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"BUT NOTHING SHALL STAND BETWEEN US ANY MORE."

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THE

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Carità.

CHAPTER XL.

TWO—PARTED.



THIS early summer had been a time of little pleasure to any one in the Square. Everything had seemed to go wrong from the day Miss Cherry went dolefully away, crying with wonder and disappointment to think that her darling should have been so unkind to her, and her brother fallen so completely out of her influence. Very hopefully she had come, prepared to do her duty, and sure at least of Cara's sweet society and comfort—but as she drove away from the

door Miss Cherry felt that this society was over for ever. She had trusted in "the child" from Cara's earliest days—and now the child shut up her heart, and would not, even after all she had seen with her own eyes, confide in her. She saw now how it was going to be. James would marry "that woman," which was the bitter name by which gentle Miss Cherry, so full of kindly charity, had been driven by suspicion to call Mrs. Meredith—and Cara would fall away from her own relations, and estrangement and doubt would take the place of affection. "Oh, that we had never seen them!" Miss Cherry said to herself, meaning the Meredith family generally—that "elderly siren" who had bewitched

James, and that harum-scarum son who had persuaded Cara to bind herself to him without telling her nearest relations. For Edward Miss Cherry had a certain kindness. He had been very kind—he had behaved as young men used to do (she thought), as was becoming and respectful—and he too had been disappointed and wounded by the strange secrecy of the young pair, who had no motive to make them so desirous of concealing their engagement; why should they conceal it? This was the most provoking, the most exasperating feature of all; there was no reason for concealment—the parents on either side would have been willing enough—no one would have thrown any obstacles in their way. Why had they made a mystery of it? And James?—Miss Cherry went down to the country with a sad heart. But it pained her infinitely to answer those questions which Miss Charity insisted upon having replies to. She could censure them herself in the recesses of her own bosom—but to hear others find fault with them was more than Miss Cherry could bear.

“You see I have got well without you,” Miss Charity said. “I hope you have done as well for James and his daughter, Cherry, as nature, without any assistance, has done for me.”

“Oh, they are very well, thank you,” said Miss Cherry, with a tremor. “Cara has a headache sometimes; but all girls have headaches—and as for James, he is in perfect health.”

“I was not thinking of his health. Is all safe about the other matter?”

“You know, her husband died,” said Miss Cherry, somewhat dreamily.

“What has that to do with it? A woman without a husband has just as much need to be circumspect as a woman with one. What are you insinuating, Cherry? I don’t understand you to-day?”

“Why should I insinuate—and what can I say? James was going away, because he could not make up his mind to give up going to her; but now—he means to stay.”

“So that is it!” said Miss Charity. She was not quite decorous in all her ways, but took the privilege of her age, and often shocked her more scrupulous niece. She uttered a sound which was not unlike a low whistle of mingled astonishment and amusement. “So that is what it is! These men with broken hearts are *incroyable*, Cherry. And will she have him, I wonder?”

“Have him?” Miss Cherry echoed, with something which from her gentle lips was like scorn. She was over-severe in this case as naturally as in other cases she was over-charitable. “She had not seen her husband for I don’t know how many years—there cannot be any very great grief on his account. And James goes there—every night.”

“Ah! but I wonder if they’ll care to marry,” said the old lady—“that’s different—I should think they would prefer not to marry——”

"Aunt Charity! James may be weak but he is not wicked. He would not do such a thing——"

"You are a little old maid, and you don't know anything about it," cried Miss Charity, peremptorily. She was an old maid herself, to speak by the book—but she thought she did understand. Miss Cherry said nothing of her other trouble. She went and got her knitting meekly, and settled down in the old way as if she had never left the Hill. Well! it was home, and this was her natural life—but when her old aunt, who was now quite strong again, went briskly out to the garden to look after the flowers and her gardener, Miss Cherry let her hands fall into her lap, and felt the stillness penetrate to her soul. The troubles of the Square, the commotions and displeasures, Cara who would not open her heart—saucy Oswald who smiled in her face and defied her—poor Edward with his disappointment—and even James, who according to all appearance was going to marry again;—how angry she had been with them! how she had felt their different faults, crying to herself bitterly over them—and yet how she missed them! That was life—this—this was *home*—which was quite a different thing. It was very wicked of her, very ungrateful to God who had given her such a lovely house, such a good kind aunt, nobody to trouble or disturb her; very ungrateful, very wicked. Had she not everything that heart could desire? and peace and quiet to enjoy it. Miss Cherry acknowledged all this—and cried. How still it was! nothing moving, nothing happening—and yet, ungrateful woman, to be so well off and not to appreciate it! What could she wish for more?—indeed, Mrs. Burchell thought that she had a great deal too much, and that it was sinful for an unmarried woman without a family to be so well off as Miss Cherry was.

Meantime Cara, left alone in the Square, fell into all the melancholy of her beginning. Oswald still came to see her from time to time in the morning, confiding to her all the steps of his progress, and receiving sometimes her sympathy, sometimes reproof, sometimes what they both called "advice." Though she had very good cause to be angry with him, yet it was very difficult to be angry with Oswald—for though he was so self-regarding, he was too light-hearted to be stigmatized with the harsher quality of selfishness. It came to the same thing often, but yet the name seemed too harsh. And he was Cara's only friend. She had not had time to form many acquaintanceships, and she was too shy to go by herself to return the calls, or even to accept the invitations of the people she did know. How was she to go anywhere? Her father took no interest, asked no questions—and Mrs. Meredith was no longer the confidant of everything that happened, to arrange all for her. Therefore she refused the invitations, and shrank more and more into her corner. Between her and Mrs. Meredith a great gulf had risen. Who had caused it or what had caused it no one could tell—but there it lay, separating them, causing embarrassment when they met, and driving them daily further and further apart. Mrs. Meredith was angry with Cara as

Miss Cherry was. She saw no sense, no meaning, in the concealment which she too believed in; and it had done a positive wrong to Edward, who never, she felt sure, would have permitted himself to go so far had the position been definitely settled. Edward had resumed his work with greater energy than ever. He was going forward now for his final examination, after which very little interval was left. His mother could not think of it without tears. One of her two boys was thus lost to her—the half of her fortune so to speak, and more than the half, for Edward had gradually assumed all the kindly offices which Oswald had been too much self-occupied to undertake—and it was all Cara's fault. Thus they blamed each other, not saying a word except in their own hearts—as women will do, I suppose, till the end of time. Mrs. Meredith would have allowed, had you pressed her, that Oswald too was wrong; but in her heart she never thought of his fault, only of Cara's. It was Cara who had done it—a little frankness on her part, natural confidence in one who was to be her mother, and who was so willing (Mrs. Meredith said to herself with genuine feeling) to accept that office, and care for the child and her comforts; how much evil might have been avoided had Cara possessed this quality, so winning in young people! Then Oswald would have been drawn closer to, instead of separated as he now seemed, from his family—then Edward would have checked himself in time, and his thoughts would have travelled in some other direction. All Cara's fault! With a real ache in her heart at the thought of the mischief done, this was what the elder woman thought. So that when Cara withdrew, wounded, and sad, and angry at the position in which she found herself, Mrs. Meredith made no effort to call her from her retirement. She was full of many reflections and questions of her own—and surely it was the part of the children to inform her of everything, to seek her consent, to conciliate her, not hers to do all this to them.

As for Edward he went no more to the house in which he had spent so many happy hours. Looking back at them now, how happy they seemed! No cloud seemed to have been on his sky when he sat there by the light of Cara's lamp, reading to her, seeing her through all his reading, feeling the charm of her presence. In reality they had been full of very mingled pleasure, and often the bitterness involved had overbalanced the sweetness; but he did not remember that now that they were past—they seemed to have been all happiness, a happiness lost for ever. He made up for the loss, which seemed to have impoverished his whole life, by work. Fortunately he had lost ground which had to be recovered now, if he was to carry out his original intention about India—and he gave himself up to this with something like passion. All the evening through, in those hours which he used to spend with Cara, he worked, deadening himself, stupefying himself with this like a narcotic, exciting his brain to take the part of a counter-irritant against his heart. Now and then if the poor young fellow paused for a moment, a sudden softness would steal over him, a recollection of the room next door with Miss Cherry counting her stitches

on the other side of the fire—and the soft rose-reflection on Cara's white dress. How could he defend himself against these remembrances? All at once, while his eyes were fixed on his book, this scene would come before him, and lines of exasperating verse would tingle through him—reminding him of Elaine, and how she “loved him with that love that was her doom.” Thus some malicious spirit played upon the boy—

I loved you and my love had no return,
And therefore my true love has been my death.

No, he thought with a faint half-smile, it would not be his death. If such things happened once they did not happen now. It was not so easy to die. A man had got to live and make the best of it—to forget what was so near to him, yet so unattainable, and fix his thoughts on law-cases instead. This was the modern form of tragedy. To go and work, and to live, and do as other men did—yet never be as other men. Who does not know the poignant yet sweet misery that is in that thought: never to be as other men—to carry the wound all through one's life—to be struck with a delicate arrow which should vibrate in the wound for ever! And then with renewed zeal he would plunge into his work. What notes he made, what reports he drew out, digests of the dreariest books, accounts of the dullest trials! I think he liked the dullest best; anything that was interesting, anything that had any humanity in it, seemed by some strange by-path or other to take him back to Cara. Poor boy! and then when it suddenly occurred to him that Cara was alone on the other side of the wall, the book would fall out of his hand or the pen from his fingers. She was alone as he was alone. Oswald, who ought to bear her company, was away somewhere following his own fancies—her aunt was gone—and her father was *here*. Then Edward trembled in mind and in body, under the force of the temptation to go to her, to cheer her, whatever might happen to him. He seemed to see her, lonely in a corner. She had not even work to do as he had, to force her from herself. How the poor boy's heart would beat!—but then—If she were his he knew he would not fear solitude, nor dislike having nothing to do—to think of her would keep him happy; and perhaps if she loved Oswald as Edward loved her— This thought stung him back to his work again with greater energy than ever. Most likely she loved her solitude, which was sweet with recollections. Then there would break through all his law and all his labour a violent hot pulse of resentment. For Oswald's sake!—who went wandering about, gay and light-hearted, from club to club, from dinner to dinner, and had not so much gratitude, so much decency, as to give one evening out of a dozen to her!

But Cara, as the reader knows, had not the consolation with which Edward credited her. Happiness of all kinds she thought had deserted her for ever. There was not even a fire to keep her company, to make her an imitation of a companion. If one could choose the time to be unhappy it would be always best in winter, when one can cower

over the glow of the fire, and get some comfort out of the warmth. It was like stealing away her last friend from her to take away her fire. When she sat in her usual place the dark fireplace seemed to glare at her like a kind of grave. And when she sat at the window, all the evening lights got into her eyes and drew tears, so sweet were they and wistful, even though it was but a London sky. Cara had once read a foolish little poem somewhere, in which the twilight was embodied in the form of a poor girl looking stealthily in at the open windows, to look for her lost lover, and sighing when she could not find him. At her age allegory is still beautiful—and the very dimness shadowed into visionary form about her, looking for something—for what? for happiness, that was lost and could not be found again, never could be found. She did not think any longer as she had done at first with a half-superstitious tremor, of her mother who might be about, looking at her with anxious spiritual eyes, unable to make herself known. It was a lower level of thought upon which the girl had fallen—she had strayed from the high visionary ground, and had begun to think of herself. She wanted some one near, some voice, some touch, some soft words breaking the stillness; but these sweetnesses were not for her. By turns she too would study like Edward—but then she had no occasion to study, there was no bond of duty upon her. She read *Elaine* over again, poring over her book in the twilight, which was a congenial light to read by, and the same words which pursued Edward went thrilling through her also like the note of a nightingale floating through the dark—"Loved him with that love that was her fate"—but how fortune favoured Elaine! what an end was hers! whereas there was nothing wonderful about poor little Cara, only a foolish mistake which she could not set right, which nobody cared enough about her to set right, and which must mar her whole life without remedy. The house was quite still as it had been before Miss Cherry came—but worse than that—for then there was no imbroglio, no web of falsehood about her poor little feet. Things had grown worse and worse for her as the days went on. She wrote little formal letters to the Hill saying that she and papa were quite well. She went out to take a walk every day with nurse, and according to the orders of that authority. She asked cook what there was to be for dinner, and agreed to it whatever it was. She made her father's coffee in the morning, and was very quiet, never disturbing him, saying Yes or No, when he asked her any question—and sat at the other end of the table when he dined at home. He thought she was a very good little girl—not so clever as he had expected, but children so often grow up different from their promise—a very good little girl of the old-fashioned type, made to be seen and not heard. He had never been used to her, and did not require his child to sympathise with him or amuse him as some men do—and his mind was full of other things. It did occur to him as the summer went on that she was pale—"I think you ought to see Maxwell, Cara," he said; "you are looking very colourless; write a little note, and ask him to come to put you to rights."

"I am quite well, papa—I don't want Mr. Maxwell or any one."

"Well, if you are sure—but you look pale; I will speak to Mrs. Meredith, and see what she thinks." Cara felt a sensation of anger at this suggestion. She denied again with much earnestness that there was anything the matter with her—and though the heat of her reply almost roused her father to real consideration, it did not after all go quite so far as that. He went to his library, and she to her drawing-room. The morning was the cheerful time of her day. It was the hour for Oswald, who came in quite pleasantly excited, and told her of the expedition he was going to make into the country on the chance of having an interview and explanation with his Agnes. Cara thought this was a very good thing to do. "She ought to know exactly what you feel about her," she said; "and oh, Oswald, you ought to tell everybody, and make an end of all these mysteries."

"That is one word for her and two for yourself, Cara," he said, laughing; "you want to be free of me. But no, wait just a little longer. Look here, I will send you the *Vita Nuova*, and there you will see that Dante had a screen to keep people from suspecting that it was Beatrice."

"I will not be your screen," said Cara, with energy; "it is wicked of you to speak so."

"Why, it is in the *Vita Nuova*!" said Oswald, with indignant innocence; "but never mind, it will be over directly; and you shall come and see her, and help us. My mother must come too."

"I am glad of that. I am sure that Mrs. Meredith would go to-day if you were to ask her."

"Not to-day—let us get our holiday first. I want to see her blush and her surprise as she sees me—but after that you shall see how good and reasonable and correct I shall be."

He went away smiling. It was June, and the very atmosphere was a delight. He had brightened Cara for the moment, and she stepped out upon the balcony and breathed the sweet air, which was sweet even there. Oswald thought she was looking after him as he walked away, and was flattered by Cara's affection—and other people thought so too. As she looked down into the Square she caught the eyes of Edward who had just come out, and who took it for granted that this was a little overflowing of tenderness on her part, a demonstration of happy love. He looked up at her almost sternly she thought, but he did not mean it so. He had grown pale and very serious these last few weeks. And he took off his hat to her without a word. Cara went in again as if she had received a blow. She covered her face with her hands and cried. Oh, if it really was in the *Vita Nuova*! Cara hoped the lady who was the screen for Beatrice did not feel it as she did—and what did it matter?—that lady, whoever she was, must have been dead for hundreds of years. But *she* was alive, and this falsehood embittered her whole life.

CHAPTER XLI.

TWO—TO BE ONE.

JAMES BERESFORD was full of perturbation and troubled thoughts as well as his child. The romance of middle age is more difficult to manage than that of youth. It is less simple, less sure of its own aim; indeed, it has so often no aim at all, but cherishes itself for itself disinterestedly, as youthful sentiment never does. The death of Mr. Meredith had exercised a great, but at first undefined, influence on Mr. Beresford's affairs. He was as good as told by everybody that there was now no reason for putting restrictions upon his friendship and intercourse with Mrs. Meredith, a thing which had been demanded of him as his duty a little while before; and he had accepted this assurance as an immediate relief, and had gladly fallen back into the old habits in which had lain so much of the comfort of his life. And he could not have left his friend, who had been so much to him in his trouble at this moment of distress for her. But there was something in the air which made him conscious of a change. He could not tell what it was; no one said anything to him; his own feelings were unaltered; and yet it was not the same. He evaded making any inquiry with himself into what had happened for some time; but the question was not to be evaded for ever; and gradually he gleaned from all sides—from looks and significant words, and a hundred little unexpressed hints, that there was but one thing expected by everybody—and that was, with all the speed consistent with decency, a marriage between himself and his neighbour. Everybody took it for granted that the death of her husband was "a special providence" to make two good people happy; and that poor Mr. Meredith (though probably he had no such benevolent intention) could not have done a kinder thing than to take himself out of the way at this particular moment. There was not one of their mutual friends who did not think so; no one blamed the pair whose friendship was supposed to have fallen into "a warmer feeling" in the most innocent way, without any intention of theirs; and who were ready to make the necessary sacrifice to propriety as soon as they found it out. What so natural as that this should have happened? An attractive and charming woman left in the position of a widow, year after year, by her uncongenial husband—and an intellectual, accomplished man, left alone in the prime of life, to whom in kindness she had opened her doors. Some people had shaken their heads, but everybody allowed that there was but one end to such an intimacy. And it was very seldom that anything so convenient happened in the world as the death of the husband so absolutely in the nick of time. Of course what would happen now was clear to the meanest apprehension. Probably being, as they were, excellent people both, and full of good feeling, they would wait

the full year and show "every respect" to the dead man who had been so considerate of them; but that, at that or an earlier period, Mrs. Meredith would become Mrs. Beresford, was a thing that everyone felt convinced of, as sure as if it had already taken place.

It would be difficult to tell how this general conviction forced itself upon James Beresford's mind. The efforts which had to be made to send him away awoke him to a startled sense that his intimacy with his neighbour was regarded by his friends under a strange and uncomfortable light; and he had yielded to their efforts with no small agitation on his own part, and a sense of pain and desolation which made him ask himself whether they were right. Probably had he gone away, and Mrs. Meredith been forcibly separated from him, an unlawful object of affection, he would have ended by believing that they were right, and that the consolation and comfort and pleasures of his intercourse with her had grown into "a warmer feeling." But now that Mr. Meredith was well out of the way, and even the excitement attending his end over, he was by no means so clear in his mind, and the subject became one of great trouble and complication. Somehow it seems always possible, always within the modesties of nature even to the least vain of men, or women, that some other, any other, may regard him (or her) with a specially favourable eye. No one does wrong in loving us, nor are we disposed to blame them for it. So that there was perhaps a time in which Mr. Beresford took his friends' opinion for granted, and was not unprepared to believe that perhaps Mrs. Meredith would be happy in being his wife; and that, in his state of mind, was a final argument against which nothing could be said. But lately he had begun to doubt this; his coming did not clear away the clouds that had invaded her brows. She would strike into sudden talk about Edward and his going away, when her friend with much delicacy and anxiety was endeavouring to sound her feelings. She seemed unconscious of his investigation—her mind was pre-occupied. Sometimes, on the other hand, she would betray a certain uneasiness, and change the subject in a way that betrayed her consciousness; but that was only when her mind was quite free. From the time when she began to have a grievance, an anxiety of her own, she escaped from the most cautious wiles of his scrutiny. She was more occupied by thoughts of her son, than by thoughts of him. Was this consistent with *love*? Poor James Beresford, feeling that this would decide him in a moment, could he know, one way or another, what her feelings were, was thus thrown out and forced to fall back upon his own.

And what were his own?—A maze of conflicting ideas, wishes, prejudices, and traditions of old affection. There was nothing in the world he would not have given up cheerfully rather than lose this sweet friend—this consoler and sympathiser in all his troubles. But he did not want her to be his wife; he did not want to have any new wife. His Annie, it might be, had faded into a distant shadow; but that shadow repre-

sented to him a whole world past and over—the world of love and active, brilliant, joyous happiness. His nature, too, had fallen into the shadows—he did not want that kind of happiness now; one passion had been enough for him; he wanted a friend, and that he had—he did not want anything more. And the idea of disturbing all the unity of his life by a second beginning gave him a smart shock. Can a man have more wives than one?—Can he have more lives than one?—He was a fanciful man, of fastidious mind, and with many niceties of feeling such as ruder minds call fantastic. He shrank from the thought of banishing from his house even the shadow and name of her who was gone. To be sure if he could make up his mind that *she* wished it, all these resolutions would have gone to the winds; and it is very likely that he would have been very happy—happier than he could ever be otherwise. But then he could not make her feelings out. Would she go visibly away from him, even while he was sitting by her, into her troubles about Edward—eyes and heart alike growing blank to him, and full of her boy—if she had given to him a place above her boys in her affections? Surely no. I would not even assert that there was not the slightest possible suspicion of pique in this conclusion, for the man would have been flattered to know that the woman loved him, even though he was conscious that he did not so regard her. But “the warmer feeling” of which all their friends were so sure, of which everybody concluded that it had grown unconsciously *en tout bien et tout honneur* out of that friendship which the world holds to be impossible between man and woman—was just the one thing about which the principal person concerned could have no certainty at all. He knew what the friendship was—it was almost life to him; it was his strongest support—his best consolation; it was the only thing that could make a second, a kind of serious sweet successor, to the love that was never to come again; but it was not that love—certainly not in his heart—so far as he could make out, not in hers either; but who could tell? Weak man! he would rather have preferred that she should have felt differently, and that it should have been his duty to marry for her sake.

His life had settled down into all its old lines since Mr. Meredith's death. He had his business about the societies—his meetings—his lectures to arrange—sometimes his articles to write. Now and then he dined out in the best and most learned of company. He was pointed out to the ignorant when he went into society as a distinguished person. He was in the front of the age, knowing a great deal more than most people knew, doing things that few people could do. His mornings were spent in these refined and dignified occupations; and when he dined out with his remarkable friends, or when he dined at home with only his silent little girl to keep him company, as regularly as the clock struck he knocked at the next door, and had his hour of gentle talk, of mutual confidence. They knew all about each other, these two; each could understand all the allusions the other made—all the surrounding

incidents in the other's life. They talked as man and wife do, yet with a little element of unconvention, of independence, of freshness in the intercourse, which made it more piquant than that between man and wife. What could be more agreeable, more desirable, more pleasant? But to break off all this delightful ease of intercourse by some kind of antiquated courtship, by the fuss of marriage, by fictitious honeymooning, and disturbance of all their formed and regular habits of life,—what nonsense it would be—and all for the sake of their friends, not of themselves! But if *she* should wish it, of course that would give altogether another character to the affair.

This was what Mr. Beresford at last made up his mind to ascertain boldly one way or another. It was about the same time as Oswald, approaching the railway junction, was turning over his dilemma and seeing no way out of it. Mr. Beresford had been hearing a lecture, and was in a chastened state of mind. He had been hearing about the convulsions of the early world, and by what means the red-hot earth cooled down and settled itself, after all manner of heavings and boilings, into something of the aspect it wears. As he walked home he dwelt upon the wonderful grandeur of such phenomena. What did it matter, after all, what happened to a few small insignificant persons on the crust which had formed over all these convulsions? What of their little weepings and lovings and momentary struggles, to one who could study such big and mighty strainings of force against force? A little while at the most, and the creatures who made so much fuss about their feelings would be a handful of dust; but volcanic action would go on for ever. Notwithstanding this philosophy, however, it must be allowed that, whereas he had heard of these convulsions with the calmest bosom, his heart began to beat as he approached Mrs. Meredith's door. If the moon had tumbled out of the sky, or a boiling caldron suddenly revealed itself in the earth, so long as it was at a safe distance, even Mr. Beresford, who was so fond of science, would not have cared a tenth part so much about it, as he did to know what his neighbour meant; which was inconsistent, but natural perhaps. The philosophy went out of his head as he approached the door. Little fusses of loving and of liking—momentary cross-lights, or, let us say, flickering farthing candles of human sentiment—what are they to the big forces that move the world? Is not a bit of chalk more interesting than all your revolutions and changes?—your petty sufferings, passions, heroisms, and the like? Mr. Beresford thought he believed all that—yet, heaven above! how calm he was when the chalk was under consideration, and how much perturbed when he went up the steps of the house next door!

“ You have been out to-night ? ”

“ Yes, I have been hearing Robinson—a remarkably interested, intelligent audience. Where are the boys? Edward should come—it would interest him.”

“ Edward is always at work. He is killing himself for this examin-

ation. I wish he could be interested in something less serious. Oswald has been away all day. I think he said he was going to the country. If we could only mix them up a little," said the mother, with an anxious smile—"to one a little more gravity, to the other a little more of his brother's light-heartedness."

Mr. Beresford did not say anything about the superior interest of volcanic action, as he might, nay, perhaps ought, to have done. He said instead, in the feeblest way, "That will come as they get older. You must give them time."

Mrs. Meredith did not say anything. She shook her head, but the faint smile on her face remained. There was nothing tragical yet about either one or the other. Mr. Beresford was less calm than usual. He sat down and got up again; he took up books and threw them away; he fidgeted about the room from one point to another. At last even Mrs. Meredith's composure gave way. She jumped to one of those sudden conclusions which foolish women who are mothers are so apt to think of. It suddenly rushed upon her mind that some accident had happened to Oswald, and that Mr. Beresford had been sent to her to break the news.

"You are put out," she said; "something has happened. Oh, tell me—something about the boys? Oswald!"

"Nothing of the sort," he said. "Don't think it for a moment! The boys are perfectly well, I hope. I was going to ask you an odd sort of question though," he added, with an awkward smile, rushing into the middle of the subject. "Did it never occur to you that you would be the better for having some one to help you with the boys?"

Now, there could not have been a more foolish question—for until a very short time back the boys' father had been in existence—and since then, there had been no time for the widow to take any such step. She looked at him with much surprise. "Some one to help me? Whom could I have to help me? Their poor dear father was too far away!"

"Ah! I forgot their father," said Mr. Beresford, with naïve innocence, and then there was a pause. He did not know how to begin again after that very evident downfall. "I mean, however, as a general question," he added, "what do you think? Should you approve of a woman in your own position—marrying, for instance—for her children's sake?"

"That is a curious question," she said, with a little laugh; but the surprise brought the colour into her face. "I suppose it would depend on the woman. But I don't know," she added, after a moment, "how a woman could put her children into any stranger's—any *other* man's hands."

"Ah, a stranger! perhaps I did not mean a stranger."

"I don't think you know what you meant," she said, with a smile; but there was some terror in her eyes. She thought she knew what was coming. She was like him in her own sentiments, and still more like

him in her speculations about himself. She had been brought to believe that he loved and wanted to marry her. And, if it could not be otherwise, she felt that she must consent; but she did not wish it any more than he did. However, while he thought the best policy was to find out what ought to be at once, she was all for putting off, avoiding the consideration, trusting in something that might turn up. Mr. Beresford, however, had wound himself up to this interview, and was not to be put off.

“Between people of our sober years such questions may be discussed—may they not?” he said. “I wonder what *you* think really? There is nothing I so much wish to know—not the conventional things that everybody says—but what *you* think. You have been my other conscience for so long,” he added, jesuitically, in order to conceal the cunning with which he was approaching the subject—asking for her opinion without specifying the subject on which he wanted it.

But she saw through him, with a little amusement at the artifice employed. He wanted to know what she thought without asking her. Fortunately, the being asked was the thing *she* wanted to avoid. But just when they had got to this critical point Edward came upstairs. He was not friendly, as he had been, to his mother’s friend; he came in with the gloom upon his face, and a look of weariness. Mr. Beresford heard the door open with great impatience of the newcomer, whoever it might be. Nothing could be more inopportune. He wished Edward in Calcutta or wherever else it might be best for him to be on the other side of the seas. But, as for Mrs. Meredith, her attention fled on the moment to her boy. She forgot her friend and his questioning, and even the delicate position which she had realized, and the gravity of the relations which might ensue. All this went out of her mind in comparison with Edward’s fatigued look. She got up and went to him, putting her hand very tenderly upon his shoulder.

“You have been working too long, dear. Oh, Edward, don’t be so anxious to get away from me! You are working as if this was your dearest wish in the world.”

“So it is,” he said; “not to leave you, mother; but to feel that I am doing something, not merely learning or enjoying myself.”

“Edward is quite right,” said Mr. Beresford. “It is by far the most worthy feeling for a young man.”

But Edward did not take this friendly support in a good spirit; he darted a half-savage glance at his backer-up.

“Oh, if you take it in that light, that is not what I meant,” he said. “I am not of that noble strain. It is not pure disinterestedness. I think it is a pity only to lose one’s advantages, and I should have some advantages of connection and that sort of thing. At least, I suppose so; and it is what is called a fine career.”

“Yes, it is a fine career.”

“If it is fine to separate yourself from all you care for in the world,”

cried Mrs. Meredith, "from all who care for you—not only must we be left behind, but when you have got beyond me, when you have a family of your own——"

"Which I never shall have, mother."

"Nonsense! boys and girls say so, and end just like others; even your own, your very own must be taken from you. You must give up everything—and you call that a fine career."

"Men do, if women don't," said the young man, not looking at her. His heart was so wrung and sore that he could not keep the gloom off his face.

"And you don't care what women think? You might have put off that lesson till you were a little older. At your age what your mother thinks should surely be something to you still."

He gave her a look which was full of pain. Was that what he was thinking? Was he sure to care little for what women thought? "You know better, mother," he said, harshly. He was all rubbed the wrong way—thwarted, wearied, unhappy. "I only came for a book," he continued, after a moment, picking up the first one he got hold of, and then, with a little nod to the visitor, went upstairs again. What did that visitor want here? Why did he leave his own house, and Cara alone—poor Cara!—whom nobody loved as Edward did? It would be a great deal better for Mr. Beresford if he would stay at home. After this little episode Edward sat down stubborn and unyielding to his work again. What did it matter if a man was happy or unhappy? He had his day's work to get through all the same.

"Don't think him harsh. I am afraid my poor boy is not quite happy," said Mrs. Meredith, with tears in her eyes.

"That is nothing," he said. "I am not a friend of yesterday; but he came in when we were talking——"

"Ah, yes," she said, but her eyes were still full of Edward; "what was it we were talking about?"

"I am afraid if you say that, it is sufficient answer to my question," said Mr. Beresford, more wounded than he could have supposed possible; for he wanted to be first with her, though he did not wish it in the vulgar way that was supposed.

"You are not to be angry," she said, with a deprecating look, laying her hand softly on his arm; "you must not be hard upon me. When they are boys we wish them to be men, but anxiety grows with their growth; and now I think sometimes I should be glad to have them boys again."

"Boys, boys!" he exclaimed, with natural impatience, "Is that all you think of? Yet there are other interests in the world."

"How selfish I am!" she cried, rousing herself suddenly. "That is true. You must forgive me; but I am so used to talk to you of everything, whatever is in my heart."

This melted him once more. "Yes," he said, "we talk to each other of everything; we have no secrets between us. There is nothing in the

world I would not do for you, nor you, I think, for me. Do you know what people are thinking about you and me? They think that being so near we should be nearer; that we might help one another better. That was what I wanted to ask you. Don't you think it is so?"

He wanted her to commit herself first, and she was willing enough that he should commit himself, but not that she should. She was embarrassed, yet she met his eyes with a half smile.

"I think it is not a case for heeding what people think. Are we not very well as we are? How could we be better than as fast friends—friends through fire and water?"

"That we should always be," he said, grasping her hand, "that we should always be; and yet without becoming less we might be more. Speak to me frankly, dear; you know all my heart. Do not you think so too?"

 XLII.

A GREAT REVOLUTION.

NOTWITHSTANDING the directness of this questioning, it was by no means a direct reply which Mr. Beresford got from Mrs. Meredith. It was not a refusal, but neither was it a consent. "Let us not do anything rashly," and "I think we are very well as we are," was what she said, and yet the change was certainly a step nearer accomplishment now that the possibility of it had been mentioned between them. He had grown rather earnest in pressing the expediency of this step as soon as the ice was fairly broken, and had been piqued by her reluctance into more warmth than he had expected himself to feel. Nevertheless, when he came back to his own house, uncomfortable matters of detail came into Mr. Beresford's mind, and annoyed him more than he could have believed, more than they were worth. About the houses, for instance; if this happened, they could not go on living next door to each other. Would she come to his, or should he go to hers?—if indeed the matter came to anything. This bothered him, and suggested many other details—changes of habit which would bother him still more. Altogether it was a troublesome business. He liked her best in her own drawing-room; but then he liked himself much best in his own library, and there were moments in which he felt disposed to denounce the fool who had first thought of any change. All things considered, how much better it would have been that they should remain as they were! but that was no longer to be thought of. How was he to tell Cara? How was she to tell her boys, upon whom she was so much more dependent than he was upon Cara? If the boys disapproved strenuously, then Mr. Beresford felt it would come to nothing after all; and in that case how much better to have said nothing! for he felt that he would not like to stand in the position of a man refused. So that altogether this middle-aged romance was not without its troubles; troubles—as, for instance, that about the houses—which you may laugh

at if you please, but which involved much more personal embarrassment and inconvenience, you will allow, than many of the sentimental difficulties which you are ready to weep over in the romances of the young.

Mrs. Meredith was kept in some uneasiness also by the fact that Oswald did not return that night. The servants sat up for him, and lights burned all night in the house, affronting the dawn which came so early; but he did not appear. This was not at all usual; for Oswald, though he liked his own way, and was frivolous enough, had never been dissipated in the ordinary sense of that word; and what made it more unpleasant still was the fact that next day was Sunday, and that no communication either by telegram or letter was possible. This fact drove everything else out of Mrs. Meredith's head. When James Beresford went to her, she could talk of nothing but Oswald; where he could have gone, how he might have been detained. That he had not sent them any news of his movements was easily explained. Sunday! "I would not say a word against Sunday," said poor Mrs. Meredith, who went to church dutifully as Sunday came; "but, oh! when one is anxious, when there is no post and no telegraph, what a day!" They were all telling her how easily explainable Oswald's absence was; and when they stopped explaining it to her, she herself would take up the parable, and protest that she knew exactly how it must have happened. It was all as clear as daylight. He had been detained by his friends, whoever they might happen to be, or he had lost the last train. It was Oswald's way to lose the last train, and no one had asked where he was going when he said he was going to the country. And, of course, it had been too late to telegraph on Saturday night, and how was he to know, a boy of his late habits, that the telegraph offices were open early on Sunday morning? All these explanations were most plausible—the worst of such things, however, is that, plausible as they are, they satisfy nobody. But it annoyed Mr. Beresford immensely to find that Oswald's unexpected absence took up all Mrs. Meredith's thoughts. She had no leisure for him, though surely he ought to have been at least as important as Oswald. Whatever he talked to her about, she replied to him with something about her boy. As if her boy could have come to any harm! as if it was not all his own levity and selfishness! Mr. Beresford, having an object of his own to pursue, was quite indignant with and impatient of Oswald. What was he, a frivolous do-nothing unsatisfactory young man, that so much fuss should be made about *him*? He was one of "the boys"—what more could be said? and how unsatisfactory the best of women were when this motive came into play! Cara never thus distracted her father's mind; he did not think of her. To be sure she was a girl, and girls never get into scrapes. He did not quite like, it is true, the task of opening this question, of which his mind was full, to Cara. He thought, perhaps, that when all was settled, *she* (meaning Mrs. Meredith) might do it. Women know best how to deal with girls; but to make Cara, whatever might happen to her, into a hindrance of other intercourse,

into an obstacle which stopped everything, that was not a weakness of which he would be capable. Mr. Beresford did not scoff at women; it was not a sentiment congenial to him; but still he had a feeling that in this respect the comparative strength and weakness of male and female character was certainly shown. But he would not say so rudely. He was obliged to submit.

On Monday morning a telegram did come from Oswald. He had been detained; would write to explain, but did not expect to get home till Thursday or Friday; please send portmanteau to Cloak-room, Clapham Junction. "Do any of his friends live in that quarter?" Mrs. Meredith asked Edward, with astonishment. "He has friends everywhere," said Edward, with a half sigh. This pleased the mother, though he had not said it with such an intention. Yes, he had friends everywhere. He was a harum-scarum boy, too careless perhaps, but everywhere, wherever he went, he had friends; and the portmanteau was sent, and the letter of explanation waited for—but it did not come. In short, the week had nearly run round again without any news of him, and everything else was arrested, waited for Oswald's reappearance. Mrs. Meredith evaded all recurrence to the more important subject by constantly falling back upon Oswald—perhaps she was rather glad of the chance of escape it gave her—and Mr. Beresford was no nearer a settlement than ever. This fretted him, and put him in a sort of secondary position which he did not like, but which it was useless to struggle against; and so the days and the hours went on.

It was the Friday when two visitors, almost at the same moment, approached the two adjoining houses in the Square, both of them with faces full of seriousness, and even anxiety. One of them was Mr. Maxwell in his brougham, who sprang out with a kind of nervous alacrity unusual to him, and knocked at Mrs. Meredith's door. The other was a solid and portly clergyman, who got out of a four-wheeled cab, paying his fare with a careful calculation of the distance, which produced bad language from his driver, and knocked at Mr. Beresford's. They were admitted about the same moment, and received in the two corresponding rooms with nothing but a wall between them; and both of them had very serious business in hand. Cara's visitor was Mr. Burchell, from the Rectory, who asked, with a countenance full of strange things, and with many apologies, whether Miss Beresford had lately seen "our Agnes." Agnes! the name made Cara start.

"I have not seen any one but Roger since I left the Hill. I hope he —I mean all, are well. Is Agnes in town, Mr. Burchell?" Agnes was four or five years older than Cara, and therefore out of her sphere.

"I thought your aunt would certainly have mentioned it to you; indeed, Mrs. Burchell was much surprised that she did not see her when she was in town. Agnes has been in—an educational establishment for some time. We are a little anxious about her," said the Rector, with a quaver in his voice.

"Is she ill?" Cara did not love the clergyman, under whom she had sat for ten years, but her heart was touched by that unmistakable trembling in his commonplace voice.

"I don't suppose she is ill; we—don't know. The fact is she left—the House last Saturday—and has never come back. We don't know what has become of her," he said, with real trouble. "You won't mention it to any one. Oh, I suppose it is nothing, or something quite easily explainable; but her mother is anxious—and I thought you might have seen her. It is nothing, nothing of any real consequence," he added, trying to smile, but with a quiver in his lips. He was stout and commonplace and indeed disagreeable, but emotion had its effect upon him as well as another, and he was anxious about his child. He looked Cara wistfully in the face, as if trying to read in the lines of it something more than she would allow.

"Agnes! the House—Oh, Mr. Burchell!" said Cara, waking up suddenly to a full sense of all that was in the communication. "Do you mean to say that it was Agnes—*Agnes!* that was the Agnes in the House?"

Mr. Maxwell was more uncertain how to open the object of his visit. He sat for some time talking of *la pluie et le beau temps*. He did not know how to begin. Then he contrived little traps for Mrs. Meredith, hoping to bring her to betray herself, and open a way for him. He asked about Cara, then about Mr. Beresford, and how he heard he had given up all ideas of going away. But, with all this, he did not produce the desired result, and it was necessary at last, unless he meant to lose his time altogether, to introduce his subject broadly without preface. He did so with much clearing of his throat.

"I have taken rather a bold thing upon me," he said. "I have thought it my duty—I hope you will forgive me, Mrs. Meredith—I have come to speak to you on this subject."

"On what subject?" she said simply, with a smile.

This made it more difficult than ever. "About you and Mr. Beresford," he said, abruptly blurting it out. "Don't be offended, for heaven's sake! You ought to have known from the first; but I can't let you walk blindly into—other relations—without letting you know."

"Doctor, I hope you are not going to say anything that will make a breach between us," said Mrs. Meredith. "You have no right to suppose that I am about to form other relations—I only a few months a widow! I hope I have done nothing to forfeit my friends' respect."

"Then I am not too late," he said, with an air of relief. "There is still time! I am very glad of that. Respect—forfeit your friends' respect? who could suppose such a thing? You have only too much of your friends' respect. We would all go through fire and water for you."

"Thanks, thanks," she said; "but you must not let me be gossiped about," she added, after a moment, which made the doctor, though he was not of a delicate countenance, blush.

"That is all very well," he said, "but those who have so many friends, and friends so warmly interested, must expect a little talk. It has been spoken of, that there was something, that there might be—in short, that Mr. Beresford and you—forgive me! I don't mean to say that it would not be most suitable. Everybody knows how fond he is of you—and not much wonder."

"Indeed, indeed you must not talk to me so," cried Mrs. Meredith, distressed; "my affairs are not public business, Mr. Maxwell."

"I came to tell you," he said, doggedly, "something you ought to know. I have no dislike to James Beresford. On the contrary, we are old friends; we were boys together. I did my best to shelter him from any reproach at the time. Everything I could do I did, and I think I succeeded. Perhaps now when one comes to reflect, it would have been better if I had not succeeded so well. But I could not stand by and see him ruined, see his peace of mind destroyed."

