought to be permitted in punishing wretches who may have been guilty of torturing dumb creatures. No man dare contend that such heartless criminals could be degraded by corporal punishment; neither could any say that such cruelty had not richly earned the infliction. The Viceroy should be empowered to disarm the populations of refractory districts. He ought to be supported by a strong civil and a strong military force, so as to give law-breakers no chance at all. He might meet with a little trouble at first; but as soon as it should be understood and felt that Parliamentary agitation was at an end, and that the laws were being impartially enforced, the disposition to turbulence and outrage would, as we may confidently anticipate, rapidly decline. At the same time, it should be a charge to the Viceroy to promote industry, to ascertain and attempt to develop the resources of the sister island, and to attract capital into it. Indeed the passage of capital into the country would not require much invitation, but would occur in the ordinary

course of things as soon as life and property should be known to be more secure than of old—as soon as it should be said of Ireland that the murderer, the mutilator, and the wrecker of homes could no longer walk there in safety by day or by night. The new, strong Government might give much sound advice as to how assistance from this island might be most profitably given to Ireland. At present there is much reason to fear that English gifts of money to Ireland are injudiciously applied,—that the party spirit, the misrepresentation, and the terrorism which are curses of the island, procure the misdirection of this as they do of every well-intended provision. Many well-wishers of Ireland recommend a copious emigration therefrom. The Government here suggested would be able greatly to facilitate and to regulate emigration.

We are quite aware that the remedy here recommended is a sweeping and a searching one—one that would be violently objected to. The defence of it lies in the miserable condition of Ireland, for the amelioration whereof none of our ordinary expedients of government will suffice. We cannot govern Ireland as we govern Great Britain. It is a shame and a sin to us not to govern Ireland effectually. *Ergo*, we are bound to try another form of government. It should be remembered that our partiality for Parliamentary government, and our notion that it would be cruelty to deprive Ireland of that which we look upon as a great blessing to ourselves, are but sentiments. And in dealing with a very difficult problem, we want common-sense, not sentiment. It is the sentimental view which the Irish demagogues endeavour continually to exhibit to us, because they know well that they thus address our national

foibles rather than our judgment, and because they know also that whenever Great Britain may take this matter in hand in a practical way their occupation will be gone. But it is our duty to be practical here. Once put into the right groove and held there for a period, the Irish would forget their blood-thirstiness and savagery; they would learn that their advancement and prosperity can be better and more easily promoted than by assassination and violence; and they would apply their faculties to arts and pursuits which would to a great extent shut out the baser and fiercer passions. After witnessing the benefits of order and industry for a generation, they would hardly choose, even if it were permitted, to return to uselessness and ferocity.

Having thus dreamt out our day-dream of a reasonably governed Ireland, we wake up to behold the immovable, inexorable powers which stand for the long-trying, unfruitful state of things, and which, to some minds, render amelioration impossible, and the hope of it an absurdity. Our contemporary the 'Saturday Review' wrote not very long ago—"It would now be impossible to administer Ireland as a mere dependency. The growing strength of the English democracy would place an insurmountable impediment in the way of any attempt of the kind. The extreme Liberal party will never consent to deprive itself of the aid of allies who will always be ready to support revolutionary measures."* It is true that no damsel or treasure was ever surrounded by more vigilant and determined guardians—dragons, griffins, adamantine gates, enchanted bulwarks—than would be sure to show themselves in defence of the continuance of *Our Reproach*.

Their name is legion for whose profit a distracted, discreditable Ireland serves. Private interests, party interests, would start up alarmed; and more than that, a jealous Legislature, inwardly conscious of having failed, but outwardly boastful of its power and its privileges, would wrestle hard to maintain its hold of that which only festers in its grasp. We do not underrate, and we have no wish to make light of, the immense force which would come from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, and insist that Ireland should remain poor, lawless, barbarous, and a reproach to us.