"Are you talking of Mr. Beresford? Have you lost your senses, doctor? what do you mean?"

"You remember all that happened when Mrs. Beresford died?"

"I remember—oh yes—poor Annie! how she suffered, poor soul, and how truly he mourned for her—how heart-broken he was."

"He had occasion," said the doctor, grimly.

"Had occasion! I cannot imagine what you mean—there was never a better husband," said Mrs. Meredith, with some fervour; "never one who loved a woman better, or was more tender with her."

"Too tender. I am not saying that I condemn him absolutely. There are cases in which in one's heart one might approve. Perhaps his was one of these cases; but anyhow, Mrs. Meredith, you ought to know."

She got impatient, for she too had the feeling that to see her friend's faults herself was one thing, but to have him found fault with quite another. "I should have thought that I knew Mr. Beresford quite as well as you did, doctor," she said, trying to give a lighter tone to the conversation. "I have certainly seen a great deal more of him for all these years."

"You could not know this," said Mr. Maxwell, "nor would I have told you but for the extremity of the case. Listen! She might have lingered I cannot tell how long—weeks, months—it was even possible years."

"Yes!" the assent was no assent, but an exclamation of excitement and wonder.

"I believe he meant it for the best. She was mad about having something given to her to put her out of her misery, as soon as we knew that she was past hope. Mrs. Meredith, I feel bound to tell you—when you know you can judge for yourself. He must have given her something that day after the consultation. It is no use mincing words—he must have given her—her death."

"Doctor! do you know what you are saying?" She rose up from her chair—then sank back in it, looking as if she were about to faint.

“I know too well what I am saying. I huddled it up that there might be no inquiry. I don't doubt she insisted upon it, and I don't blame him. No, I should not have had the courage to do it, but I don't blame him—altogether. It is a very difficult question. But you ought not to marry him—to be allowed to marry him in ignorance.”

She made no answer. The shock came upon her with all the more force that her mind was already weakened by anxiety. Given her death! what did that mean? Did it mean that he had killed poor Annie, this man who was her dearest friend? A shiver shook all her frame. “I think you must be wrong. I hope you are wrong,” she said. It was all she could do to keep her teeth from chattering. The sudden horror chilled and froze her. “Oh, Mr. Maxwell, he never could have done it! No, no, I will never believe it,” she said.

“But I know it,” said the doctor; “there could be no doubt of it; I could not have been deceived, and it was no crime in my eyes. He did it in love and kindness—he did it to serve her. But still no woman should marry him, without knowing at least——”

“There was never any question of that,” she said hurriedly, in the commotion of her mind. Then it seemed cowardly of her to forsake him. She paused. “He is worthy of any woman's confidence. I will not hear a word against him. He did not do it. I am sure he did not do it! or, if he did, he was not to blame.”

The words had not left her lips when the door was opened and the subject of this strange conversation, Mr. Beresford himself, came into the room. They were both too agitated for concealment. She looked at the doctor with sudden terror. She was afraid of a quarrel, as women so often are. But Maxwell himself was too much moved to make any pretences. He rose up suddenly, with an involuntary start; but he was shaken out of ordinary caution by the excitement of what he had done. He went up to the new-comer, who regarded him with quiet surprise, without any salutation or form of politeness. “Beresford,” he said, “I will not deceive you. I have been telling her what it is right she should know. I don't judge you; I don't condemn you; but whatever happens, she has a right to know.”

It is one of the penalties or privileges of excitement that it ignores ignorance so to speak, and expects all the world to understand its position at a glance. James Beresford gazed with calm though quiet astonishment upon the man who advanced to meet him with tragedy in his tone.

“What is the matter?” he said, with the simplicity of surprise. Then seeing how pale Mrs. Meredith was, he went on with some anxiety, “Not anything wrong with Oswald? I trust not that?”

Mrs. Meredith stirred in her chair and held out her hand to him. She could not rise. She looked at him with an agitated smile. “I put perfect faith in you, perfect faith!” she said, “notwithstanding what any one may say.”

"In me!" he said, looking from one to another. He could not imagine what they meant.

"Beresford," said Maxwell again, "I will not hide it from you. It has been in my mind all this time. I have never been able to look upon you as I did before; at a crisis like this I could hold my tongue no longer. I have been telling her all that happened at the death of your first poor wife."

"My *first*—!" the exclamation was under his breath, and Maxwell thought he was overcome with horror by the recollection; but that was not what he was thinking of: his first wife!—there was something sickening in the words. Was this his Annie that was meant? It seemed profanation, sacrilege. He heard nothing but that word. Maxwell did not understand him, but there was another who did. The doctor went on.

"I have never said a word about it till this day, and never would but for what was coming. You know that I took the responsibility, and kept you free from question at the time."

"What does he mean?" This question, after a wondering gaze at the other, Beresford addressed to Mrs. Meredith behind him. "All this is a puzzle to me, and not a pleasant one; what does he mean?"

"This is too much," said the doctor. "Be a man, and stand to it now at least. I have not blamed you, though I would not have done it myself. I have told her that you consented—to what I have no doubt was poor Mrs. Beresford's prayer—and gave her—her death——"

"I—gave her her death—you are mad, Maxwell! I, who would have died a dozen times over to save her!"

"There is no inconsistency in that. You could not save her, and you gave her—what? I never inquired. Anyhow it killed her, poor girl! It was what she wanted. Am I blaming you? But, James Beresford, whatever may have been in the past, it is your duty to be open now, and she ought to know."

"My God, will you not listen to me?" cried Beresford, driven to despair. He had tried to stop him, to interrupt him, but in vain. Maxwell had only spoken out louder and stronger. He had determined to do it. He was absolutely without doubts on the matter, and he was resolute not to be silenced. "She ought to know," he went on saying under his breath to himself.

"But it is not true. It is an invention, it is a mistake! I do anything against her dear life!—even in suffering, even in misery, was she not everything to me?"

"That is all very well to say. You did it in love, not in hatred, I acknowledge that. Beresford, no one here will betray you. Why not be bold and own to what you did? I could not be deceived; it was from your hand and no other your wife got her death. How could I, her doctor, be deceived?"

"Dr. Maxwell," said a low voice from the door; and they all started with a violent shock, as if it had been Annie Beresford herself come back from the grave. Mrs. Meredith rose hastily and went towards this

strange apparition. It was Cara, with cheeks perfectly colourless, with blue eyes dilated, standing as she had entered, transfixed by those terrible words. But the girl took no notice of her friend's rush towards her. She put out her hand to put Mrs. Meredith away, and kept her eyes fixed on the doctor, as if there was no one else in the room.

"Dr. Maxwell," said Cara, her young bosom heaving, "I have come just in time. You are making a great, great mistake, for that is not true."

"Cara, child, go away, go away; I never meant this for you."

"No one knows but me," she said; "I was in the room all the time. I have never forgotten one thing, nor a word she said. She wanted him to do it, but he would not. He rushed away. I did not understand then what it meant."

The girl stood trembling, without any support, so slight, so young, so fragile, with her pale face. Her father had scarcely thought of Cara before since she was the plaything of his younger life. All at once his eyes seemed to be opened, and his heart. He went to her by an irresistible impulse, and put his arm round her. Love seemed to come to life in him with very terror of what he was about to hear.

"It was not you!" he said, with a low cry of anguish; "it was not you!"

"She would not let me," said Cara. "I asked to do it, but she would not let me. She looked up—to God," cried the girl, the tears rushing to her eyes, "and took it. Did not He know everything? *You* would not be angry, papa? you would not cast me away if I had taken something to get free of pain? Would He? He was her father too."

"Oh, Cara, no one blames her—no one blames her!" said Mrs. Meredith, with unrestrained tears.

"She looked up to God," said the girl, with her voice full of awe. "She said I was to tell you; but I did not understand what it meant then, and afterwards I could not speak. It has always seemed to stand between us, papa, that I had this to tell you and could not speak."

"My child," said the father, his lips trembling, "it has been my fault; but nothing shall stand between us any more."

The two others looked on for a moment with conflicting feelings. Mrs. Meredith looked at them with generous tears and satisfaction, yet with a faint pang. *That* was over now. She had always intended it should end thus; but yet for the moment, such is the strange constitution of the heart, it gave her a passing pang. As for the doctor, he gathered his gloves and his hat together with great confusion. He had made a fool of himself. Whatever the others might do, how could he contemplate this solemn disclosure he had come to make, which had been turned into the officious interference of a busybody? He took no leave of anyone; but when they were all engaged with each other, made a bolt for the door of the back drawing-room, and got out, very red, very uncomfortable, and full of self-disgust. He was touched too by the scene which had been so unexpectedly brought before him, and felt tears, very

unusual to him, tingling in the corners of his eyes. He met Edward on the stairs; but Edward was too much preoccupied to observe how Maxwell was looking.

"Do you know," he said, "if Miss Beresford is in the drawing-room? There is a gentleman waiting for her downstairs."

"If you mean Cara," said the doctor, "she is there, and the mistress of the situation, I can tell you. Oh, never mind; I can let myself out. You'll find them all there."

Edward stared a little, but went on to deliver his message. "I hope I am not disturbing any one," he said, in the formal manner which he had put on; "but there is some one, very impatient, waiting for Miss Beresford—I mean Cara," he added, half ashamed of himself, "downstairs."

Cara roused herself from her father's arm. It revived her more than anything else to see that Edward was turning away again to leave the room. She shook the tears from her eyes, and roused herself into sudden energy. "That was why I came," she said. "Oh, Mrs. Meredith, where is Oswald? We must find him, or they will all break their hearts."

"Who—you, Cara, my darling? no one shall break your heart."

"No, no," she cried, with a little start of impatience. "It is time this was over. He never would tell you the truth. Oh, we must find him, wherever he is, for Agnes has gone too."

They all gathered about with looks of wonder, Edward making but one step from the door where he stood. His countenance gleamed over with a sudden light; he put out his hands to her unawares.

"Agnes—who is Agnes?" said Mrs. Meredith. "Oh, Cara, what does it all mean? I know nothing about him—where he is. He was to come back to-day."

"Agnes is Agnes Burchell," said Cara. "He has been telling me of her all this time. He has been spending his whole time going after her. And she is gone too, and it is her father who is downstairs. Oh, think how we can find them! Her father is very anxious. Oswald should not have done it," said Cara, with the solemnity of her age. "I always begged him, and he always promised, to ask you to go."

"This is extraordinary news," said Mrs. Meredith, dropping into the nearest chair. She was trembling with this renewed agitation. "And you knew it, Cara; you have been his confidant? Oh, what a strange mistake we have all made!"

"It was not my fault," said Cara, softly. She gave a furtive glance at Edward as she spoke, and his mother looked at him too. Edward's countenance was transformed, his eyes were lit up, smiles trembling like an illumination over his face. Mrs. Meredith's heart gave a leap in her motherly bosom. She might have been wounded that it was none of her doing; but she was too generous for so poor a thought. He will not go to India now, she said to herself in her heart. The pang which Cara had given her unwittingly was nothing to the compensation thus received from her equally unconscious hands.

Paul Philistia.

“ Dum doceo insanire omnes, huc propius nec vos ordine adite.”

“ Er ist, er ist er,
Ein Philister,”

says the German student song. The word has become so familiar, since Mr. Matthew Arnold introduced it, that it has almost become strange again, and the finer sort of people spare to use it. The original use was simple: the Philistine was the shopkeeper, the *bourgeois*, the *épiciér*, whom the University man was bound to hate and despise; “Professoren, Philister, und Vieh,” the categories comprehending the population of the University town. Heine applied the word to the rest of his countrymen, and meant by it the ordinary German, whether learned or unlearned, who held the ordinary creed of the Germans—solid and settled in his opinions, preferring Schiller to Goethe, and the *Allgemeine Zeitung* to either; enjoying such a humdrum, rational, patriotic life as is described by D. F. Strauss in his *Old and New Faith*, not necessarily either illiberal or stupid, but capable of accepting implicitly the most illiberal and stupid conclusions if they come recommended by the proper names. The Philistine is the opponent of the chosen seed, the representative of mediocrity, who, from the strong position of the Usual, makes war upon ideas. Translated into English we recognise him at once. He is, in short, that British Public whose organ is *The Times*. He is not to be known by any kind or degree of opinions; he may be Conservative or Liberal, Churchman or Dissenter, of town or country, of any profession or age; he looks on things in a homely English spirit, pays his debts, reads the paper, hates humbug, discharges all the duties of a man and a Christian. He lives respected and dies regretted, and has never had a thought, or done an action, that was not commonplace, or known what it is *cali convexa tueri*. The note of these people is stupidity of different degrees; they are not malicious even when they are most brutal and noisy. They are declared enemies dwelling within their own border, unable to creep into the camp and corrupt, but serving to keep the defenders on their guard.

First, then, as we are concerned with the British not the German Philistine, let us glorify that splendid common sense of *The Times*, that plain John Bull, whose instincts are always reasonable, whose reasons and actions are as often as not unreasonable. When I see a particularly ante-ideal article in *The Times* I look upon it as a measure

of the distance between public opinion and enlightened opinion, and as showing the strength and weakness of each. *The Times*, i.e. the influential Englishman, is stupid but manly; the enlightened are the leaders, and must lead, but as a rule they want either the manliness of courage or the manliness of patience. The rule of majorities is good, not because majorities are wise, but because they indicate what will be endured by the stupid. New things require to be understood before they can be used; the wisest legislation is that which makes new things easy of comprehension, or removes obstacles to understanding. "That which is settled by custom," says Bacon, "though it be not good, yet at least it is fit. . . . Whereas new things piece not so well." They must endure the open opposition of the stupid, the ridicule of the clever-stupid, the border Philistines, who are wise only in their own generation, but are wise in that. I recognise and admire Mr. M. Arnold's brilliant parable of Sancho Panza and Don Quixote, the sublime idealist checked and thwarted by the blundering clown, who nevertheless must follow his lead; but where would Don Quixote be without Sancho Panza? Our treasures are all in earthen vessels; in this survival-of-the-fittest world it is unreasonable to complain of conditions which ensure toughness, unreasonable to dislike the very qualities which make progress possible. Don Quixote, without the discipline provided by Sancho Panza, curates, housekeepers, muleteers, would go farther but fare worse. He might even become contemptible; but he survives the opposition and ridicule which would crush an imitator, a mere Baratarian, because he has with him something permanent which will survive, not in spite of, but because of, opposition and ridicule. Radicals and Utopians, dreamers and schemers of all kinds, make the grand mistake of considering their own motives only. The great world, the uninstructed common sense of the public, makes the opposite mistake of considering methods only, and disregarding motives. But this mistake is less dangerous to society than the other up to a certain point. When the Philistine has become a pedant, and defends conservatism on principle, then he departs from the ground of established convenience and practice which is his only safe position, and becomes subject to the criticism of his own class; but till then he is justified in asking at each step proposed to him how will it work? what shall I get by giving up this? and he requires, and is right in requiring, practical arguments such as the common intellect can understand before he will give up what, though it be not good, is yet fit.

There were many degrees among Philistines in the old time; all were not men of six fingers and six toes, monsters, of no proportion, bawling out their hatred of the Hebrews. So there are degrees of stupidity; and we need a finer test. We have all learnt from Mr. M. Arnold that the note of Philistia is provincialism. One who invents tests exposes himself to be tried by them, and Mr. Swinburne's delicate application of this very test has perhaps tinged the genial critic's cheek with an unwonted blush. But if Mr. M. Arnold is provincial, so much

the better for the *Vie de Province*. Hans Andersen's story of the *True Princess and the Pea* has disposed of criticism of this kind, which is only meant to amuse, not to make a serious assault. The test of provincialism will do well enough. It will include all those to whom their own view of life is sufficient, and who have not enough curiosity and tolerance to inquire how much good there may be to come out of Nazareth. The provincial or clever-stupid class combine often with the vulgar-stupid class to crush novelties. They both apply, and themselves fall under, the discipline of stupidity, which requires that new things should be made plain, and the discipline of ridicule, which requires that new things should be made agreeable to common sense. But because they dwell in a border land, neither true Philistia nor the inherited portion of the Tribes, they are less easy to recognise, and show themselves under different characters and names, and require careful inspection.

The second class of Philistines, who live on the border, and are alternately enlightened and stupid, both receiving and giving their share of the discipline which Philistia administers, are the guides and teachers of the stupid, always a little ahead in general intelligence, but apt to lapse into stupidity from imperfect theorising. They are sometimes confounded with the stupid whom they chastise; oftener they pass into the ranks of a clique, forgetting their true office, which is to chastise not the stupid only, but in their different degrees all members of cliques and promoters of views—politicians, artists, dons, schoolmasters, and other professional people, to whom their own *Krähwinkel* or *Entepfuhl* is sacred. It may be laid down as a general rule that nine out of ten people are professional, and therefore vulnerable, if it be but in the heel. We all talk shop with more avidity than anything else, though we profess to dislike it and avoid it; and as soon as we yield to the temptation of talking shop we need the Philistine at our elbow to chastise us. Happily he is never far off, and the part is one that is easily taken. Our dearest friend will turn Philistine, put on the square cap, and seize the rod at a moment's notice, if we have not the wit to shake a cap and bells now and then, after the school of Erasmus and Sterne, or, more truly, to know when we are wearing it, and disarm ridicule by confessing folly. Ridicule is the needful discipline. He was no fool who said "all things are laughter." At any rate laughter is the great corrective for solemnities which have gone stale. We have heard it said that no one believes, till he can afford to laugh at, his own religion. True or not, the saying is to the purpose as pointing out the purgatorial office of ridicule. Nothing can save a man from being sometimes ridiculous, and ridicule is always right, always strikes home, always reveals something in the bone as well as in the skin. Noah drunk, David dancing, Vulcan limping, Mars in the net, are allegories to teach that Momus has his right over every mortal and immortal head. Now it is one, now another: none can read the *Book of Snobs* without wincing; just so if a *Book of Philistines* were written, there is not a

pedant living whose withers would be unwrung. The Philistine has at all events the advantage of being *au courant* with the common intellect of his time; the pedant knows a thing or two about his own province, but may possess no knowledge beyond. He must show his Hebraism by borrowing of his neighbour the jewels he needs, must learn of the Philistines themselves, or he will end in being as dull as they. At a certain time of life, or at a certain stage of success, most men are liable to find their faiths become formulas; they begin to lead the unexamined life which is not fit to live, and which leads to the heavy stupidity against which they have been protesting all their life. Craftsmen must be always sharpening their tools, and learning to use new tools; if not, the journeymen soon overtake them, and they sink to the journeyman level.

It is reported of St. Antony that having lived ninety years in the repute of being the holiest man—if not in Africa, at least in the district of Alexandria—it was revealed to him that there lived a holier than he in a distant part of the desert, Paul by name. Accordingly, in the true spirit of humility he set out to seek him, and at last found his cell in the recesses of a howling wilderness. We can imagine the details: the shut door, the holy dirt, the scant diet, the obstinate contest of humility and courtesy. Long the two old gentlemen (Paul's age was 113) contended in a kind of beggar-my-neighbour game of piety; the tame raven brought an extra roll for breakfast to prevent the starvation of both, for each would have starved sooner than eat before the other; at last Antony had the satisfaction of despatching his friend to heaven, burying his body with the help of two lions, and returning to his convent to find himself without a rival. Now it seems to me that Paul is not a person to imitate. He was able to preserve his reputation by living only within the view of a certain set; and his holiness was never tested as it would have been had he come off his own ground and consorted with the world as Antony did. He had absolutely no opportunity for sinning. If he had watered his cucumbers without feeling greedy, and said his prayers without feeling weary, he had done, when bedtime came, as much of his road to heaven as could be done in a day's journey. Whereas Antony, dragged from his cool cell and his blessed contemplation, his palm-trees and his solemn river, to the noise, and dirt, and ophthalmia of Alexandria, to wrangle with George and Arius, and hear again the old, old story of Athanasius' grievances—Antony's sanctity was not afraid of the test of provinciality. The true craftsmen of piety, as of other fine issues, are those who want no artificial protection of a clique to praise them, or a hermitage to hide them, or rules and formulas to justify them. The school of Shammai said "Bind," and the school of Hillel said "Loose;" but the true sons of Israel need neither doctrine; for they have the sense or tact of godliness, better than ordinances of binding or loosing. It gives a lustre to the piety of Augustine, George Herbert, and St. Charles Borromeo, that they lived in the world, or could go down into the crowd like Elijah from his mount. Daniel at his pulse was no nobler than

Daniel prince of the kingdom. It is not solitude alone, or society alone, that we need wrangle about; nor is it the society or solitude of bodies, but of ideas, that is in question. Cowper, amid the parochialities of Olney, "so ignorant, and by such ignoramus surrounded," was less provincial than Baudelaire in Paris, because the ideas in which one lived are those of the poet's world, while those which formed the life-disease of the other were of his own circumstances, or time, or life. The *préjugés du clocher* can exist even in Paris. Baudelaire, with his musk and ambergris, his soft furs, his exquisiteness of music and rhythm, his love of what is uncommon, unexpected, morbid, even monstrous; with his half-human cats, his half-divine negresses, his half-Elysian haschisch; whose senses seem almost to interpenetrate so that colours are as a perfume to him, and sounds affect him as touch; whose pleasures seem to begin at that part of the spectrum of feeling where those of other men end; who seems not to belong to earth, but to live in a limbo between hell and heaven, too original and unique in his isolation to be a type, is nevertheless an ideal, the ideal of the perfect artist for whom Art is all, and all in itself; but a misleading ideal, because he has a false air of having tried all life and emotion and found it worthless. He held (if his cynicism held anything) that there was a quintessence of life—or dust—which might possibly be worth preserving if stored in the costliest vessels, ready to be spilt if ever it seemed precious; but to satisfy his sense of irony this quintessence had to be sought in dunghills and heaps of carrion. No illusion was to be admitted; the depths of the horrible must be sounded to find beauty, the deserts of spleen must be traversed to gather the rare spices of a true *ennui*. *Le beau c'est l'horrible—l'horrible c'est le beau*, he does not scruple to say. Those who praise his sentiment as well as his style are obliged to get astride of the "Art for Art" theory—a dangerous Pegasus—and declaim against "morality" as an enemy to Art. "Art for Art," like other maxims, is not of private interpretation, and has to be referred to the example of the great masters of sentiment and style; not only to the artists of to-day, who may turn out hereafter to be no more than skilled labourers; nor to sentimentalists and critics, who may be skilled labourers too, and yet never reach the level of Art. If the highest art of all the ages is immoral, as we are told, "Art with poisonous honey stol'n from France" may be immoral, which is quite another thing; and the puritanical talk against "Moral Art," which is so common nowadays, may be as far wrong in its way as the moral and religious pictures and poetry of a hundred years ago. Here, as elsewhere, the common conscience of the world, for whose delight, if not for the glory of God, beautiful things are made, has a right to speak, and the purgatorial fire of Philistia will probably burn up Baudelaire and spare Cowper.

If this is an unfair comparison, put by the side of Baudelaire one of those artists who have lived a full life of pain and pleasure, glorifying both by human sympathy. There are scenes and ideas in *Les Misérables* which

touch on that paradox which I have quoted ; but the difference is this, that the one man, like the greatest painters, when dealing with horror seeks for beauty in it, the other seeks horror underlying beauty. The one loves a charnel-house for the sake of the lives of men his own kindred ; to the other his fellow-creatures seem the actors in a dance of death, and he grins as he strips all disguises off, and hears the teeth chatter and the ribs rattle under the thin covering of blood and vital tissue.

To return to our Philistines of the second sort,—those who are not merely obstructive from stupidity, but who apply the discipline of ridicule. They are irreverent ; they laugh and trample on ideas, are intolerant, and sometimes brutal. But they are not less medicinal. The opinion which is “*regina del mondo*” is not made up only of the stupid traditions of the stupid, stupid by natural aptitude and by inheritance, ὄροι ἐξ ὄρων γιγνώμενοι through many asinine generations ; it represents also much which it is salutary to hold provisionally, and something which is both salutary and true, and is often held more soundly and sensibly by men of the world than by artists, philosophers, or poets. Let them cry “Philistine” as they will, the man of large experience can allow the name ; for if wrong sometimes, he is oftener right than they.

I cannot take a better instance than Lord Macaulay, and the more so because he is a favourite instance of Philistinism. There he sits, in the frontispiece to Mr. Trevelyan’s book, big, strong, hard-featured, certain of himself, without weaknesses, without *nuances*, without shame or blame, the very figure of triumphant commonplace. He had no sense of that which did not meet his gaze point blank. Direct denunciation, direct panegyric, dogmatical hypotheses, and domineering conclusions ; these are what he gives us. We do not expect from him balanced doubts and elegant hesitancy. But this does not necessarily make him a bad historian or an unsafe guide. On the contrary, he held a whole public opinion in himself. He was able to weigh in the balance a greater mass of facts than any one who had ever set himself to walk over the field of human knowledge. If we admit that he had but one supreme faculty, that of memory, others have approached him in this, and yet have made no mark in letters or affairs. Macaulay was not merely six cubits high, with a helmet of brass and a spear-staff like a weaver’s beam, but had strength and skill to drive the iron home. No shield resists him. Through triple bull’s hide—*tot ferri terga, tot aeris*—crashes the terrible weapon, and he grasps the reeking spoils. In the havoc of the battle he sometimes dealt a false blow and slew Lausus as well as Mezentius. But better that nine innocent men should be hanged than one rogue escape the gallows. We may be thankful for Macaulay ; and now that Croker and Montgomery have been sufficiently vindicated, we may leave the bodies of his slain to the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air. In his Philistinism, such as it was, there was nothing stupid. He commanded a view of history and literature from an unattained height, and set things down as their proportions appeared to him thence. Hence he is

absolutely, in most instances, above criticism ; his critics cannot refute his conclusions, because they do not know his premisses. He is, in short, too all-embracing and all-quelling to be ticketed by any such easy epithet as "Philistine." It is as if one were to call Oliver Cromwell a fanatic, or Julius Cæsar a usurper, and think he had done with them. He is a Briareus, not a Goliath ; and would kill you a score or two of his reviewers before breakfast. It is ill catching a whale with a landing-net. I claim this position for him, not in virtue of any special characteristic, but because of his great range of power and knowledge. He is one of those in whom no crudity of opinion or crassness of sense entitles writers of finer fibre to despise them as Philistines. In the "Philistine of Genius" genius supersedes Philistine. Our reverence receives a shock when Luther, Cromwell, and Bunyan are classed as it were with other Nonconformists. How well Mr. Kinglake, in *Eothen*, hints at the heavy Philistinism of the Duke of Wellington, and how well does he turn aside from respect to the great moral character which can bear along in its course much that would stick and stink in a shallower channel ! "Great," said the Greek poet, "is the stream of the Assyrian river ; but on its wave it carries much offscouring of the land and plenty of garbage." If you want a robust and illiberal judgment on any given subject, you have only to turn over the pages of Boswell's *Johnson*. Yet we are right in respecting Dr. Johnson, and in listening to everything that he said, whether good or bad. There are some souls that go straight to Paradise ; and some Philistines who do not need the purgatory ordained alike for Philistines and their detractors.

A great deal has been heard of Herr Wagner during the last year, and shiploads of epithets have been imported from Germany for those who do not bow down and worship him. The Philistine has had his say about Wagner in *The Times* and elsewhere for thirty years past ; but when the Bayreuth festival was set going he revived his right to question and laugh. In the Nibelung operas all traditions have been upset. The orchestra is invisible ; the actors sing no airs ; the audience sit in darkness ; the stage is at one moment wrapped in flame, at another choked with steam from real steam-engines, at another flooded in water, in which it was reported that the chorus were to sing floating, supported by corks. One gentleman sang his part in a bonfire ; another in a whale's belly, through a speaking-trumpet. The enterprise was and deserved to be a triumphant success, and Philistia is silenced. Since then Herr Wagner has been over here and secured his triumph. He has conquered Germany and annexed England ; and none can grudge him the fruits of thirty years' hard fighting for his ideal. Yet there are elements in Wagnerism which can hardly be permanent, however great may be that which is to survive contemporary ridicule. We all know the programme (says the Philistine), the three T's—Tonkunst, Tanzkunst, Tichtkunst—what a confession of provincialism ! a nation that cannot distinguish between surds and sonants—the Poet-musician-coryphæus Chimæra :

moderate poetry, for there at least the amateur critic may speak with less diffidence; exciting but disturbing music; and German dancing; to galvanise and glorify the forgotten, and perhaps well forgotten, heroes of the Nibelungen Lied. A national epic out of the dark ages is a very fine thing in its way; but it does not go very far in the nineteenth century; and why should it? It is natural enough that this should come in, in Germany, with other forms of Germanism. The Germans are a learned as well as a patriotic nation, and they know all about Varus and the Cherusci, and that Hermann was a German, and that Charles the Great was not a Frenchman; and, with archæology a little at fault, they have "restored" the German empire, and got their German Rhine, and their "*petit vin blanc*" all to themselves. Half the army have won the Iron Cross. Moltke is a Count and Bismark a Prince, and '48 is forgotten. The German nation, full of glory and gold, looks back on its origins, and conceives Siegfried and the Walhalla to be as worthy of song as Achilles and Olympus: and so, in its worthy middle-class fashion, it will be classical, and makes a tetralogy, and declares it is the greatest dramatic and German work the world has known.

The weak point of Wagnerism—if it has one—is probably this, that it is too aggressively and tyrannically German. It is as insolent as French glory or British constitutionalism. No one quarrels with Greek sculpture and Italian painting for being too Greek and Italian; nor with the German colour of the greatest music. But the greatest works are because they are, not because they would be. They are great because they are universal, and tell us truth without preaching a theory. Germany is rich enough in music to abstain from taunting other nations with their poverty; and music is the most bountiful and least local of arts, and needs not to shut up its treasures in galleries. It spreads like flame where it kindles, without diminution of the original spark. And again, Wagnerism sins from arrogance, in claiming all the future and neglecting the past. Before it can claim to be universal, it must shake off or burn out these two provincialisms of place and time, or the Philistines will be upon it, and with reason.

We may put aside the fact that some of the first musicians of Germany believe Wagnerism to be a passing mania—for this is more or less the case with every new movement, and Handel's judgment of Gluck has not been confirmed by posterity—and confess Wagner's music to be what is called a great fact in the history of music. His supporters claim for him not only to have the profoundest knowledge of harmony and instrumentation, and to possess a native vein of melody of a very high order, and a great dramatic power; but they also assert that his dramas differ in kind from all that have gone before. They announce that melody, as it was understood by Mozart and Beethoven, has had its day; that music is valuable as an exponent of passion, and must carry the mind and heart with it, no longer content the ears and that ganglionic function which we term the soul. They speak of opera and symphony as having led the way to

this new revelation of drama, and say that music has only now found its true province, and that consequently all lovers of the art must look to the future, not to the past, for contentment. There is something of the fervour and intolerance of a religion in this. We admire the band of Puritans grasping the sword and the Bible of the *Zukunftsmusik*, resting on new authority and rebelling against old, as Puritans have always done, and we feel that Puritans generally have the future with them, and are on the side of hope, as opposed to that very moderate result which calls itself attainment, and is represented by the orthodox and their professors. But the dogmas of Puritans have always to run through the strainer of public opinion; and here comes in the inestimable privilege of Philistia, to keep the believers within limits, to supply the discipline of ridicule, and to clip and prune the superfluities which accompany all great growths; to weight true genius with the ballast of common sense: a humble office, but a needful. One important business of Philistia is to clear away the useless and impertinent imitators, and bring the original teacher (Maker, as Mr. Carlyle would say) into his proper place. Every maker is travestied, but is also helped by his apes, who bring some discredit on what he teaches, but at the same time perform the useful office of representing his ideas more or less distorted. The alloy helps the workman; it is necessary that truth should be recommended to the world by humbug. When Dr. Newman was a lecturer at Oriel, it is reported that his followers imitated unessential peculiarities (as Horace's imitators drank cummin to make themselves pale), and wore low shoes and white stockings. There is no sanctity attached to shoes and stockings short of going entirely discalced; it did them neither good nor harm; but it attracted attention. The Philistine laughed at them; but peculiarity gained notoriety, and now they can do without the shoes and stockings, and set the pattern of a uniform of their own. The Philistines have pruned off the shoes and stockings—well if they had been able to prune off modern extravagances not to be traced to 1833—and whatever was permanent in the Oxford Movement is all the stronger for having gone through the purgatory of ridicule. Wagnerism, too, is on its trial; but it has gone through the stage of self-assertion, and need not now insist that every detail is inspired. Like the Puritanism of the seventeenth century, it has its weaknesses; and it will have a fall, perhaps even a Restoration, if it presses its victories too hard, tries to stamp out what is classical, and prefers every professor of noise to the peaceful and humble lovers of cantabile and sonata-form. All honour to Puritans; but honour also to Philistines, who bring them into contact with possibilities, and teach them to be in harmony with their age.

It is not, however, enough to be in harmony with the age; the age is but one of the ages, and every age has its fashion. Fashion is always infallible in its day; but setting aside art and letters, we have only to think of the Turf and the Hurlingham of to-day, then the society which is drawn in

Vanity Fair and the *Newcomes*, till we come to Beau Brummel and the Pavilion, and the stifling dulness of *Tom and Jerry*, and a little farther back in the shade of time *Evelina* and Ranelagh, to see that all that glitters is not the gold of Helen's necklace. How difficult it is now to believe, in spite of obstinate archæological sentiment, that Greuze and Watteau were once the perfection of *bon goût*; that Lely's houris were as fashionable as the sweet beauties of Sir Joshua and Gainsborough; that Dinglinger's hideous ornaments of monstrous pearls, the Duke of Buckingham's white cut velvet with 30,000*l.*-worth of jewels sewn upon it, Prince Hal's eyelet-holes, were once the finest things that the shifting glass of fashion could show! Or, to pass out of our own times altogether into other regions of *Vanitas Vanitatum*, how impossible it is to judge the taste of societies in which no exception could be made to the graceful indecencies of Appuleius or the Anthology, or when Lais and Phryne were openly admired by all men and secretly envied by many women! All these, and thousands more, hit the taste of their own day, and would be justly described by more or less coarse epithets in another. There is no trust to be placed in the verdict of any age; the Philistine is perhaps unborn who shall laugh down what we now admire. There is a grotesque passage in Montaigne's Essays in which, as is his fashion, he ridicules the practices which have been "the thing" in one age and country or another. Much is forgotten at once, much is sifted by Philistia only to be bolted again in a future time, till that which is permanent and human remains to be the delight of the world. There would be nothing to regret if we could be sure that every dog would have its day; but useful, blundering Philistia, knowing more of common sense than beauty, beats down good with bad, and the more delicate growths are often lost. There is no help for it, and we can hardly wish it otherwise; for, after all, the best mostly survives, and the bills thrown out by the *Parliamentum indoctorum* are taken up outside and brought in at their right time and in a better form for the use of the world.

One word more about the critics, those amateurs who, if we believe the craftsmen, are the worst of Philistines, "defaming and defacing" the living as well as the dead lions. Julius Cæsar asked Catullus to dinner; Oliver Cromwell spoke of detractors "as if a mouse should nibble at my heel." Sir Walter Scott's introduction to the *Lady of the Lake* is the perfect model of a great writer's courtesy; but few are wise enough, as he was, to "let parody, burlesque, and squibs find their own level," still fewer to take up Byron's insult about "Sir Walter's reign" and turn it into a gracious tribute to his rival's greatness. Great artists, as far as I can judge, are more generous in praising than others, but also more savage in retaliating. Pope on Atticus, Johnson on Chesterfield, Bentley on Boyle, *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, are terrible instances of literary vengeance. There is the temptation of power, and the splendid success which attends its exertion; and probably the great ones are far more patient than the little ones suppose. It is right that great impertinences

should be chastised; yet the crowd of amateurs and critics who form and express opinions are each of them a little bit of the public by whose verdict authors stand or fall, and if they may not blame they have no right to praise. "Boys!" said Dr. Keate, "I'll flog you if you cheer; because if I let you cheer me I must let you hiss me." Let the critics hiss as geese or serpents, they will bray loud enough when the fit takes them! The poets, it is true, do not depend upon the public for the "thoughts which make rich the blood of the world;" but they write for readers, and readers, if they have a right to read at all, have a right to think.

Besides, it is only the living authors who may not be touched. We all have our crack at Goethe and Virgil, we criticise without sparing the shortcomings of Pope and the extravagances of Shakspeare. Yet, if living poets are sacrosanct, what can be more monstrous than that an anonymous writer in the *Cornhill* should venture to have an opinion about Iago? Why are not the poets in arms against the intruder? Any one may say what he likes about Shakspeare; partly, perhaps chiefly, because Shakspeare is dead and has no relatives living to defend him; partly, to be sure, because an educated man has a right to an opinion about the writers by whom his soul has been fed, and may express it without impertinence if it is not absurd in itself, as likely enough it is not. This rule of "*de vivis nil nisi bonum*" is not preserved in the case of other public men. We speak and write on platforms and in newspapers as blatantly as we like about statesmen who know their business better than we do; and thereby those statesmen get much deserved praise and blame, and no doubt are the better for both. Let the critics have no more than their due, which is to be listened to with moderate attention and good temper; for they may say true, and if they talk nonsense it will fall on their own heads.

"*Securus judicat orbis terrarum*" is a good saying if it is understood in its length and breadth; for there is a false "security" which belongs to a clique or a person, the security of public opinion which belongs to orthodoxy or conceit. This, which is merely ridiculous in an individual, becomes mischievous in a clique; because it encourages bad work and hides good work by cherishing a sectarian spirit. The "dissidence of dissent" exists in other regions than that of religion. Purists and puritans of all kinds are hardened by it into pedants or fanatics; what was provincial easily becomes parochial; and when once they have reached this stage, they are fit to join the ranks of the very Philistines against whom they have spent their lives in protesting. When Luther has decided to abolish the Epistle of James and give an Elector two wives, he is as much out of court as the Pope himself, who has at least a good following of *orbis terrarum* at his back. There is in all human strifes, on one hand, a sense of experience, of proportion, of the discipline of ridicule, which gives that side a right to be considered as a belligerent, even though its principles and practice may be wrong and those of the

other side right. There were clumsy reformers and learned priests, as there were heavy-handed monks and cunning authors of *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*. So it always is; each side misjudges the other and uses the epithet "Philistine," or some equivalent name, not without reason. The point where the balance tips is that at which it becomes clear, often after the first group of actors are gone by, which side is to win. Till then, attack and defence use all their weapons; theory batters on practice, practice insults and ridicules theory. The attack may be to press some passing cause, and may embody nothing permanent; if so, it will fail, and practice and possession will keep their laugh. Or, on the other hand, it may be the dawning of a light of the ages; and then the laugh will be turned, and *orbis terrarum*, with all its worldly wisdom, will learn a lesson, the lesson perhaps of Paganism and the Catholic Church. It is the power of distinguishing a rising cause from a passing fancy or discontent that has marked great leaders of thought and action; they know on which side the Philistines are. They may sojourn in Gath and dissemble, and incur reproach as traitors or cowards from the more ardent men whose work they use; but they understand better than the Philistines themselves the strength of stupidity both to hinder and to help, and will never allow themselves to become stupid from over-cleverness.

My conclusion, then, is that Philistia is a neighbour land where live friends as well as enemies of the chosen people. The Hebrews are often passing to and fro, and sometimes they miss their orientation and shake off the dust of their feet when their faces are turned away from Jerusalem. The wise Hebrew builds his wall with the sword in his left hand. He spoils the Philistines, as he has always spoiled the nations, without despising them—for Hiram is skilful to work, and the Chaldeans know the stars; learning of their wisdom to strengthen his own perceptions and make them solid and trustworthy; tolerant of all unlikenesses, and regarding the proportions of like things. But if he despises Philistia and dwells too much in his own little city, the strangest fate will come upon him. The strictest Pharisee will be caught and bound and made to grind in the prison-house blinded, not knowing that he is doing the work of his enemies and becoming more and more like them. The Pharisee turned Philistine is a spectacle familiar to the philosopher who sits at leisure in his swing-basket, and contemplates the follies of men. Let him not swing there too long; or Aristophanes, standing on the firm earth, will shake him down with laughter, and convince him by bruises that his basket was not the world, and perhaps no part of it.

Delphi.

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I.

WE had (speaking figuratively) hung up our bridles in the temple of Athene Chalinitis at Corinth before taking boat across the eastern half of the gulf. After a dreamy passage through its blue waters, we found ourselves landed in the full heat of noon at Itæa, the Scala, i.e. stair, or landing place of Salona, which occupies the site of Amphissa, the chief town of the Ozolian Locrians. No horses are to be met with at Itæa; and the camels stalking beneath their burdens along the quay were clearly not designed by Nature for the climbing of mountain passes. Soon our humble procession of mules was jangling across the dusty plain; and our pilgrimage to Delphi—the dream of many years—had begun in earnest.

Fields of corn and clumps of olive-trees and vineyards, with the berries trailing along the ground, cover the Crissæan plain—and all are overspread by a grey coat of dust. Unlike the mules of the Phæacian princess, our beasts show no disposition to run with speed and move well onward with their legs, but they too shall in time gain praise as strong-hoofed and as the most sure-footed of mountaineers. Meanwhile their guardians, stepping briskly along in gaiters and petticoats of many folds, are urging them on with long-drawn cries, melancholy and monotonous. These cries, varied now and then by amœbæan strains of unmitigated discord, are to be the accompaniment of our journeyings for many days, till at last we bid farewell to our honest muleteers as they sit at their parting feast before the steaming cookshop of St. Demetrius in Thebes fair. To-day we are only on the eve of our toils through the Parnassus-country. Not a breath of air is stirring in the sultry noontide. Above, the sun is blazing out of a cloudless blue, and the birds are asleep, in silent concert with the dozing boy aloft on his scaffold of straw in the field.

The plain through which we are riding, in ancient times as now, furnished an easy access to the Delphic pass; and the sea-port of Cirrha, whose remains are sought a little to the east of our landing-place, had grown wealthy in consequence. With wealth came insolence and outrages, and in the course of time vengeance overtook the citizens of the flourishing sea-port; a Sacred War waged in the interests of the temple and its pious visitors destroyed Cirrha and consecrated the whole of the plain to

the Delphic Apollo. The victors employed the spoils in founding the Pythian games, which were at first no doubt celebrated on the plain itself. The chariot of Clisthenes of Sicyon, whose ships had cut off the supplies of the Cirrhæans in the Sacred War, gained him the laurel-wreath in the second of these contests, which three centuries later the great Athenian orator could still call the common agôn of the Greeks. But there was another purpose of a more useful character, for which the whole of the plain between Mount Cirphis and the sea was left untilled. Whoever approached the oracle had first to offer sacrifice under the superintendence of its priests. The Cretan mariners whom Apollo had chosen for the founders of his temple had faltered at the outset when bidden to build a temple on the rocky height. "How," they had asked of the god, "shall we be able to live in such a spot?" "Foolish men and faint-hearted," the god replied, "who think but of toil and trouble. I will give you counsel easier to follow. Each of you take his knife in his hand and be ever ready to sacrifice sheep; these shall be brought to me in endless numbers by the people; guard ye the temple and receive its visitors." The lesson of faith was soon learnt, and for long centuries the priests could say, as Ion said to Creusa, "The altars have nourished me, and the ceaseless flow of visitors." The plain thus became a pasture-ground for the destined victims of the Delphic sacrifices, and remained untilled and unpeopled. But the sea-port was, after all, a necessity for the temple itself, and in course of time it crept into a furtive life again. When in after days King Philip of Macedon had established the head-quarters of his intrigues at Delphi, his good friends the Locrians of Amphissa took possession of Cirrha and began building there. But a well-organised fit of religious enthusiasm swept away the encroachments; and, nominally to avenge this petty trespass, another Sacred War was kindled which laid Amphissa level with the ground, and which in its results—for such are sometimes the results of little wars in which great powers have a hand—extinguished the liberties of Hellas.

From this fatal plain over which Apollo was long lord from the hillside to the sea, a gradual stony ascent conducts us to the village of Chryso, at the entrance of the Delphic gorge. Here we pause, as the pilgrims may have paused of old, to drink from one of the welcome springs of the village, and to mend the scanty furniture of our mules. It is the first of the villages of Parnassus where fancy, for it is nothing more, supposes the Greek population to survive in unmixed purity of race. Nowhere, at all events, are taller and lithier mountaineers to be found than among the Parnassian villagers; for the beauty of their daughters it is better not to seek too hopefully. During our brief halt at Chryso we are the centre of an undisguised but unobtrusive curiosity; a patriarch on his doorstep conducts the conversation with our eloquent travelling servant, and from the lattice above we are silently surveyed by heads half-hidden in the rosemary growing out of the *οὐχί* and *ραι* of a ballot-box.

Chryso stands on the site—it can hardly be doubted—of the ancient Crissa, the Phocian city to which Delphi originally belonged as a mere local sanctuary. The Homeric hymn to Apollo, written about the eighth century, does not regard Delphi as a separate place from Crissa. “Come,” it says, “to Crissa, under sunny Parnassus—a height turned to the west; over it hangs a rock; beneath runs a hollow precipitous ravine.” Crissa was the natural acropolis of the plain of which Cirrha was the port, and commanded the rocky valley, where its citizens established sanctuaries of religious worship—doubtless of other deities in the first instance, and then of Apollo. When the Dorian advance from Thessaly to the rear of Parnassus opened the connection between Delphi and Tempe, when the sacred road was built from Delphi to Mount Olympus, and when the Dorians gave the impulse to the foundation of the great League which took Delphi under its special protection, the local sanctuary became a national one, Hellenic instead of Crissæan. The question thus at once arose whether the Crissæans, or the Phocians, of whom they formed part, could maintain their claim to administer the revenues and manage the affairs of the Delphic temple, or whether the latter, self-governed and independent, should be emancipated from local control. As against Crissa, the question was settled early in the sixth century by the Sacred War already mentioned, in which the sea-port of Cirrha was destroyed, and Crissa itself (for its precise fate is unknown) was at all events permanently reduced to insignificance. Athens—with Sicyon—had on this occasion come forward as the champion of national as against local pretensions; the whole war had been Solon’s work. For Athens had been recently consecrated as a city to Apollo, who had hitherto only been the god of the Eupatrid families; and the Sacred War seemed a fit enterprise for a community once more at peace with itself, and looking forward to a legislative settlement of its institutions. The later Delphic policy of Athens is not wholly consistent with the earlier, for, as regards the Phocians, it suited the Athenians in later times to espouse their claims to the management of the temple, which they asserted by force in the days of Philip. The brief epoch of Phocian ascendancy ended in the ruin and desolation of Phocis itself.

Thus Crissa at an early period lost its share in the glories of Delphi—and became merely the entrance or portal to the road on which it once naturally exercised sovereign control. Such fragments of marble and other ancient remains as are still observable at Chryso may have afterwards been brought from Delphi in the days of its downfall, and need not detain us on our journey. That journey, it can hardly be doubted, takes us along the very road by which the *theoriæ* or sacred processions usually approached the temple—since it is difficult to suppose that, instead of passing along the middle of the western ridge of the valley of the Plistus, they followed the bottom of that valley itself, whence the sacred edifices of Delphi would have appeared at a giddy height above the pilgrims’ heads.

Even without its associations the two-hours' ride from Chryso to Castri, from Crissa, i.e. to Delphi, may be called unsurpassed in the impressiveness of its scenery. Next to its lacking all associations, the safest test to apply to the effect of natural scenery is perhaps to imagine the wrong ones—like the faithful Murray, for instance, who thinks himself safe in describing "all around" as "stern, a fit approach to a shrine of gloomy superstition." This is, perhaps, the very last way of describing the character of the Delphic sanctuary on which one would have naturally fallen; but the description of the pass, before the neighbourhood of Delphi is reached, seems accurate enough. Nature is indeed stern and gloomy as viewed from the road between Parnassus and Cirphis in the valley of the Plistus, and the precipitous sides of the mountain, along which lie scattered in wild chaos the stones and rocks torn off by the earthquakes in their wild sport, descend with tremendous severity to the bed of the little stream below. But the awe which nature inspires in her self-inflicted desolation, the terror which she would inspire if the tempest were up on the mountain side and the rocks were quaking on their bases, and the streams in the valley were swollen to a destructive torrent, are feelings not in harmony with the worship in the temple beyond, sacred to the god who had cast them out. The book is open before us in which to read the meaning of the name of the Pythian Apollo. For what is the slaying of the dragon Python from which the god derives his best-beloved name, but the victory of light over darkness, the staying of the powers of destruction by the divine beneficence, the arresting of the horrors of inundation and decay in the valley of the shadow of death beneath? The significance of the myth easily extending itself from the material to the moral world, it became the symbolic basis of most of the festive solemnities of the Delphic temple, and the triumphal cry which first arose when the monster lay smitten by the shaft of Apollo became the vocal device of victory and thanksgiving throughout the Hellenic world. *Ἢ Ἢ παῖνον*, no longer shall the earth-born monster desolate the fields, and destroy men and beasts, and drink the rivulets, and scare the nymphs, and encircle the mountains in his terrible embraces; a helper and a healer is come, and the power of the sun-god has broken nature's winter.

In the days when the Delphic temple was honoured as the common sanctuary of the Hellenic world, and even for some time after its most glorious period had passed, neither temple nor city seems to have required the ordinary protection of walls. Delphi was certainly not a fortified city as late as the middle of the fourth century B.C., when it was forcibly seized by the Phocian general, Philomelus; and when, rather less than a century afterwards, it was attacked by the Gauls, it is expressly stated to have had no other than its natural defences. This was the occasion when the god, being asked how he would defend his temple, replied by the mouth of the Pythia, "I will provide for that—I and the White Maidens." The White Maidens whose onset confounded the

Celtic host were the snowdrifts on the heights of Parnassus. We saw one of them next day, hiding on the side of one of the peaks of the mountain away from the rays of Apollo, the lover of her sister Chione. On the north side Delphi needs no walls, for here rise the twin natural parapets of Nauplia and Hyampeia; on the south the mountain side descends—the inlets are only to the east and the west. But that to the east is described already by Pausanias as steep and difficult; it is that which leads up from the Schiste—or Divided Way—where the three roads from Daulis, Amhysus, and Delphi meet. Doubtless this route, difficult as it was, was much used by the pilgrims from Thebes and Athens; it formed part of the Pythian road proper, which the Athenians gloried in having themselves opened, and which their royal hero Theseus was said to have freed from robbers. A famous legend testifies to its narrowness. It was before the entrance to the Schiste that the chariot of the ill-fated Œdipus met that of Laius in the narrow path. We saw the spot on our journey from Delphi, and listened to the narrative of a horrible event which has attached to the scene a new memory of blood. Hard by there rises a monument in honour of Megas, once a notorious brigand, and afterwards brigand-catcher in the service of King Otho's government. He had caught in the trap of the cross-roads one of the brigand chiefs, whose head he had promised to bring home to Athens to the good Queen Amalia, and the dying robber begged his captor, an old comrade, for one parting embrace. Megas could not refuse it, and his captive stabbed him dead in his embrace. The eastern road, then, required but little defence; and it was on the west only that in the later days of the temple the Delphians built their wall, the traces of which are among the first Delphic remains meeting the traveller's eye on the western road. Before he reaches these, however, he has already noticed sepulchral excavations in the rocks, where the citizens buried their dead—where, perhaps, weary pilgrims may at times have been laid to sleep in the vicinity of the restful sanctuary.

Soon we reach the houses of the village of Castri, which occupies the site of Delphi itself. We are in a great natural amphitheatre of terraces, descending towards the bed of the river Plistus beneath, and ascending to the base of the rocky wall behind. The first part of the circle of rocky mountains above Delphi consists of the Phædriades, whose crags shut out the view of plain and sea, except through the inlet of the gorge, and as seen from the other end of the Delphic enclosure, receive the first rays of the morning sun. Immediately beneath these lay the *stadium* or race-course—constructed in the later days when the art of architect and engineer did not shrink from so difficult a task—the theatre, the *lesche*, and lowest the temple of Apollo itself, built on a terrace supported by an ancient Pelagic wall. It was this wall which was in part brought to light, with the inscriptions covering it, by Ottfried Müller and Ernst Curtius, when they paid a visit to Delphi in the year 1840. It was a fatal visit for the elder, and at that

time most famous, of the pair, for exposure to the sun while copying the Delphic inscriptions, followed by a journey through the Copaic marshes and their evil exhalations, threw him on a sick bed from which he never rose. French scholars, deputed by that French school of resident archæologists at Athens, which has done such noble service to the exploration of Greek antiquity, followed in the track of these eminent predecessors; and it seems probable that their labours, and those of MM. Foucart and Wescher, will at no distant date be resumed by the Athenian Society of Archæology, of whom we found an eager and courteous representative on the spot. The French discoverers found some drums and capitals of Corinthian columns, which seem to belong to the ancient temple—to that which was begun by the Alcmaeonidæ towards the end of the sixth century, and of which a Corinthian, Spintharus, was the first architect. They found subterraneous chambers—probably those in which the treasures of the temple were concealed in the Homeric days, and whence the Phocians would have snatched them, had not the god, by the warning sounds of an earthquake, stayed their impious enterprise. And—following an indication given by Pausanias—they found the very place of the *adyton*, or holy of holies of the temple, whither the water of the fountain Cassotis, descending from the Phædriades and passing underground, carried its inspiring stream. The water of Cassotis for a time ceased to flow; and underneath its calcareous deposits were found inscriptions of the second century B.C. Where the line of the stream crosses the enclosure of the temple must have been the spot on which the Pythia set up her tripod, and whence she delivered the oracles of the god from under his golden statue.

Leaving the ruins of the temple of Apollo and the houses of the village which cover so large an unexcavated part of them behind us on the left, we pass the rocky fissure which separates the two beetling rocks of Nauplia and Hyampeia—whose twin points caused the ancients to call Parnassus, of which they are by no means the summits, the two-headed mountain. It is through this chasm that the Castalian fountain once poured its lustral waters into the basin beneath. Part of its course is still discernible in a cave into which we penetrated, but which in winter the melting snow renders inaccessible; but the rocks have been moved by the earthquakes, and one of the last of these—in 1870—crushed out of sight the basin itself. But in the rock by its side may still be seen the niches where votive offerings were doubtless placed for the nymphs, and in one of which the inhabitants to this day place their tributes to a Christian saint. A pool of clear water which we may fairly call Castalian is still bubbling from a perennial spring: and we drink a draught of the ice-cold element without whose purification no worshipper approached the temple, and the Pythia herself did not dare to utter her prophecies.

A little further, hard by the locality of the ancient gymnasium, and on the spot—or near it—where the temple of Athene Pronaia rose to

welcome the Athenian pilgrims arriving on the Schiste road, is the little monastery of the Panagia—the Blessed Virgin—served (as most monasteries now are in Greece) by a single priest. He makes us welcome to his little house and yard, where over pavements of ancient marbles one may step into his little church, barbarously gay in its solitude with the tawdry ornaments of modern Greek devotion. On the wooden balcony of the house we watch the shades of night gathering in the gorge, the whole length of which lies stretched out before us, and lie down to rest. Day passes into darkness and darkness into light without a change in the temperature, with scarce a stir in the deep tranquillity around, till at last “the lustrous car with yokèd steeds, the sun is shining o’er the earth, and banishing before his fire the stars into the sacred night. The trackless summits of Parnassus now are lighted up and joyously receive for mortal men the chariot of day.”

II.

To the historical student Delphi is not indeed the navel of the earth, but the centre of much that is noblest and most elevating in one of the noblest and most elevating spheres of human history.

One of the influences which gave to Hellas and Hellenic culture during a long period much of the measure of unity which they possessed, not only had and was acknowledged to have its actual centre here, but was historically identified with the name of Delphi by the Greek world and that part of the outside world which came into contact with it. This influence was that of the Apolline religion and worship—a worship which, so far from seeking to oust or depreciate those of other deities, rather elevated and strengthened them by uniting itself with them, and tended to range them all in a system which reached its apex in the worship of Zeus Hypatus, the Highest God. Thus the temples of other divinities rose by the side of that of Apollo in the Delphic valley—there at the eastern entrance was worshipped Athene Pronoia or Pronaia (likewise worshipped on Apollo’s sacred isle of Delos); there burnt the sacred fire of Hestia, *omphalos* proper of the earth, where all who came to consult the oracle were first bound to offer sacrifice; there Dionysus, as Plutarch expressly tells us, was honoured as zealously as Apollo himself, and the grave from which he annually rose was guarded in the *adyton* by the side of the Pythian tripod. To his father Zeus, Apollo paid the highest reverence; the temple at Olympia was built under the sanction of Delphi; and in the degenerate days when religious belief had stiffened into calculating superstition, it was thought a safe plan—not to call it a pious dodge—to obtain an oracle from the Olympian Zeus and then have it confirmed (for contradicted it could not be) by the Pythian Apollo.

This Apolline worship itself was (speaking of the Hellenic world) singularly cosmopolitan. Crete shared it with Delphi; and it was

familiar to Attica and the whole of Ionia. When the Dorians established a seat of the Amphictyony at Delphi, a whole series of Apolline foundations arose along the road from Mount Olympus to the valley of the Plistus. For a long time at least the Dorians, even in Peloponnesus, preserved a peculiar attachment to Apollo; nor could a bitterer shame have been inflicted upon Sparta in after days by the victorious Thebans than her exclusion from the Pythian games. In these games we recognise a specially characteristic influence of the Apolline religion. Unlike those of the great Hellenic festivals, they included competitions in music as well as the gymnastic art. Indeed at first Apollo had disdained other but music contests near his sanctuary, and had our piety been more wakeful during our ride through Delphi, we might have remembered Tilphusa's protest in the Homeric hymn, while our thirsty mules were jostling one another for a share in the water descending from the Phædriades. "Thou art vexed by the sound of swift horses, and by mules quenching their thirst from my sacred springs." By these festivals, and the devotion to music which they expressed, Delphi became a school of Apolline art; and the flowing Ionic robes of the cither-player are those of the festive dress of the Delphic Apollo. The route of the processions which repaired to these games was an almost unbroken chain of Pythian temples and oracles; and Pindar sang of this marvellous extension of the worship of Apollo in the form of a legend of the wanderings of the god himself. But that power through which he most specially and effectively diffused his influence was exercised through his oracles themselves, and above all through those delivered in his temple at Delphi.

The Delphic oracle was of course only one among several institutions of the same kind in the Hellenic world; and it may therefore be well at once to inquire wherein for us consists its singular significance. There can be little doubt that the wisdom of the earliest Greek oracles—of which Dodona in Epirus was the most ancient and the chief—was originally a weather-wisdom, and that the earliest prophetesses consulted there were the birds of the air—the black doves who settled in the branches of the prophetic oak. The Dodona oracle was, in short, as it has been called,* a great meteorological observatory; but such an observatory, if it can be depended upon, is of primary importance for a population consisting entirely of husbandmen, and entirely dependent for its sustenance not only upon the harvest but upon the harvest of its own soil. Soon the discovery was made that not only the birds are sensitive to the warnings of the atmosphere, but human beings as well, among them more especially women. Asking advice on one subject leads to asking advice on another; and counsel was soon sought from the wisdom of Dodona on other matters besides those directly connected with the change of the seasons and the coming and going of the storms. But if

* See E. Doehler's admirable lecture *Die Orakel* (Berlin, 1872).

the heavens were watched and the fore-knowledge they disclosed of coming events was interpreted to eager questioners, so 'was the earth, whose succession of products likewise seemed to reveal the same innate prophetic gift. Thus the personified Earth came to be honoured as the most primitive of prophets, and from her it was supposed that her prophetic power was communicated by her mysterious outpourings—her exhalations and her springs. Many oracular localities thus acquired fame—among them, at an early date, the rocky Pytho, where natural instinct (goats were said to have discovered the Delphic oracle, and doubtless they were the earliest and will be the latest inhabitants of the gorge) revealed the prophetic spot. The Earth—the Night—Themis, the law-giver—Posidon, who shakes the earth with his trident—Athene Pronoia, the goddess of foresight—Hestia—all these were successively connected with the Delphic oracle before it was taken possession of by Apollo. He did not expel their worships when he established his own among them; he was but a prophet among prophets, but the most powerful among them all—the all-seeing one, whose beams shed light upon all things, and evoked from the responsive earth the inspiring exhalations.

But the full significance, the historic significance properly speaking, of the Apolline oracle at Delphi, only begins when it became the centre of a great political organisation, which, without being strictly national in its extent, yet partook of the character of a national institution. The agricultural tribes had now grown into political communities, their interests and needs had come to extend beyond questions of seed-time and harvest time, and the counsel they asked from their established centre referred to questions of social conduct and political life, to questions of war and peace, of legislation and constitution, of public institutions and party contests, of the foundation of settlements and colonies. No merely human instinct, fortified by merely human experience, seemed capable of satisfying such demands as these. Divination became inspiration; it assumed the forms of that fine frenzy which possesses the poet; it clothed itself in rhythmic language, and communicated itself through the lips of women wholly under the dominion of the god. It is in this period that the influence and authority of the Delphic oracle were indisputably at their height. Freed from the local control of a Phocian country town, it had become an independent power free to manage its own affairs. Noble families from whom the priestly officers were chosen stood at its head, with a council, and in later times an assembly, a small civic community, and a tributary rural population. Among the priestly officers a body of five *ἅγιοι*, or Holy Ones, seems to have formed a directory; they have been more or less aptly compared to a college of cardinals. The sanctity of the Delphic territory was guaranteed by the Amphictyony, and the Delphic state occupied a position in Greece something like that which the Papal States would have held in the reorganised Italy contemplated by Napoleon III. after Villafranca. But its strength lay in

the piety which it commanded throughout Hellas and wherever the Hellenic name was honoured. Cypselus of Corinth, Clisthenes of Sicyon, Solon of Athens—these are among the names connecting themselves with its greatest age; it was honoured by Phrygian princes and by the kings of Lydia, by the Etruscans and the Etruscan family on the royal throne at Rome (the Tarquini), and by the founders of the young Republic. Its civilising influence spread in a network of roads close to its temple through Greece; it pointed the way to the Greeks on their expeditions of foreign discovery and settlement; it welcomed, in the name of Hellas as it were, foreign princes who desired to enter into relations of intimacy with the Hellenic world. It stirred and directed the national activity by the impulse of its counsel and the fulness of its geographical knowledge, and was acknowledged as the consultative centre of the political world of Greece both at home and abroad. The legislation of Lycurgus at Sparta appealed to a Delphic sanction; indeed, Apollo himself is sometimes mentioned as its author. It was his behest which commended the laws of Zaleucus as the healing remedy for the dissensions of the Epizephyrian Locrians. Solon was called upon by Delphi to place himself at the helm of the Attic State; and the reforms of Clisthenes, which perfected the operations of the Solonian constitution, were consecrated by the same authority. Such was the power of Delphi in the days of its greatness—about the time when the conflagration of the temple befel, and when the piety of Greece, above all that of an exiled family of Athenian nobles, restored it with munificent splendour.

After this climax came the beginning of the period of decline. The primary cause of this decline is to be sought in the decay of that spirit of national unity of which Delphi was the representative. Sparta had become a Peloponnesian power; and as she had done nothing for Delphi in the First Sacred War, so though she still revered and at critical seasons followed the Delphic behests, her eyes were turned rather towards Olympia than to the northern sanctuary across the gulf. She had encouraged the establishment of other festive centres, all purely Dorian in origin and association. The growth of Athens was preparing the fatal dualism which was to rend Hellas asunder; but Athens was fermenting in revolution and tyranny, from which Delphi, holding fast to the old order, averted its eye. When the great trial of the Persian Wars came upon Greece, she would have fallen a trembling prey into the grasp of the conqueror, had not Athens, at the bidding of one statesman of transcendent genius and foresight, placed herself in the van—virtually alone in spirit. At this crisis Delphi hesitated and held back, and when the war had been waged and the victory won, proved unable to mould itself to the new times and the new greatness of Athens, Delphi's own truest defender of old as she had now shown herself the truest champion of Hellenic freedom. Though the courage of Delphi revived with the courage of the nation which Athens and her great statesman alone had kept from sinking, yet after the victory the priesthood not only

rejected the gifts of Themistocles, but refused to reconcile itself to the democracy whose sway he made a reality. Delphi would not recognise the fact that (to use the words of Grote) the real protectors of its treasures were the conquerors of Salamis and Plataea, and contented itself with promulgating the story of the repulse of the Persians from the temple of Apollo by the interposition of the god himself.

Thus, after Delphi had proved untrue to its national task at the national crisis, because it had been unable to assume the true function of a directing power—which is to direct—it gradually passed into a false position towards the true heir of the future of Hellas. Refusing to go hand in hand with Athens, it became a mere factor on which the selfish conservatism of Sparta could more or less count—a conservatism which could prevent the progress of another power but not prepare its own. At the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War, Delphi summoned the Locrians to join the Spartan confederation—acting the part of a patriarch thundering in the name of a czar—and a good understanding with Athens was only restored in passing, in the days when the pious Nicias had patched up a peace with the baffled conservative power in Peloponnesus. The political authority of Delphi continued to sink, nor was its importance ever revived except in a way and in times fatal for Hellenic freedom. Epaminondas had employed its agency against Sparta with Napoleonic determination; Iason of Pheræ, who thought to inherit the supremacy of Thebes, had opened his brief career as hegemon by a display of his royal splendour at Delphi and a hecatomb of a thousand bulls. The Phocians attempted to carry back its history to the traditions of the Crissæan days by forcibly seizing its management, but soon ended by melting down its treasures into pay for their mercenaries and ornaments for the mistresses of their chiefs. The golden gifts of Cræsus, the necklaces of Helen and Eriphyle, had become the spoils of a sacrilegious local patriotism when the restorer of Delphi and the avenger of Apollo arrived in the person of the Macedonian Philip. He redeemed the honour of the God; but what place was there for a national temple and a national oracle in a dependent province? Delphi recovered much of its splendour, and preserved it through Macedonian and even through Roman times; but its temple had lost its national importance, and the chief significance of the sanctuary perhaps had come to lie in the facilities which it furnished for one of the most humanising institutions of Greek and Roman society—the institution of enfranchisement. To this a large number of the recently-discovered inscriptions refer. Its oracle had become a resort for private occasions only, and its authority in this direction was being gradually superseded by the activity of lower forms of divination—corresponding, like the most ancient of which we spoke, to physical rather than moral needs. The gods of the dead were taking the place of the gods of the living; and a superstitiously mystic pantheism sought its aid in the fancies of an enervated religious sense. A gentle sceptic like Cicero could surmise the fictitiousness of the

ancient Delphic oracles and weigh the evidence for them in the balance of diplomatic criticism; a speculative believer like Plutarch could sit with his friends in the precincts of the Apolline temple itself, and mingle with daring physiological conclusions credulous anecdotes which would rejoice a spiritualist of our own age of reason.

In conclusion, as it seems possible and even necessary to distinguish between several periods in the history of the Delphic oracle, might it not be likewise well, in applying a justified scepticism to its operations, to attempt a similar historical distinction? Of the first period—when the oracle was a mere *μαρτεῖον χθόνιον*—giving the responses of the Earth to the questions addressed to her as to her own physical phenomena—we know little, and are relatively little concerned to know more. Our interest in the character of the oracle becomes deepest when it becomes an essentially moral interest, and when we inquire into the causes which sustained the moral, social, political, and religious control indisputably for a long time exercised by it over the Greek world. That interest is proportionately diminished when we recognise without difficulty that the moving power is becoming a moved one—not a mere puppet unless on quite exceptional occasions, but still a machine responsive to the touch of the instructed hand. Finally, it sinks into comparative indifference when the organism is seen to have survived its highest purposes, and while still filling an important place in the social and even in the religious life of the civilised world, fails to tempt us aside from a survey of the main currents by which the progress of that life is determined.

If, then, we had—which of course we have not—anything like a complete collection of the Delphic oracles, I doubt whether we should wish to see them arranged on the principle which appears to have been followed by the philosopher Chrysippus in his collection, that of gathering together all the oracular responses which had been visibly fulfilled. As to the mere question of the event, one may rest content with the simple observation of that worthy military man, Q. Cicero, that the oracle of Delphi would never have been so celebrated and honoured, had not all ages proved the truthfulness of its responses—and this, even if one agrees with the statement of the same honest critic (as to oracles in general), that at times things which have been predicted happen in a less degree (*minus eveniunt*). One likes these gentle ironies of the classic tongues). Indeed, at the risk of seeming to beg the difficulty, one may venture to say that it is a quite secondary question whether to an inquirer of after times it seems, or does not seem, as if the oracles had always proved true. The primary question is, whether they fulfilled themselves in the eyes of the generation to which they were given; whether they accomplished their purpose. And this makes it necessary to ask, what in point of fact was their scope and object? to what end were they shaped, what was their legitimate relation to the life of the nation?

“I have come,” says Hermes in the prologue to the play which I have inevitably cited more than once (for the *Ion* of Euripides is a poetic handbook to the Delphic temple)—“I have come to this land of Delphi, where, taking his seat in the very navel of the earth, Phœbus utters his chants to mortals, ever soothsaying to them both that which is and that which shall be.” Observe the phrase: soothsaying that which *is*,—distinct if you like in the poet’s mind from prophesying that which shall be. Now, the plain truth is, that the basis of all true practical wisdom—and it was such that men pausing on the brink of action sought from the temple of Apollo—lies in insight into the present, of which foresight into the future is a mere derived corollary. Nor was it the future which Apollo was fain to reveal to mortal inquirers; on the contrary, this remained resting on the knees of the gods, its needs were only darkly hinted at. But as to the present, and the present as affecting the future, he spoke with a very different force; bidding men act with circumspection, with prudence, with piety; supplying them with that moral impulse, that encouragement, that counsel to act and not stand irresolute, which was the real help, so long as religious faith and religious hope were dominant in the Hellenic mind, which the Hellenes sought from the Delphic god. Or can it be supposed that the Greeks were—what their whole ethical system proves them not to have been—sheer fatalists—that when they went to consult Apollo as to the establishment of a code of laws, the foundation of a religious worship, the averting of a pestilence, the building of a temple, the settlement of a colony, they did so in the spirit of gambling imbecility which decides between two courses of action by the turn of a coin, whether it be pile or cross? It was counsel and the consecration of the will which the oracle could give and which were sought from it, not the substitution of a mere command based on a foreknowledge pliantly revealed to human irresolution—the irresolution of the man who does “not know why yet he lives to say the things to do,” when “he has cause and will and strength to do’t.”

Now if we adhere to this point of view we shall without difficulty understand wherein lay that moral force of the Delphic oracle which it indisputably wielded in the days of its greatness. We shall likewise advance some way towards understanding what may at first sight appear paradoxical—that these oracles, which we are accustomed to regard as primarily the revelations of the future, were to outward seeming so obscure. In the first place it may be incidentally observed that much of this obscurity, as it seems to us, was not really such to the recipients. This is a point which has been copiously illustrated by Lobeck in his *Aglaophamus*. Unlike those profound critics who start with the in itself absurd notion that the object of the Pythia was not to enlighten but to mystify inquirers—as if men would have resorted to Delphi for centuries to hear curious riddles—he endeavours to *account for* the form in which the oracular responses were usually couched. He recalls the fact—which the history of literature so abundantly exemplifies—that alle-

gorical speech is more moving, more pleasing, more esteemed than direct; and this, not because it conceals the truth, but because it conveys the truth more impressively. He further shows that there was a poetic language, dealing largely in metaphor and paraphrase, which was certainly not used in the ordinary conversation of men, but which was partly derived from ancient and popular speech, and perfectly intelligible when used in its proper place—the surviving language of gods and of antiquity—might I venture to call it the biblical speech, which, like that of the oracles, serves to illuminate and not to obscure the oratory or conversation of periods remote from it in date. More than this, Delphi had formed its own language, partly in connection with its own religious traditions, partly in connection with local dialect, and though this might become more difficult to be understood in course of time, yet it admitted of study, and there were special officers, both at Athens and at Sparta at all events, bound to keep up a familiarity with it. Undoubtedly these peculiarities of expression must have had a tendency to stereotype themselves in the course of time, to harden and stiffen as all language does, especially when ecclesiastics have the manipulation of it: and at Delphi, where erst the Pythia had chanted her untutored verses (inventing the hexameter by the way, according to the excellent Pausanias)—as all primitive literary expression is apt to take a rhythmic form—the temple in later times no doubt had its college of poets, who adapted the responses to the traditional metric conditions. But what seems to us obscurity of form could not have been primarily intentional.

It is of far greater importance that, in whatever form they were delivered, the oracles, as all testimony agrees in showing, exercised the moral force of a power directing men to those courses of action which were in harmony with the national progress and development on the one hand, on the other with the eternal laws of right. There is no obscurity in the counsels which the oracle must have given, because we know they were followed, to Battus the Prosperous, the second founder of Cyrene, or to Cypselus, the regenerator of Corinth. And if we ask for the fulfilment of a prophecy of evil we may remember the Sybarites, for whose murderous impiety vengeance was threatened by the oracle when affronted by a terrified inquiry, and whose city was shortly afterwards laid level with the ground by their neighbours of Croton. The god had no remedy for the fears of the evildoer but a warning of the approaching punishment. Not a pilgrimage to Delphi, nor gifts devoted to its sanctuary, would expiate the doom of insolence and sin.

And this brings us face to face with one other question which has often been asked with reference to the Delphic oracle. How far was it amenable to the moving and corrupting influences of power and party: to what extent was the god, through the Pythia, a mere instrument in the hands of the Delphic priesthood, and were these a mere instrument in the hands of those who chose to play upon it? As to the former part of the question it may seem idle to ascribe the inspiration of the Pythia to the exhalations

of the earth beneath the tripod, to the lustral waters of Castalia, to the laurel leaves chewed by the priestess before she addressed herself to her sacred task. On the other hand, it seems an equally unjustified assumption to suppose the Pythia to have been a mere tool in the hands of the sacerdotal college. We are informed that the women chosen were not, except in the earliest times, of a youthful age, and that they were simple and ignorant. To this latter statement, which is Plutarch's, we may attach as much value as we choose for the earlier times: but it seems clear that there was no training, no schooling of agents in the case. Pausanias knew of only one instance of the Pythia having been corrupted by a bribe, and then speedy punishment and deposition overtook both her and the corruptor. The Pythiæ, then, were women of the people, in constant contact, of course, with the influence of the temple, and in constant consciousness of the sentiments, the opinions, and the moral tone of its priesthood. These are the data which we possess, and from them we must draw our conclusions. If the oracles were in the main utterances of the divine sanction to courses of action commending themselves for confirmation, of the divine warning against the consequences of wrong, there is no difficulty in understanding how the Pythia should have been a fit and a ready agent for their primary expression. That in the course of time these utterances should have been—to use the word in no ill-meaning sense—*edited* by the priesthood, was simply an inevitable necessity. But herein lay precisely the significance of the oracle at the time of its greatest influence, that the ideas to which it gave expression were at once those of the Pythia who uttered, the priests who promulgated, and the leaders of the people who received them. Afterwards the priests became partisans, but so did, if I may use the expression, the very temple itself, and its Pythiæ with it. To my mind the part taken by these simple women in the operations of the oracle is one of the surest and at the same time most striking proofs of the vital sympathy which in its best days existed between it and the nation. The Pythia degenerated with the oracle, and though in its later times she may have “philippized” unconsciously, I have no doubt that she “philippized” with heart and mind, without having been bribed like her predecessor in the days of King Cleomenes.

When, therefore, we read in a critical historian* that the oracles which are handed down to us in the pages of Herodotus may be classified as mere puzzles wrought out by the ingenuity of a mythical age, as the expressions of a shrewd and politic ambiguity, as answers dictated by a calculation of probabilities or extorted by political and personal influence, as answers which enforce a moral principle, and lastly, as predictions made up after the event, we may acknowledge the accuracy of the classification, but need not by it be deterred from pursuing such reflections as the above. Why, as Cicero very pertinently observes.

* See Cox's *History of Greece*, vol. i. p. 273.

should we esteem Herodotus more veracious than Ennius?—in other words, every one of his statements—and among them those as to oracles more or less nearly accomplished—is open to the test of historical criticism, and this will no doubt prove many of them to have no value but that of legendary ornaments, and others to have been made up after the event. In the earlier times, however, it will be difficult to trace in more than one or two oracles—if, indeed, in more than one (for I cannot include the support given to the policy of the Alcæonidæ)—even a suspicion of corrupt influence. The ambiguous oracles will be found to contain less ambiguity from a moral point of view than from others; indeed, though the prediction which told Cræsus that the passage of the Halys would be followed by the ruin of a great power may seem to have been uncommonly safe as a prophecy, was it not also undoubtedly sound as a warning? There remains that class of oracles of which unfortunately but few have descended to us, but which beyond all doubt was the largest and the most important of all. These were the oracles which upheld the distinction between right and wrong, which in the spirit of all true religion confirmed the conscience and encouraged the moral will, which did not trick the inquirer into tempting fate, but guided him in the path before the choice of which he was faltering, and sent him forward in it with a high heart, and with the blessing of the Pythian Apollo. These were the oracles which expressed the essence of the worship which they fostered—a worship in which no impure heart might engage, and from which the god rejected the questionings of impious minds.

But the sun is mounting over Parnassus; though he no longer shines upon the temples in all their glory of marble columns and golden statues, upon the treasuries of Athens and Corinth and Sicyon, upon the endless memorials of gods and men—from Cronos' legendary stone to the golden lion of Cræsus, and the bronze wolf by the great altar, with its mocking record of the rivalry between Athens and Sparta—upon the offerings from Coreyra in the Western seas and Tegea among the Arcadian hills and Tarentum in the Calabrian bay—upon the trophy of Marathon, and, alas! the trophy of Ægospotami—upon the gifts of warriors and the gifts of athletes, and all the mythical and historical array of which the list is written in the pages of Pausanias—upon all the wonders which survived the greatness of Delphi—upon its stadium and gymnasium and *lesche*, and the mighty order of its terraces, as yet unbroken by earthquake and decay and undefaced by the mean superstructure of a wayside village. It is time to pursue our journey over the crags and through the ravines of Parnassus, past the Corycian cave on the hillside, where of old the Delphians took refuge in days of the Persian danger, faint of heart, and not trusting in Apollo's power to protect his sanctuary. It is now deserted and lonely, for the very brigands have happily abandoned their haunts, and an eagle is swooping in the air, monarch of the solitude around. Thence we are to

cross the plain at the base of the central cone of the great mountain—on which a village, well-named Calybia, i.e. huts, recalls if you will the Cyclopean period of Greek architecture, if you will otherwise, the desolation of Achill Island on the Atlantic shore. Then, after slaking our thirst with lumps of snow at the *strungu* or shepherd's hut, whence in spring the flutes send their music through the hills, we dismount from our faithful beasts and climb the height of Parnassus, and survey a vast map shrouded in mist, but disclosing the whole expanse of country from the Thessalian to the Arcadian mountains. We shall sleep well that night among the vineyards and cottonfields of distant Arachova, and even the singing of the village maidens, armed with spindles and sharp tongues, will not prolong our vigils far beyond the midnight hour.

Our homeward journey will take us past the groves of the Daulian nightingale and the solitude of the Chæronean lion to Lebadea, the smiling and prosperous town by whose rushing streams lies the cave of Trophonius. Its oracle was a foundation of the Delphic Apollo, who, as one legend ran, rewarded the restless brethren Trophonius and Agamedes for their labours as the architects of many temples—among them his own at Delphi—by sending them a tranquil death on the seventh day after the completion of their task. But another legend told that Trophonius, escaping from a foe, had vanished under the earth at Lebadea, and here his oracle—as that of a chthonic god—was revered already in the days of the Persian Wars, and in later times—when the power and influence of Delphi had already sunk—still continued to be visited by eager inquirers, who here sought relief for their bodily maladies. The burnt-offering of a ram was the decisive sacrifice demanded by this deity; it was killed at night-time, when the votary descended into the cave to learn from the soothsaying priest whether Trophonius was favourable to his prayers. It was high morning, however, when we paid a rapid visit to the rocky recesses, where the niches still tell of the votive offerings, of the hope which sick men happily always bring to a physician who has confidence in himself, and where the streams hard by challenged us in vain to decide which of them is that of Memory, and which of Oblivion.

We might have profited by a draught from either before we some days afterwards found ourselves at home once more in Athens. From the stream of memory for much that will be sought in vain in this imperfect record; from the stream of oblivion for the tediousness, ineffable and indescribable, of the Bœotian plain. But whatever the morrow might bring, Parnassus lay behind us, probably to be visited no more—and enclosed in its mighty folds Delphi, never to be forgotten by any of its pilgrims.

A. W. WARD.

A Plea for certain Exotic Forms of Verse.