But appalling as the adventure is, we are not utterly dismayed. We remember that a stout heart and a good cause always sufficed to penetrate the enchanter's barriers, though he charmed never so wisely. And we believe yet in the power of an honest desire and a persistent courageous endeavour. There are myriads in this land, who, if they were once fairly impressed with the importance, first to Ireland and secondly to Great Britain, of dealing wisely with this difficulty, would rise above party considerations, and insist upon the power of Great Britain being used earnestly and determinedly for the better government of Ireland. But these well-disposed myriads require to be instructed, and to understand clearly not only what they must do, but what they must not do. It is not an impossible thing for Britons to be wrought to the conviction that the time has come for taking some very serious step with regard to Ireland. They have often felt that they must and would address themselves to her amelioration; but whenever this has been the case, there has always been at hand

* September 4, 1880.

some specious adviser, who, seeing that things must needs be altered, took pains that they should be altered as little as possible. The great care of these advisers was, that no reform should go to, or near to, the root of the matter. They are prompt to deflect the thrust which they cannot block. They lead into a side channel the force which has been accumulated for the correction of the evil; and by proposing palliatives, compromises, and concessions,—measures calculated, perhaps, to bring a seeming peace for a year or two,—they waste and disperse the head of public feeling, which, if it were properly directed, might produce a permanent cure. We have only to look back at the various nostrums which have been from time to time administered, without being followed by any good result, to be convinced of their futility, and to be warned against the repetition of such weak and inappropriate action. We have never been able to kill the snake of sedition and rebellion, though we have scotched it so often. With certainty it has raised its head again and hissed at us, giving clear proof that our efforts had been futile, and that the work was all to do over again. There is a Land Commission sitting now (as many a Commission has sat before) to devise some compromise which may bring a lull of a year or two—a thing which may be a great relief to Ministers. The Commission will recommend some new law as a matter of course—some new law which, for the twentieth time in this century, is to put an end to all contention and satisfy Ireland at last. Already fond people, prone to temporising, are talking about a “settlement” of the land question. As if there ever could be a settlement by the

stock Parliamentary routine! Was not the land question “settled” by Parliament in 1870? and were we not then assured that there would be need of no further legislation on the subject? It tries one’s patience to hear stuff like this about “settlement” repeated. The “settlement” would probably be a bribe to the unruly, at the expense of the orderly, to give the Ministry rest for a twelvemonth or so. We earnestly desire that the well-wishers of Ireland may not be led from the right track by any such recommendation. If the Commissioners have anything reasonable and good to recommend, let us have it, in God’s name, and be thankful; but let us not accept it as a thing which can acquit us of our obligations toward Ireland. Mr Parnell, M.P., in a speech which he made at Ennis on the 19th September, is reported to have said as follows in reference to the Land Commission now sitting:—

“I am bound to tell you honestly that I believe this Commission was appointed in order to try and whittle down the demand of the Irish tenantry, and to try to find out what was the very least measure of reform that had a chance of being accepted in Ireland, and to a great extent to divert the minds of tenant-farmers from agitating and organising to the useless work of going before this Commission and giving evidence. I cannot possibly see what useful effect evidence before this Commission can have. We know that the report, if there is any report, must be of a one-sided character, and against the interests of the people of this country. The composition of the Commission is a guarantee of that. Hence we have to consider whether it is at all probable that the importance which might be gained by having evidence put down could have any counterbalancing advantage as compared with the demoralisation that the farmers must experience when they turn their eyes with any hope of confidence to such Commission when so constituted. What will be said if the tenant-farmers

come before this Commission in any large numbers? It will be said that you have accepted the Commission; that you must therefore be bound by its report; and if there is very much evidence given, it will form a very good excuse for the Government and for the English Tory party to put off legislation on the land question next session until they have time to read the evidence and consider its bearing and effect. My opinion, then, decidedly is this—Whatever harm you do your cause by going before this Commission, you certainly will be able to do no good."

Though our aims are very different from those of Mr Parnell, yet we quite agree with him that no recommendation calculated to heal the wounds of Ireland is likely to proceed from the Commission. It is very likely, indeed, to "whittle down" the whole question, and to propose (as has been done twenty times before) some paltry quack-salve, with the effect—if a law should be founded upon its suggestions—of obtaining a two years' truce for the Ministry, and of enabling them to brag once more that they have pacified Ireland.