WHEN the poetess Louise Bertin put to Alfred de Musset the still unanswered question "What is poetry?" she received a celebrated rejoinder, the last and perhaps the happiest clause of which is :

D'un sourire, d'un mot, d'un soupir, d'un regard
Faire un travail exquis.

The answer was far from satisfying the demand of Mdlle. Bertin, but as a definition of, not poetry indeed, but the function of a poet, it left little to be desired. To make immortal art out of transient feeling, to give the impression of a finite mind infinite expansion, to chisel material beauty out of passing thoughts and emotions,—this is the labour of the poet; and it is on account of this conscious artifice and exercise of constructive power that he properly takes his place beside the sculptor and the painter. To recognise in poetry one of the fine arts seems curiously difficult to an ordinary mind. The use of the same symbols which are employed for the interpretation of thought in prose is probably the origin of the habitual impression that poetry is rather allied to philosophy than to art. Yet every artist in verse, however humble, is conscious from the first time that he strives to fashion his inarticulate music, that the work he tries to accomplish is in its essence plastic. The very images that occur to the mind in considering the history of poetry prove its analogy with the fine arts. What poet can be said to resemble Hegel or Locke in the sense that Dante parallels Giotto or Tennyson reminds us of Mendelssohn? Whether the analogy in these particular cases be judged to exist or not, there is at least nothing unreasonable in such a suggestion. We feel that these men progressed in parallel arts, fashioning rather than reflecting, creators and not contemplators. If therefore, as we must, we regard poetry as one of the fine arts, it need not surprise us to have to dismiss the purely spontaneous and untutored expression of it as of little else than historical interest. In the present age the warblings of poetic improvisation cannot expect more attention than the equally artless impromptus of an untaught musical talent. In the last century, just after the long lyrical drought was breaking up, the attention of Europe was called to several poets who improvised with genius. The peculiar gift of Burns may be classed with these; a more singular instance was that of the Swedish Bellman, whose impromptus still take a high place in the literature of his country, while his laboured pieces have been forgotten for a century. As a rule, however, where little pains is taken little pleasure results; the poems of certain con-

temporaries, composed with excessive facility, are doomed in their own lifetime to the fate that befell the *tours de force* of the painter Fa Presto. And among earnest writers of verse the question is not whether or not labour shall be expended on their work, but to what aim that labour should tend.

Every artist gifted with originality answers this question in his own way; but the history of literature proves that each age exercises a moulding influence on the whole group of its artists. Raphael, Milton, Beethoven did not appear like Stromboli, flaring out of a level sea of mediocrity, but rather as the final peak of an ascending range of talent; Shakspeare is more nearly approached by the smallest of the Elizabethan dramatists than by Sheridan or by Hugo. The same aims actuate, in a measure, all the artists of a vital period; and no one influence is exercised for a long time upon a group of active minds. It may be almost laid down as an axiom that no generation worships unmodified the gods of its immediate predecessor. If, therefore, we obtain a correct opinion of what is admired by the fathers, it is not paradoxical to take for granted that the same will not be admired by the sons. Let us consider, then, what were the technical characteristics of the English poetry of the beginning of this century. The philosophic simplicity of Wordsworth and the sensuous beauty of Keats, with a small admixture of Shelley's delicate music, were combined to form the basis upon which Tennyson stepped first into public notice. The worship of Milton by Keats, of Milton through Keats, pushed to an extravagant excess, set the Spasmodic School in motion; blustering blank verse, studded with unconnected beauties of fanciful phrase, formed the instrument for these brilliant discords. Style was utterly wanting, and the whole school passed into thin air, not without leaving a baneful influence, a tradition of formlessness behind it. In the Brownings the influence of Keats took another shape, and these great poets, surviving the wreck of the Spasmodists, were still bent more on vigour than grace, and worked in bronze rather than in silver. By a curious coincidence, however, all these writers, except in part Mrs. Browning, began to adopt blank verse as their favourite instrument; the Laureate, especially, laying aside one by one all the lyrical adornments of his youth, set himself to the construction of a system of blank verse, the lucidity, melody, and sweetness of which will be the wonder of posterity. At one time, so powerful was his personal example, there seemed a danger that our poetry would for a time abandon all other forms as completely as the age of Addison gave up all for the heroic couplet of Pope; the result being, of course, more disastrous in the modern instance, because it is so much easier to produce bad blank verse than bad rhymed decasyllables. The delicacy of Mr. Tennyson and the vigour of Mr. Browning were aped by hundreds of imitators, who proceeded no further than effeminacy in the first instance and ruggedness in the second.

It was obvious that a reaction must come, and it came in the simultaneous appearance of several learned and enthusiastic poets, whose

technical methods differed in almost every instance from those of the generation before them. I am not now concerned to defend or even to examine the revolution they effected in any but a technical sense. I do not anticipate that any one will deny that this last was needful. The dignity and service of rhyme, strangely neglected in the last generation, were insisted upon by the younger writers, who fed the exhausted sources of music with new combinations of old forms and with a happy reproduction of ancient measures. The dactylic rhythms of Mr. Swinburne, often incorrectly spoken of as anapæstic, have undoubtedly given a classic grace and precision to a form too often dedicated in the last century to vulgar and trivial music. Mr. William Morris has indued the heroic measure, which had been thrown aside as a worn-out instrument, with a new spirit and unfamiliar if somewhat languid cadences. Mr. D. G. Rossetti in the sonnet, and his sister in the song, have added new wealth to our traditional heritage of melody. The verse of these writers is rich in colour, supple, vehement; their iambics, so far from lagging, are apt to overflow into a kind of running dactyl. Their aim, sometimes only too prominently expressed, is evidently to escape triviality and poverty of phrase; they recognise the value of unhackneyed words, whether realistically homely or pedantically ornate. It is in the nature of things that such a reaction in favour of form should be violently opposed and enthusiastically embraced; and also that, after a brief period of success, its popularity should be provisionally threatened by a revival of the elder manner. We have accordingly seen of late more than one writer of talent recur to the severer or less exacting style of thirty years ago. But the spirit of the time is against such a resuscitation of the past. Tennyson's mantle has not fallen upon his disciples, and they cannot hope to succeed him in fame. This seems especially the case in the matter of narrative blank verse; those who write epics of Heaven or Hell in this perilous measure do so at the risk of their reputation: such poems are certain of oblivion, weighed down irremediably by the burden of their facility.

The actual movement of the time, then, appears certainly to be in the direction of increased variety and richness of rhyme, elasticity of verse, and strength of form. The invertebrate rhapsodies of Sydney Dobell, so amazing in their beauty of detail and total absence of style, are now impossible. We may lack his inspiration and his insight, but we understand far better than he the workmanship of the art of verse. The sonnet, reduced by Sidney and Daniel—its original importers—to a weak quatorzain ending in a couplet, and first redeemed in its pure beauty by Milton, had fallen again into irregularity in spite of the revival of Wordsworth and Keats. Dobell, who is the very helot of stylistic depravity, wrote sonnets of fifteen, sixteen, eighteen lines, and rhymed them as seemed good in his own eyes. In the present generation we write sonnets on the pure Petrarchan model, and when, the other day, an elderly sonneteer published a sonnet of thirteen lines and with

one poor rhymeless line, the publication of such a piece in a prominent magazine was felt to be a thorough anachronism, and its shortcoming was presently apologised for.

If it be asked what is the use of these limits, and why sonnets should of necessity have fourteen lines with four rhymes, in decasyllabic iambics, duly arranged? the answer is, because it has been proved in the history of literature that law is better than anarchy, and that the exact shape universally conceded to a form of verse by our ancestors is practically found, in spite of or because of its very difficulties, useful in the production of a certain kind of art. Those who are impatient of rules and prefer to be a law unto themselves, may turn elsewhere. Poetry offers a myriad branches in which they may exercise their liberty; they are not obliged to compose sonnets, but we have a right to demand that if they do so they should follow in the time-honoured footsteps of Petrarch and Milton. I have remarked, however, that the literary opinion of the time is generally in favour of exact form in literature, and I will take the liberty of supposing that those who do me the honour of following my argument unite in this opinion. It is on this assumption that I build the proposal which I am about to make. We allow that the revival of the old pure form of the sonnet is one which was indubitably required. That the rhymes of the octett must be two instead of four, instead of appalling us by its difficulty encourages us to brilliant effort. We acknowledge that the severity of the plan and the rich and copious recurrence of the rhyme serve the double end of repelling the incompetent workman and stimulating the competent. This being so, why should we not proceed to the cultivation of other fixed forms of verse, which flourished in the earliest days of modern poetic literature, and of which the sonnet, if the finest, is at least but one?

In point of fact, the movement I advocate has begun on all sides, with the spontaneity of an idea obviously ready to be born. I myself, without suggestion from any acquaintance, but merely in consequence of reading the early French poets, determined to attempt the introduction of the *ballade* and the *rondeau*. But, to my great surprise, I found that I had no right to claim the first invention of the idea. First on one hand, then on the other, I discovered that several young writers, previously unknown to me and to one another, had determined on the same innovation. For some time the idea was confined to conversation and private discussion. But these forms are now being adopted by a still wider circle, and the movement seems so general that the time has come to define a little more exactly what seems to be desirable in this matter and what not. In doing so I shall be as conservative as possible, laying no bondage on others, but pointing out, for the amusement of those who have not the opportunity to go minutely into the history of verse, what are the traditional and unique characteristics of the exotic forms which it seems desirable to adopt into English poetry. And in so doing I shall consider the six most important of the poetic creations of old France, the

rondel, the *rondeau*, the *triolet*, the *villanelle*, the *ballade*, and the *chant royal*. These six poems, with the sonnet, form a group which comprises in the earliest and latest literature of France a large proportion of what is most precious, most lyrical, and most witty in the national verse. Each has a fixed form, regulated by traditional laws, and each depends upon richness of rhyme and delicate workmanship for its successful exercise. The first three are habitually used for joyous or gay thought, and lie most within the province of *jeu-d'esprit* and epigram; the last three are usually wedded to serious or stately expression, and almost demand a vein of pathos.

The Rondel is a poem, written, like the sonnet, in fourteen lines, each properly containing, however, only eight syllables. These fourteen lines have but two rhymes throughout, so arranged that the rhymes in the first, fourth, fifth, ninth, and twelfth lines correspond, and also those in the second, third, sixth, tenth, and eleventh lines. Nothing has been said about the seventh, eighth, thirteenth, and fourteenth lines, because these are the exact repetition, twice over, of the first and second. There is thus a kind of refrain repeated at the beginning, the middle, and the end of the poem, and this is the leading characteristic of the form of verse. There can be no doubt that in this refrain, originally a musical contrivance connected with the vocal round to which the rondel was sung, we have the source of the jingling refrain found in so many Scotch and Danish ballads. For these latter, though more barbaric in form, are probably later in date than the invention of the rondel and the true ballade. In the burden of a border ballad there is often a charm of wild melody, but generally, it must be confessed, there is also a break in continuity which is annoying and even absurd. The burdens written in imitation of these, in modern ballads, seem particularly affected. The refrain of the rondel, however, was not only always an integral part of the poem, but the charm and force of the whole mainly depended on the skilful introduction of these thrice-repeated words, with a delicate *nuance* of change of meaning in each case. It is plain, therefore, that in the resuscitation of the artistic rondel we do not fall into the same danger of imbecility as we do in imitating the untutored burden of an epical ballad, a form of verse, be it said in passing, of all the most hopeless for our age to reproduce.

The invention of the rondel has been traditionally ascribed to King Thibaut VI., from whose erudite court so many of the streams of modern art, eloquence, poetry, and music are dimly surmised to have proceeded. At least it may be confidently supposed to be an invention of the thirteenth century. In Eustache Deschamps, a generation later, we find it full-blown and covered with gracious blossoms, but it was in the hands of another royal poet that it was to reach its supreme cultivation. Readers of the CORNHILL MAGAZINE will not need to be reminded of a recent article in which the adventures and pastimes of Charles d'Orléans were vividly brought before them. This prince, a poet full of the

technical learning and skill of his age, took the rondel under his peculiar patronage, and produced a collection of these poems which has never been approached. Charles, in short, is the king and master of the rondel, and to appreciate its grace and art we must turn to his pages. One of the most famous, which Mr. A. Lang has carefully translated, stands thus in the original :—

Le temps a laissé son manteau
De vent, de froidure et de pluye,
Et s'est vestu de brouderie
Du soleil luisant, cler et beau.

Il n'y a beste ne oyseau
Qu'en son jargon ne chante ou crie :
Le temps a laissé son manteau
De vent, de froidure et de pluye.

Rivière, fontaine et ruisseau
Portent, en livrée jolie,
Gouttes d'argent d'orfaverie,
Chascun s'abille de nouveau,
Le temps a laissé son manteau
De vent, de froidure et de pluye.

This is very sweet and delicate. The reader must now, having heard the prince in his native French, listen to him in the English of his captivity :—

Bewere, my trewe innocent hert,
How ye hold with her aliauns,
That somtym with word of plasúns
Resceyved you under covert.

Thynke how the stroke of love comsmert
Without warying or deffiauns.
Bewere, my trewe innocent hert,
Hold ye hold with her aliauns.

And ye shall pryvely or appert
See her by me in lovë's dauns,
With her faire femenyng contenauns
Ye shall never fro her astert.
Bewere, my trewe innocent hert,
How ye hold with her aliauns.

“Comsmert” is good, but, on the whole, it was possible in those days to write worse English verses. Occleve and Lydgate proved it in several execrably bad rondels, one of which, by the way, Mr. Henry Morley has lately quoted, with a note, which shows that he has not apprehended the distinction between the rondel and the rondeau. This distinction will be more clearly perceived by a comparison of the two specimens given above with those of the rondeau to be presently given, than by any number of pedantic definitions.

The bibliography of the rondel is simple. An essentially naïve form, it was the first to disappear in the French Renaissance and the last to

recur in our own age. As early as the time of Clément Marot it gave way to the rondeau, and in modern French, examples of it are to be found, as far as I know, only in *Les Occidentales* of M. Théodore de Banville. In English, I have not been able to trace any rondels later than those of Occlève; but I am enabled, by the kindness of my friend Mr. Austin Dobson, to quote, from a volume of his now in the press, one which exemplifies in a very charming manner the form and quality of the pure rondel :—

Too hard it is to sing
In these untuneful times,
When only coin can ring,
And no one cares for rhymes!

Alas! for him, who climbs
To Aganippe's spring;
Too hard it is to sing,
In these untuneful times!

His kindred clip his wing,
His feet the critic limes;
If Fame her laurel bring,
Old age his forehead rimes;
Too hard it is to sing
In these untuneful times!

I note that in this, and in each of a group of rondels which he has shown me, Mr. Dobson introduces an intentional deviation from the French tradition in a slight re-arrangement of the lines. I think this of no importance, the number of rhymes and the position of the refrain being unaltered. Banville, in some late rondels, admits a more serious divergency in the entire omission of the fourteenth line.

The rondel; charming and piquant as it is, can hardly be resuscitated in England with much success; the copiousness of the refrain becomes monotonous and tedious. I cannot but think, however, that for comic and satiric verse it is exceedingly well adapted, its ingenious naïveté and its innocent repetition giving special point to an insulting apostrophe or a sly squib. Examples of such a use can scarcely be given here with propriety, but the suggestion may be left to germinate in the mind of the reader.

The Rondeau is of all the forms under discussion the one which has hitherto shown the most vitality in England; it has not the extreme antiquity of the others, and seems as specially adapted to crystallise modern wit as the sonnet to enclose modern reflection. The earliest master of the rondeau was Clément Marot, in whose hands it took its present form; what that form is, the following definition may suffice to show. The rondeau is a poem written in iambic verse of eight or ten syllables, and in thirteen lines; it must have but two rhymes. It contains three stanzas, the first and third of which have five lines, and the second three; there is also a refrain, consisting of the first word or words in the first line, added, without rhyming with anything, to the ends of the eighth line and of the thirteenth line. It has been well said that this refrain is at the same time "plus et moins qu'un vers;" for though

it is not counted as a line, it forms the most salient point of the poem, and gives movement to the whole. The French have always been justly proud of this airy creation. It is true that Joachim du Bellay, bent on the introduction of classic forms, decided severely against its use in his treatise on poetry, and that at his desire it fell into contempt at the Renaissance; but when the reaction came, it was perhaps for this very reason that the rondeau was taken into favour when the ballade, the sonnet, and the villanelle were abandoned. The rondeau was fated to enjoy a brief period of splendid revival in the middle of the seventeenth century, and it was at that time that its most brilliant examples were composed. In the joyous society of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, when literature of the gracious and delicate sort attained such a luxurious growth, the rondeau was the favourite instrument of poets and poetesses who out-vied one another in graceful trifling and ingenious compliment. It was not a great or heroic period in letters, and what of strength French literature had, flirted but indifferently with the Rambouillet muse; but of exquisite taste and stylistic precision there was no lack, and these also are precious qualities. Of the whole group Voiture was the acknowledged head, *facile princeps* among the wits, and he has never been rivalled as an exponent of the whimsical beauties of the rondeau. Although he wrote many, only thirty have been preserved, so daintily selected that there is no one among them that is not a little masterpiece. The first of the series, traditionally addressed to Mdlle. Julie herself, has been imitated by almost every succeeding writer of rondeaux, but never with the same audacious ease of manner. It is a good example of the typical rondeau:—

Ma foy, c'est fait de moy, car Isabeau
 M'a conjuré de luy faire un Rondeau :
 Cela me met en une peine extrême.
 Quoy treize vers, huit en eau, cinq en ème,
 Je luy ferois aussi-tôt un bateau !
 En voilà cinq pourtant en un monceau :
 Faisons en huit, en invoquant Brodeau,
 En puis mettons, par quelque stratagème,
 Ma foy, c'est fait !
 Si je pouvois encore de mon cerveau
 Tirer cinq vers, l'ouvrage seroit beau ;
 Mais cependant, je suis dedans l'onzième,
 Et si je croy que je fais le douzième,
 En voilà treize ajustez au niveau.
 Ma foy, c'est fait !

Victor Brodeau, here invoked, was a contemporary of Marot, now little read, but the writer of some admirable rondeaux. After Voiture, the most eminent poets of the rondeau were his contemporaries, Benserade and Sarazin. Benserade, in particular, carried the culture of this form of verse to so absurd an excess that he translated the whole *Metamorphoses* of Ovid into rondeaux, and had his monstrous exercise sumptuously printed at the King's press with elaborate illustrations, at a cost,

it is said, of 10,000 francs. After the age of Louis XIV. the rondeau was never entirely abandoned in France; and Piron uses a form of it, which I suppose he invented, just before the modern revival. Another form of rondeau, into the characteristics of which it is not needful to enter here, was adopted by Alfred de Musset; and French poets, since the day of the last-mentioned, have composed rondeaux abundantly.

In several English poets of the seventeenth century the influence of the form is strongly marked. Charles Cotton, in particular, wrote one, quoted by Dr. Guest. It is a very ungallant appeal against matrimony. I am indebted to my friend the editor for my next example, a rondeau in one of Pope's letters. The earliest set of rondeaux, however, as far as I am able to discover, occurs much later, and in a most unlikely quarter, the *Rolliad*. This farrago of satires in prose and verse, originally published in 1784, was written by a group of politicians and men of fashion as a means of ridiculing the ministry of Pitt. It had an ephemeral success and is now unread, but it contained a great deal of wit that has not yet evaporated. The pieces were anonymous, but I find from MS. sources that the only part of the book bearing upon our inquiry—namely, a set of pure rondeaux—was composed by Dr. Laurence, the friend of Burke. These are five in number, and they are all most carefully and accurately constructed on the model of Voiture. Of these satires on North, Eden, Pitt, and Dorset—some of them indelicate and all of them virulent—this is the one most convenient for quotation:—

Around the tree, so fair, so green,
 Erewhile, when summer shone serene,
 Lo! where the leaves in many a ring
 Before the wintry tempest's wing
 Fly scattered o'er the dreary scene:
 Such, NORTH, thy friends. Now cold and keen
 Thy winter blows; no sheltering screen
 They stretch, no graceful shade they fling
 Around the tree.

Yet grant, just Fate, each wretch so mean,
 Like EDEN—pining in his spleen
 For posts, for stars, for strings,—may swing
 On two stout posts in hempen string!
 Few eyes would drop a tear, I ween,
 Around the tree.

The success of the *Rolliad* caused several imitators of these pieces to try their hand, and rondeaux are not unfrequent in the periodical prints of the beginning of this century, but always, as far as I have seen, of the meanest merit. Recently, the rondeau has again been widely cultivated. Mr. Swinburne published in 1866 two poems which he called *Rondels*, but which were really rondeaux, though very impure in form. In 1873 I myself printed seven rondeaux, more like the true poem, but still disobedient to the laws of Voiture; but later in the same year there appeared a volume of *Poems* by Mr. Robert Bridges which contained three rondeaux, perfect in form, the first I think published since the days

of Dr. Laurence. Since 1873 rondeaux have become more common, and I have since found that Mr. Austin Dobson and Mr. Theo. Marzials had already written them before those above mentioned came under their notice. This spontaneous growth of rondeaux is a curiosity of literature not unworthy of record.

It should be remembered that it is a great point in writing humorous or serio-comic rondeaux that there should be a play of words in the refrain. For instance, Théodore de Banville addresses one to Désirée Rondeau, in which the refrain "Rondeau" at one time refers to the lady's name and at another to the form of verse. I notice that the young poet Jean Richepin, in his new volume *Les Caresses*, carries this quite into the region of punning, for he begins a rondeau "votre beau thé" and ends it "votre beauté." It will be difficult in English to carry out this custom without losing some of the distinction and delicacy which are the indispensable qualities of this kind of poetry; to be the least vulgar would be absolutely destructive to the success of such writing, but I think a play upon words in the refrain should be attempted.

It would be pedantic to enter minutely in this paper into all the varieties of the various forms of verse. Jean de la Fontaine—who was a far more curious and many-sided poet than the average reader supposes, and very far from being merely a fabulist—uses a *rondeau redoublé*, which is a very pretty poem, but which I must not linger to describe. Let us pass on to the third of my six forms.

The Triolet is a very dainty little poem; we are all apt to fall into the sin of favouritism, and I confess I am unduly partial to the triolet. It is charming; nothing can be more ingeniously mischievous, more playfully sly, than this tiny trill of epigrammatic melody, turning so simply on its own innocent axis. The triolet is composed of eight lines, on two rhymes, the first line being repeated as the fourth and the first two as the seventh and eighth. The arrangement of the rhymes can be best understood by the quotation of a triolet that seems to me to be absolutely perfect, the work of M. Théodore de Banville, who is unrivalled in his skill in this sort of workmanship. It is entitled *A Singing Lesson* :—

Moi, je regardais ce cou-là.
 "Maintenant chantez," me dit Paule.
 Avec des mines d'Attila
 Moi, je regardais ce cou-là.
 Puis, un peu de temps s'écoula . . .
 Qu'elle était blanche, son épaule!
 Moi, je regardais ce cou-là;
 "Maintenant chantez," me dit Paule.

The earliest triolet that has been discovered is in the *Cleomedès* of Adenèz-le-Roi, who wrote in the early part of the thirteenth century. This is exactly similar in form to that quoted above, which was composed at least 600 years later. It does not seem that the triolet, however, was much used by the poets of the Middle Ages. Mediæval wit,

as we know, was lumbering, and not easily to be repressed within such dainty limits. At the Renaissance it ceased to be employed at all, but it suddenly became the rage in the society of the Hôtel Rambouillet about the year 1648. Voiture is not known to have ever written a triolet; but at his death, which occurred in 1648, Sarazin wrote a pompous funeral poem—probably the most funny serious elegy ever composed—in which, among other strange mourners, he makes “the poor little Triolet, all in tears,” trot by the bier of the dead poet. In the next year, 1649, Gérard de Saint Amant, in the preface to his *Nobles Triolets*, refers to the sudden new fashion very fantastically, saying that it has lately pleased Apollo, God of Parnassus, to ennoble *le pauvre petit Triolet*, and that in consequence he does homage to the deity in that shape; this being the introduction to a batch of no less than sixty-four. The vogue lasted for a considerable time, but Boileau, in his *Art Poétique*, in 1669, though he patronises the rondeau in a celebrated couplet,

Tout poëme est brillant de sa propre beauté,
Le rondeau, né gaulois, a la naïveté,

does not so much as mention the triolet. Piron, and one or two others, used it in the beginning of the present century; and in our own time it has been resuscitated by Théodore de Banville with such success that triolets have become like the sands upon the shore in Parisian newspapers and volumes of verse. M. Charles Delioux has composed an air which has been very popular, and which suits all regular triolets precisely.

In England the triolet is a new comer, but it has already begun to be cultivated. The first specimens printed here, as far as I have been able to discover, were two by Mr. Bridges, in 1873. They were not quite so airy as one might wish, but still, in honour of their precedence, let one be quoted here:—

When first we met we did not guess
That Love would prove so hard a master;
Of more than common friendliness
When first we met we did not guess.
Who could foretell this sore distress,
This ir retrievable disaster
When first we met? We did not guess
That Love would prove so hard a master.

Triolets are now by no means rare in English. Mr. Austin Dobson, in particular, has written several, which seem to me full of the delicate gaiety of the best French verse. Here is one of them, the epilogue, or *Urceus exit*, to a series of “Rose-leaves”:—

I intended an Ode,
And it turned into Triolets.
It began *à la mode*:
I intended an Ode,
But Rose crossed the road
With a bunch of fresh violets;
I intended an Ode,
And it turned into Triolets.

There is a great temptation to treat the triolet simply as a stanza, and to write a long poem in triolets. Several poets have done so once, and one, Alphonse Daudet—now so famous as the author of *Fromont Jeune et Risler Aîné*—with decided success. I do not think, however, that any one would repeat this experiment twice. In the course of an extended poem the incessant repetition of the couplet becomes tiresome, and a rapid air is not easily avoided. It may, however, possibly be done once in a lifetime.

The true vocation of the triolet is certainly epigram. In this capacity it was used as a trenchant political weapon in the last days of the French Empire. It surpasses in ease, rapidity, and melody the conventional epigram of two heroic lines, a fit instrument in the hands of the followers of Pope and Racine, but unsuited to our less artificial age. It is singularly well adapted for personalities, and the abusive paragraphs of some of the newspapers of the day might be at least as effective if couched in smart triolets as they are now in awkward prose. Indeed, this very winter one of our satiric prints has adopted the plan of publishing lampoons in the form of rondels and triolets.

It does not appear that any critic has noticed that the triolet is a condensed rondel. Take, however, from a rondel of Charles d'Orléans the third, fourth, sixth, eighth, eleventh, and twelfth lines, and what remains is a pure triolet in form. In the same way a rondel might be expanded out of a well-filled triolet.

We now come to the three forms more elaborate and serious, for which a pathetic or passionate rendering seems almost imperative. The Villanelle has been called "the most ravishing jewel worn by the Muse Erato." It is unusual, as befits a precious thing, since its construction is so difficult and its nature so delicate that it requires a peculiar mood and moment for its composition. I do not find that much has been recorded of its history, but it dates back at least as far as the fifteenth century. It is a poem written in tercets and on two rhymes, the first and third verse of the first stanza continuing to alternate as the third line of each successive stanza until they finally form the close as a couplet. An example, written about 1560 by Jean Passerat, the great Hellenist, will show more plainly this singular and charming manner of construction:—

J'ay perdu ma tourterelle.
Est-ce point celle que j'oy ?
Je veux aller après elle.

Tu regrette ta femelle,
Hélas ! aussi fais-je moy,
J'ay perdu ma tourterelle.

Si ton amour est fidelle,
Aussi est fermi ma joy ;
Je veux aller après elle.

Ta plainte se renouvelle :
Toujours plaindre je me doy :
J'ay perdu ma tourterelle.

En ne voyant plus la belle
 Plus rien ne beau je ne voy :
 Je veux aller après elle.

Mort, que tant de fois j'appelle
 Pren—ce qui se donne à toy !
 J'ay perdu ma tourterelle ;
 Je veux aller après elle.

This dear dove of Passerat's seems to me quite as sweet as Lesbia's sparrow, and such a pretty grief is worthily enshrined in such a dainty form. It appears that villanelles may be any length, if only they retain this number and arrangement of rhymes. In modern France Théodore de Banville and Philoxène Boyer have written famous villanelles. In English I do not think any have yet been printed, except one by the present writer, published in 1874 in the *Athenæum*. In the dearth of examples, I may perhaps be pardoned if I quote here another which has not hitherto seen the light :—

Wouldst thou not be content to die
 When low-hung fruit is hardly clinging,
 And golden Autumn passes by ?

If we could vanish, thou and I,
 While the last woodland bird is singing,
 Wouldst thou not be content to die ?

Deep drifts of leaves in the forest lie,
 Red vintage that the frost is flinging,
 And golden Autumn passes by.

Beneath this delicate rose-gray sky,
 While sunset bells are faintly ringing,
 Wouldst thou not be content to die ?

For wintry webs of mist on high
 Out of the muffled earth are springing,
 And golden Autumn passes by.

O now when pleasures fade and fly,
 And Hope her southward flight is winging,
 Wouldst thou not be content to die ?

Lest Winter come, with wailing cry,
 His cruel icy bondage bringing,
 When golden Autumn hath passed by,

And thou, with many a tear and sigh,
 While life her wasted hands is wringing,
 Shalt pray in vain for leave to die
 When golden Autumn hath passed by.

The Ballade is the most lordly and imposing of the forms commonly used in archaic French. If we include with it the Chant Royal, to which it is closely allied, it was this form of verse which completely ruled French poetry during the fourteenth century, and which has constantly reappeared ever since. After what has been said above, it is

hardly needful to repeat that the ballade made classic by Deschamps and Villon has nothing whatever in common with the romances sung by wandering minstrels in Germany and Scotland, and known to us from time immemorial as *ballads*. The one is a precious and delicate work of art, the other a much more vital and stirring form of poetry often, but wholly artless and spontaneous. It would be difficult to point out two poems, each admirable, more diametrically opposed than the border ballad of *Chevy Chase* and the ballade which Villon made for himself and his companions when they were waiting to be hanged. The exercise needed to build up the three stanzas of the ballade, like the stories of a house, with the crowning *envoi*, was especially pleasing to the minutely restless, frivolously curious temper of the late Middle Ages. The result was hundreds and thousands of ballades, written upon every conceivable subject, about forty of which are immortal, and the rest hopelessly buried among the ruins of dead thought. In the Royal French Library there are MS. collections of countless ballades by every known and unknown writer of the period, testifying beyond the shadow of doubt to the unrivalled popularity of the form. There still exist over 150 by Eustache Deschamps, though the greater part of the writings of that friend of Chaucer's have perished. In Henry de Croy's *L'art et science de rhethorique pour faire rimes et ballades*, an invaluable treatise of French poetics, printed in 1493, but having a much earlier character, the ballade is taken, as a matter of course, as being the most important of all branches of the art of rhyming. And yet the difficulty of composing a ballade, even in so richly rhymed a language as old French, is very considerable. Henry de Croy recognizes three sorts of ballades: *Ballade commune*, *Ballade balladante*, and *Ballade fratrifée*. We need not trouble ourselves with these nice distinctions; the first-mentioned is the type to which all modern examples belong. This, however, has itself two varieties, according as it is written in verses of eight or ten syllables. I cannot face the tediousness of describing in detail each of these forms. I shall presently give an example in English of the latter, and if the reader will carefully note the arrangement of the rhymes, the recurrence of the refrain and the number of lines, I need not go more into detail. It must be particularly noted, however, that only three rhymes are used in all the twenty-eight lines, that the refrain contains the chief thought or most memorable sentiment of the poem, and that the *envoi* ought to begin with *Prince*, or some equivalent, such as *King*, *Queen*, or *Sire*. The ballade of eight syllables being thus defined, that of ten syllables differs from it only in having two more syllables in each stanza, and one more in the *envoi*, and in a fuller range of rhymes, four being permitted in the thirty-five lines.

Some of the earliest ballads in existence bear the name of the chronicler Jehan Froissart. But Messire Guy de la Trémouille is supposed to have actually been the first to devise the elaborate rules of construction which have been in force ever since. This worthy was guard of the Oriflamme

in 1383, and died in 1398, leaving behind him a great fame of chivalry and gracious science. But it is Eustache Deschamps who is usually accredited with this honour, and undoubtedly this restless child of song, amid the eternal pilgrimages of his wandering life, found time to push the cultivation of the ballade to a most refined pitch. He even wrote an *Art of making Chansons, Ballades, Virelays, and Rondels*, in prose, which is a most precious relic of the age. Christine de Pisan, called La Désolée, was a famous composer of mournful ballads, and Charles d'Orléans wrote many when he was in prison in England. Thus we are led up to the name which is as supreme in the department of the ballade as Petrarch in that of the sonnet—François Villon. He does not seem to have written ballades in hundreds, as many of his contemporaries did; on the contrary, only between thirty and forty are with any certainty attributed to him, but among these are several which for sincerity, passion, and lyrical power, are to be compared with none but the very finest imaginative writing of the late Middle Ages. In Mr. D. G. Rossetti's translation, the *Dames du Temps Jadis* has become widely popular in English, and Mr. Swinburne has lately printed a version of that *Contre les Mesdisans de la France*, with the most absolute retention of the intricate measure. At one time it was hoped that these two poets would publish a volume of selected pieces from Villon, and I believe it is not too late to hope for such a book from Mr. Swinburne. Among the self-assured and comely court poesy of the day, these sinister and bitter songs, full of agony and revolt, rise with an entralling strangeness and with the charm of an absolute sincerity. Almost alone among the productions of their time, they allow us to see what really were the sorrows and degradations of the mediæval poor. In this disreputable poet of the slums, this friend of harlots and men condemned to be hanged, the common people raised the first of the voices that took four hundred years to make themselves veritably heard. The next great poet who employed the ballade was Clément Marot, who learned the art from his father, Jehan Marot, a great proficient. After his day there was a long pause of more than a hundred years; the great tide of the Renaissance swept over the ballade as over other forms, and it only reappeared in the hands of the poets of the Hôtel Rambouillet. It had by that time undergone a great change. It was no longer the resonant and plaintive harp upon whose strings Villon had recounted his sorrow and Marot his fits of deep devotional ardour; in the school of wit it became an exquisite weapon of elegant badinage and sprightly malice. Voiture's celebrated ballade on the *Beau Monsieur de Neuf-Germain*, with its

L'autre jour le grand Apollon,
 Père du jour et de la gloire,
 Tenoit au ciel un violon
 Marqueté d'ebene et d'yvoire,

is quite a model of distinction and grace in comic verse. The examples of his contemporaries, Sarazin and Bussy-Rabutin, are of the same order,

while Jean de la Fontaine protested in favour of a more serious treatment, and excelled in poems which were the dying utterance of an art smothered in rhetoric. Saint-Beuve revived the form of the ballade, and Théodore de Banville has resuscitated it in its ancient spirit. Albert Glatigny, the Villon of our day, must not be forgotten in this list of names.

In our own country the long-winded John Gower, before he began to rhyme in English, wrote a great number of French ballades, which have been printed in the present century by the Roxburgh Club. One of them has been translated by Mr. Henry Morley. The Chaucer of 1561 contains a number of poems, attributed to himself and Lydgate, which are called "Balades," but which are merely pieces in rhyme royal, so arranged as to imitate the French ballade, without its severity of form. It was not, however, till 1876 that the first pure ballades were printed in English. Mr. Austin Dobson's "Ballad of the Prodigals" appeared in May, and Mr. Swinburne's "Ballad of Dreamland" in September of that year. I will quote the latter as an excellent type of all that a ballade should be:—

I hid my heart in a nest of roses,
 Out of the sun's way, hidden apart;
 In a softer bed than the soft white snow's is,
 Under the roses I hid my heart.
 Why would it sleep not? Why should it start,
 When never a leaf of the rose-tree stirred?
 What made sleep flutter his wings and part?
 Only the song of a secret bird.

Lie still, I said, for the wind's wing closes,
 And mild leaves muffle the keen sun's dart;
 Lie still, for the wind on the warm sea dozes,
 And the wind is unquieter still than thou art.
 Doth a thought in thee still as a thorn's wound smart?
 Does the pang still fret thee of hope deferred?
 What bids the lids of thy sleep dispart?
 Only the song of a secret bird.

The green land's name that a charm encloses,
 It never was writ in the traveller's chart,
 And sweet as the fruit on its tree that grows is,
 It never was sold in the merchant's mart.
 The swallows of dreams through its dim fields dart,
 And sleep's are the tunes in its tree-tops heard;
 No hound's note wakens the wild-wood hart,
 Only the song of a secret bird.

ENVOI,

In the world of dreams I have chosen my part,
 To sleep for a season and hear no word
 Of true love's truth or of light love's art,
 Only the song of a secret bird.

That the writer of this poem permits no click of the machinery to be perceived in the musical periods of his recurrent rhymes, is due to his

eminent instinct for form, and not, as the careful reader will note, to any slurring of the excessively difficult rules of the ballade. Before leaving the subject, two more translated ballades must be mentioned—one by Mr. A. Lang from Villon, and Mr. Longfellow's of Marot's "Frère Lubin."

But if the ballade be elaborate, the Chant Royal is the final *tour-de-force*, the *ne plus ultra* of legitimate difficulty in the construction of a poem. Henry de Croy derives the title of this form from the fact that persons excelling in the composition of chants royaux were worthy to be crowned with garlands, like conquerors or kings. It is a moot point among students whether the ballade or the chant royal be the earlier and original poem. Eustache Deschamps wrote both, and confounded the one with the other. It was always dedicated to more stately and heroic themes than the ballade. The chant royal was reserved for the celebration of divine mysteries, or for the exploits of some heroic race. It was more extended than the ballade, containing five instead of three stanzas, each of eleven lines, and in the sixty-one lines of which it was composed, five rhymes might be used. Clément Marot was the great master of the chant royal, and he has left several magnificent examples of its exercise. The solemnity of a religious ceremony, something of the joyous ecstacy of an apotheosis is required for the rolling and mounting music of the chant royal. It has rarely been used in modern French, except by the infinitely skilful De Banville, and in English not a single example has been printed. I am therefore bound to apologize for quoting the unpublished chant royal of a writer whom I ought to be the last to remember. I am led to do so in order to give a pure example of construction in this as in the previous forms discussed:—

Behold, above the mountains there is light,
 A streak of gold, a line of gathering fire,
 And the dim East hath suddenly grown bright
 With pale aerial flame, that drives up higher
 The lurid airs that all the long night were
 Breasting the dark ravines and coverts bare ;
 Behold, behold! the granite gates unclose,
 And down the vales a lyric people flows,
 Who dance to music, and in dancing fling
 Their frantic robes to every wind that blows,
 And deathless praises to the vine-god sing.

Nearer they press, and nearer still in sight,
 Still dancing blithely in a seemly choir ;
 Tossing on high the symbol of their rite,
 The cone-tipped thyrsus of a god's desire ;
 Nearer they come, tall damsels flushed and fair,
 With ivy circling their abundant hair,
 Onward, with even pace, in stately rows,
 With eye that flashes, and with cheek that glows,
 And all the while their tribute-songs they bring,
 And newer glories of the past disclose,
 And deathless praises to the vine-god sing.

The pure luxuriance of their limbs is white,
 And flashes clearer as they draw the nigher,
 Bathed in an air of infinite delight,
 Smooth without wound of thorn or fleck of mire,
 Borne up by song as by a trumpet's blare,
 Leading the van to conquest, on they fare,
 Fearless and bold, whoever comes or goes,
 These shining cohorts of Bacchantes close,
 Shouting and shouting till the mountains ring,
 And forests grim forget their ancient woes,
 And deathless praises to the vine-god sing.

And youths are there for whom full many a night
 Brought dreams of bliss, vague dreams that haunt and tire,
 Who rose in their own ecstasy bedight,
 And wandered forth through many a scourging brier,
 And waited shivering in the icy air,
 And wrapped the leopard-skin about them there,
 Knowing, for all the bitter air that froze,
 The time must come, that every poet knows,
 When he shall rise and feel himself a king,
 And follow, follow where the ivy grows,
 And deathless praises to the vine-god sing.

But oh! within the heart of this great flight,
 Whose ivory arms hold up the golden lyre,
 What form is this of more than mortal height?
 What matchless beauty, what inspired ire!
 The brindled leopards know the prize they bear
 And harmonise their steps with stately care;
 Bent to the morning, like a living rose,
 The immortal splendour of his face he shows.
 And, where he glances, leaf, and flower, and wing
 Tremble with rapture, stirred in their repose,
 And deathless praises to the vine-god sing.

ENVOI.

Prince of the flute and ivy, all thy foes
 Record the bounty that thy grace bestows,
 But we, thy servants, to thy glory cling,
 And with no frigid lips our songs compose,
 And deathless praises to the vine-god sing.

It is to be noted that this long poem of sixty-one lines, and the sonnet of fourteen lines, and *le pauvre petit Triolet* of only eight, bear precisely the same relation to one another. Each is complete in itself, and bound to fill with the expression of a single idea the exact limits of a traditional form. If one should essay to write a chant royal, and break down under the weight of rhymes in the fifth stanza, it would be entirely illegal to introduce a modification for the purpose of arriving safely at the *envoi*. This is an example of that vague "poetical licence" which incompetent workmen are so fond of falling back upon, and which in reality does not exist. If a sculptor sets himself to carve a face out

of marble there is no sculpturesque licence that permits him to stick on a plaster nose because he finds it too difficult to chisel the marble outline, or because he has carelessly cut too deep into the substance. It is only in poetry that persons without an instinct for form are allowed to play tricks of this kind, and it cannot be too distinctly said that they are not allowed to do this except by the licentious laws of their own making. English literature is distinctly injured, and we approach a step nearer to chaos by the existence of Sydney Dobell's sonnets.

But this just zeal for form must not blind us to the risk we run of chasing the outside of a leaky goblet. Form itself is of no use whatever if there be no matter for the form to enclose. There could plainly be composed pure rondeaux and ballades in nonsense verses, poems that would have all the exterior distinction of style, with no interior meaning at all. Sooner than arrive at such a conclusion, let us throw up all form whatever; yes, even desert rhythm and metre altogether, and adopt the uncouth prose in which a certain American rhapsodist clothes his prophetic utterances, leaping—to use the old figure of Diogenes—upon the pride of the poets, but with a greater pride than theirs. I trust we are not yet such empty vessels. I hope I may be dead before the English poets take Walt Whitman for their model in style. But there is always the danger of using elaborate and beautiful measures to conceal poverty of thought, and my plea would be incomplete if I left this objection to it unstated. The only excuse for writing rondeaux and villanelles is the production of poems that are charming to a reader who takes no note of their elaborate form; they should be attractive in spite of, and not because of, their difficulty. The true test of success is that the poem should give the reader an impression of spontaneity and ease, and that the attention should be attracted by the wit, or fancy, or pathos, in the thoughts and expression, and not, until later study, by the form at all. Let it not, however, be for this reason imagined that the labour is thankless and the elaboration needless. Half the pleasure given to the reader, half the sense of richness, completeness, and grace which he vaguely perceives and unconsciously enjoys, is due to the labour the poet has expended. Who shall say how much the severity and awful force of the "Divine Comedy" are not tempered and mellowed for us by the exquisite ebb and flow of the *terza rima* with its endless recurrent harmonies of rhyme? Who would ever follow the servants of the "Faery Queen" through the labyrinths of windless moor and languid forest if it were not for the rich music of the stanza that accompanies them? In spite of Milton, in spite of Tennyson, the world can never grow too old to be bewitched by the siren of rhyme.

E. W. G.

Japanese Miniature Odes.

THERE are, probably, few nations that do not point to their poetical literature as their chiefest glory. In England, in Germany, in Italy, in Greece, the national poets are by their countrymen awarded the palm over the great prose writers, while even in France itself, where, to an outsider, the distance between a Pascal and a Racine, between Voltaire as author of *Mahomet* and the *Henriade* and Voltaire as author of the *Siècle de Louis XIV.* appears like a yawning chasm, the compatriots of those writers are very loth to allow so trenchant a judgment, and would often seem, indeed, entirely reversing it, to point to the laurels of a Racine, a Corneille, and even a Boileau as the chief national title to imperishable renown.

In Japan, however, this rule does not hold. There the prose and the poetry of the classic age take equal rank in the popular appreciation, and, indeed, in countless cases it is the same men and the same women that have attained to equal celebrity both as prosaists and as poets. The foreign critic will feel disposed to re-echo this impartial judgment; for it will strike him forcibly, on perusing the classic literature of Japan, that the same faults and the same excellencies stamp all its productions (except, perhaps, the very earliest)—the same insinuating graces of style, the same love of nature, the same pathetic, and, to us Westerns, modern-seeming, tenderness, the same harping upon a few ideas, and the same absence of philosophic depth. Few tasks, indeed, could be more difficult than to have to draw any code of morals, any approach to a system of metaphysics from the writings of the poets of Japan—an admission which will appear to many Western readers to be the acknowledgment of a grave deficiency, while others, perhaps, who, in this utilitarian age, would welcome a beautiful thing all the more warmly for its being useless, may be weak-minded enough to feel a certain satisfaction on learning that there is at least one literature wholly governed by the precept that delight—not instruction—should be poetry's end and aim, and that the poet's mission is fully accomplished if he leaves our minds dazzled with the graceful flights of his imagination, and our ears ringing with the most harmonious cadences. It is not, however, pretended that the great family likeness running all through the productions of the Japanese classic age, and which is but a natural result of a concentration and unity of national life almost unparalleled in the history of any other land, amounts to an absolute identity of characteristics in their various branches; nor can it be here attempted to discuss in detail the features

of a whole literature. Not even an appreciation of the poetry as a whole comes within the scope of this paper. But, leaving aside the religious songs and the longer odes of the earliest ages, as well as the lyric drama* of a somewhat later period, we must content ourselves with a few criticisms and illustrations of the thirty-one syllable stanzas, so well known to every student of Japanese literature under the name of "Shorter Odes," and which have not only, from the 9th century downwards, been by far the most popular form of poetical composition, both with writers and readers among the natives themselves, but are also, in the opinion of those outsiders best qualified to pronounce on such a subject, the most characteristic of all the productions of the Japanese muse.

A poem complete in thirty-one syllables! Strangely as such an idea may strike a European, the notion of an epic in a dozen cantos would seem to these Easterns to the full as strange, and vastly more appalling; for in no other quarter of the globe does the doctrine that "brevity is the soul of wit" find so many votaries. A prosody which knows nothing of either rhyme or assonance, alliteration, parallelism, quantity or accentual stress, may likewise appear a contradiction in terms. What then, in Japan, constitutes the difference between prose and verse, if all these distinguishing marks be missing? Well; in order that a composition may be rhythmical, the words of which it is composed must be so arranged as to fall into lines of either five or seven syllables, which lines must succeed one another in a certain order; and that order, in the thirty-one syllable odes, is 5, 7, 5, 7, 7. Also many inversions unknown in prose are permitted; plays upon words and a peculiar kind of terms called "pillow-words," are introduced for the sake of grace and euphony, and, above all, no barbarous Chinese expression must ever cross the poetic threshold. So much for the outer form, touching which, indeed, if all its minutiae were to be noticed, a sufficiently long treatise might be written by any Japanese scholar who did not pause to ask himself whether it would be ever read. What will be of wider interest is the contents of these miniature poems.

The contents are various, it need scarcely be said; for the ponderous tomes of the *Collection of a Myriad Leaves*, of the many-titled collections sometimes classed together as the *Poetical Collections of the Twenty-one Reigns*, and of all the other collections and selections which still continue to grow year by year, even under the government of his present gracious Majesty, when so much else that had appeared to be ineradicably fixed in the national affection is seen scattered to the winds and become "as a dream when one awaketh"—all these hundreds and hundreds of volumes of thirty-one syllable odes cannot but treat of a multiplicity of subjects. In most of the collections, indeed, the poems are regularly classified under various heads: first Spring, wherein the odes on the different flowers of that delightful season succeed each other

* For a specimen of the latter see the CORNHILL MAGAZINE for October, 1876.

in the order in which such flowers bloom—first the plum-blossom, and then the cherry, the most precious of all flowers; after that, in early summer, the wisteria, accompanied by the cuckoo, which, on the first day of the fourth moon, takes the place left vacant by the nightingale on the preceding evening (the last evening of spring); and so on, down to the end of winter. Next comes incipient love, followed by all the other phases of the tender passion—and a large and important division this is—while elegies, travelling odes, acrostics, and odes congratulatory and miscellaneous bring up the rear. Such is, in brief, the order followed in the *Collection of Odes Ancient and Modern*, published A.D. 905, by command of the Mikado Daigo, and from which, as the most celebrated of the *Poetical Collections of the Twenty-one Reigns*, the majority of our illustrations will be drawn.

Of all the excellencies of the ancient Japanese poets, none can have a greater charm for the modern English reader than their passionate love of nature, and their tender interpretation of her mysteries—qualities which are inherited by their otherwise strictly practical descendants at the present day. Take, for instance, the following stanza :—

Softly the dews upon my forehead light :—
 From off the oars, perchance, as feather'd spray,
 They fall, while some fair junk bends on her way
 Across the Heav'nly Stream on starlit night.

The “Heavenly Stream” is the Japanese name for that which we call the Milky Way.

Or, again, listen to the following,—one of the odes on the snow :—

When from the skies that wintry gloom enshrouds
 The blossoms fall and flutter round my head,
 Methinks the spring e'en now his light must shed
 O'er heav'nly lands that lie beyond the clouds.

The flowers to which the snow is here compared are those of the splendid double cherry-tree, the king of trees, whose praises these far Eastern bards are never tired of singing. One of the most celebrated of them, Narihira, even goes so far, by an extreme of rapture, as almost to curse these too lovely flowers. He exclaims :—

If earth but ceased to offer to my sight
 The beauteous cherry-trees when flowering,
 Ah! then, indeed, with peaceful, pure delight
 Mine heart might revel in the joys of spring!

Rather far-fetched, perhaps. But then we should remember that to one nation alone, in all the annals of literature, was it given to know exactly the limits of true taste; and that if the Japanese sometimes sin against Greek ideas of moderation, we later Europeans could scarcely venture to throw at them the first stone. Possibly, too, a tendency to exaggeration was, in Narihira's case, but a family failing. At least, we find a half-brother of his—also a grandee of the then Mikado's court—

giving vent to very ridiculous sentiments at the aspect of a celebrated cascade. He says :

The roaring torrent scatters far and near
Its silv'ry drops. Oh! let me pick them up.
For when of grief I drain some day the cup,
Each will do service as a bitter tear!

From this to avowed caricature is but a step; and the poet Tadamine is himself laughing when he writes of another waterfall :

Long years, methinks, of sorrow and of care
Must have pass'd over the old fountain-head
Of the cascade; for like a silv'ry thread
It rolls adown, nor shows one jet-black hair!

It would be impossible to accuse the Japanese of want of imagination when we find them capable of so bold an idea as is contained in the following "miniature ode" on the wild geese :

What junk, impell'd by autumn's fresh'ning gale,
Comes speeding t'ward me? 'Tis the wild geese driv'n
Across the fathomless expanse of heav'n,
And lifting up their voices for a sail.

Yet it is certain that some of the most powerful aids to imagination are wanting among them; and of one of these aids in particular, the use of impersonation—which to us Europeans is naturally suggested by the genders of nouns—either in our own or in kindred and well-known tongues—the Japanese are almost entirely deprived by the very different nature of their language, which does not so much as possess words answering to our "he" and "she" to distinguish a man from a woman. Death with his sickle, or Flora leading back the May, would appear to these simple-minded Orientals as queer and far-fetched a notion as would that of stationing upon bridges, and in other public places, big statues of scantily-dressed females supposed to represent Commerce and Agriculture, or Philosophy and Religion, or some such other abstract ideas. It would probably be hard to get them at all to understand what was meant, and when they did at last understand, they would most assuredly burst out laughing. Indeed, in the whole course of his Japanese reading, the present writer does not remember to have met with more than one clear instance of impersonation. It occurs in a stanza on Old Age, which, though seemingly intended to be joking, may perhaps be thought to have in it a certain touch of pathos :

Old Age is not a friend I wish to meet;
And if some day to see me he should come,
I'd lock the door as he walk'd up the street,
And cry: "Most honour'd Sir, I'm not at home!"

To conclude, from the last few stanzas quoted, that the poets of Japan are much given to the comic, were to conclude wrongly. They are almost always serious,—too monstrously serious, perhaps, for European taste; and as for the commentators, *they* are hopelessly serious, insisting on dis-

covering allusions where there are none, and meanings that were never meant. We read, for example, the following stanza :

With roseate hues that pierce the autumnal haze,
The spreading dawn lights up Akashi's shore !
But the fair ship, alas ! is seen no more,
An island veils it from my loving gaze ;

and, as we read, the explanation that suggests itself to our untutored minds is, that the tiny ode means just what it says, and that the poet, apparently putting the words into the mouth of some high-born damsel of the Mikado's court, simply intends to represent her as watching with tender eyes the departing junk that bears her lover from her side. But no ! the writings of so celebrated and so ancient a person as the author of the ode are not to be treated in this off-hand manner. All kinds of mystical interpretations are suggested : as that, for instance, the reference is to the frank innocence of childhood, which all too soon disappears behind the rocky islands and makes shipwreck on the sands of life. Of one commentator it is reported that he pondered constantly on this stanza during the space of three years, and was at last rewarded by an insight into its secret intention. Unfortunately the outcome of his meditations has not been handed down to us.

But the elegy is, of all the forms of poetry, that in which the Japanese may most truly be said to excel, even when—by an usage which would jar on European taste, but which, in their so differently constituted language, is extremely graceful and even pathetic—they introduce plays upon words into the midst of the most serious thoughts. The poet Tsurayuki thus laments the death of a friend, who, like himself, belonged to that bright galaxy that shone in the court of Kiyoto at a time when almost all Europe was sunk in dark and hopeless barbarism :

So frail our life, perchance to-morrow's sun
May never rise for me. Ah ! well-a-day !
While lasts the twilight of the sad to-day,
I'll mourn for thee, O thou beloved one !

A point which should never be forgotten is, that almost all the classical literature of Japan was written by and for a small circle of lords and ladies, princes and princesses, at the Imperial court. For if, without entering into speculations on the reason of so strange a phenomenon—less strange to one who should adopt the theory of an original distinction of race between the nobles and the plebeians of Japan—if we keep this fact in mind, we shall have a key to the interpretation of most of the characteristics of a highly peculiar literature. Where, indeed, if not in the ante-chambers of a court, should verbal harmony and all the softer graces of style be pursued to a degree showing that manner more than matter is held to be the one thing needful to poet and prosaist alike ? Under what other circumstances should we be more likely to find piquancy take the place of profundity, and sentiment the place of passion ? For the high-born poets who passed from one vicerealty to another, and for

the poetesses who, in damask and brocade, spent their days amid the magnificence of the palace of the "Son of Heaven," few circumstances could arise which might have made them able to fathom the depths of the human heart or have brought them face to face with those moral problems that must suggest themselves to such as, conscious of right-doing in themselves, yet have to fight an unequal battle with all the evil powers of the world. The, in Japan, all but preponderating influence of women was also thrown into the scale; at least it may, we trust (even in our days, when this has become rather a delicate subject), be permitted us to hold that female writers are more likely to abound in subtle graces than in vigour and in philosophic depth.

Here are a few more miscellaneous examples of "miniature odes:"

REPROACH ADDRESSED TO THE NIGHTINGALES.

Whom would your cries, with artful calumny,
Accuse of scatt'ring the pale cherry-flow'rs?
'Tis your own pinions flitting through these bow'rs
That raise the gust which makes them fall and die!

UNREQUIED LOVE.

A youth once loved me, and his love I spurned.
But see the vengeance of the pow'rs above
On cold indiff'rence: now 'tis I that love,
And my young love, alas! is not return'd.

LOVE.

Now hid from sight are great Mount Fusi's fires.
Mount Fusi, said I? 'Tis myself I mean!
For the word *Fusi* signifies, I ween,
Few see the constant flame of my desires.*

THE LOTUS.

O lotus-leaf! I dreamt that the wide earth
Held nought more pure than thou, held nought more true.
Why, then, when on thee rolls a drop of dew,
Pretend that 'tis a gem of priceless worth?

Of the Buddhist bishop Henjō, writer of the above stanza, the justly celebrated author of the preface to the *Collection of Odes Ancient and Modern*, says: "The bishop was a skilful versifier, but in real feeling he was lacking: I might liken him to one that should conceive an artificial passion for the mere painted semblance of a maiden." Of the already quoted poet Narihira, it is said in the same place: "His stanzas are so pregnant with meaning, that the words suffice not to express it. He is like a closed flower that hath lost her colour, but whose fragrance yet remaineth." Here is another sample of his obscure style:—

E'en when on earth the thundering gods held sway
Was such a sight beheld? Calm Tats'ta's flood,
Stain'd, as by China's art, with hues of blood,
Rolls o'er the peaceful moors and fields away.

The allusion is to the crimson and scarlet of the autumn maples.

* This stanza is necessarily rather an imitation of the original than a translation of it.

But we must not go on quoting for ever—if, indeed, quoting it can be called, where, in the place of the originals which the translator so much delights in reading, those he writes for are reduced to reading the translator. A few words in conclusion. If a moral, a lesson must perforce be drawn from the works of the classic poets of Japan, it might, perhaps, be formulated in three simple words: “Life is brief.” Life is brief. Let us make the best of it; for we know not what comes after, nor if anything comes after. Let us pluck the flowers of spring before they fade; let us hark to the note of the cuckoo, as, in the reddening summer dawn, his shadow flits for an instant across the face of the sinking moon; let us love; let us be merry—not wildly or grossly, like the fool of Scripture, but with all comeliness and grace, as befits high-born and cultivated men and maidens. From those that are dominated by such an ever-present idea—albeit that it is less often proclaimed than understood—sadness cannot long be absent: hence the power of their elegies, and the tender grace of their conception of nature. For, be it observed, in ages of faith natural beauties are but little understood or appreciated. How, indeed, can they be greatly valued by men who look upon them as snares and hindrances, turning away the soul from the contemplation of higher and worthier objects? and the remark that it is only in these latter days of lukewarm conviction that we Europeans have really begun to enter into the meaning of outward nature is a trite one. Love nature, love life and enjoy it, would seem to be the burden of the songs of the poets of Japan; but yet they never can forget how soon the life to which they so greatly hold will end, how soon the natural beauties they so dearly prize will—for each one, at least—pass hopelessly away. One of the poets of the eighth century has expressed this in a more direct, as well as in a more graceful manner than any of his compeers. Writing, as he did, just before the time when the “shorter odes” of which we have been treating became almost the sole recognised form of poetical composition, his poem, which is a much longer one, does not strictly belong to the subject of this paper. But it so exactly reproduces that idea which may be called the fundamental idea of Japanese poetry, that we think our readers will not quarrel with us for quoting it. There is a short prose superscription which runs thus:—

Easy to accumulate and hard to avoid are the eight greater tribulations. Hard to obtain and easy to exhaust are the joys of an hundred years. What the ancients deplored, I too have now reason to lament, and have therefore composed this ode to give vent to my grief at the turning grey of my hairs:—

ODE ON THE UNSATISFACTORINESS OF LIFE.

Proem.

’Twere idle to complain,
Or think to stem unvarying nature’s course,
And backward to its source

Turn the swift torrent of the years again,
That, with resistless force,
Rolls down with age and sorrow in its train.

Strophe.

Lo! where the virgin choirs are playing,
As tender virgins may befit,
When, hand in hand, they go a-maying,
And through the merry dance they flit :
Bracelets of gems and gold
Around their arms are roll'd ;
And, lightly, sleeve in sleeve entwin'd,
What time the tender virgins go a-maying,
Their crimson robes all carelessly are swaying
As breathes the listless wind.
But eager time cannot be staying :
Their beauty loses its delight ;
Already through their locks come straying
Pale threads of silv'ry white ;
Already do the wrinkles furrow
The features erst so blithe and gay,
And fades the smile which seem'd to borrow
The sweetness of the flowers of May :
Such is, alas! dread time's inevitable sway!

Antistrophe.

Behold the martial youth advancing,
As martial youth may well beseem,
In coat of mail, with sabre glancing,
And arrows that as hoar-frost gleam !
There, on the grassy mead,
Over his chestnut steed
He flings a cloth of leopard-hide,
And to the castle hies him gaily prancing,
Where dwells a lovely maiden soul-entrancing,—
His own, his own sweet bride ;
Then gently knocks, and, round him glancing,
Throws back the door, and clasps her tight
And she, too, clasps his hands, enhancing
The rapture of that night.
Vain fleeting dream! With none to guide him,
See him now leaning on his staff,
His sole support, where all avoid him
Or greet him with a scornful laugh :
Such is the old man's end—a butt for idle scoff!

Epode.

Cease, then, to wish ; cease to complain :
What's past is past, and comes not back again.

BASIL HALL CHAMBERLAIN. •

An Apology for Idlers.

BOSWELL : We grow weary when idle.

JOHNSON : That is, sir, because others being busy, we want company ; but if we were idle, there would be no growing weary ; we should all entertain one another.

JUST NOW, when every one is bound, under pain of a decree in absence convicting them of *lèse-respectability*, to enter on some lucrative profession, and labour therein with something not far short of enthusiasm, a cry from the opposite party who are content when they have enough, and like to look on and enjoy in the meanwhile, savours a little of bravado and gasconade. And yet this should not be. Idleness so called, which does not consist in doing nothing, but in doing a great deal not recognised in the dogmatic formularies of the ruling class, has as good a right to state its position as industry itself. It is admitted that the presence of people who refuse to enter in the great handicap race for sixpenny pieces, is at once an insult and a disenchantment for those who do. A fine fellow (as we see so many) takes his determination, votes for the sixpences, and, in the emphatic Americanism, "goes for" them. And while such an one is ploughing distressfully up the road, it is not hard to understand his resentment, when he perceives cool persons in the meadows by the wayside, lying with a handkerchief over their ears and a glass at their elbow. Alexander is touched in a very delicate place by the disregard of Diogenes. Where was the glory of having taken Rome for these tumultuous barbarians, who poured into the Senate house, and found the Fathers sitting silent and unmoved by their success? It is a sore thing to have laboured along and scaled the arduous hill-tops, and when all is done, find humanity indifferent to your achievement. Hence physicists condemn the unphysical ; financiers have only a superficial toleration for those who know little of stocks ; literary persons despise the unlettered ; and people of all pursuits combine to disparage those who have none.

But though this is one difficulty of the subject, it is not the greatest. You could not be put in prison for speaking against industry, but you can be sent to Coventry for speaking like a fool. The greatest difficulty with most subjects is to do them well ; therefore, please to remember this is an apology. It is certain that much may be judiciously argued in favour of diligence ; only there is something to be said against it, and that is what, on the present occasion, I have to say. To state one argument is not necessarily to be deaf to all others, and that a man has written

a book of travels in Montenegro, is no reason why he should never have been to Richmond.

It is surely beyond a doubt that people should be a good deal idle in youth. For though here and there a Lord Macaulay may escape from school honours with all his wits about him, most boys pay so dear for their medals that they never afterwards have a shot in their locker, and begin the world bankrupt. And the same holds true during all the time a lad is educating himself, or suffering others to educate him. It must have been a very foolish old gentleman who addressed Johnson at Oxford in these words: "Young man, ply your book diligently now, and acquire a stock of knowledge; for when years come upon you, you will find that poring upon books will be but an irksome task." The old gentleman seems to have been unaware that many other things besides reading grow irksome, and not a few become impossible, by the time a man has to use spectacles and cannot walk without a stick. Books are good enough in their own way, but they are a mighty bloodless substitute for life. It seems a pity to sit, like the Lady of Shalott, peering into a mirror, with your back turned on all the bustle and glamour of reality. And if a man reads very hard, as the old anecdote reminds us, he will have little time for thought. If you look back on your own education, I am sure it will not be the full, vivid, instructive hours of truancy that you regret; you would rather cancel some lack-lustre periods between sleep and waking in the class. For my own part, I have attended a good many lectures in my time. I still remember that the spinning of a top is a case of Kinetic Stability. I still remember that Emphytepsis is not a disease, nor Stillicide a crime. But though I would not willingly part with such scraps of science, I do not set the same store by them as by certain other odds and ends that I came by in the open street while I was playing truant. This is not the moment to dilate on that mighty place of education, which was the favourite school of Dickens and Balzac, and turns out yearly many inglorious masters in the Science of the Aspects of Life. Suffice it to say this: if a lad does not learn in the streets, it is because he has no faculty of learning. Nor is the truant always in the streets, for if he prefers, he may go out by the gardened suburbs into the country. He may pitch on some tuft of lilacs over a burn, and smoke innumerable pipes to the tune of the water on the stones. A bird will sing in the thicket. And there he may fall into a vein of kindly thought, and see things in a new perspective. Why, if this be not education, what is? We may conceive Mr. Worldly Wiseman accosting such an one, and the conversation that should thereupon ensue:—

"How now, young fellow, what dost thou here?"

"Truly, sir, I take mine ease."

"Is not this the hour of the class? and should'st thou not be plying thy Book with diligence, to the end thou mayest obtain knowledge?"

"Nay, but thus also I follow after Learning, by your leave."

"Learning, quotha! After what fashion, I pray thee? Is it mathematics?"

"No, to be sure."

"Is it metaphysics?"

"Nor that."

"Is it some language?"

"Nay, it is no language."

"Is it a trade?"

"Nor a trade neither."

"Why, then, what is't?"

"Indeed, sir, as a time may soon come for me to go upon Pilgrimage, I am desirous to note what is commonly done by persons in my case, and where are the ugliest Sloughs and Thickets on the Road; as also, what manner of Staff is of the best service. Moreover, I lie here, by this water, to learn by root-of-heart a lesson which my master teaches me to call Peace, or Contentment."

Hereupon Mr. Worldly Wiseman was much commoved with passion, and shaking his cane with a very threatful countenance, broke forth upon this wise: "Learning, quotha!" said he; "I would have all such rogues scourged by the Hangman!"

And so he would go his way, ruffling out his cravat with a crackle of starch, like a turkey when it spreads its feathers.

Now this, of Mr. Wiseman's, is the common opinion. A fact is not called a fact, but a piece of gossip, if it does not fall into one of your scholastic categories. An inquiry must be in some acknowledged direction, with a name to go by; or else you are not inquiring at all, only lounging; and the workhouse is too good for you. It is supposed that all knowledge is at the bottom of a well, or the far end of a telescope. Sainte-Beuve, as he grew older, came to regard all experience as a single great book, in which to study for a few years ere we go hence; and it seemed all one to him whether you should read in Chapter xx., which is the differential calculus, or in Chapter xxxix., which is hearing the band play in the gardens. As a matter of fact, an intelligent person, looking out of his eyes and hearkening in his ears, with a smile on his face all the time, will get more true education than many another in a life of heroic vigils. There is certainly some chill and arid knowledge to be found upon the summits of formal and laborious science; but it is all round about you, and for the trouble of looking, that you will acquire the warm and palpitating facts of life. While others are filling their memory with a lumber of words, one-half of which they will forget before the week be out, your truant may learn some really useful art: to play the fiddle, to know a good cigar, or to speak with ease and opportunity to all varieties of men. Many who have "plied their book diligently," and know all about some one branch or another of accepted lore, come out of the study with an ancient and owl-like demeanour, and prove dry, stockish, and dyspeptic in all the better and brighter parts of

life. Many make a large fortune, who remain underbred and pathetically stupid to the last. And meantime there goes the idler, who began life along with them—by your leave, a different picture. He has had time to take care of his health and his spirits; he has been a great deal in the open air, which is the most salutary of all things for both body and mind; and if he has never read the great Book in very recondite places, he has dipped into it and skimmed it over to excellent purpose. Might not the student afford some Hebrew roots, and the business man some of his half-crowns, for a share of the idler's knowledge of life at large, and Art of Living? Nay, and the idler has another and more important quality than these. I mean his wisdom. He who has much looked on at the childish satisfaction of other people in their hobbies, will regard his own with only a very ironical indulgence. He will not be heard among the dogmatists. He will have a great and cool allowance for all sorts of people and opinions. If he finds no out-of-the-way truths, he will identify himself with no very burning falsehood. His way takes him along a by-road, not much frequented, but very even and pleasant, which is called Commonplace Lane, and leads to the Belvedere of Commonsense. Thence he shall command an agreeable, if no very noble prospect; and while others behold the East and West, the Devil and the Sunrise, he will be contentedly aware of a sort of morning hour upon all sublunary things, with an army of shadows running speedily and in many different directions into the great daylight of Eternity. The shadows and the generations, the shrill doctors and the plangent wars, go by into ultimate silence and emptiness; but underneath all this, a man may see, out of the Belvedere windows, much green and peaceful landscape; many firelit parlours; good people laughing, drinking, and making love, as they did before the Flood or the French Revolution; and the old shepherd telling his tale under the hawthorn.

Extreme *business*, whether at school or college, kirk or market, is a symptom of deficient vitality; and a faculty for idleness implies a catholic appetite and a strong sense of personal identity. There is a sort of dead-alive, hackneyed people about, who are scarcely conscious of living except in the exercise of some conventional occupation. Bring these fellows into the country, or set them aboard ship, and you will see how they pine for their desk or their study. They have no curiosity; they cannot give themselves over to random provocations; they do not take pleasure in the exercise of their faculties for its own sake; and unless Necessity lays about them with a stick, they will even stand still. It is no good speaking to such folk: they *cannot* be idle, their nature is not generous enough; and they pass those hours in a sort of coma, which are not dedicated to furious moiling in the gold-mill. When they do not require to go to the office, when they are not hungry and have no mind to drink, the whole breathing world is a blank to them. If they have to wait an hour or so for a train, they fall into a stupid trance with their eyes open. To see them, you would suppose there was nothing to look

at and no one to speak with ; you would imagine they were paralysed or alienated ; and yet very possibly they are hard workers in their own way, and have good eyesight for a flaw in a deed or a turn of the market. They have been to school and college, but all the time they had their eye on the medal ; they have gone about in the world and mixed with clever people, but all the time they were thinking of their own affairs. As if a man's soul were not too small to begin with, they have dwarfed and narrowed theirs by a life of all work and no play ; until here they are at forty, with a listless attention, a mind vacant of all material of amusement, and not one thought to rub against another, while they wait for the train. Before he was breeched, he might have clambered on the boxes ; when he was twenty, he would have stared at the girls ; but now the pipe is smoked out, the snuff-box empty, and my gentleman sits bolt upright upon a bench, with lamentable eyes. This does not appeal to me as being Success in Life.

But it is not only the person himself who suffers from his busy habits, but his wife and children, his friends and relations, and down to the very people he sits with in a railway carriage or an omnibus. Perpetual devotion to what a man calls his business, is only to be sustained by perpetual neglect of many other things. And it is not by any means certain that a man's business is the most important thing he has to do. To an impartial estimate it will seem clear that many of the wisest, most virtuous, and most beneficent parts that are to be played upon the Theatre of Life are filled by gratuitous performers, and pass, among the world at large, as phases of idleness. For in that Theatre, not only the walking gentlemen, singing chambermaids, and diligent fiddlers in the orchestra, but those who look on and clap their hands from the benches, do really play a part and fulfil important offices towards the general result. You are no doubt very dependent on the care of your lawyer and stockbroker, of the guards and signalmen who convey you rapidly from place to place, and the policemen who walk the streets for your protection ; but is there not a thought of gratitude in your heart for certain other benefactors who set you smiling when they fall in your way, or season your dinner with good company ? Colonel Newcome helped to lose his friend's money ; Fred Bayham had an ugly trick of borrowing shirts ; and yet they were better people to fall among than Mr. Barnes. And though Falstaff was neither sober nor very honest, I think I could name one or two long-faced Barabbas's whom the world could better have done without. Hazlitt mentions that he was more sensible of obligation to Northcote, who had never done him anything he could call a service, than to his whole circle of ostentatious friends ; for he thought a good companion emphatically the greatest benefactor. I know there are people in the world who cannot feel grateful unless the favour has been done them at the cost of pain and difficulty. But this is a churlish disposition. A man may send you six sheets of letter-paper covered with the most entertaining gossip, or you may pass half-an-hour pleasantly,

perhaps profitably, over an article of his ; do you think the service would be greater, if he had made the manuscript in his heart's blood, like a compact with the devil ? Do you really fancy you should be more beholden to your correspondent, if he had been damning you all the while for your importunity ? Pleasures are more beneficial than duties because, like the quality of mercy, they are not strained, and they are twice blest. There must always be two to a kiss, and there may be a score in a jest ; but wherever there is an element of sacrifice, the favour is conferred with pain, and, among generous people, received with confusion. There is no duty we so much underrate as the duty of being happy. By being happy, we sow anonymous benefits upon the world, which remain unknown even to ourselves, or when they are disclosed, surprise nobody so much as the benefactor. The other day, a ragged, barefoot boy ran down the street after a marble, with so jolly an air that he set everyone he passed into a good humour ; one of these persons, who had been delivered from more than usually black thoughts, stopped the little fellow and gave him some money with this remark : " You see what sometimes comes of looking pleased." If he had looked pleased before, he had now to look both pleased and mystified. For my part, I justify this encouragement of smiling rather than tearful children ; I do not wish to pay for tears anywhere but upon the stage ; but I am prepared to deal largely in the opposite commodity. A happy man or woman is a better thing to find than a five-pound note. He or she is a radiating focus of good will ; and their entrance into a room is as though another candle had been lighted. We need not care whether they could prove the forty-seventh proposition ; they do a better thing than that, they practically demonstrate the great Theorem of the Liveableness of Life. Consequently, if a person cannot be happy without remaining idle, idle he should remain. It is a revolutionary precept ; but, thanks to hunger and the workhouse, one not easily to be abused, and, within practical limits, it is one of the most incontestable truths in the whole Body of Morality. Look at one of your industrious fellows for a moment, I beseech you. He sows hurry and reaps indigestion ; he puts a vast deal of activity out to interest, and receives a large measure of nervous derangement in return. Either he absents himself entirely from all fellowship, and lives a recluse in a garret, with carpet slippers and a leaden inkpot ; or he comes among people swiftly and bitterly, in a contraction of his whole nervous system, to discharge some temper before he returns to work. I do not care how much or how well he works, this fellow is an evil feature in other people's lives. They would be happier if he were dead. They could easier do without his services in the Circumlocution Office, than they can tolerate his fractious spirits. He poisons life at the well-head. It is better to be beggared out of hand by a scapegrace nephew, than daily hag-ridden by a peevish uncle.

And what, in God's name, is all this pother about ? For what cause do they embitter their own and other people's lives ? That a man should

publish three or thirty articles a year, that he should finish or not finish his great allegorical picture, are questions of little interest to the world. The ranks of life are full ; and although a thousand fall, there are always some to go into the breach. When they told Joan of Arc she should be at home minding women's work, she answered there were plenty to spin and wash. And so, even with your own rare gifts ! When nature is "so careless of the single life," why should we coddle ourselves into the fancy that our own is of exceptional importance ? Suppose Shakespeare had been knocked on the head some dark night in Sir Thomas Lucy's preserves, the world would have wagged on better or worse, the pitcher gone to the well, the scythe to the corn, and the student to his book ; and no one been any the wiser of the loss. There are not many works extant, if you look the alternative all over, which are worth the price of a pound of tobacco to a man of limited means. This is a sobering reflection for the proudest of our earthly vanities. Even a tobacconist may, upon consideration, find no great cause for personal vainglory in the phrase ; for although tobacco is an admirable sedative, the qualities necessary for retailing it are neither rare nor precious in themselves. Alas and alas ! you may take it how you will, but the services of no single individual are indispensable. Atlas was just a gentleman with a protracted nightmare ! And yet you see merchants who go and labour themselves into a great fortune and thence into the bankruptcy court ; scribblers who keep scribbling at little articles until their temper is a cross to all who come about them, as though Pharaoh should set the Israelites to make a pin instead of a pyramid ; and fine young men who work themselves into a decline, and are driven off in a hearse with white plumes upon it. Would you not suppose these persons had been whispered, by the Master of the Ceremonies, the promise of some momentous destiny ? and that this lukewarm bullet on which they play their farces was the bull's-eye and centrepiece of all the universe ? And yet it is not so. The ends for which they give away their priceless youth, for all they know, may be chimerical or hurtful ; the glory and riches they expect may never come, or may find them indifferent ; and they and the world they inhabit are so inconsiderable that the mind freezes at the thought.

R. L. S.

The Planet of War.

AMIDST wars and rumours of war, the planet which has for its symbol the spear and shield of the old Assyrian warmen approaches one of those points of its epicyclic orbit about the earth where it is at its nearest to us. In the earlier part of the Crimean War, Mars shone in our midnight skies, though not so splendidly as he will shine in August and September of the present year. In the early spring of 1854,

At a time of the year

When the face of night is fair on the dewy downs,
And the shining Daffodil dies and the Charioteer
And starry Gemini hang like glorious crowns
Over Orion's grave low down in the west,

the spirit of Maud,

. . . Seem'd to divide in a dream from a band of the blest
And spoke of a hope for the world in the coming wars—
. . . and pointed to Mars
As he glow'd like a ruddy shield on the Lion's breast.

The poet expressed the feeling of the day, though the hope of which he sang was not the hope with which men now watch the signs of war. But if Mars were in truth the planet of war, if his influence, poured from near at hand upon the nations of this earth, excited them to war and bloodshed, we might well fear that the coming months would bring desolation on many fair terrestrial fields. For Mars has not blazed so fiercely in our skies since 1845, nor will he so shine again for 47 years, as during the last days of August and the opening days of September. Moreover, twice during his time of greatest splendour his rays will be closely conjoined with those of the malignant planet Saturn, the greater Infortune, as Mars himself is the lesser Infortune, of astrological systems.

The ruddy hue of this planet, justifying the evil qualities attributed to it by nations believing in planetary influences, has been noted from the earliest times. The Greeks called Mars the fiery planet; the Hebrews gave to it a name signifying "enkindled;" the Indians called it Angaraka, or burning charcoal, and sometimes Lohitanga, or the red orb. Ruddy stars also were compared with Mars, as the chief of all the ruddy stars, —so that the name Antares given to the star which glows like a fiery coal in the heart of the Scorpion, signifies that in ruddiness that star is a rival of Mars or Ares.

Recent researches among the ruins of Nineveh have brought to light cuneiform inscriptions relating to the celestial bodies, and among others to the planet Mars. It would appear that a treatise, in sixty books,

called *The Observations of Bel*, belonged formerly to the public library of Nineveh. Its date cannot have been later than the seventeenth century before our era, and the observations recorded in it extend over more than 500 years, so that the earliest bore date about 2540 B.C. One of the books was devoted to the pole star,—not our present pole star, but the star Alpha of the Dragon, at that time the bright star which lay nearest the pole of the heavens. Another book was devoted to Venus; a third to Mars. We find that even at the remotest time to which these records relate, that is, more than 2500 years before our era, the planet Mars presided (as a deity) over the third day of the week, the other planets ruling the days in the order indicated by the present nomenclature, the Sun presiding over Sunday, the Moon over Monday (Mars over Tuesday, or Mardi), Mercury over Wednesday (or Mercredi), Jupiter over Thursday (or Jeudi, Jove's day), Venus over Friday (or Vendredi), and Saturn, the gloomiest and most malignant, but also the most powerful of the planetary deities, over Saturday, the sabbath day, when, owing to his evil influence, no work could safely be undertaken. Doubtless Tuesday was as rigidly set aside for the initiation of all warlike enterprises as Saturday for the avoidance of all labour whatsoever.

If only astrology had been a true method of prediction, the discovery of the true nature of the solar system would have brought within our range much fuller information respecting the other planets, and in particular the planet Mars, than we are ever likely to possess. Astrologers claimed such perfection for the principles of their art, that the whole history of our earth might have been predicted from the planetary configurations alone; and indeed they were very successful in showing that all past events corresponded with the aspect of the heavens when they occurred. Now if other planets thus influence the fortunes of our earth, which is itself one of the planets, it follows that each of the planets is in like manner influenced by the positions and motions of the rest. But these can be quite easily calculated. Therefore the fortunes of the inhabitants of every planet can be determined, and the entire past history of each planet can be read by terrestrial astronomers. Only one circumstance must be ascertained telescopically. (At least so it appears to us, for we confess we are not such adepts in the methods of astrological divination as to be quite sure whether astrological principles, properly applied, might not have determined everything which the telescope has revealed. As a mere matter of fact astrology discovered nothing of this kind. But that is the merest detail.) It should be known how a planet is posed in space, what are the pole stars of its northern and southern hemispheres, and at what rate exactly it rotates upon its axis. For the astrologer, in determining the future fortunes of his "native," or in calculating the native's past history, has to take into account the aspect of the star-sphere at the moment of the native's birth, as well as at the critical stages of his career; and to do this properly account must be taken of course of the hour and of the position of the pole of the heavens,

We do, however, know fairly well the position of the axis of Mars, and we know the length of his day within the tenth part of a second, so that if only astrology were a sound method of divination, we might learn much of the past history and of the future fortunes of this planet. As De Morgan has remarked in an article on astrology in the *Penny Cyclopaedia*, "we have lost," in the rejection of astrology, "a charming opportunity of discovering what goes on in other planets."