Here we may glance for a moment at the curious apology for delay which has been of late so frequently made by Ministers and their friends. "Let us," it has been said, "not be studious to enact exceptional laws for Ireland until it shall be proved beyond contradiction that the ordinary law of the land has failed. Let us exhaust the ordinary law first." As if it were not already clear to the most vulgar mind that the law has most miserably failed, that it is inoperative, and that in its place has been erected an illegal and secret power coercing by means of assassination and cruelty! Why, if there had remained any virtue or any efficacy in the ordinary law, the case of Ireland which we are discussing

could not have arisen. The fortune of the man in Thessaly was to recover his sight by the same process which had destroyed it; and the plan of our Ministerial sages is that the code which has allowed Ireland to sink to such a state of anarchy, is now to be the instrument of her restoration! Pshaw!! The men who use this pitiful sophistry know well that the Queen's writ will not run in many parts of Ireland; that witnesses of acts of violence dare not denounce or reveal them; and that juries, only too often, dare not, on the clearest evidence, to convict a criminal!

The 'Spectator' newspaper, on the 30th October, wrote as follows: "The British Government is not bound to govern only, but to govern constitutionally; and the first principle of the constitution is that the despotic power intrusted to Parliament shall not be used to set aside law, until the law has failed to protect public order." A little further down in the same article may be read: "It is an open question whether the law has any strength at all; whether any jury could be got together without packing, which, on any evidence, would convict a popular law-breaker." If the writer here have not proved a case against himself, there is no such thing as demonstration.

No; we must go very much deeper than a Commission is likely to even hint at, and much further than the ordinary law will carry us. We must, in good earnest, govern Ireland, not coax her into a short-lived good-humour. And, as has been already stated, Parliament is not likely, of its own will, ever to make, and adhere to, such dispositions as will do good.

Equally plain is it that we can do nothing except through Parliament. So, if Parliament will not

do it, there is an end of the matter ! But soft : it was only said that Parliament would not do the right thing—*i. e.*, according to our view, institute a new government for a fixed period — of its own will. There is nothing which Parliament may not be made to do by the pressure of opinion persistently applied. Once it is understood that the people of Great Britain see their way to a great and benevolent end, that they are determined to attain that end, and that they will be satisfied with nothing short of it, Parliament will do the will of the country, and the right man will come to the front to guide Parliament in so doing. But this will never be unless the country is firm, and, with a single and unalterable mind, insists upon the government of Ireland being removed for a time beyond the daily cognisance of the Legislature. Alternatives will be a hundred times offered before the resolution to make this great change can be finally taken. If the people accept any substitute whatever for the *quasi* dictatorship, they will be once more foiled of their purpose, once more doomed to disappointment, once more amused till the day of waking up to the knowledge that Ireland is as bad as ever, and that we must begin again. It is a self-denying ordinance which they must compel Parliament to enact.

We have no doubt that as soon as the people of this country perceive their duty towards Ireland, they will endeavour to do it. But some reflection is required, and much avoidance of old errors. Let us, as a very important point, consider that we have been accustomed to regard the bad, the disaffected, the unruly portion of the Irish with interest ; while for the orderly, well-disposed part of them, we have had hardly a thought to

give. There may be a reason why we inadvertently do this ; but is it right to do it after we have perceived our inadvertence ? It is a truth that the tyranny which Irish orators impute to Great Britain, and to which Great Britain emphatically pleads *Not guilty*, is practised daily by the unruly Irish upon their peaceable neighbours. No men can lead more miserable lives than those Irishmen who are loyal and sound at heart. Should they be landlords, they are denied the rents which are justly due to them from their tenants, and threatened with death if they attempt by legal means to obtain their own, or to rid themselves of their unprofitable tenants. We know that these are often not empty threats, and that lives are taken on small provocation, so that every landlord may be said to carry his life in his hand. If the peaceable men be themselves tenants, or of the tenant class, they are forbidden to pay their rent by bands of secret conspirators ; they are forbidden to occupy certain lands which the conspirators may choose to have left on the landlord's hands, or to exercise that freedom as to hiring or letting, labouring or serving, which is the right of every man in a free community. Death is the penalty threatened for breach of the conspirators' commands ; but possibly, for a first disobedience of these, the victim may mercifully be let off with having his house set on fire, his crops destroyed, or his cattle rendered valueless by the most cruel injuries. The law does not help those who are thus oppressed. Justice Shallow's servant Davy remarked that "an honest man is able to speak for himself, while a knave is not ;" but things in Ireland to-day are very unlike the things of Davy's experience.