The astronomer who watches, during the approaching close approach of Mars, the slowly rotating lands and seas of the planet, can scarcely, however unimaginative he may be (and we fear it is an essential requisite of the surveying astronomer that he should be as free from imagination as a man well can be), avoid the thought that contests such as have raged upon our earth for the possession of various regions of our planet's surface, may be in progress out yonder in space. Armies may be desolating the fairest regions of Mars at the very time when they are under the telescopic survey of the terrestrial observer. Warlike fleets may be urging their way across those seas and straits which our astronomers have marked down in their charts of the planet. We may hope, if we choose to forget our own experience of "Nature red in tooth and claw with ravine," that in yonder peaceful looking world there is peace among all creatures. But our own earth, amid the fiercest tumults and the most desolating wars, presents to the other worlds that people space the same peaceful scene. Distance lends so much, at least, of enchantment to the view. The sun himself, over every square mile of whose surface turmoil and uproar prevail compared with which the crash of the thunderbolt is as silence and the fiercest blast of the hurricane as absolute rest, looks calm and still in our skies, and even in the telescope shows signs of activity only to the mind's eye, none that our natural vision can appreciate.

It is a strange thought, too, that expeditions such as man makes to discover the hidden places of the earth may be in progress in other planets. Some among those lands and seas of Mars, which the astronomer contemplates in the ease and quiet of his observatory, may not as yet have been seen by inhabitants of Mars, because of the dangers which prevent access to them. We may well doubt, for instance, whether the bravest and most enterprising Martialists have yet succeeded in reaching either pole of the planet. Our eyes have rested on those polar regions, even on the very poles themselves, of the planet. But so, an observer on Venus, possessing optical instruments of adequate power, could see, on turning them upon our earth, those terrestrial polar regions which the most daring of our voyagers have in vain attempted to reach. And as the eyes of creatures in other worlds may thus have looked upon regions of the earth of which we know nothing from direct observation, so the eye of man has rested on the poles of a planet which is never at a less distance than 33,000,000 miles, while the inhabitants of that planet, if such there are, may have been foiled again and again in all attempts to penetrate within their polar fastnesses.

We wonder, in passing, whether the idea has ever occurred to the inhabitants of Mars that Martian regions have been made the subject of a war, and a somewhat lively war, though of words only, among terrestrial astronomers. Such has actually been the case, insomuch that if analogy may be our guide, astronomers in Mars and Venus are not improbably contending about the distribution of the four quarters of our earth, and our principal seas, and lakes, and islands, and peninsulas, among living and dead celebrities in those planets. The story of a recent short but sharp terrestrial war over the lands and seas of Mars is not without its lesson, even if that lesson be only a response to the time-worn question, "*Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ?*" It would seem that an English student of astronomy who had found occasion often to refer to Martian regions until then unnamed, had for convenience assigned to these regions, after charting them (a work of some labour and difficulty), the names of those astronomers whose observations had thrown light upon the geography of the planet,—or its areography, as, if pedantically inclined, we may name what corresponds with the geography of our earth. Thus to Sir W. Herschel one continent was assigned, to Secchi another, to Mädler a third, and to Dawes (the "eagle-eyed" observer to whom we owe the most exact observations of Mars yet made) a fourth. To divers other astronomers, all observers of the planet, various lands and seas were assigned. This was not done with the idea of honouring those astronomers, but simply of giving convenient names to features which have often to be referred to. A Belgian astronomer, Dr. Terby, of Louvain, who has laboriously examined and compared an immense number of pictures of Mars, adopted the nomenclature just referred to, adding one or two names (including that of the author of the English chart), but making no changes. Unfortunately, however, he had somewhat misapprehended the object of the names, and described them as "in honour of" such a one's labours, "in recognition of" the discoveries of such another, and so forth. This proved too much for the patience of a French writer on astronomy, who found neither continent nor ocean (as it chanced) assigned to any French observer, though large tracts of land and sea were given to Laplace, Leverrier, Arago, and other distinguished Frenchmen. He therefore incontinently reconstructed the chart, altering it in many respects (all the alterations singularly enough corresponding more or less closely with Dr. Terby's suggestions as to what might have to be done when Mars was re-examined). He called this chart his own, and proceeded to re-name most of the lands and seas. He treated some English observers rather contemptuously, dismissing Sir J. Herschel altogether, relegating Dawes to a small sea, De la Rue to another, Lockyer to a third (all three seas close together). The most marked feature of all, a dark sea, shaped somewhat like an hour-glass, had been assigned to Kaiser, a German astronomer, who had made many interesting observations of the planet. M. Flammarion dismisses the German to a corner of that sea, and leaves the sea itself with-

out any name except one descriptive of its shape,—possibly intending that the name of a French writer on astronomy should fill the space.

On this Dr. Terby of Louvain rose indignant. In astronomic ire and areographic grief, he solemnly denounced the new nomenclature. To say truth, he had some reason to be annoyed, because his labours had been freely used with a form of acknowledgment which, though seemingly profuse, by no means did justice to his claims. “Nine times,” said M. Flammarion, “does the name of Dr. Terby appear in my account of the lands and seas of Mars.” “I would you had mentioned it once only,” retorts Dr. Terby, “with the statement that the account is entirely taken from my labours,” where it is not borrowed from the before-mentioned English astronomers. M. Flammarion promises, in return, never to mention Dr. Terby again. “*Mea culpa*: je ne le ferai plus,” he says, adding, as a pleasant parting word, “à tout bien prendre cependant, il n’y a rien d’étonnant à ce qu’on se batte à propos de Mars; espérons qu’il n’y aura pas de sang versé, et que la colère du petit lion Belge se calmera d’elle-même.”

Let us turn, however, from these small bickerings to the consideration of the planet itself. Already in these pages* we have discussed two theories of the planet Mars regarded as another world. One is the theory that he is at present inhabited, and that too by creatures which, though they may differ very much from the inhabitants of this earth in shape and appearance, may yet be as high in the scale of living creatures. In particular this theory assumes as probable, if not certain, the belief that among the inhabitants of Mars there are creatures endowed with reason. According to the other theory, which we have called the Whewellite theory, Mars is altogether unfit to be the abode of creatures resembling those which inhabit our earth; neither vegetable nor animal forms known to us could exist on the planet; in fine, “all the conditions of life in Mars, all that tends to the comfort and well-being of Martian creatures, must differ utterly from what is human on earth.” We have also in our essay on “Life past and future in other Worlds” (in the CORNHILL MAGAZINE for June, 1875) considered a general theory which in our opinion is far more probable than either the Brewsterian or the Whewellite,—the theory, namely, that each planet has a life-bearing stage, but that the duration of this stage of its existence, though measurable perhaps by hundreds of millions of years, is yet exceedingly short by comparison with the duration of the preceding stage of preparation and the sequent stage of decay and death. From the direct application of the laws of probability to this theory, the chances are shown to be very small indeed that life exists at this present time on any planet selected at random and without reference to what observation has revealed. Precisely as, when we know that a bag contains several thousand black balls and only

* See CORNHILL MAGAZINE for May, 1871, “Life in Mars;” and for July 1873, “A Whewellite Essay on Mars.”

a few white ones, the chance that a ball taken at random is a white one is exceedingly small; so, the period of a planet's fitness for life being short compared with the preceding and following stages, the chances are very small that this present time, which is, so far as other planets are concerned, taken at random, falls within the period of any given planet's fitness to be the abode of living creatures. The telescope and the spectroscope may correct this inference, just as on looking at a ball taken from such a bag as we have described the drawer of the ball might find to his surprise that he had taken one of the white ones, few though they were compared with the black ones. But *apart* from such observations, the chances must be regarded as exceedingly small (according to this theory) that any given planet is at this present time inhabited. Nevertheless, two conclusions, according well with ordinary conceptions as to the fitness of things, follow from this theory:—First, our earth is but one among many millions of worlds inhabited at this present time. Secondly, every planet is at some time or other, and for a very long period, the abode of life. These three points,—the small probability (apart from telescopic observation) that any given planet is inhabited now; the great probability that many millions (out of thousands of millions of planets) are inhabited now; and the equally great probability that every planet has been, is, or will be inhabited—are demonstrated in the third of the essays above mentioned. That essay presents the view towards which the present writer had been gradually led—from the Brewsterian theory which he accepted until 1871, through the Whewellite, towards which he had inclined until 1873, when finally the intermediate theory seemed pressed upon him by overwhelming weight of testimony.

Our present purpose is to show more particularly how this theory accords with what is known respecting the planet Mars. We wish also to show how both the lines of reasoning which had been before employed, one pointing to the Brewsterian theory, the other to the Whewellite theory, converge in the case of Mars upon this intermediate theory.

In the first place, we saw, in considering the conditions which favour belief in the existence of life in the planet Mars, that he presents the clearest possible evidence of being one in origin and structure with our own earth. We cannot tell what the nature of the soil of Mars may be, but its generally ruddy tinge,—so well marked that, though the telescope shows an almost equal part of the surface to be greenish in hue, the red prevails, giving to the planet as seen by the naked eye its obvious red colour,—seems to show that it resembles the red sandstone of our own earth. This, we know, is one of the older geological formations, and if we could safely compare terrestrial with Martian geology, or, let us say, geology with areology, we might almost be tempted to find in the present prevalence of a tint belonging to one of the earlier of our terrestrial formations an argument in favour of the theory that Mars passed through fewer stages of development during its life-bearing condition than our earth, and that thus the later formations of our earth's surface are want-

ing in the surface of Mars. This reasoning would not be very safe, however; it implies a resemblance in details which is unlikely, the observed rule of nature seeming, so far as we can judge, to be similarity in generals, variety in details. We may well believe that the ruddiness of the soil of Mars is due to the same general cause as the ruddiness of our red sandstone,—the general prevalence of certain organisms; but neither the actual character of this particular formation, nor its position in the terrestrial series of strata, can be safely predicated of the ruddy formation constituting the chief part of the visible land surface of Mars. Few will now suppose with a French writer, that the ruddiness of Mars is due to the colour of vegetation there. A certain support is given to the idea by the circumstance that the degree of ruddiness is variable, and is somewhat greater during the Martian summer than in spring and autumn. In this sense, we may say of the summer of Mars with the poet Wendell Holmes—

The snows that glittered on the disc of Mars
Have melted, and the planet's fiery orb
Rolls in the crimson summer of its year.

But the ruddiness of the planet's summer—which will be well marked this year, for on September 18, only eleven days after its time of nearest approach and greatest splendour, it will be Midsummer's day for the southern half of Mars—can be otherwise and better explained than by supposing that the Martian forests glow with fiery foliage during the summer days. We can see, as the summer proceeds, the white mists which had hidden the planet's lands and seas breaking up, and the features of the surface being gradually revealed with more and more distinctness. It is to the disappearance of these mists and clouds, not to the red leaves of Martian trees, that the change in the planet's colour must most probably be referred.

We have less reason for doubt as to the nature of the greenish markings. The spectroscope, as we have already explained in *Life in Mars*, shows that the air of Mars is at times laden heavily with the vapour of water. We can no longer therefore follow Whewell in doubting the real nature of the green parts of the planet, or refuse with him to accept the explanation of the white polar markings long since advanced by Sir W. Herschel. Undoubtedly wide seas and oceans, with many straits and bays and inland seas, exist on Mars. Snow and ice gather in the winter time about his polar regions, diminishing gradually in extent as summer proceeds, but never entirely disappearing.

Thus we are not left doubtful as to the general resemblance of Mars, so far as the structure of his surface is concerned, to the earth on which we live. He has a surface of earth, probably in large part formed by deposition at the bottom of former seas and subsequently raised above the sea-level by subterranean forces, or rather caused to appear above the surface by the effects of the gradual shrinkage of the planet's crust. Of the existence of Vulcanian energy we have unmistakable evidence in

the fact that lands and seas exist, for a continent implies the operation of Vulcanian forces. The shapes, too, of the outlines of the lands and seas indicate the existence of mountain ranges, and these, too, of considerable elevation. Then we have the presence of water, and of a stable atmosphere in which the vapour of water rises. It seems no daring assumption to suppose that this air is constituted much like our own air. In the first place, if the air were formed of other gases, the spectroscope would probably reveal their existence, which has not happened; and secondly, with the evidence we have of a general similarity of structure and origin, an atmosphere of nitrogen and oxygen would naturally be formed while the planet was developing to its present condition, and would remain after other constituents of the planet's primeval atmosphere had been removed. For a similar reason we may safely infer that the greenish hue of the water implies the presence of the same substances, though not perhaps similarly proportioned, which are carried in suspension in our oceans, and give to them their green, green-blue, and blue tints.

It is important to notice these general resemblances, either demonstrated or safely to be inferred. We no longer propose to deduce from them the conclusion that the planet's present condition is like that of our own earth. We might, indeed, dwell on some considerations which naturally suggest themselves here. We might see in imagination the waves of those distant seas beating upon the long shore lines, and hear "the scream of a maddened beach dragged down by the wave." We can imagine the slow progress of the Martian day,—the mists of morning gradually clearing away as the sun rises; the winds raised by the mid-day heat, zephyrs murmuring among the distant hills or blasts roaring loudly over desolate rock-bound seas; the gathering of clouds towards eventide, though probably to pass from the skies at night (because condensed by cold), leaving the same constellations we see to shine with greater splendour through a rarer atmosphere. We can imagine all this, because we know from what the telescope has revealed that such must be the changes of the Martian day. We see in the telescope the long white shore-lines, the clearing mists of morning, the gathering mists of night,—and we know that there must be air currents in an atmosphere undergoing such changes. There must be rain and snow and hail, and electrical disturbances—thunder and lightning at times—besides tornadoes and hurricanes, blowing probably more fiercely than our own, though their destructive effects must be less because of the greater tenuity of the Martian air.

But while we recognise in imagination the progress of such events as these, we must not forget that for countless ages in the past mighty processes of disturbance and continuous processes of steady change took place in our earth when as yet there was no life, nor that probably life will have ceased to exist on this earth millions of years before the land and sea and air will cease to be the scene of nature's active but unconscious workings. We cannot deduce from the mere fact that if living creatures

existed on Mars they would witness such and such phenomena which are familiar to the inhabitants of earth, the conclusion that such creatures do exist there. We do not assert that no such creatures exist there. Our theory of life in other worlds does not require that any given planet should be shown to be uninhabited. Nevertheless, there are so many reasons for regarding the fulness of Mars's life-bearing season as belonging to a very remote past, that it is necessary to note the insufficiency of the mere evidence of the activity of nature's unconscious forces to prove the existence of living conscious beings on the planet.

In fine, the arguments by which, in the essay on *Life in Mars*, we endeavoured to indicate the probability of the planet's being inhabited, prove only that the planet had an origin like our earth's and is similarly constituted.

On the other hand, the arguments by which, in the essay entitled *A Whewellite Theory of Mars*, we endeavoured to show that Mars is not in a condition fit to be the abode of life, tend to show that while similar to the earth in origin and structure, Mars is in a far later stage of planetary development.

One of these arguments, indeed, does not relate to the condition of the planet itself, but to its position with reference to the sun. Being much further from the sun than we are, the planet receives much less direct heat. The supply is partly dependent, however, on the planet's condition; for if the air of Mars is very rare, then apart from the diminished supply there is a more rapid cooling owing to the readier radiation of heat into space. But in any case the supply of solar heat has to be considered as one of the factors of a planet's condition, considered with reference to the question of habitability. If through its inherent heat the planet Mars was once as warm on the whole as the earth now is, that heat making up for the smaller supply of solar heat, then it seems reasonable to believe that the creatures inhabiting the planet were so far like those now existing on our earth that the same degree of heat suited their requirements. If then we find reason for believing that *now* the inherent heat of the planet is much less than that of our own earth, so that on this account the descendants of those creatures would be unable to exist unless great modifications had taken place in their requirements, which modifications seem outside any effects which could be attributed to natural selection, then the inference that therefore these races of creatures have died out is certainly strengthened, and in no small degree, by the fact that the supply of heat received from the sun is much smaller in the case of Mars than in the case of our earth. Seeing, then, that the average daily supply of light and heat on Mars (taking square mile for square mile of his surface) is less than the average daily supply on our earth in the proportion of two to five, we have here a strong argument, we will not say in favour of the belief that Mars is not now inhabited, but in favour of the belief that the duration of the life-supporting era has been, is, or will be much more rapidly

shortened than in our earth's case, by the cooling of his globe. For the life-destroying influence of the cooling is much more effectively strengthened in his case than in our earth's, by the effect of distance from the central source of light and heat.

All the other circumstances in the condition of Mars point directly to the conclusion that Mars must have long since passed his planetary prime. His orbit being outside the earth's, he was probably formed far earlier, though this is not so certain as it was held to be when Laplace's nebular theory was first advanced. It is, however, very unlikely that he began to be formed later; and as he is much smaller, he would probably be fashioned more quickly. It is still more probable, in fact very much more probable, that he cooled much more quickly than the earth. His mass is not much more than a ninth of hers, while his surface is only about one-third of hers. He had, then, originally, even if of the same temperature when first formed, only one-ninth her amount of heat to distribute, so that if he had radiated away at one-ninth of her rate, the supply would have lasted as long. Pouring it away at one-third of her rate—for the radiation taking place from the surface is proportional to the surface—he parted with it three times faster than he should have done in order to cool at the same rate as the earth. Hence he cooled three times faster than the earth, and must have attained a condition which she will not attain until three times as long an interval has elapsed from the era of her first existence, than has already elapsed. Since most geologists assign many hundreds of millions of years to the last-named period, and all agree that it must be measured by many millions of years, it follows that twice as many hundreds of millions of years must elapse if the former are right, but only twice as many millions of years if the latter are right, before our earth will be in the same condition as Mars. In reality our argument is not at all affected by the difference of opinion among geologists in this respect. For the question is of the condition of Mars, not of the number of years which may have elapsed since he was in the same condition as our earth, or of the number of years which may have to pass before our earth will be in the same condition as Mars. Whether Mars requires hundreds of millions, or millions, or only thousands of years to pass through one stage of its planetary existence, our earth requires about three times as long; and taking the entire development of Mars and the earth (assuming they began planetary existence together), Mars must be some three times as far on the way towards planetary decrepitude and death as our earth.

Only one circumstance in the discussions of geologists on the question of the time required for the development of a globe like our earth, bears very strongly on our opinion as to the existence of life on Mars. It is not altogether certain that the life-bearing era of a planet is exceedingly short compared with the era of growth and preparation, and the era of decrepitude and death. So far, indeed, as astronomical considerations are concerned we perceive that the fashioning of a planet

must be a process requiring an enormous length of time. The slow aggregation of nebulous matter, the separation of ring from ring, the breaking up of a ring into separate nebulous masses, and the gathering of each ring of them into a single mass, must have proceeded very slowly; and few who consider all the circumstances of the case will doubt that hundreds of millions of years must have elapsed between the time when first the matter of a future planet began to have separate existence, and when at length it was all gathered together in a single mass. But what followed—the gradual contraction and cooling of that mass till it became a true planet, the gradual cooling of the planet until its surface became separable into land and water, the further cooling till life became possible, the progression of life through all its various stages till earth and sea and air had each their various races of living creatures, all these stages of the planet's existence belong to the domain of geology and biology, not to that of astronomy. Doubts have arisen respecting the duration of these eras, and as yet these doubts remain. Nor have biologists as yet determined how long life may be expected to continue upon our earth. Some see already the signs of what may be called biological decrepitude. It has been asserted that man, the highest race of living creatures which the earth has yet known, is not only the highest she will ever know, but that the race, regarded as a type of animal life, has already passed its prime, and has advanced perceptibly towards decadence.* Lower races, however, seem capable almost of indefinite multiplication—we refer, be it understood, to the multiplication of races, not of the individuals composing races. And so far as mere life is concerned, it would seem as though the earth might undergo vast changes of condition, and the sun himself lose largely in heat-emitting and light-emitting power, without the earth being depopulated, so long at least as the changes took place gradually. It may well be that life begins at so early a stage of planetary development and continues to so late a stage, that the entire duration of a planet's life-bearing era bears a much greater proportion to the entire duration of the planet than our reasoning (a few paragraphs back) implies.

But after all, the question of mere life in other worlds is not what we are interested in. Mere consciousness can scarcely be regarded as a more interesting phase of nature than unconscious activity such as we see in the vegetable world, or than the motion of inert matter, or even than the mere existence of matter. If we could be assured that Mars and Venus and Mercury are crowded with animal and vegetable life of

* One of the evidences for this discouraging conclusion, advanced by a well-known American zoologist, is the relative length of the period of old age in the individual man. In youthful races, the individual does not attain old age till very soon (relatively to the entire life) before death. The relative duration of old age grows longer and longer as the race grows older, until, in races which are about to pass away, it becomes nearly equal to half the entire interval between birth and death, soon after which the race dies out.

those lower forms which owe their inferiority to decrepitude of the type, or that on the youthful planets Jupiter and Saturn some of the monstrous forms exist which flourished on the earth when she was young—

Dragons of the prime
That tare each other in their slime,

what to us would be those teeming worlds of life? They might as well be mere inert masses circling idly round the sun, neither now nor ever in the past the abode of life, and never to become so in future ages. The story of such life would be to us as—

A tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury
Signifying nothing.

It is the existence of intelligent beings on those remote worlds that alone has any interest for us, the thought that the wonders of the universe are recognised by beings in some sort like ourselves, that the problems which perplex us may have been dealt with, perchance even solved, by others, and again that our world may be a subject of interest and study for creatures thinking as much, but knowing as little, about us as we think and know about them.

In this respect certainly, if analogy can be any guide at all, we find little reason for regarding with present interest either the younger giant planets, Jupiter and Saturn, or the probably aged dwarfs, Mercury, Mars, and our moon. Few believe that men have existed on the earth many hundreds of thousands of years, and those even who assign to the human race its greatest duration in the past, regard it in its earliest form as little better than a race of brute beings. If we supposed that men sufficiently intelligent to consider the heavens and the earth have existed in our world for one hundred thousand years, we are certainly giving the widest possible allowance of duration to intelligent man. Nor can it be denied that the existence of such a race as ours seems far more definitely limited in the future by the slowly changing condition of our earth and the life-giving sun, than that of lower types of animal existence. We would not assert that beyond all question a hundred thousand years hence the earth will no longer be a fit abode for man, who has already begun to draw very largely on the garnered stores of our globe; but we consider this view altogether probable, and that indeed a nearer limit might be assigned to the duration of the human race, by one who should carefully consider the progress and requirements of the race on the one hand, and the condition, changes of condition, and capabilities of our earth, on the other.

If we assign two hundred thousand years as the extreme duration of the period during which men capable of observing the phenomena surrounding them and of studying the problems of the universe have existed and will exist, we assign to our earth a reason-life (if we may so speak) which, compared with the full life of the earth, is but as a second compared with centuries. So far as the existence of beings capable of thought and

reflection is concerned, our theory assuredly holds. It is on *à priori* grounds utterly unlikely that any one of the orbs we can actually observe is inhabited by creatures like ourselves in those circumstances which distinguish us from the brutes and from savages.

So far as observation extends, in the case of Mars, it seems altogether unlikely that the present era of his existence corresponds with that very brief period during which reasoning creatures inhabit a planet. Supposing we have rightly taken two hundred thousand years for the duration of that period in our earth's case—and it seems far more likely that the estimate errs in excess than in defect—the duration of the corresponding period in the case of Mars would probably be about 70,000 years. Mars would probably have entered on that stage of his existence millions of years ago; but supposing for a moment that he reached it at about the same time as our earth, or, according to our estimate, a hundred thousand years ago, then the period would have been completed about 30,000 years ago. The appearance of the planet implies a much later stage, however, of planetary existence. The seas of Mars present all the appearance of exhaustion during millions of years, in the course of which their waters have nourished the surface of the planet with rain. The water thus raised from the Martian oceans has no doubt been always restored to them in large part, either falling directly on the water surface in rain, or being gathered by streams and rivulets and rivers on the land surface, to be discharged by the river mouths into the seas. But a portion has always been retained by the land, soaking slowly and steadily into the interior of the planet. This portion has doubtless been exceedingly small each year, but during the long ages which have elapsed since first the seas of Mars had separate existence, the total amount thus drained off must have been enormous. We see the effect in the relatively small area of the Martian seas. They cover barely half of the planet, while terrestrial seas occupy nearly three-fourths of the surface of our globe. They have the shape also which our seas would have, if somewhat more than two-thirds of the water were dried up. The variety of tint which they present show that but few of those seas are deep, for few of them are dark. Many are so light as to suggest the idea that a large part of the area shown in the charts as aqueous, consists in reality of land and water so broken up into small islands, lakes, straits, isthmuses, and the rest, that the telescope cannot distinguish the details. Again, the unchanging colour of the land regions implies that they are naked and sterile. Unless we adopt the theory that not only is the vegetation of Mars rubescent, but that all the principal glories of the Martian forests are ever-reds, and the Martian fields covered with herbage of unchanging ruddiness, we must accept the conclusion that the land surface is an arid desert. This evidence alone is almost strong enough to assure us that none but the lowest forms of life, animal and vegetable, exist on Mars at present. The evidence against the fitness of Mars to support the higher forms of life seems overwhelmingly strong.

But after all, why should a conclusion such as this dishearten the student of other worlds than ours? Whether it relates to a planet here and there, to Mars or Mercury or the Moon because of their decrepitude, or to Jupiter and Saturn because they are as yet too young, or whether it is extended according to the laws of probability to the universe of planets, does it not accord with what we know of our own earth? We do not mean merely that our earth as a planet was once unfit, and will one day become again unfit, to support life; but that even during the present life-supporting era of its existence we do not find all regions of the earth at all times fit to support life; nor do we find all races existing simultaneously. As various races begin, develop, and die out, as various regions are at one time sterile at another clothed with life, so among the orbs inhabiting space, now one set of races may exist and anon an entirely different set, the series of planets which during one era are the abode of life being the nascent worlds of a former, the dead worlds of a later era. A modern believer in the universality of life says: "On those worlds, as on ours, there are cities passing through all the stages of glory and of power; there also, as here, there are cities like Rome, and Paris, and London, altars and thrones, temples and palaces, wealth and misery, splendours and ruins. And perchance from the venerable ruins of an ancient capital two lovers at this moment on the planet Mars may be gazing on the traces of the grandeur and of the decay of empires, and feeling that amid all the metamorphoses of time and space, life, eternally young, pervades the universe, reigning for ever over all the worlds, and pouring forth endless youth in the golden rays of all the suns which people infinity." But the very scene which suggested these ideas should have taught another lesson. Not every region of earth is inhabited, not every inhabited region is a Rome, or an Athens, or a Paris, or a London. While some great nation or city is enjoying the fulness of its vigour, others are perishing or have long since passed away, others are as yet unknown, or but begin their existence. So may it well be, so *must* it be if analogy is our guide, so *is* it if our observations can be trusted, with other planets than this earth, with other systems than our sun's. As each orb occupies but the minutest portion of the infinity of space, so is the lifetime of each but a wavelet in the ocean of eternity. Two wavelets, or many, may run side by side upon an endless sea, and so may the lifetime of our earth synchronise with life upon another world, or many others. But for each wave that thus runs beside the wave of life on which our lot is cast, a myriad—nay, ten million million others are far removed from ours, lie even beyond the horizon bounding what we call time. The universe as we know it, the region of space to which our most powerful telescopes penetrate, is not more utterly lost in the true universe of infinity than is the range of time past, present, and to come, over which our researches extend, amid the infinities of time eternal.



IT LOOKED LIKE A VERY NICE POND INDEED.

Errema; or, My Father's Sin.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

NOT AT HOME.



RS. HOCKIN, however, had not the pleasure promised her by the facetious Major of seeing me "make up to my grandmamma." For although we set off at once to catch the strange woman who had roused so much curiosity, and though, as we passed the door of Bruntlands, we saw her still at her post in the valley, like Major Hockin's new letter-box, for some reason best known to herself we could not see any more of her. For, hurry as he might upon other occasions, nothing would make the

Major cut a corner of his winding "drive," when descending it with a visitor. He enjoyed every yard of its length, because it was his own at every step, and he counted his paces in an undertone, to be sure of the length, for perhaps the thousandth time. It was long enough in a straight line, one would have thought, but he was not the one who thought so; and therefore he had doubled it by judicious windings, as if for the purpose of breaking the descent.

"Three hundred and twenty-one," he said, as he came to a post, where he meant to have a lodge as soon as his wife would let him; "now the old woman stands fifty-five yards on, at a spot where I mean to have an ornamental bridge, because our fine saline element runs up there when the new moon is perigee. My dear, I am a little out of breath, which affects my sight for the moment. Doubtless that is why I do not see her."

"If I may offer an opinion," I said, "in my ignorance of all the

changes you have made, the reason why we do not see her may be that she is gone out of sight."

"Impossible!" Major Hockin cried, "simply impossible, Erema. She never moves for an hour-and-a-half. And she was not come, was she, when you came by?"

"I will not be certain," I answered; "but I think that I must have seen her if she had been there, because I was looking about particularly at all your works as we came by."

"Then she must be there still, let us tackle her."

This was easier said than done, for we found no sign of anybody at the place where she certainly had been standing less than five minutes ago. We stood at the very end and last corner of the ancient river trough, where a little seam went inland from it, as if some trifle of a brook had stolen down while it found a good river to welcome it. But now there was only a little oozy gloss from the gleam of the sun upon some lees of marshy brine left among the rushes by the last high tide.

"You see my new road and the key to my intentions?" said the Major, forgetting all about his witch, and flourishing his geological hammer, while standing thus at his "nucleus." "To understand all, you have only to stand here. You see those levelling posts, adjusted with scientific accuracy. You see all those angles, calculated with micrometric precision. You see how the curves are radiated——"

"It is very beautiful, I have no doubt; but you cannot have Uncle Sam's gift of machinery. And do you understand every bit of it yourself?"

"Erema, not a jot of it. I like to talk about it freely when I can, because I see all its beauties. But as to understanding it, my dear—you might set to, if you were an educated female, and deliver me a lecture upon my own plan. Intellect is, in such matters, a bubble. I know good bricks, good mortar, and good foundations."

"With your great ability, you must do that," I answered, very gently, being touched with his humility, and allowance of my opinion; "you will make a noble town of it. But when is the railway coming?"

"Not yet. We have first to get our Act; and a miserable-minded wretch, who owns nothing but a rabbit-warren, means to oppose it. Don't let us talk of him. It puts one out of patience when a man cannot see his own interest. But come and see our assembly-rooms, literary institute, baths, &c. &c.—that is what we are urging forward now."

"But may I not go first and look for my strange namesake? Would it be wrong of me to call upon her?"

"No harm whatever," replied my companion; "likewise no good. Call fifty times, but you will get no answer. However, it is not a very great round, and you will understand my plans more clearly. Step out, my dear, as if you had got a troop of Mexicans after you. Ah, what a fine turn for that lot now!" He was thinking of the war which had broken out, and the battle of Bull's Run.

Without any such headlong speed we soon came to the dwelling place

of the stranger, and really for once the good Major had not much overdone his description. Truly it was almost tumbling down, though massively built, and a good house long ago; and it looked the more miserable now from being placed in a hollow of the ground, whose slopes were tufted with rushes, and thistles, and ragwort. The lower windows were blocked up from within, the upper were shattered, and crumbling, and dangerous, with blocks of cracked stone jutting over them; and the last surviving chimney gave less smoke than a workman's homeward whiff of his pipe to comfort and relieve the air.

The only door that we could see was of heavy black oak, without any knocker, but I clenched my hand, having thick gloves on, and made what I thought a very creditable knock, while the Major stood by, with his blue lights up, and keenly gazed and gently smiled.

"Knock again, my dear," he said; "you don't knock half hard enough."

I knocked again with all my might, and got a bruised hand for a fortnight, but there was not even the momentary content produced by an active echo. The door was as dead as everything else.

"Now for my hammer," my companion cried; "this house, in all sound law, is my own. I will have a 'John Doe and Richard Roe,'—a fine action of ejectment. Shall I be barred out upon my own manor?"

With hot indignation he swung his hammer, but nothing came of it except more noise. Then the Major grew warm and angry.

"My charter contains the right of burning witches, or drowning them, according to their colour. The execution is specially imposed upon the bailiff of this ancient town, and he is my own pickled-pork man. His name is Hopkins, and I will have him out with his seal, and stick, and all the rest. Am I to be laughed at in this way?"

For we thought we heard a little screech of laughter from the loneliness of the deep dark place, but no other answer came, and perhaps it was only our own imagining.

"Is there no other door?—perhaps one at the back?" I asked, as the lord of the manor stamped.

"No, that has been walled up long ago. The villain has defied me from the very first. Well, we shall see. This is all very fine. You witness that they deny the owner entrance?"

"Undoubtedly I can depose to that. But we must not waste your valuable time."

"After all, the poor ruin is worthless," he went on, calming down as we retired; "it must be levelled, and that hole filled up. It is quite an eyesore to our new parade. And no doubt it belongs to me, no doubt it does. The fellow who claims it was turned out of the law. Fancy any man turned out of the law. Erema, in all your far-west experience, did you ever see a man bad enough to be turned out of the law?"

"Major Hockin, how can I tell? But I fear that their practice was very very sad—they very nearly always used to hang them."

"The best use—the best use a rogue can be put to. Some big thief has put it the opposite way, because he was afraid of his own turn. The constitution must be upheld, and, by the Lord, it shall be—at any rate, in East Bruntsea. West Bruntsea is all a small-pox warren out of my control, and a skewer in my flesh. And some of my tenants have gone across the line to snap their dirty hands at me."

Being once in this cue, Major Hockin went on, not talking to me much, but rather to himself, though expecting me now and then to say "yes;" and this I did when necessary, for his principles of action were beyond all challenge, and the only question was how he carried them out.

He took me to his rampart, which was sure to stop the sea, and at the same time to afford the finest place in all Great Britain for a view of it. Even an invalid might sit here in perfect shelter from the heaviest gale, and watch such billows as were not to be seen except upon the Major's property.

"The reason of that is quite simple," he said, "and a child may see the force of it. In no other part of the kingdom can you find so steep a beach fronting the south-west winds, which are ten to one of all other winds, without any break of sand or rock outside. Hence we have what you cannot have on a shallow shore, grand rollers: straight from the very Atlantic, Erema; you and I have seen them. You may see by the map that they all end here, with the wind in the proper quarter."

"Oh, please not to talk of such horrors," I said; "why, your ramparts would go like piecrust."

The Major smiled a superior smile, and after more talk we went home to dinner.

From something more than mere curiosity I waited at Bruntsea for a day or two, hoping to see that strange namesake of mine who had shown so much inhospitality. For she must have been at home when we made that pressing call, inasmuch as there was no other place to hide her within the needful distance of the spot where she had stood. But the longer I waited the less would she come out—to borrow the good Irishman's expression—and the Major's pillar-box, her favourite resort, was left in conspicuous solitude. And when a letter came from Sir Montague Hockin, asking leave to be at Bruntlands on the following evening, I packed up my goods with all haste and set off, not an hour too soon, for Shoxford.

But before taking leave of these kind friends, I begged them to do for me one little thing, without asking me to explain my reason, which indeed was more than I could do. I begged them, not of course to watch Sir Montague, for that they could not well do to a guest, but simply to keep their eyes open and prepared for any sign of intercourse, if such there were, between this gentleman and that strange interloper. Major Hockin stared, and his wife looked at me as if my poor mind must have gone astray, and even to myself my own thought appeared absurd. Remembering,

however, what Sir Montague had said, and other little things as well, I did not laugh as they did. But perhaps one part of my conduct was not right, though the wrong (if any) had been done before that: to wit, I had faithfully promised Mrs. Price not to say a word at Bruntlands about their visitor's low and sinful treachery towards my cousin. To give such a promise had perhaps been wrong, but still without it I should have heard nothing of matters that concerned me nearly. And now it seemed almost worse to keep than to break such a pledge, when I thought of a pious, pure-minded, and holy-hearted woman, like my dear "Aunt Mary," unwittingly brought into friendly contact with a man of the lowest nature. And as for the Major, instead of sitting down with such a man to dinner, what would he have done but drive him straightway from the door, and chase him to the utmost verge of his manor with the peak-end of his "geological hammer?"

However, away I went without a word against that contemptible and base man, towards whom—though he never had injured me—I cherished for my poor cousin's sake the implacable hatred of virtuous youth. And a wild idea had occurred to me (as many wild ideas did now in the crowd of things gathering round me) that this strange woman, concealed from the world, yet keenly watching some members of it, might be that fallen and miserable creature who had fled from a good man with a bad one, because he was more like herself,—Flittamore, Lady Castlewood. Not that she could be an "old woman" yet, but she might look old, either by disguise, or through her own wickedness; and everybody knows how suddenly those southern beauties fall off, alike in face and figure. Mrs. Price had not told me what became of her, or even whether she was dead or alive, but merely said, with a meaning look, that she was "punished" for her sin, and I had not ventured to inquire how, the subject being so distasteful.

To my great surprise and uneasiness as well, I had found at Bruntlands no letter whatever, either to the Major or myself, from Uncle Sam or any other person at the Saw-mills. There had not been time for any answer to my letter of some two months back, yet being alarmed by the Sawyer's last tidings, I longed with some terror for later news. And all the United Kingdom was now watching with tender interest the dismemberment, as it almost appeared, of the other mighty Union. Not with malice, or snug satisfaction, as the men of the North in their agony said; but certainly without any proper anguish yet, and rather as a genial and sprightly spectator, whose love of fair play perhaps kindles his applause of the spirit and skill of the weaker side. "'Tis a good fight—let them fight it out!" seemed to be the general sentiment; but in spite of some American vaunt and menace (which of late years had been galling) every true Englishman deeply would have mourned the humiliation of his kindred.

In this anxiety for news I begged that my letters might be forwarded under cover to the postmistress at Shoxford, and bearing my initials.

For now I had made up my mind to let Mrs. Busk know whatever I could tell her. I had found her a cross and well-educated woman, far above her neighbours, and determined to remain so. Gossip, that universal leveller, theoretically she despised; and she had that magnificent esteem for rank which works so beautifully in England. And now when my good nurse reasonably said, that much as she loved to be with me, her business would allow that delight no longer, and it also came home to my own mind that money would be running short again, and small hope left in this dreadful civil war of our nugget escaping pillage, (which made me shudder horribly at internal discord), I just did this—I dismissed Betsy, or rather I let her dismiss herself, which she might not have altogether meant to do, although she threatened it so often. For here she had nothing to do but live well, and protest against tricks of her own profession which she practised as necessary laws at home; and so, with much affection, for the time we parted.

Mrs. Busk was delighted at her departure; for she never had liked to be criticised so keenly while she was doing her very best. And as soon as the wheels of Betsy's fly had shown their last spoke at the corner, she told me with a smile that her mind had been made up to give us notice that very evening to seek for better lodgings. But she could not wish for a quieter, pleasanter, or more easily pleased young lady than I was without any mischief-maker; and so, on the spur of the moment, I took her into my own room, while her little girl minded the shop, and there and then I told her who I was, and what I wanted.

And now she behaved most admirably. Instead of expressing surprise, she assured me that all along she had felt there was something, and that I must be somebody. Lovely as my paintings were (which I never heard, before or since, from any impartial censor), she had known that it could not be that alone which had kept me so long in their happy valley. And now she did hope I would do her the honour to stay beneath her humble roof, though entitled to one so different. And was the fairy ring in the churchyard made of all my family?

I replied that too surely this was so, and that nothing would please me better than to find, according to my stature, room to sleep inside it, as soon as ever I should have solved the mystery of its origin. At the moment this was no exaggeration, so depressing was the sense of fighting against the unknown so long, with scarcely any one to stand by me, or avenge me if I fell. And Betsy's departure, though I tried to take it mildly, had left me with a readiness to catch my breath.

But to dwell upon sadness no more than need be (a need as sure as hunger) it was manifest now to my wondering mind that once more I had chanced upon a good, and warm, and steadfast heart. Everybody is said to be born, whether that happens by night or day, with a certain little widowed star, which has lost its previous mortal, concentrating from a billion billion of miles, or leagues, or larger measure, intense, but generally invisible radiance upon him or her; and to take for the moment

this old fable as of serious meaning, my star was to find bad facts at a glance, but no bad folk without long gaze.