The knaves are now alone able to speak for themselves, and they speak loudly enough, while honest men cannot get a hearing and are confounded. It is more than a man's life is worth to give evidence against one of these conspirators from the witness-box, or as a juror to pronounce him guilty. Everything, therefore, is against the orderly and peaceable man. He is subjected to the fearful wrongs which we have described, and no man layeth it to heart. Begin to talk about Ireland, and you find shortly that it is the *law-breakers*, *their* cries, *their* demands, and what is to be done for *them*, that you are discussing; while for their victims, the poor souls whom we ought to protect, we have not a word or a thought. What has the Government been doing very lately—only a few months ago? While Ireland was known to be exceptionally unquiet and disposed to turbulence and law-breaking, Government suffered an Act to expire which had specially been passed for the preservation of the peace—that is to say, when a strong measure was expressly wanted as the only means whereby the law could be upheld, they declined to propose any strong measure. And why? Because the votes of the Irish members would be lost to them if they should attempt to deal firmly with Irish crime; and therefore loyal subjects must be shot, and outraged, and treated as criminals; for what are they in comparison of the Irish vote! Is it too much to require of the British people that well-disposed loyal men should be allowed to exercise the ordinary rights of citizens in Ireland without being perpetually in fear of death? It is Britain's business; Britain is responsible; at Britain's door must lie all the blood that is shed, and

all the damage that is suffered, for want of a sufficient executive Government.

A piece of refined consideration which has been recently put forth by a writer, who is also an ex-Minister of the Liberal party, in a contemporary periodical, regarding a special law for Ireland, is most remarkable. This writer would by no means countenance a stringent measure, because its restrictions would abridge the liberties of the peaceable as well as of the unruly. It is refreshing to find a word of any kind written for the peaceable; but such a word as this is surely an absurdity, if any word can be so. You take the shadow of death off peaceable men, you give them security for their property, and restore to them the rights of free men, but in so doing you commit an injustice against them because, forsooth, you restrict their liberties, and involve them in common disabilities with the transgressors! Could a severer satire upon mawkish sentiment have been penned? The mind that could have conceived it must have been accustomed to range far and wide in search of specious answers to stern strong arguments. Is it likely that they who are crying to us to save their lives and all that they possess, would object to protection being purchased at the expense of some civil disabilities? If the life be more than meat and the body than raiment, surely either of them is more than the liberty of possessing firearms, or of uttering treasonable speeches. We should like to hear on this subject some of the poor men who have been served with threats in the form of coffins. Can we suppose that they would object to having their lives preserved because the law which might preserve them would impose some slight restrictions? Assuredly not. It is only

the advocate who undertakes to speak in their name that could think of such a thing. *They* feel that the tyranny of agitators and brigands is a thousand times harder to bear than any limitation which the law might impose.

And this brings us to another stage of our argument. We have, as it were, put aside Parliament and appealed to the people outside it. The people must be advised and marshalled somehow before they can join in a clear definite demand concerning the government of Ireland. And the duty of marshalling and instructing them devolves upon the press. If the press will keep continually before the British people the wrongs which they are permitting, and the criminality of permitting such wrongs, an interest may be raised which may go on more and more extending and intensifying, until the nation is ready to rectify a crying error, and to do it intelligently and effectually. We ought not to relax our efforts simply because the cause looks so difficult as to be almost hopeless. We know that we have right on our side; and that ought to give us courage and energy. Ten righteous men might have saved the cities of the plain; and ten honest pens working devotedly for the better governing of Ireland, may fan the flame of opinion, until it shall have become an irresistible fire-blast. We are not the first who have laboured in this field, and we trust that we may not be the last by very many. The subject ought to be kept continually prominent. The arena must not be given up wholly to those who speak for the rebels. Enough, and far more than enough, is said for them. At least an equal voice should be raised on behalf of the loyal people who are at this moment, and continually, suffering brutal violence

and deprivation of their natural rights at the hands of organised miscreants whom it is *our* duty to hold in check and to punish.

We have set before us pictures in plenty of the miserable Ireland, *Our Reproach*, which the unintelligent, fruitless treatment of the last fifty years has produced. What should those melancholy pictures teach us? Surely, not that it is expedient to go on still longer in the same senseless way, but rather that we should resort to a new system of treatment, the old one having, by the confession of both sides, failed lamentably. "Emancipate the Catholics, and all will go well," said the infallible physicians; and we emancipated the Catholics. But all did not go well. "Pull down the Irish branch of the Church of England," said the infallible, "and all will go well." We pulled down the Irish Protestant Church; but all did not go well, nor a bit better than before. "Revise the land laws," again said the infallible, "and all will go well." We revised the land laws; but does the account set before us from day to day show that all is going well? Nay, surely; but it proves beyond contradiction that the infallible physicians, so called, knew nothing whatever of their work, and were the merest bunglers. Manifestly it is time to lay to our hand, and to institute a more intelligent system.

But might it not be profitable to dwell a little on pictures of a happy and contented Ireland, such as might be achieved by a firm and impartial Government? The intrinsic wealth of Ireland has never been developed, simply by reason of the perversity of its own population, which perversity has again been encouraged and maintained by British perversity in governing—or rather in not governing—Ireland.

No man dares to lay out capital in Ireland; because the chances are very great that, on the attempt being made to found there any industry whatever, overseers and workmen would be murdered or rattened, buildings would be burned, machinery broken, cattle maimed, and destruction in every way perpetrated. "We are howling for want and misery," say, in effect, the Irish; "but at your peril, Saxons, bring any of your wealth here to relieve us by finding us profitable employment. As much foolish alms, to keep us in idleness and rioting, as you please; but bring us the means of certainly *earning* our bread, and you die." Landowners are scared from residing on their properties, and so spending money in the country, by the fear of death—they take refuge elsewhere; and the ruffians who scare them, forming an argument out of their own wrong, raise a clamour against absenteeism. We have already remarked on the means resorted to for defeating the courts of law in any attempt to punish the lawless. But all this might be reversed if we should choose to give protection to life and property. Capital, for the employment of which there is ample occasion there, might be attracted in such quantity as would afford honest livelihood to tens of thousands. Manufactures might be established, fisheries promoted, waste lands reclaimed, mines worked, communications increased, the comfort of the population immeasurably advanced, if only we would give such protection to the capitalist, his servants and his gear, as would beget a fair hope of some profit on his venture. Landlords would return to their homes if assured of their lives and liberties. The effect must undoubtedly be, to turn that

land into a garden and a hive of industry, which is now everywhere neglected, and in many parts a wilderness; to turn the people from being savages or demi-savages and brigands, or else crushed victims, into civilised, industrious, useful inhabitants; to make Ireland, instead of a loss and a grief to us, a source of wealth and a defence!

This latter picture, which without question can be realised if we will, ought, we say, to be contemplated by us Britons, as well as the Ireland of squalor, poverty, and every species of lawlessness; and in season and out of season, whenever we may be undertaking an action for our own profit or pleasure, whenever we are enjoying our luxuries and our comforts, whenever we are disposed to lecture other countries on the proper methods of government, whenever we would travel or would rest, whenever we would ask a blessing on honest endeavour, ought to be set before us the pictures of this Ireland and of this,—of the Ireland which we are neglecting and misgoverning, and of that prosperous Ireland which we might produce, if only we would give our minds to this most interesting duty, and act boldly and firmly together. We must behold Ireland as she now is—a shuttlecock pushed about in the political arena, not for *her* good, but for the convenience and advantage of parties. We must realise the truth that her miserable, helpless condition can have no end unless we stir ourselves on her behalf and come to her rescue; but that if we do stir ourselves, we may not only end her misery but bring prosperity to her. Once we see our duty we shall be without excuse if we fail to do it. It is at our very door that relief is wanted—a relief far more need-

ful than pecuniary alms. Only by giving such relief can we quiet the accusations of our own consciences: only thus can we put away OUR REPROACH.

In the above paper no political party has been attacked. It has been the writer's object not to identify himself with any faction, but rather to recommend measures which, as he feels certain, would be in a high degree beneficial to Ireland—to recommend them to the British people to be adopted as a work of duty, and for their own interest. The statesmen who may carry out these measures will, it is thought, deserve well of their country, be their side in politics what it may. But, while these remarks have been in preparation for the press, events have been in progress in Ireland which, being intimately related to our subject, call for notice; and the authorities there and here have pursued a course on which some comment may be desirable.