CHAPTER XL.

THE MAN AT LAST.

THIS new alliance with Mrs. Busk not only refreshed my courage, but helped me forward most importantly. In truth, if it had not been for this, I never could have borne what I had to bear, and met the perils which I had to meet. For I had the confidence of feeling now that here was some one close at hand, an intelligent person, and well acquainted with the place and neighbourhood, upon whom I could rely for warning, succour, and, if the worst should come to the very worst, revenge. It is true that already I had Jacob Rigg, and perhaps the protector promised by my cousin, but the former was as ignorant as he was honest, and of the latter, as he made no sign, how could I tell anything?

Above all things, Mrs. Busk's position, as mistress of the letters, gave me very great advantage both for offence and defence. For without the smallest breach of duty or of loyal honour she could see that my letters passed direct to me or from me, as the case might be, at the same time that she was bound to observe all epistles addressed to strangers or new-comers in her district, which extended throughout the valley. And by putting my letters in the Portsmouth bag, instead of that for Winchester, I could freely correspond with any of my friends without any one seeing name or postmark in the neighbouring villages.

It is needless to say that I had long since explored, and examined with great diligence, that lonely spot where my grandfather met his terrible and mysterious fate. Not that there seemed to be any hope now, after almost nineteen years, of finding even any token of the crime committed there. Only that it was natural for me, feeling great horror of this place, to seek to know it thoroughly.

For this I had good opportunity, because the timid people of the valley, towards the close of day, would rather trudge another half-mile of the homeward road than save brave legs at the thumping cost of hearts not so courageous. For the planks were now called "Murder-bridge;" and everybody knew that the red spots on it, which could never be seen by daylight, began to gleam towards the hour of the deed, and glowed (as if they would burn the wood) when the church clock struck eleven.

This phenomenon was beyond my gifts of observation; and knowing that my poor grandfather had scarcely set foot on the bridge, if ever he set foot there at all—which at present was very doubtful—also that he had fallen backward, and only bled internally, I could not reconcile tradition (however recent) with proven truth. And sure of no disturbance

from the step of any native, here I often sat in a little bowered shelter of my own, well established up the rise, down which the path made zig-zag, and screened from that and the bridge as well by sheaf of twigs and lop of leaves. It was a little forward thicket, quite detached from the upland copse, to which perhaps it had once belonged, and crusted up from the meadow slope with sod and mould in alternate steps. And being quite the elbow of a foreland of the meadow-reach, it yielded almost a "birdseye view" of the beautiful glade and the wandering brook.

One evening, when I was sitting here, neither drawing, nor working, nor even thinking with any set purpose, but idly allowing my mind to rove, like the rivulet, without any heed, I became aware of a moving figure in the valley. At first it did not appear to me as a thing at all worth notice; it might be a very straightforward cow, or a horse, coming on like a stalking horse, keeping hindlegs strictly behind, in direct desire of water. I had often seen those sweet things that enjoy four legs walking in the line of distance as if they were no better off than we are, kindly desiring, perhaps, to make the biped spectator content with himself. And I was content to admire this cow, or horse, or whatever it might be, without any more than could be helped of that invidious feeling which has driven the human race now to establish its right to a tail, and its hope of four legs. So little, indeed, did I think of what I saw, that when among the hazel twigs, parted carelessly by my hand, a cluster of nuts hung manifest, I gathered it, and began to crack and eat, although they were scarcely ripe yet.

But while employed in this pleasant way, I happened to glance again through my leafy screen, and then I distinguished the figure in the distance as that of a man walking rapidly. He was coming down the mill-stream meadow towards the wooden bridge, carrying a fishing-rod, but clearly not intent on angling. For, instead of following the course of the stream, he was keeping quite away from it, avoiding also the foot-path, or at any rate seeming to prefer the long shadows of the trees and the tufted places. This made me look at him, and very soon I shrank into my nest and watched him.

As he came nearer any one could tell that he was no village workman, bolder than the rest, and venturesome to cross the "Murder-bridge" in his haste to be at home. The fishing-rod alone was enough to show this when it came into clearer view; for our good people, though they fished sometimes, only used rough rods of their own making, without any varnish or brass thing for the line. And the man was of different height, and walk, and dress, from any of our natives.

"Who can he be?" I whispered to myself, as my heart began to beat heavily, and then seemed almost to stop, as it answered—"this is the man who was in the churchyard." Ignoble as it was, and contemptible, and vile, and traitorous to all duty, my first thought was about my own escape; for I felt that if this man saw me there he would rush up the

hill and murder me. Within pistol-shot of the very place where my grandfather had been murdered—a lonely place, an unholy spot, and I was looking at the hand that did it.

The thought of this made me tremble so, though well aware that my death might ensue from a twig on the rustle, or a leaf upon the flutter, that my chance of making off unseen was gone ere I could seize it. For now the man was taking long strides over the worn-out planks of the bridge, disdainful of the handrail, and looking upward, as if to shun sight of the footing. Advancing thus he must have had his gaze point-blank upon my lair of leafage; but, luckily for me, there was gorse upon the ridge, and bracken, and rag-thistles, so that none could spy up and through the footing of my lurking place. But, if any person could have spied me, this man was the one to do it. So carefully did he scan the distance, and inspect the foreground, as if he were resolved that no eye should be upon him while he was doing what he came to do. And he even drew forth a little double telescope, such as are called "binoculars," and fixed it on the thicket which hid me from him, and then on some other dark places.

No effort would compose or hush the heavy beating of my heart; my lips were stiffened with dread of loud breath, and all power of motion left me. For even a puff of wind might betray me, the ruffle of a spray, or the lifting of a leaf, or the random bounce of a beetle. Great peril had encompassed me ere now, but never had it grasped me as this did, and paralysed all the powers of my body. Rather would I have stood in the midst of a score of Mexican rovers than thus in the presence of that one man. And yet was not this the very thing for which I had waited, longed, and laboured? I scorned myself for this craven loss of nerve, but that did not enable me to help it. In this benumbed horror I durst not even peep at the doings of my enemy; but presently I became aware that he had moved from the end of the planks (where he stood for some time as calmly as if he had done nothing there), and had passed round the back of the hawthorn tree, and gone down to the place where the body was found, and was making most narrow and minute search there. And now I could watch him without much danger, standing as I did well above him, while his eyes were steadfastly bent downward. And, not content with eyesight only, he seemed to be feeling every blade of grass or weed, every single stick or stone, craning into each cranny of the ground, and probing every clod with his hands. Then, after vainly searching, with the very utmost care, all the space from the hawthorn trunk to the meadow-leet (which was dry as usual), he ran in a fury of impatience to his rod, which he had stuck into the bank, as now I saw, and drew off the butt-end, and removed the wheel, or whatever it is that holds the fishing-line; and this butt had a long spike to it, shining like a halberd in a picture.

This made me shudder; but my spirit was returning, and therewith my power of reasoning, and a deep stir of curiosity. After so many

years, and such a quantity of searching, what could there still be left to seek for, in this haunted and horrible place? And who was the man that was looking for it?

The latter question partly solved itself. It must be the murderer, and no other, whoever he might be among the many black spots of humanity. But as to the other point, no light could be thrown upon it, unless the search should be successful, and perhaps not even then. But now this anxiety, and shame of terror, made me so bold—for I cannot call it brave—that I could not rest satisfied where I was, and instead of blessing every leaf and twig that hid me from the enemy, nothing would do for me but to creep nearer, in spite of that truculent long bright spike.

I thought of my father, and each fibre of my frame seemed to harden with vigour and fleetness. Every muscle of my body could be trusted now. I had always been remarkably light of foot. Could a man of that age catch me? It was almost as much as Firm Gundry could do, as in childish days I had proved to him. And this man, although his hair was not gray, must be on the slow side of fifty now, and perhaps getting short of his very wicked breath. Then I thought of poor Firm, and of good Uncle Sam, and how they scorned poltroonery; and, better still, I thought of that great Power which always had protected me—in a word, I resolved to risk it.

But I had not reckoned upon fire-arms, which such a scoundrel was pretty sure to have; and that idea struck cold upon my valour. Nevertheless I would not turn back. With no more sound than a field-mouse makes in the building of its silken nest, and feet as light as the step of the wind upon the scarcely ruffled grass, I quitted my screen, and went gliding down a hedge, or rather the residue of some old hedge, which would shelter me a little towards the hollow of the banks. I passed low places, where the man must have seen me if he had happened to look up; but he was stooping with his back to me, and working in the hollow of the dry water-trough. He was digging with the long spike of his rod, and I heard the rattle of each pebble that he struck.

Before he stood up again, to ease his back, and to look at the ground which he still had to turn, I was kneeling behind a short close-branched holly, the very last bush of the hedgerow, scarcely fifteen yards from the hawthorn-tree. It was quite impossible to get nearer without coming face to face with him. And now I began again to tremble, but with a great effort conquered it.

The man was panting with his labour, and seemed to be in a vile temper too. He did not swear, but made low noises full of disappointment. And then he caught up his tool, with a savage self-control, and fell to again.

Now was my time to see what he was like, and engrave him on my memory. But lo, in a moment, I need not do that! The face was the bad image of my father's. A lowered, and vicious, and ill-bred image of a noble countenance—such as it was just possible to dream that my dear

father's might have fallen to, if his mind and soul had plunged away from the good inborn and implanted in them. The figure was that of a tall strong man, with shoulders rather slouching, and a habit of keeping his head thrown back, which made a long chin look longer. Altogether he seemed a perilous foe, and perhaps a friend still more perilous.

Be he what he might, he was working very hard. Not one of all Uncle Sam's men, to my knowledge, least of all Martin, would have worked so hard. With his narrow and ill-adapted tool he contrived to turn over, in less than twenty minutes, the entire bed of the meadow-leet, or trough, for a length of about ten yards. Then he came to the mouth, where the water of the main stream lapped back into it, and he turned up the bottom as far as he could reach, and waited for the mud he had raised to clear away. When this had flowed down with the stream, he walked in for some little distance till the pool grew deep, but in spite of all his labour—there was nothing.

Meanwhile the sunset-glow was failing, and a grey autumnal haze crept up the tranquil valley. Shadows waned and faded into dimness more diffuse; and light grew soft, and vague, and vaporous. The gleam of water, and the gloss of grass, and deep relief of trees, began to lose their several phase and mingle into one large twilight blend. And cattle, from their milking-sheds, came lowing for more pasture; and the bark of a shepherd's dog rang quick as if his sheep were drowsy.

In the midst of innocent sights and sounds, that murderer's heart misgave him. He left his vain quest off, and gazed, with fear and hate of nature's beauty, at the change from day to night which had not waited for him. Some touch of his childhood moved him perhaps, some thought of times when he played "I spy," or listened to twilight ghost tales; at any rate, as he rose and faced the evening, he sighed heavily.

Then he strode away; and although he passed me almost within length of his rod, there was little fear of his discovering me, because his mind was elsewhere.

It will, perhaps, be confessed by all who are not as brave as lions, that so far I had acquitted myself pretty well in this trying matter. Horribly scared as I was at first, I had not allowed this to conquer me, but had even rushed into new jeopardy. But now the best part of my courage was spent; and when the tall stranger refixed his rod and calmly recrossed those ominous planks, I durst not set forth on the perilous errand of spying out his ways and tracking him. A glance was enough to show the impossibility in those long meadows of following without being seen, in this stage of the twilight. Moreover, my nerves had been tried too long, and presence of mind could not last for ever. All I could do, therefore, was to creep as far as the trunk of the hawthorn tree, and thence observe that my enemy did not return by the way he had come, but hastened down the dusky valley.

One part of his labours has not been described, though doubtless a highly needful one. To erase the traces of his work, or at least obscure

them to a careless eye : when he had turned as much ground as he thought it worth his while to meddle with, he trod it back again to its level, as nearly as might be, and then (with a can out of his fishing-basket) sluiced the place well with the water of the stream. This made it look to any heedless person who would not descend to examine it, as if there had been nothing more than a little reflux from the river, caused by a flush from the mill-pond. This little stratagem increased my fear of a cunning and active villain.

CHAPTER XLI.

A STRONG TEMPTATION.

Now it will be said, and I also knew, that there was nothing as yet, except most frail and feeble evidence, to connect that nameless stranger with the crime charged upon my father. Indeed it might be argued well, that there was no evidence at all, only inference and suspicion. That, however, was no fault of mine ; and I felt as sure about it as if I had seen him in the very act. And this conclusion was not mine alone ; for Mrs. Busk, a most clever woman, and the one who kept the post-office, entirely agreed with me that there could be no doubt on earth about it.

But when she went on to ask me what it was my intention to do next, for the moment I could do nothing more than inquire what her opinion was. And she told me that she must have a good night's rest before advising anything. For the thought of having such a heinous character in her own delivery district was enough to unhinge her from her postal duties, some of which might be useful to me.

With a significant glance she left me to my own thoughts, which were sad enough, and too sad to be worth recording. For Mrs. Busk had not the art of rousing people, and cheering them, such as Betsy Strouss my old nurse had, perhaps from her knowledge of the nursery. My present landlady might be the more sagacious and sensible woman of the two, and therefore the better adviser ; but for keeping one up to the mark she was not in any way equal to Betsy.

There is no ingratitude in saying this, because she herself admitted it. A clever woman, with a well-balanced mind, knows what she can do, and wherein she fails, better than a man of her own proportion does. And Mrs. Busk often lamented, without much real mortification, that she had not been " born sympathetic."

All the more perhaps for that, she was born sagacious, which is a less pleasing, but in a bitter pinch a more really useful quality. And before I had time to think much of her defects, in the crowd of more important thought—in she came again, with a letter in her hand, and a sparkle of triumph in her small black eyes. After looking back along the passage, and closing my door, she saw that my little bay-window had its old-

fashioned shutters fastened, and then, in a very low whisper, she said,—
“What you want to know is here, Miss.”

“Indeed!” I answered, in my usual voice. “How can you know that? The letter is sealed.”

“Hush! Would you have me ruined for your sake? This was at the bottom of the Nepheton bag. It fell on the floor. That was God’s will, to place it in your power.”

“It is not in my power,” I answered, whispering in my turn, and staring at it, in the strong temptation. “I have no right even to look at it. It is meant for some one else, and sealed.”

“The seal is nothing. I can manage that. Another drop of wax—and I strike our stamp by accident over the breakage. I refuse to know anything about it. I am too busy with the other letters. Five minutes—lock the door—and I will come again.”

This was a desperate conflict for me, worse even than bodily danger. My first impulse was to have nothing to do with it—even to let the letter lie untouched, and, if possible, unglanced at. But already it was too late for the eyes to turn away. The address had flashed upon me before I thought of anything, and while Mrs. Busk held it up to me. And now that address was staring at me, like a contemptuous challenge, while the seal, the symbol of private rights and deterrent honour, lay undermost. The letter was directed to “H. W. C., Post-office, Newport, Sussex.” The writing was in round-hand, and clear, so as not to demand any scrutiny, and to seem like that of a lawyer’s clerk, and the envelope was of thin repellent blue.

My second impulse was to break the letter open and read it without shrinking. Public duty must conquer private scruples. Nothing but the hand of Providence itself could have placed this deadly secret in my power so amazingly. Away with all squeamishness, and perhaps prevent more murder.

But that “perhaps” gave me sudden pause. I had caught up the letter, and stood near the candle, to soften the wax and lift the cover with a small sharp paper-knife, when it flashed on my mind that my cousin would condemn and scorn what I was doing. Unconsciously I must have made him now my standard of human judgment, or what made me think of him at that moment? I threw down the letter, and then I knew. The image of Lord Castlewood had crossed my mind, because the initials were his own—those of Herbert William Castlewood. This strange coincidence—if it were, indeed, an accident—once more set me thinking. Might not this letter be from his agent, of whom he had spoken as my protector here, but to whom as all unseen I scarcely ever gave a thought? Might not young Stixon, who so often was at Bruntsea, be employed to call at Newport for such letters, and return with them to his master? It was not very likely, for my cousin had the strongest contempt of anonymous doings. Still it was possible, and the bare possibility doubled my reluctance to break the seal,

For one minute longer I stood in doubt, and then honour and candour and truth prevailed. If any other life had been in peril but my own, duty to another might have over-riden all. But duty to oneself, if over pushed in such a case, would hold some taint of cowardice. So I threw the letter, with a sense of loathing, on a chair. Whatever it might contain, it should pass, at least for me, inviolate.

Now when Mrs. Busk came to see what I had done, or rather left undone, she flew into a towering passion, until she had no time to go on with it. The rattle of the rickety old mail-cart, on its way to Winchester that night, was heard, and the horn of the driver as he passed the church.

“Give it me. A’ mercy! A young natural, that you are!” the good woman cried, as she flung out of the room, to dash her office stamp upon that hateful missive, and to seal the leathern bag. “Seal indeed! Inviolatè! How many seals have I got to make every day of my life?”

I heard a great thump from the corner of the shop, where the business of the mails was conducted; and she told me afterwards that she was so put out, that broken that seal should be,—one way or another. Accordingly she smashed it with the office-stamp, which was rather like a woman’s act, methought; and then, having broken it, she never looked inside—which perhaps was even more so.

When she recovered her leisure and serenity, and came in, to forgive me and be forgiven, we resolved to dismiss the moral aspect of the question, as we never should agree about it, although Mrs. Busk was not so certain as she had been, when she found that the initials were the initials of a lord. And then I asked her how she came to fix upon that letter among so many others, and to feel so sure that it came from my treacherous enemy.

“In the first place, I know every letter from Nepheton,” she answered, very sensibly. “There are only fourteen people that write letters in the place, and twelve of those fourteen buy their paper in my shop—there is no shop at all at Nepheton. In the next place, none of them could write a hand like that, except the parson and the doctor, who are far above disguise. And two other things made me certain as could be. That letter was written at the ‘Green Man’ alehouse; not on their paper, nor yet with their ink; but being in great hurry, it was dusted with their sand, a sand that turns red upon ink, Miss. And the time of despatch there is just what he would catch, by walking fast after his dig where you saw him, going in that direction too, and then having his materials ready to save time. And if all that is not enough to convince you, Miss—you remember that you told me our old sexton’s tale?”

“To be sure I do. The first evening I was left alone here. And you have been so kind, there is nothing I would hide from you.”

“Well, Miss, the time of old Jacob’s tale is fixed by the death of poor old Sally Mock; and the stranger came again after you were here, just before the death of the miller’s eldest daughter, and you might almost have seen him. Poor thing; we all called her the ‘flower of the

Moon,' meaning our little river. What a fine young woman she was, to be sure! Whenever we heard of any strangers about, we thought they were prowling after her. I was invited to her funeral, and I went, and nothing could be done nicer. But they never will be punctual with burials here; they like to dwell on them, and keep the bell going, for the sake of the body, and the souls that must come after it. And so when it was done, I was twenty minutes late for the up-mail and the cross-country post, and had to move my hands pretty sharp, I can assure you. That doesn't matter; I got through it, with the driver of the cart obliging, by means of some beer and cold bacon. But what I feared most was the Nepheton bag, having seen the old man at the funeral, and knowing what they do afterwards. I could not return him 'too late' again, or he would lose his place for certain, and a shilling a day made all the difference to him, between wife and no wife. The old pair without it must go to the workhouse, and never see one another. However, when I was despairing quite of him, up he comes with his bag quite correct, but only one letter to sort in it, and that letter was, Miss, the very identical of the one you held in your hands just now. And a letter as like it as two peas had come when we buried old Sally. It puzzled me then, but I had no clue to it; only now you see, putting this and that together, the things we behold must have some meaning for us; and to let them go without it is against the will of God; especially when at the bottom of the bag."

"If you hear so soon of any stranger in the valley," I asked, to escape the re-opening of the opening question, "how can that man come and go—a man of remarkable stature and appearance—without anybody asking who he is?"

"You scarcely could have put it better, Miss, for me to give the answer. They do ask who he is, and they want to know it, and would like anybody to tell them. But being of a different breed, as they are, from all outside the long valley, speaking also with a different voice, they fear to talk so freely out of their own ways and places. Anything they can learn in and out among themselves, they will learn; but anything out of that they let go, in the sense of outlandish matter. Bless you, Miss, if your poor grandfather had been shot anywhere else in England, how different it would have been for him!"

"For us, you mean, Mrs. Busk. Do you think the man who did it had that in his mind?"

"Not unless he knew the place, as few know it. No, that was an accident of his luck, as many other things have been. But the best luck stops at last, Miss Erema; and unless I am very much mistaken, you will be the stop of his. I shall find out, in a few days, where he came from, where he stayed, and when he went away. I suppose you mean to let him go away?"

"What else am I do?" I asked; "I have no evidence at all against him, only my own ideas. The police would scarcely take it up, even if——"

“Oh, don't talk of them. They spoil everything. And none of our people would say a word, or care to help us, if it came to that. The police are all strangers, and our people hate them. And indeed, I believe that the worst thing ever done was the meddling of that old Jobbins. The old stupe is still alive at Petersfield, and as pompous-headed as ever. My father would have been the man for your sad affair, Miss, if the police had only been invented in his time. Ah yes, he was sharp! Not a Moonstock man—you may take your oath of that, Miss,—but a good honest native from Essex. But he married my mother, a Moonstock woman; or they would not put up with me here at all. You quality people have your ideas to hold by, and despise all others, and reasonable in your opinions; but you know nothing—nothing—nothing—of the stiffness of the people under you.”

“How should I know anything of that?” I answered; “all these things are new to me. I have not been brought up in this country, as you know. I come from a larger land, where your stiffness may have burst out into roughness, from having so much room suddenly. But tell me what you think now your father would have done in such a case as mine is?”

“Miss Erema, he was that long-headed that nobody could play leap-frog with him. None of them ever cleared over his barrel. He walked into this village fifty-five years back, this very month, with his spade upon his shoulder and the knowledge of everybody in his eye. They all put up against him, but they never put him down; and in less than three months he went to church, I do assure you, with the only daughter of the only baker. After that he went into the baking line himself; he turned his spade into a shovel, as he said, and he introduced new practices.”

“Oh, Mrs. Busk, not adulteration?”

“No, Miss, no! The very last thing he would think of. Only the good use of potatoes in the bread, when flour was frightful bad, and painful dear. What is the best meal of the day, he used to reason Dinner! And why? Why, because of the potatoes! If I can make people take potato for their breakfast, and potato for their supper too, I am giving them three meals a day instead of one. And the health of the village corresponded to it.”

“Oh, but, Mrs. Busk, he might have made them do it, by persuasion, or at least with their own knowledge——”

“No, Miss, no! The whole nature of our people, Moonstock or out of it, is never to take victuals by any sort of persuasion. If St. Paul was to come and preach, ‘Eat this or that,’ all I had of it in the shop would go rotten. They hate any meddling with their likings, and they suspect doctor's rubbish in all of it.”

“I am quite of their opinion,” I replied; “and I am glad to hear of their independence. I always used to hear that in England none of the poor people dared have a will of their own.”

Mrs. Busk lifted up her hands to express amazement at my ignorance, and said that she "must run away, and put the shutters up; or else the policeman would come rapping, and look for a glass of beer, which he had no right to, till it came to the bottom of the firkin; and this one was only tapped last Sunday week. Don't you ever think of the police, Miss?"

Probably this was good advice, and it quite agreed with the opinions of others, and my own impressions as to the arrogant lethargy of "the force," as they call themselves, in my father's case. Mrs. Busk had more activity and intelligence in her little head, than all the fat sergeants and inspectors of the county, helmet, belt, and staff and all.

CHAPTER XLII.

MASTER WITHYPOOL.

AT first I was much inclined to run for help, or at least for counsel, either to Lord Castlewood, or to Major Hockin; but further consideration kept me from doing anything of the kind. In the first place, neither of them would do much good; for my cousin's ill-health would prevent him from helping me, even if his strange view of the case did not; while the excellent Major was much too hot and hasty for a delicate task like this. And again, I might lose the most valuable and important of all chances, by being away from the spot just now. And so I remained at Shoxford for awhile, keeping strict watch upon the stranger's haunt, and asking about him by means of Mrs. Busk.

"I have heard more about him, Miss," she said one day, when the down-letters had been despatched, which happened about middle-day. He has been here only those three times this summer, upon excuse of fishing always. He stays at old Wellham, about five miles down the river, where the people are not true Moonites. And one thing that puzzles them is, that although he puts up there simply for the angling, he always chooses times when the water is so low that to catch fish is next to impossible. He left his fishing quarters upon the very day after you saw him searching so; and he spoke as if he did not mean to come again this season. And they say that they don't want him neither, he is such a morose, close-fisted man; and drinking nothing but water, there is very little profit with him."

"And did you find out what his name is? How cleverly you have managed!"

"He passes by the name of 'Captain Brown;' but the landlord of his inn, who has been an old soldier, is sure he was never in the army, nor any other branch of the service. He thinks that he lives by inventing things, for he is always at some experiments, and one of his great points is to make a lamp that will burn and move about under water. To be sure you see the object of that, Miss?"

"No, really, Mrs. Busk, I cannot. I have not your penetration."

"Why, of course, to find what he cannot find upon land. There is something of great importance there, either for its value, or its meaning. Have you ever been told that your poor grandfather wore any diamonds or precious jewels?"

"No. I have asked about that most especially. He had nothing about him to tempt a robber. He was a very strong-willed man, and he hated outward trumpery."

"Then it must be something that this man himself has dropped, unless it were a document, or any other token, missing from his lordship. And few things of that sort would last for twenty years almost."

"Nineteen years, the day after to-morrow," I answered, with a glance at my pocket-book. "I determined to be here on that very day. No doubt I am very superstitious. But one thing I cannot understand is this—what reason can there have been for his letting so many years pass, and then hunting like this?"

"No one can answer that question, Miss, without knowing more than we know. But many reasons might be supposed. He might have been roving abroad, for instance, just as you and your father have been. Or he might not have known that the thing was there; or it might not have been of importance, till lately. Or he might have been afraid, until something else happened. Does he know that you are now in England?"

"How can I possibly tell, Mrs. Busk? He seems to know a great deal too much. He found me out when I was at Colonel Gundry's. At least I conclude so, from what I know now, but I hope he does not know,"—and at such a dreadful idea, I shuddered.

"I am almost sure that he cannot know it," the good post-mistress answered; "or he would have found means to put an end to you. That would have been his first object."

"But, Mrs. Busk," I said, being much disturbed by her calmness; "surely, surely he is not to be allowed to make an end of every one! I came to this country with the full intention of going into everything. But I did not mean at all, except in my very best moments, to sacrifice myself. It seems too bad—too bad to think of."

"So it is, Miss Erema," Mrs. Busk replied, without any congenial excitement; "it does seem hard for them that have the liability on them. But still, Miss, you have always shown such a high sense of duty, and of what you were about——"

"I can't, I cannot. There are times, I do assure you, when I am fit for nothing, Mrs. Busk, and wish myself back in America. And if this man is to have it all his own way——"

"Not he, Miss. Not he. Be you in no hurry. Could he even have his way with our old miller? No, Master Withypool was too many for him."

"That is a new thing. You never told me that. What did he try to do with the miller?"

"I don't justly know what it was, Miss Erema; I never spoke to miller about it; and indeed I have had no time since I heard of it. But those that told me said that the tall strange gentleman was terribly put out, and left the gate with a black cloud upon his face, and the very next day the miller's daughter died, quite sudden and mysterious."

"How very strange! But now I have got a new idea. Has the miller a strong high dam to his pond? And a good stout sluice-gate at the end?"

"Yes, Miss, to be sure he has," said Mrs. Busk; "otherwise how could he grind at all, when the river is so low as it is sometimes?"

"Then I know what he wanted; and I will take a leaf out of his own book—the miscreant! He wanted the miller to stop back the water, and leave the pool dry at the 'Murder-bridge.' Would it be possible for him to do that?"

"I cannot tell you, Miss; but your thought is very clever. It is likely enough that he did want that; though he never would dare to ask without some pretence,—some other cause I mean, to show for it. He may have been thinking that whatever he was wanting was likely to be under water. And that shows another thing, if it is so."

"Mrs. Busk, my head goes round, with such a host of complications. I do my best to think them out,—and then there comes another!"

"No, Miss; this only clears things up a little. If the man cannot be sure whether what he is looking for is on land, or under water, it seems to me almost to show that it was lost at the murder-time, in the dark and flurry. A man would know, if he dropped anything in the water by daylight, from the splash and the ripple, and so on, for the stream is quite slow at that corner. He dropped it, Miss, when he did the deed; or else it came away from his lordship."

"Nothing was lost, as I said before, from the body of my grandfather; so far at least as our knowledge goes. Whatever was lost was the murderer's. Now please to tell me all about the miller, and how I may get round him."

"You make me laugh in the middle of black things, Miss, by the way you have of putting them. But as to the miller,—Master Withypool is a wonder, as concerns the ladies. He is one of those men that stand up for everything, when a man tries upper side of them. But let a woman come, and get up under, and there he is—a piecrust lifted. Why I, at my age, could get round him, as you call it. But you, Miss—and more than that, you are something like his daughter; and the old man frets after her terrible. Go you into his yard, and just smile upon him, Miss; and if the Moon-river can be stopped, he'll stop it for you."

This seemed a very easy way to do it. But I told Mrs. Busk that I would pay well also, for the loss of a day's work at the mill was more than fifty smiles could make up.

But she told me, above all things, not to do that. For old Master Withypool was of that sort that he would stand for an hour with his

hands in his pocket, for a halfpenny, if not justly owing from him. But nothing more angered him than a bribe to step outside of his duty. He had plenty of money, and was proud of it. But sooner would he lose a day's work, to do a kindness, when he was sure of having right behind it, than take a week's profit without earning it. And very likely that was where the dark man failed, from presuming that money would do everything. However, there was nothing like judging for oneself; and if I would like to be introduced, she could do it for me with the best effect; taking as she did a good hundred-weight of best "households" from him every week, although not herself in the baking line, but always keeping quartern bags, because the new baker did adulterate so.

I thought of her father, and how things work round; but that they would do without remarks of mine. So I said nothing on that point, but asked whether Master Withypool would require any introduction. And to this Mrs. Busk said, 'Oh, dear no!' And her throat had been a little rough since Sunday, and the dog was chained tight, even if any dog would bite a sweet young lady; and to her mind the miller would be more taken up, and less fit to vapour into obstacles, if I were to hit upon him all alone, just when he came out to the bank of his cabbage-garden, not so very long after his dinner, to smoke his pipe and to see his things a-growing.

It was time to get ready if I meant to catch him then, for he always dined at one o'clock, and the mill was some three or four meadows up the stream; therefore as soon as Mrs. Busk had re-assured me that she was quite certain of my enemy's departure, I took my drawing things, and set forth to call upon Master Withypool.

Passing through the churchyard, which was my nearest way, and glancing sadly at the "fairy ring," I began to have some uneasiness about the possible issue of my new scheme. Such a thing required more thinking out than I had given to it. For instance, what reason could I give the miller for asking so strange a thing of him? And how could the whole of the valley be hindered from making the greatest talk about the stoppage of their own beloved Moon, even if the Moon could be stopped without every one of them rushing down to see it? And if it was so talked of, would it not be certain to come to the ears of that awful man? And if so, how long before he found me out, and sent me to rejoin my family?

These thoughts compelled me to be more discreet; and having lately done a most honourable thing, in refusing to read that letter, I felt a certain right to play a little trick now, of a purely harmless character. I ran back therefore to my writing-desk, and took from its secret drawer a beautiful golden American eagle, a large coin, larger and handsomer than any in the English coinage. Uncle Sam gave it to me, on my birthday; and I would not have taken 50*l.* for it. With this I hurried to that bridge of fear, which I had not yet brought myself to go across; and

then, not to tell any story about it, I snipped a little hole in the corner of my pocket, while my hand was still steady ere I had to mount the bridge. Then pinching that hole up with a squeeze, I ran, and got upon that wicked bridge, and then let go. The heavy gold coin fell upon the rotten plank, and happily rolled into the water, as if it were glad not to tempt its makers to any more sin, for the sake of it.

Shutting up thought, for fear of despising myself for the coinage of such a little trick, I hurried across the long meadow to the mill, and went through the cow-gate into the yard, and the dog began to bark at me. Seeing that he had a strong chain on, I regarded him with lofty indignation. "Do you know what Jowler would do to you?" I said; "Jowler, a dog worth ten of you. He would take you by the neck, and drop you into that pond, for daring to insult his mistress!" The dog appeared to feel the force of my remarks; for he lay down again, and with one eye watched me, in a manner amusing, but insidious. Then taking good care to keep out of his reach, I went to the mill-pond, and examined it.

It looked like a very nice pond indeed, long, and large, and well banked up, not made into any particular shape, but producing little rushy elbows. The water was now rather low, and very bright (though the Moon itself is not a crystal stream), and a school of young minnows, just watching a water-spider with desirous awe, at sight of me broke away, and reunited, with a speed and precision that might shame the whole of our very best modern fighting. Then many other things made a dart away, and furrowed the shadow of the willows; till distance quieted the fear of man—that most mysterious thing in nature—and the shallow pool was at peace again, and bright with unruffled reflections.

"What ails the dog?" said a deep gruff voice, and the poor dog received a contemptuous push, not enough to hurt him, but to wound his feelings, for doing his primary duty. "Servant, Miss! What can I do for you? Footpath is t'other side of that there hedge."

"Yes, but I left the footpath on purpose. I came to have a talk with you, if you will allow me."

"Sartain! sartain!" the miller replied, lifting a broad floury hat and showing a large grey head. "Will you come into house, Miss, or into gearden?"

I chose the garden, and he led the way, and set me down upon an old oak bench, where the tinkle of the water through the flood-gates could be heard.

"So you be come to paint the mill at last," he said. "Many a time I've looked out for you. The young leddy down to Mother Busk's, of course. Many's the time we've longed for you to come, you reminds us so of somebody. Why, my old missus can't set eyes on you in church, Miss, without being forced to sit down a'most. But we thought it very pretty of you not to come, Miss, while the trouble was so new upon us."

Something in my look or voice made the old man often turn away, while I told him that I would make the very best drawing of his mill that I could manage, and would beg him to accept it.

"Her ought to a'been on the plank," he said, with trouble in getting his words out. "But there—what good? Her never will stand on that plank no more. No, nor any other plank."

I told him that I would put her on the plank, if he had any portrait of her, showing her dress and her attitude. Without saying what he had, he led me to the house, and stood behind me, while I went inside. And then he could not keep his voice, as I went from one picture of his darling to another, not thinking (as I should have done) of what his feelings might be; but trying, as no two were at all alike, to extract a general idea of her.

"Nobody knows what her were to me," the old man said, with a quiet little noise, and a sniff behind my shoulder. "And with one day's illness, her died—her died."

"But you have others left. She was not the only one. Please, Mr. Withypool, to try to think of that. And your dear wife still alive, to share your trouble. Just think for a moment of what happened to my father. His wife and six children all swept off in a month—and I just born, to be brought up with a bottle!"

I never meant, of course, to have said a word of this; but was carried away by that common old idea of consoling great sorrow with a greater one. And the sense of my imprudence broke vexatiously upon me, when the old man came and stood between me and his daughter's portraits.

"Well, I never!" he exclaimed, with his bright eyes steadfast with amazement. "I know you now, Miss. Now I knows you. To think what a set of blind newts us must be! And you the very moral of your poor father, in a female kind of way! To be sure, how well I knew the Captain! A nicer man never walked the earth, neither a more unlucky one."

"I beg you—let me beg you," I began to say; "since you have found me out like this——"

"Hush, Miss, hush! Not my own wife shall know, unless your own tongue telleth her. A proud man I shall be, Miss Raumur," he continued with emphasis on my local name, "if aught can be found in my power to serve you. Why, Lord bless you, Miss," he whispered, looking round, "your father and I has spent hours together! He were that pleasant in his ways and words, he would drop in from his fishing, when the water was too low, and sit on that very same bench where you sat, and smoke his pipe with me, and tell me about battles, and ask me about bread. And many a time I have slipped up the gate, to give him more water for his flies to play, and the fish not to see him so plainly. Ah, we have had many pleasant spells together; and his eldest boy and girl, Master George, and Miss Henrietta, used to come and fetch

our eggs. My Polly then was in love with him, we said; she sat upon his lap so, when she were two years old, and played with his beautiful hair, and blubbered—oh she did blubber, when the Captain went away!”

This invested Polly with new interest for me, and made me determine to spare no pains in putting her pretty figure well upon the plank. Then I said to the miller, “How kind of you to draw up your sluice-gates to oblige my father! Now will you put them down and keep them down, to do a great service both to him and me?”

Without a moment's hesitation he promised that anything he could do should be done, if I would only tell him what I wanted. But perhaps it would be better to have our talk outside. Taking this hint, I followed him back to the bench in the open garden, and there explained what I wished to have done, and no longer concealed the true reason. The good miller answered that with all his heart he would do that much to oblige me, and a hundred times more than that; but some little thought and care were needful. With the river so low as it was now, he could easily stop the back-water, and receive the whole of the current in his dam, and keep it from flowing down his wheel-trough, and thus dry the lower channel for perhaps half-an-hour, which would be ample for my purpose. Engineering difficulties there were none; but two or three other things must be heeded. Miller Sims, a mile or so down river, must be settled with, to fill his dam well, and begin to discharge, when the upper water failed; so as not to dry the Moon all down the valley, which would have caused a commotion. Miller Sims being own brother-in-law to Master Withypool, that could be arranged easily enough, after one day's notice. But a harder thing to manage would be to do the business without rousing curiosity, and setting abroad a rumour which would be sure to reach my enemy. And the hardest thing of all, said Master Withypool, smiling as he thought of what himself had once been, would be to keep those blessed boys away, who find out everything, and go everywhere. Not a boy of Shoxford but would be in the river, or dancing upon its empty bed, screeching and scolloping up into his cap any poor bewildered trout chased into the puddles, if it were allowed to leak out, however feebly, that the Moon water was to stop running. And then how was I to seek for anything?

This was a puzzle. But, with counsel, we did solve it. And we quietly stopped the Moon, without man or boy being much the wiser.

CHAPTER XLIII.

GOING TO THE BOTTOM.

IT is not needful to explain everything, any more than it was for me to tell the miller about my golden eagle, and how I had managed to lose it in the Moon—a trick of which now I was heartily ashamed, in the face of honest kindness. So I need not tell how Master Withypool managed

to settle with his men, and to keep the boys unwitting of what was about to come to pass. Enough that I got a note from him to tell me that the little river would be run out, just when all Shoxford was intent upon its dinner, on the second day after I had seen him. And he could not say for certain, but thought it pretty safe, that nobody would come near me, if I managed to be there, at a quarter before one, when the stream would begin to run dry, and I could watch it. I sent back a line by the pretty little girl, a sister of poor Polly, to say how much I thanked him, and how much I hoped that he himself would meet me there, if his time allowed. For he had been too delicate to say a word of that; but I felt that he had a good right to be there, and, knowing him now, I was not afraid.

Nearly everything came about as well as could be wished almost. Master Withypool took the precaution, early in the morning, to set his great fierce bull at large, who always stopped the footpath. This bull knew well the powers of a valley in conducting sound; and he loved to stand, as if at the mouth of a funnel, and roar down it, to another bull, a mile below him, belonging to his master's brother-in-law. And when he did this, there was scarcely a boy, much less a man or woman, with any desire to assert against him the public right of thoroughfare. Throughout that forenoon then, this bull bellowed nobly, still finding many very wicked flies about: so that two mitching boys, who meant to fish for minnows with a pin, were obliged to run away again.

However, I was in the dark about him, and as much afraid of him as anybody, when he broke into sight of me round a corner, without any tokens of amity. I had seen a great many great bulls before, including Uncle Sam's good black one, who might not have meant any mischief at all, and atoned for it—if he did—by being washed away so.

And therefore my courage soon returned, when it became quite clear that this animal now had been fastened with a rope and could come no nearer. For some little time then I waited all alone, as near that bridge as I could bring myself to stand, for Mrs. Busk, my landlady, could not leave the house yet, on account of the mid-day letters. Moreover, she thought that she had better stay away, as our object was to do things as quietly as could be.

Much as I had watched this bridge from a distance, or from my sheltering-place, I had never been able to bring myself to make any kind of sketch of it, or even to insert it in a landscape: although it was very well suited and expressive, from its crooked and antique simplicity. The overhanging also of the hawthorn tree (not ruddy yet, but russety with its colouring crop of coral) and the shaggy freaks of ivy above the twisted trunk, and the curve of the meadows and bold elbow of the brook, were such as an artist would have pitched his tent for, and tantalised poor London people with a dream of cool repose.