Several opportunities have been used by persons in authority for publicly noticing the condition of things in Ireland; and one eminent person has emphatically assured us that the supremacy of the law must and will be upheld in that island whatever else may befall there. They, or many of them, have also made mention of great wrongs endured by the Irishmen who set the law at naught; and, where these wrongs may not have been stated in words, they have been implied by the tenor and tone of the speaker. As regards the promises to uphold the laws through evil

report and good report, they ought, as one may imagine, to be a source of inexpressible comfort and satisfaction to ourselves, and to all who participate in views such as have been just now propounded. If they do not make us light of heart—and we fear that we find little pleasure in them—we may have some reason to give presently why we refuse to be charmed. But let us first notice the Irish grievances; let us examine what has sounded ominously like a justification of Irish lawlessness.

There is nothing very startling in the sounds, "Irish grievances." As long as 'Maga' has existed, now more than two generations, there have always been Irish grievances; and in the old time before her they were the *mode* also, as our fathers have declared to us. It seems to be ordained for these grievances, as the Scriptures say it is for the poor, that they shall never perish out of the land. As has already been remarked, the grievances have been cured over and over again in the present century; and, strangely enough, it is the very lips which, ten years ago, assured us of the eradication of the grievances, and promised a long reign of peace thereafter, which now reopen the wail and declare that Ireland has great and grievous wrongs. Like the cry of *wolf*, the wail and the announcement fall rather flat upon accustomed ears; yet still it behoves those who would, before all things, advise for the public security, to look abroad for a moment, and not to assume incontinently that the wolf is an invention.* Certes, the Irish-

* From some remarkable utterances made lately at Birmingham, one is led to imagine that not really a redress of grievances, but a sort of retribution, is the desire and the due of Irishmen: landlords are thought to have had things too much to their advantage in the past, therefore let the tables be turned and let tenants

man's grievances are not obvious—they are not to be discovered at a glance. And we cannot but remark, that those who, having authority, have spoken of them and emphasised them, have entirely omitted to tell us what they are. The omission is suspicious. No scrutiny that we can exercise suffices to show us their nature or their extent. That a great many evils are to be seen in Ireland—poverty and idleness for example—we do not doubt; but to make these grievances it must be shown that they are due to the action of some supplanters or oppressors. Moreover, it would seem from the manner in which the grievances are named, that they are very old grievances, notwithstanding the repeated cures of them that have been effected since the year 1800. We quite believe that in the far past there existed in Ireland a state of things not characterised, according to modern ideas, by equity or charity. But we have changed this state of things; it exists no longer. To be continually reverting to it, and hugging the grievances that may have lain in it, is as senseless as it would be for modern Englishmen to be continually fretting themselves about the state of society which obtained under the Plantagenets or the Tudors. Whatever those evils may have been, either in England or Ireland, they have been swept away, as far as that can be done by the laws. As nobody will tell what the grievances are, we are left to guess; and after making the best examination in our power, we remain with the conviction that the grievance at present amounts to this—viz., that many of those

Irishmen who are not owners of land desire ardently to be so, and entertain a serious idea of becoming so by disposing of the landlords in some unjust manner, the Legislature being expected to help them in their pursuit.

Now this, to an ordinary mind, has much the same appearance as an imagined grievance of some Englishmen who, having cast eyes of desire on the wealth of the Barons Rothschild or the Messrs Coutts, should set upon the present owners to dispossess them by any conceivable method, and should call upon the Legislature to pass an ordinance to strip the financiers, and hand over their assets to those who would so much desire to enjoy them. We know how much sympathy with this grievance would be felt in London city, and the sort of consolation which the aggrieved would be likely to receive there. But shift the scene of it to Ireland, and some men see it in a totally different light. We don't know why. And if this is really the grievance, that those who have not are debarred from robbing those who have, we don't care to waste more time over it. But we should much desire all who are eloquent about Ireland's wrong, to say whether it be such a wrong as we have guessed at. They ought to do this; and then the country will understand distinctly what their aim is.

And now as to the boast that, before all things, the law shall be upheld in Ireland. So pleasant is the announcement, that we believe that we might have joined in the cheers with which it was greeted at the Mansion House on Lord Mayor's Day if we had been present. We

have all their own way in the present and future. This is not a statesmanlike method of arguing; and it will not, as we expect, be found to be very convincing.

could have joined, we say, in the applause for very delight that such an utterance had fallen from the lips of a man who was in a position to make his acts correspond with it. But a moment's reflection—a mental glance at the miserable state of things as they are;— must have dispelled the comfortable illusion;—

“Alas! recollection at hand
Soon hurries us back to despair.”

The Minister, when he gave voice to the flourish, must have known that he was taking no step whatever for the purpose of preserving life and property. However benevolent his ideas or his wishes may be, his acts have been confined to instituting a prosecution of certain agitators—a very right thing in itself, though tardily resorted to—which is expected to run a tedious course of some three months in the law courts. Call you this backing of the law? Call you this—this timid, feeble action—throwing the shield of the law over threatened lives, securing her Majesty's subjects in the exercise of their rights as freemen, or executing the laws against brigandage and ruffianism? When Sir John Falstaff expected

to receive two-and-twenty yards of good satin, he found that Master Dumbleton had sent him only “security”: we, when we were told to expect security, found that we had been listening to fustian! While the law is dragging its slow course along against the agitators, murder is as free as before to strike his victims—ay, and is striking them; conspiracy against peaceable persons gathers force, and operates with increased terror, instead of finding its designs checked; landlords are driven forth; capital is altogether disappearing; private enterprise is undertaking the duty which the executive has basely shrunk from assuming. We have imbecility in the place of vigour; and all the worst features of lawlessness aggravated by the conviction that the authorities dare not act.

Everything that we see around us confirms us in our view that there must be a new and stringent method of governing Ireland; that a strong arm must draw her, and hold her, once more within the paths of law and duty; and that the people of Great Britain must gravely consider, and must prescribe for, her needs.

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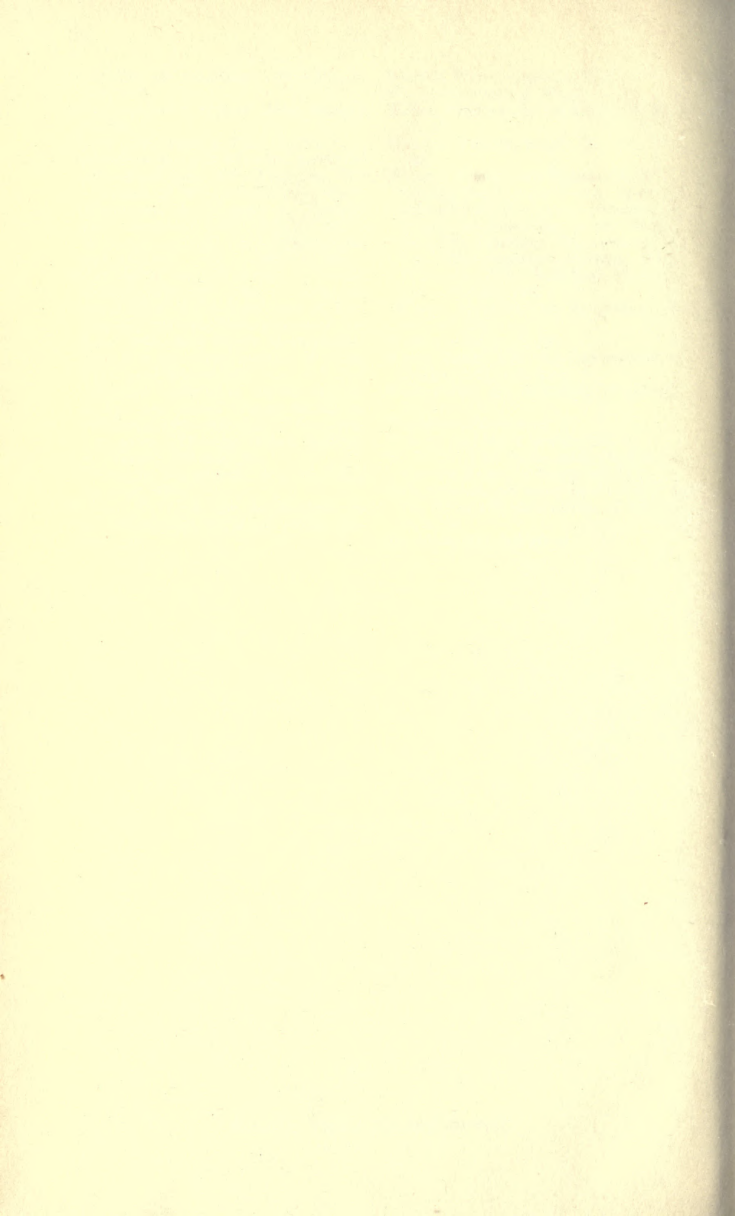
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