As yet the little river showed no signs of doing what the rustic—or surely it should have been the cockney—was supposed to stand still and wait for. There was no great rush of headlong water, for that is not

the manner of the stream in the very worst of weather ; but there was the usual style of coming on, with lips and steps at the sides, and cords of running towards the middle. Quite enough at any rate to make the trout jump, without any omen of impending drought, and to keep all the play and the sway of movement going on serenely.

I began to be afraid that the miller must have failed in his stratagem against the water-god, and that, as I had read in Pope's Homer, the liquid deity would beat the hero ; when all of a sudden there were signs that man was the master of this little rustic. Broad swords of flag and rapiers of water-grass, which had been quivering merrily, began to hang down and to dip themselves in loops ; and the stones of the brink showed dark green stripes on their sides, as they stood naked. Then fine little cakes of conglomerated stuff, which only a great man of nature could describe, came floating about, and curdling into corners, and holding on to one another in long-tailed strings. But they might do what they liked, and make their very best of it, as they fell away to nothing upon stones and mud. For now more important things began to open, the like of which never had been yielded up before ; plots of slimy gravel, varied with long streaks of yellow mud, dotted with large double shells, and parted into little oozy runs by wriggling water-weeds. And here was great commotion and sad panic of the fish, large fellows splashing and quite jumping out of water, as their favourite hovers and shelves ran dry, and darting away with their poor backs in the air, to the deepest hole they could think of. Hundreds must have come to flour, lard, and butter, if boys had been there to take advantage. But luckily things had been done so well that boys were now in their least injurious moment, destroying nothing worse than their own dinners.

A very little way below the old wooden bridge, the little river ran into a deepish pool, as generally happens at or near a corner, especially where there is a confluence sometimes. And seeing nothing, as I began to search intently, stirring with a long-handled spud which I had brought, I concluded that even my golden eagle had been carried into that deep place. However, water or no water, I resolved to have it out with that dark pool, as soon as the rest of the channel should be drained, which took a tormenting time to do ; and having thick boots on, I pinned up my skirts, and jumping down into the shoals, began to paddle, in a fashion which reminded me of childish days passed pleasantly in the Blue River.

Too busy thus to give a thought to any other thing, I did not even see the miller, until he said—

“ Good day, Miss,” lifting his hat, with a nice kind smile ; “ very busy, Miss, I see, and right you are to be so. The water will be upon us again in less than half-an-hour. Now let me clear away they black weeds for you. I brought this little shivel a'purpose. If I may make so bold, Miss, what do'e look to find here ? ”

“ I have not the very smallest notion,” I could only answer ; “ but if there is anything, it must be in that hole. I have searched all the

shallow part so closely that I doubt whether even a sixpence could escape me, unless it were buried in the mud or pebbles. Oh how can I manage to search that hole; there must be a yard of water there?"

"One thing I ought to have told'e for to do," Master Withypool whispered, as he went on shovelling—"to do what the boys do when they lose a farden—to send another after 'un. If so be now, afore the water was run out, you had stood on that there bridge and dropped a bright coin into it, a new half-crown, or a two-shilling piece, why the chances would be that the run of the current would a'taken it nigh to the likeliest spot for holding any other little matter as might a'dropped, permiskous you might say, into this same water."

"I have done so," I answered, "I have done that very thing, though not at all with that object. The day before yesterday a beautiful coin, a golden eagle of America, fell from my pocket on that upper plank, and rolled into the water. I would not lose it for a great deal, because it was given to me by my dearest friend, the greatest of all millers."

"And ha'n't you found it yet, Miss? Well, that is queer. Perhaps we shall find it now, with something to the back of it. I thought yon hole was too far below the bridge. But there your gold must be, and something else most likely. Plaise to wait a little bit, and us'll have the wet out of 'un. I never should a'thought of that but for your gold guinea, though."

With these words Master Withypool pulled his coat off, and rolled up his shirt-sleeves, displaying arms fit to hold their own even with Uncle Sam's almost; and then he fell to with his shovel and dug, while I ran, with my little spud, to help.

"Plaise keep out of way, Miss; I be afeard of knocking you. Not but what you works very brave, indeed, Miss."

Knowing what men are concerning "female efforts," I got out of the strong man's way, although there was plenty of room for me. What he wanted to do was plain enough—to dig a trench down the empty bed of the Moon river, deep enough to drain that pit, before the stream came down again.

"Never thought to run a race against my own old dam," he said, as he stopped for a moment to recover breath. "Us never knows what us may have to do. Old dam must be a'most busting now. But her's sound enough, till her beginneth to run over."

I did not say a word, because it might have done some mischief; but I could not help looking rather anxiously upstream, for fear of the water coming down with a rush, as it very soon must do. Master Withypool had been working, not as I myself would have done, from the lips of the dark pit downward; but from a steep run some twenty yards below, where there was almost a little cascade, when the river was full flowing; from this he had made his channel upward, cutting deeper as he came along, till now at the brink of the obstinate pool, his trench was two feet deep almost. I had no idea that any man could work so with a

shovel, which seems such a clumsy tool compared with a spade: but a gentleman who knows the country and the people, told me that, with their native weapon, Moonites will do as much digging in an hour as other folk get through in an hour and a half with a spade. But this may be only, perhaps, because they are working harder.

"Now," said Master Withypool at last, standing up, with a very red face, and desiring to keep all that unheeded; "now, Miss, to you it belongeth to tap this here little cornder, if desirable. Plaise to excoose of me going up of bank to tell 'e when the wet cometh down again."

"Please to do nothing of the sort," I answered, knowing that he offered to stand out of sight from a delicate dread of intrusion; "please to tap the pool yourself, and stay here, as a witness of what we find in it."

"As you plaise, Miss, as you plaise. Not a moment for to lose in arguing. Harken now, the water is a-topping of our dam. Her will be here in five minutes."

With three or four rapid turns of his shovel, which he spun almost as fast as a housemaid spins a mop, he fetched out the plug of earth severing his channel from the deep reluctant hole. And then I saw the wisdom of his way of working, for if he had dug downward from the pool itself, the water would have followed him all the way, and even drowned his tool out of its own strokes. Whereas now with a swirl and a curl of ropy mud, away rushed the thick, sluggish, obstinate fluid: and in less than two minutes the hole was almost dry.

The first thing I saw was my golden eagle, lodged about half way down the slope, on a crust of black sludge, from which I caught it up, and presented it to Master Withypool, as a small token and record of his kindness; and, to this day, he carries it upon his Sunday watch-chain.

"I always am lucky in finding things," I exclaimed, while he watched me, and the upstream too, whence a babble of water was approaching; "as sure as I live I have found it!"

"No doubt about your living, Miss. And the Captain were always lively. But what have your bright eyes hit upon? I see nort for the life of me."

"Look there," I cried, "at the very bottom of it—almost under the water. Here, where I put my spud—a bright blue line! Oh, can I go down, or is it quicksand?"

"No quicksand in our little river, Miss. But your father's daughter shannot go into the muck, while John Withypool stands by. I see un now, sure enough; now I see un! But her needeth care, or her may all goo away in mullock. Well, I thought my eyes was sharp enough; but I'm blest if I should have spied that though. A bit of flint, mebbe, or of blue glass bottle. Anyhow, us will see the bottom of un."

He was wasting no time while he spoke, but working steadfastly for his purpose, fixing the blade of his shovel below the little blue line I was peering at, so that no slip of the soft yellow slush should bury it down, and plunge over it. If that had once happened, good-bye to

all chance of ever beholding this thing again, for the river was coming with fury and foam, to assert its ancient right of way.

With a short laugh the miller jumped down into the pit. "Me to be served so, by my own mill-stream! Lor', if I don't pay you out for this!"

His righteous wrath failed to stop the water from pouring into the pit behind him; and, strong as he was, he nearly lost his footing, having only mud to stand upon. It seemed to me that he was going to be drowned, and I offered him the handle of my spud to help him; but he stopped where he was, and was not going to be hurried.

"I got un now," he said; "now I don't mind coming out. You see if I don't pay you out for this! Why, I always took you for a reasonable hanimal!"

He shook his fist strongly at the river, which had him well up to the middle by this time; and then he disdainfully waded out, with wrath in all his countenance.

"I've a great mind to stop there, and see what her would do," he said to me, forgetting altogether what he went for. "And I would, if I had had my dinner. A scat of a thing as I can manage with my thumb! Ah, you have made a bad day of it."

"But what have you found, Mr. Withypool?" I asked, for I could not enter into his wrath against the water, wet as he was to the shoulders. "You have something in your hand. May I see it, if you please? And then do please to go home, and change your clothes."

"A thing I never did in my life, Miss; and should be ashamed to begin at this age. Clothes gets wet, and clothes dries on us, same as un did on the sheep afore us; else they gets stiff and creasy. What this little thing is ne'er abody may tell, in my line of life—but look'th aristocratic."

The "mullock," as he called it, from his hands, and from the bed where it had lain so long, so crusted the little thing which he gave me, that I dipped it again in the swelling stream, and rubbed it with both hands, to make out what it was. And then I thought how long it had lain there; and suddenly to my memory it came, that in all likelihood the time of that was nineteen years this-very day.

"Will another year pass," I cried, "before I make out all about it? What are you, and who, now looking at me with such sad, sad eyes?"

For I held in my hand a most handsome locket, of blue enamel and diamonds, with a back of chased gold, and in front the miniature of a beautiful young woman, done as they never seem to do them now. The work was so good, and the fitting so close, that no drop of water had entered, and the face shone through the crystal glass as fresh as the day it was painted. A very lovely face it was, yet touched with a shade of sadness, as the loveliest faces generally are; and the first thought of any beholder would be—"that woman was born for sorrow."

The miller said as much, when I showed it to him.

"Lord bless my heart! I hope the poor craitur' hathn't lasted half so long as her pictur' hath."





I OPENED IT AND READ.

THE

CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

AUGUST, 1877.

Crema; or, My Father's Sin.

CHAPTER XLIV.

HERMETICALLY SEALED.



THE discovery which I have described above (but not half so well as the miller tells it now) created in my young heart a feeling of really strong curiosity. To begin with, how could this valuable thing have got into the Moon-stream, and lain there so long, unsought for, or at best so unskilfully sought for? What connection could it have with the tragic death of my grandfather? Why was that man so tardily come to search for it, if he might do so without anybody near him? Again, what woman was this

whose beauty no water or mud could even manage to disguise? That last was a most disturbing question to one's bodily peace of mind. And then came another yet more urgent—what was in the inside of this tight case?

That there was something inside of it seemed almost a certainty. The mere value of the trinket, or even the fear that it ever might turn up as evidence, would scarcely have brought that man so often, to stir suspicion by seeking it. Though after so long a time he well might hope that suspicion was dead and buried. And being unable to open this case—after breaking three good nails over it, and then the point of a penknife—I turned to Master Withypool, who was stamping on the grass to drain himself.

“What sort of a man was that,” I asked, “who wanted you to do what now you have so kindly done for me? About a month or six weeks ago? Do please to tell me, as nearly as you can.”

If Mrs. Withypool had been there she might have lost all patience with me, for putting long questions so selfishly to a man who had done so much for me, and whose clothes were now dripping in a wind which had arisen, to test his theory of drying. He must have lost a large quantity of what scientific people call “caloric.” But never a shiver gave he in exchange.

“Well, Miss,” he said; “I was thinking a’most of speaking on that very matter. More particular since you found that little thing, with the pretty lady inside of it. It were borne in on my mind that thissom were the very thing he were arter.”

“No doubt of it,” I answered, with far less patience, though being comparatively dry. “But what was he like? Was he like this portrait?”

“This picture of the lady? No; I can’t say that he were, so much. The face of a big man he hath, with short, black fringes to it. Never showeth to my idea any likeliness of a woman. No, no, Miss; think you not at all that you have got him in that blue thing. Though some of their pictures is like men, the way they buttons up nowadays.”

“I did not mean that it was meant for him; what I mean is, do you see any sign of family likeness? Any resemblance about the eyes, or mouth, or forehead?”

“Well, now I don’t know but what I might,” replied Mr. Withypool, gazing very hard; “if I was to look at ’un long enough a’ might find some’at favouring of that tall fellow, I do believe. Indeed, I do believe the more I look the more I diskivers the image of him.”

The good and kind miller’s perception of the likeness strengthened almost too fast, as if the wish were father to the thought, until I saw clearly how selfish I was in keeping him in that state so long; for I knew, from what Mrs. Busk had told me, that in spite of all his large and grand old English sentiments about his clothes, his wife would make him change them all, ere ever she gave him a bit of dinner, and would force him then to take a glass of something hot. So I gave him a thousand thanks, though not a thousandth part of what he deserved, and saw him well on his homeward way, before I went back to consider things.

As soon as my landlady was at leisure to come in and talk with me, and as soon as I had told her how things happened, and shown her our

discovery, we both of us did the very same thing, and said almost the very same words. Our act was, with finger, and nail, and eye, to rime into every jot of it; and our words were—

“I am sure there is something inside. If not, it would open sensibly.”

In the most senseless and obstinate manner it refused not only to open, but to disclose anything at all about itself. Whether it ever had been meant to open, and if so where, and by what means,—whether without any gift of opening it might have a hidden thing inside,—whether, when opened by force or skill, it might show something we had no business with, or (which would be far worse) nothing at all—good Mrs. Busk and myself tested, tapped, and felt, and blew, and listened, and tried every possible overture, and became at last quite put out with it.

“It is all of a piece with the villains that owned it,” the post-mistress exclaimed at last. “There is no penetrating either it, or them. Most likely they have made away with this beautiful lady on the cover. Kill one, kill fifty, I have heard say. I hope Master Withypool will let out nothing; or evil it will be for you, Miss. If I was you, I would carry a pistol.”

“Now please not to frighten me, Mrs. Busk. I am not very brave at the best of times; and this has made me so nervous. If I carried a pistol, I should shoot myself the very first hour of wearing it. The mere thought of it makes me tremble. Oh why was I ever born, to do man’s work?”

“Because, Miss, a man would not have done it half so well. When you saw that villain digging, a man would have rushed out, and spoiled all chance. And now what man could have ever found this? Would Master Withypool ever have emptied the Moon river for a man, do you think? Or could any man have been down among us, all this time, in this jealous place, without his business being long ago sifted out, and scattered over him? No, no, Miss, you must not talk like that—and with me as well to help you. The rogues will have reason to wish, I do believe, that they had only got a man to deal with.”

In this argument there were points which had occurred to me before; but certainly it is a comfort to have one’s own ideas, in a doubtful matter, reproduced, and perhaps put better, by a mind to which one may have lent them perhaps, with a loan all unacknowledged. However, trouble teaches care, and does it so well that the master and the lesson in usage of words are now the same; therefore I showed no sign of being suggested with my own suggestions, but only asked quietly “What am I to do?”

“My dear young lady,” Mrs. Busk replied, after stopping some time to think of it; “my own opinion is, for my part, that you ought to consult somebody.”

“But I am, Mrs. Busk. I am now consulting you.”

“Then I think, Miss, that this precious case should be taken at once to a jeweller, who can open it without doing any damage, which is more than we can do.”

“To be sure; I have thought of that,” I replied; “but how can that be done without arousing curiosity? Without the jeweller seeing its contents, if indeed it has any? And in that case the matter would be no longer at our own disposal, as now it is. I have a great mind to split it with a hammer. What are the diamonds to me?”

“It is not the diamonds but the picture, Miss, that may be most important. And more than that, you might ruin the contents, so as not to make head or tail of them. No, no; it is a risk that must be run; we must have a jeweller, but not one of this neighbourhood.”

“Then I shall have to go to London again, and perhaps lose something most important here. Can you think of no other way out of it?”

“No, Miss, at present I see nothing else—unless you will place it all in the hands of the police.”

“Constable Jobbins to wit, or his son! No thank you, Mrs. Busk, not yet. Surely we are not quite reduced to such a hopeless pass as that. My father knew what the police were worth, and so does Betsy, and so does Major Hockin. ‘Pompous noodles,’ the Major calls them, who lay hold of everything by the wrong end.”

“Then if he can lay hold of the right end, Miss, what better could you do than consult him?”

I had been thinking of this already, and pride alone debarred me. That gentleman’s active nature drove him to interfere with other people’s business, even though he had never heard of them: and yet through some strange reasoning of his own, or blind adoption of public unreason, he had made me dislike, or at any rate not like him; until he began to show signs at last of changing his opinion. And now the question was—had he done that enough for me, without loss of self-respect, to open my heart to him, and seek counsel?

In settling that point the necessity of the case overrode perhaps some scruples; in sooth, I had nobody else to go to. What could I do with Lord Castlewood? Nothing; all his desire was to do exactly what my father would have done: and my father had never done anything more than rove and roam his life out. To my mind this was dreadful now, when every new thing, rising round me, more and more clearly to my mind established what I never had doubted—his innocence. Again, what good could I do by seeking Betsy’s opinion about it, or that of Mrs. Price, or Stixon, or any other person I could think of? None whatever—and perhaps much harm. Taking all in all, as things turn up, I believed myself to be almost equal to the cleverest of those three in sense, and in courage not inferior. Moreover, a sort of pride—perhaps very small, but not contemptible—put me against throwing my affairs so much into the hands of servants.

For this idea Uncle Sam, no doubt the most liberal of men, would perhaps condemn me. But still I was not of the grand new world, whose pedigrees are arithmetic (at least with many of its items, though the true Uncle Sam was the last for that); neither could I come up to the large-

ness of universal brotherhood. That was not to be expected of a female ; and few things make a man more angry than for his wife to aspire to it. No such ideas had ever troubled me ; I had more important things to think of, or at any rate something to be better carried out. And of all these desultory thoughts it came that I packed up that odious, but very lovely, locket, without further attempt to unriddle it, and persuaded my very good and clever Mrs. Busk to let me start right early. By so doing I could have three hours with a good gentleman always in a hurry, and yet return for the night to Shoxford, if he should advise me so.

Men and women seem alike to love to have their counsels taken ; and the equinox being now gone by, Mrs. Busk was ready to begin, before the tardy sun was up, who begins to give you short measure at once when he finds the weights go against him. Mrs. Busk considered not the sun, neither any of his doings. The time of day was more momentous than any of the sun's proceedings. Railway time was what she had to keep (unless a good customer dropped in), and as for the sun—"clock slow, clock fast" in the almanacs showed how he managed things ; and if that was not enough, who could trust him to keep time after what he had done upon the dial of Ahaz ? Reasoning thus—if reason it was—she packed me off in a fly for the nearest railway station, and by mid-day I found the Major labouring on his ramparts.

After proper salutations, I could not help expressing wonder at the rapid rise of things. Houses here, and houses there, springing up like children's teeth, three or four in a row together, and then a long gap, and then some more. And down the slope, a grand hotel, open for refreshment, though as yet it had no roof on ; for the Major, in virtue of his charter, defied all the magistrates to stop him from selling whatever was saleable on or off the premises. But noblest and grandest of all to look at, was the "Bruntsea Athenæum, Lyceum, Assembly Rooms, Institution for Mutual Instruction, Christian Young Men's Congress, and Sanitary, Saline, Hydropathic Hall, at nominal prices to be had gratis."

"How you do surprise me !" I said to Major Hockin, after reading all that, which he kindly requested me to do with care ; "but where are the people to come from ?"

"Erema," he replied, as if that question had been asked too often ; "you have not had time to study the laws of political economy—the noblest of noble sciences. The first of incontrovertible facts is, that supply creates demand. Now ask yourself whether there could even be a Yankee, if ideas like yours had occurred to Columbus."

This was beyond me ; for I never could argue, and strove to the utmost not to do so. "You understand those things, and I do not," said I, with a smile, which pleased him ; "my dear Aunt Mary always says that you are the cleverest man in the world ; and she must know most about it."

"Partiality ! partiality !" cried the Major, with a laugh, and pulling his front hair up. "Such things pass by me like the idle wind ; or

rather perhaps they sadden me, from my sense of my own deficiencies. But bless me—dinner must be waiting! Look at that fellow's trowel—he knows: he turns up the point of it like a spoon. They say that he can smell his dinner two miles off. We all dine at one o'clock now, that I may rout up every man-Jack of them."

The Major sounded a steam-guard's whistle, and led me off in the rapidly vanishing wake of his hungry workmen.

CHAPTER XLV.

CONVICTION.

SIR MONTAGUE HOCKIN, to my great delight, was still away from Bruntsea. If he had been there, it would have been a most awkward thing for me to meet him, or to refuse to do so. The latter course would probably have been the one forced upon me by self-respect, and affection towards my cousin; and yet if so, I could scarcely have avoided an explanation with my host. From the nature of the subject, and several other reasons, this would have been most unpleasant; and even now I was haunted with doubts, as I had been from the first, whether I ought not to have told Mrs. Hockin long ago what had been said of him. At first sight that seemed the honest thing to do; but three things made against it. It might seem forward and meddling; it must be a grievous thing to my cousin to have his sad story discussed again; and, lastly, I had promised Mrs. Price that her words should go no further. So that on the whole perhaps I acted aright in keeping that infamous tale to myself, as long as ever it was possible.

But now ere ever I spoke of him—which I was always loth to do—Mrs. Hockin told me that he very seldom came to see them now, and when he did come he seemed to be uneasy, and rather strange in his manners. I thought to myself that the cause of this was clear. Sir Montague, knowing that I went to Castlewood, was pricked in his conscience, and afraid of having his vile behaviour to my cousin disclosed. However, that idea of mine was wrong, and a faulty conception of simple youth. The wicked forgive themselves so quickly, if even they find any need of it, that everybody else is supposed to do the same. With this I have no patience. A wrong unrepented of, and unatoned, gathers interest, instead of getting discount, from lost time. And so I hated that man tenfold.

Good Mrs. Hockin lamented his absence, not only for the sake of her darling fowls, but also because she considered him a check upon the Major's enterprise. Great as her faith was in her husband's ability and keenness, she was often visited with dark misgivings about such heavy outlay. Of economy (as she often said) she certainly ought to know something, having had to practise it as strictly as anybody in the kingdom, from an age she could hardly remember. But as for what was now brought forward as a great discovery—economy in politics—Mrs.

Hockin had tried to follow great opinions, but could only find, so far, downright extravagance. Supply (as she had observed fifty times, with her own butcher and fishmonger), instead of creating demand, produced a lot of people lounging round the corner, till the price came down to nothing. And if it were so with their institutions—as her dear husband called his new public-house—who was to find all the interest due to the building and land societies? Truly she felt that Sir Rufus Hockin, instead of doing any good to them, had behaved very oddly in leaving them land, and not even a shilling to work it with.

It relieved her much to tell me this, once for all and in strict confidence; because her fine old-fashioned (and we now may say quite obsolete) idea of duty towards her husband forbade her ever to say to him, or about him, when it could be helped, anything he might not like, anything which to an evil mind might convey a desire on her part to meddle with—with——

“Political economy,” I said; and she laughed, and said, yes, that was just it. The Major of course knew best, and she ought with all her heart to trust him not to burden their old days with debt, after all the children they had brought up and fairly educated, upon the professional income of a distinguished British officer, who is not intended by his superiors to provide successors.

“Perhaps it is like the boiled eggs they send me,” the old lady said, with her soft sweet smile, “for my poor hens to sit upon. Their race is too good to be made common. So now they get tinkers’ and tailors’ boys, after much competition, and the crammed sons of cooks. And in peace-time they do just as well.”

Of such things I knew nothing; but she seemed to speak with bitterness, the last thing to be found in all her nature, yet discoverable—as all bad things (except its own) are—by the British Government. I do not speak from my own case, in which they discovered nothing.

By the time these things had been discussed, my host (who was always particular about his dress) came down to dinner, and not until that was over could I speak of the subject which had brought me there. No sooner had I begun my tale, than they both perceived that it must neither be flurried nor interrupted, least of all should it be overheard.

“Come into my lock-up,” cried the Major; “or, better still, let us go out of doors. We can sit in my snugery on the cliff, with only gulls and jackdaws to listen, and mount my telescope, and hoist my flag, and the men know better than to skulk their work. I can see every son of a gun of them as clearly as if I had them on parade. You wish Mrs. Hockin to come, I suppose. Very well, let us be off at once. I shall count my fellows coming back from dinner.”

With a short quick step the Major led the way to a beautifully situated outpost, at a corner of the cliff, where land and sea for many a fair league rolled below. A niche of the chalk had been cleverly enlarged and scooped into a shell-shaped bower, not indeed gloriously

overhung, as in the Far West might have been, but broken of its white defiant glare by climbing and wandering verdure. Seats and slabs of oak were fixed to check excess of chalkiness, and a parapet of a pattern which the Major called Egyptian saved fear of falling down the cliff, and served to spread a paper on, or to rest a telescope.

"From this point," said the Major, crossing wiry yet substantial legs, "the whole of my little domain may be comprised as in a bird's-eye view. It is nothing of course, much less than nothing, compared with the Earl of Crowcombe's, or the estate of Viscount Gamberley; still, such as it is, it carries my ideas, and it has an extent of marine frontage such as they might envy. We are asked 5*l.* per foot for a thread of land fronting on a highway, open to every kind of annoyance, overlooked, without anything to look at. How much then per fathom (or measure, if you please, by cable-lengths) is land worth fronting the noble, silent, uncontaminating, healthful sea? Whence can come no costermongers' cries, no agitating skirl of bagpipes, or the maddening hurdy-gurdy, no German band expecting half-a-crown for the creation of insanity; only sweet murmur of the wavelets, and the melodious whistle of a boatman catching your breakfast lobster. Where, again, if you love the picturesque——"

"My dear," said Mrs. Hockin gently, "you always were eloquent from the first day I saw you; and if you reconstitute our borough, as you hope, and enter Parliament for Bruntsea, what a sensation you will create! But I wished to draw your attention to the fact that Erema is waiting to tell her tale."

"To be sure. I will not stop her. Eloquence is waste of time, and I never yet had half a second to spare. Fear no eloquence from me; facts and logic are my strong points; and now, Erema, show what yours are."

At first this made me a little timid, for I had never thought that any strong points would be needed for telling a simple tale. To my mind the difficulty was—not to tell the story, but to know what to make of it when told; and soon I forgot all about myself in telling what I had seen, heard, and found.

The Major could not keep himself from stamping great holes through his—something I forget the name of, but people sow it to make turf of chalk—and dear "Aunt Mary's" soft pink cheeks, which her last grandchild might envy, deepened to a tone of rose; while her eyes, so full of heavenly faith when she got upon lofty subjects, took a most human flash and sparkle of hatred not theological.

"Seven!" she cried; "oh Nicholas, Nicholas, you never told me there were seven!"

"There were not seven graves without the mother," the Major answered sternly. "And what odds whether seven or seventy? The criminality is the point, not the accumulation of results. Still, I never heard of so big a blackguard. And what did he do next, my dear?"

The way in which they took my story was a great surprise to me ; because, although they were so good, they had never paid any attention to it, until it became exciting. They listened with mere politeness until the scent of a very wicked man began to taint my narrative ; but from that moment they drew nearer, and tightened their lips, and held their breath, and let no word escape them. It made me almost think that people, even of pure excellence, weaned as they are from wicked things by teaching and long practice, must still retain a hankering for them done at other people's cost.

"And now," cried the Major, "let us see it ;" even before I had time to pull it out, though ready to be quick from a knowledge of his ways. "Show it, and you shall have my opinion. And Mary's is certain to agree with mine. My dear, that makes yours so priceless."

"Then, Nicholas, if I retain my own, yours is of no value. Never mind that. Now don't catch words, or neither opinion will be worth a thought. My dear, let us see it, and then judge."

"My own idea, but not so well expressed," Major Hockin answered, as he danced about ; while I with stupid haste was tugging at my package of the hateful locket. For I had not allowed that deceitful thing any quarters in my pocket, where dear little relics of my father lay, but had fastened it under my dress in a manner intended in no way for gentlemen to think about. Such little things annoy one's comfort, and destroy one's power of being quite high-minded. However, I got it out at last, and a flash of the sun made the difference.

"Brilliants, Mary !" the Major cried ; "brilliants of first water ; such as we saw, you know where ; and any officer in the British army, except myself, I do believe, would have had them at once in his camlet pouch—my dear, you know all about it. Bless my heart, how slow you are ! Is it possible you have forgotten it ? There came out a fellow, and I cut him down, as my duty was, without ceremony. You know how I used to do it, out of regulation, with a slash like this——"

"Oh Nicholas, you will be over the cliff ! You have shown me how you used to do it, a thousand times—but you had no cricks in your back then—and remember how brittle the chalk is."

"The chalk may be brittle, but I am tough. I insist upon doing everything as well as I did it forty years ago. Mary, you ought not to speak to me like that. Eighteen, nineteen, twenty brilliants, worth 20*l.* a-piece upon an average, I do believe. Four hundred pounds. That would finish our hotel."

"Nicholas !"

"My dear, I was only in fun. Erema understands me. But who is this beautiful lady ?"

"The very point," I exclaimed, while he held it so that the pensive beauty of the face gleamed in soft relief among bright blue enamel and sparkling gems. "The very thing that I must know—that I would give my life to know—that I have fifty thousand fancies——"

"Now don't be excited, Erema, if you please. What will you give me to tell you who it is?"

"All those diamonds, which I hate the sight of, and three-quarters of my half-nugget; and if that is not enough——"

"It is a thousand times too much; I will tell you for just one smile, and I know it will be a smile of unbelief."

"No, no, I will believe it," whoever you say," with excitement superior to grammar, I cried; "only tell me at once—don't be so long."

"But then you won't believe me when I do tell you," the Major replied in the most provoking way. "I shall tell you the last person you would ever think of, and then you will only laugh at me."

"I won't laugh; how can I laugh in such a matter? I will believe you if you say it is—Aunt Mary."

"My dear, you had better say at once that it is I, and have no more mystery about it." Mrs. Hockin was almost as impatient as myself.

"Mrs. Hockin, you must indeed entertain an exalted idea of your own charms. I knew that you were vain, but certainly did not—well then, if you will allow me no peace—this is the lady that lives down in the ruin, and stands like a pillar, by my pillar-box."

"I never thought you would joke like that," I cried, with vexation and anger. "Oh, is it a subject to be joked about?"

"I never was graver in my life; and you promised implicitly to believe me. At any rate, believe that I speak in earnest."

"That I must believe, when you tell me so. But what makes you think such a wonderful thing? I should have thought nothing more impossible. I had made up my mind that it was Flittamore, who lived down here; but this cannot be she. Flittamore was unheard of at the time of my grandfather's death. Moreover, her character was not like this; she was giddy, and light, and heartless. This lady had a heart—good or bad—a deep one. Most certainly it is not Flittamore."

"Flittamore! I do not remember that name. You should either tell us all or tell us nothing." The Major's tone was reproachful, and his eyes from their angular roofs looked fierce.

"I have not told you," I said, "because it can have nothing to do with it. The subject is a painful one, and belongs to my family only."

"Enough. I am not inquisitive—on the other hand, too forgetful. I have an appointment at 3.25. It takes me seven minutes and a quarter to get there. I must be two minutes and three-quarters late. Mrs. Hockin, mount the big telescope, and point it at the ramparts; keep the flag up also. Those fellows will be certain that I am up here, while I enfilade them from the western end with this fine binocular. Surprises maintain discipline. Good bye, my dear, and Miss Castlewood good bye. Tea at 6.30, and not too much water."

CHAPTER XLVI.

VAIN ZEAL.

LEAVING his telescope levelled at the men, the Major marched off with his opera-glass, in a consciously provoking style, and Mrs. Hockin most heartily joined me in condemning such behaviour. In a minute or two, however, she would not have one word said against him, and the tide of her mind (as befits a married woman) was beyond all science. So that the drift of all words came back to her husband's extraordinary merits. And certainly these, if at all like her description, deserved to be dwelt upon at very precious periods.

However, I had heard enough of them before, for the Major himself was not mute upon this point, though comparatively modest, and oftentimes deprecating praise, ere ever he received it. And so I brought Mrs. Hockin back at last, to talk about the lady who was living in the ruin.

"It is not quite a ruin," she said; "my dear husband is fond of picturesque expressions. However it is not in very good repair; and being unable to get possession of it, through some legal quibble, possibly he may look at it from a rather unfavourable point of view. And for the same reason—though he is so purely just—he may have formed a bad opinion of the strange individual who lives there. What right has she to be living without his leave upon his own manor? But there she is, and she does not care for us, or anybody. She fetches all she wants, she speaks to none, and if anybody calls for rates or taxes, or any other public intrusion, they may knock, and knock, but never get in, and at last they go away again."

"But surely that cannot go on for ever. Bruntsea is such an enlightened place."

"Our part of it is; but the rest quite benighted. As the man says—I forget his name, but the man that misunderstands us so—his contention is that 'Desolate Hole,' as the Major calls it, although in the middle of our land, is entirely distinct from it. My husband never will put up with that; his love of justice is far too strong; and he means to have a law-suit. But still he has reasons for not beginning yet; and he puts up with a great deal, I am sure. It is too bad for them to tease him so."

"It does seem a very sad thing," I replied; "and the poor soul living there all alone! Even in the summer it is bad enough; but whatever will she do when the winter comes? Why the sea, in bad weather, must be almost in upon her! And the roar of the pebbles all night! Major Hockin will never allow her to stay there."

"What can he do, when he cannot get in, and they even deny his title? I assure you, Erema, I have sent down cream, and even a dozen of my precious eggs, with the lady of the manor's compliments; but

instead of being grateful, they were never taken in ; and my Polly, ' Miss Polly Hopkins ' you know, very wisely took it all to her grandmother."

"To her grandmother, instead of mine, as the Major facetiously calls her. And now he says this is her portrait ; and instead of giving his reasons, runs away ! Really you must excuse me, Aunt Mary, for thinking that your good husband has a little too much upon his mind sometimes."

The old lady laughed, as I loved to see her do. "Well, my dear, after that, I think you had better have it out with him. He comes home to tea at 6.30, which used to be half-past six in my days. He is very tired then, though he never will allow it, and it would not be fair to attack him. I give him a mutton-chop, or two poached eggs, or some other trifle of nourishment. And then I make him doze for an hour and a half, to soothe his agitated intellect. And when he wakes, he has just one glass of hot water and sugar, with a little Lochnagar. And then he is equal to anything—backgammon, bezique, or even conversation."

Impatient as I was, I saw nothing better ; and by this time I was becoming used to what all of us must put up with—the long postponement of our heavy cares to the light convenience of others. Major Hockin might just as well have stopped, when he saw how anxious I was. Uncle Sam would have stopped the mill itself, with a dozen customers waiting ; but no doubt he had spoiled me ; and even that should not make me bitter. Aunt Mary and I understood one another. We gazed away over the breadth of the sea, and the gleam of its texture, and we held our peace.

Few things are more surprising than the calm way in which ripe age looks on at things which ought to amaze it. And yet any little one of its own concerns grows more important perhaps than ever, as the shadow of the future dwindles. Major Hockin had found on the beach a pebble, with a streak of agate in it ; he took it as the harbinger of countless agates, and resolved to set up a lapidary, with a tent, or even a shop perhaps, not to pay, but to be advertised, and catch distinguished visitors.

"Erema, you are a mighty finder ; you found the biggest nugget yet discovered. You know about stones from the Rocky Mountains, or at least the Sierra Nevada. You did not discover this beautiful agate, but you saw and greatly admired it. We might say that a 'young lady eminent for great skill in lithology, famed as the discoverer, &c.'—hold it between your eyes and this candle, but wet it in the slop-basin first ; now you see the magnificent veins of blue."

"I see nothing of the kind," I said, for really it was too bad of him ; "it seems to me a dirty bit of the commonest flint you could pick up."

This vexed him more than I wished to have done, and I could not help being sorry ; for he went into a little fit of sulks, and Aunt Mary almost frowned at me. But he could not stay long in that condition, and after his doze and his glass, he came forth, as lively and meddlesome as ever. And the first thing he did was to ask me for the locket.

“Open it?” he cried; “why of course I can; there is never any difficulty about that. The finest workmanship in the world is that of the Indian jewellers. I have been among them often, I know all their devices and mechanism, of which the European are bad copies. I have only to look round this thing twice, and then pronounce my Sesame.”

“My dear, then look round it as fast as you can,” said his wife, with a traitorous smile at me; “and we won’t breathe a Sess, till it flies asunder.”

“Mary, Miss Castlewood makes you pert, although herself so well conducted. However I do not hesitate to say that I will open this case in two minutes.”

“Of course you will, dear,” Mrs. Hockin replied, with provoking acquiescence. “The Major never fails, Erema, in anything he is so sure about; and this is a mere child’s toy to him. Well, dear, have you done it? But I need not ask. Oh let us see what is inside of it!”

“I have not done it yet, Mrs. Hockin; and if you talk with such rapidity, of course you throw me out. How can I command my thoughts, or even recall my experience?”

“Hush! Now hush, Erema! And I myself will hush most reverently.”

“You have no reverence in you, and no patience. Do you expect me to do such a job in one second? Do you take me for a common jeweller? I beg you to remember——”

“Well, my dear, I remember only what you told us. You were to turn it round twice, you know, and then cry Sesame. Erema, was it not so?”

“I never said anything of the sort. What I said was simply this—however, to reason with ladies is rude; I shall just be off to my study.”

“Where you keep your tools, my darling,” Mrs. Hockin said softly after him; “at least, I mean, when you know where they are.”

I was astonished at Aunt Mary’s power of being so highly provoking, and still more at her having the heart to employ it. But she knew best what her husband was; and to worship for ever is not wise.

“Go and knock at his door in about five minutes,” Mrs. Hockin said to me, with some mischief in her eyes. “If he continues to fail, he may possibly take a shorter way with it. And with his tools so close at hand——”

“Oh,” I exclaimed, “his geological hammer—that dreadful crusher—may I go at once? I detest that thing, but I cannot have it smashed.”

“He will not break it up, my dear, without your leave. He never would think of such a thing of course. However, you may as well go after him.”

It was wrong of Mrs. Hockin to make me do this; and I felt quite ashamed of myself when I saw the kind old Major sitting by his lamp, and wrinkling his forehead into locks and keys of puzzle, but using vio-

lence to his own mind alone. And I was the more ashamed when, instead of resenting my intrusion, he came to meet me, and led me to his chair, and placed the jewelled trinket in my hand, and said—"My dear, I give it up. I was wrong in taking it away from you. You must consult some one wiser."

"That odious thing!" I answered, being touched by this unusual humility of his; "you shall not give it up; and I know no wiser person. A lapidary's tricks are below your knowledge. But if you are not tired of me and offended, may I leave it to you to get it opened?"

"I would like nothing better," he replied, recovering his natural briskness and importance; "but you ought to be there, my dear; you must be there. Are you sure that you ought not rather to take it to your good cousin, Lord Castlewood? Now, think before you answer."

"I need not think twice of that, Major Hockin. Good and learned as my father's cousin is, he has distinctly refused to help me, for some mysterious reason of his own, in searching into this question. Indeed, my great hope is to do it without him—for all that I know, he might even wish to thwart me."

"Enough, my dear; it shall be just as you wish. I brought you to England, and I will stand by you. My cousin, Colonel Gundry, has committed you to me. I have no patience with malefactors. I never took this matter up, for very many reasons; and among them not the least was, that Sampson, your beloved 'Uncle Sam,' thought it better not to do so. But if you desire it, and now that I feel certain that an infamous wrong has been done to you—which I heartily beg your pardon for my doubt of—by the Lord of all justice, everything else may go to the devil, till I see it out. Do you desire it, Erema?"

"I certainly do not wish that any of your great works should be neglected. But if, without that, you can give me your strong help, my only difficulty will be to thank you."

"I like plain speaking, and you always speak plainly; sometimes too plainly," he said, recollecting little times when he had the worst of it; "how far do you trust me now?"

"Major Hockin, I trust you altogether. You may make mistakes, as all men do——"

"Yes, yes, yes. About my own affairs; but I never do that for other people. I pay a bill for twopence, if it is my own. If I am trustee of it, I pay three-halfpence."

His meaning was a little beyond me now; but it seemed better not to tell him so; for he loved to explain his own figures of speech, even when he had no time to spare for it. And he clearly expected me to ask him to begin; or at least it seemed so from his eyebrows. But that only came home to me afterwards.

"Please not to speak of my affairs like that," I said, as if I were quite stupid; "I mean to pay fourpence for every twopence—both to friends and enemies."

“You are a queer girl; I have always said so. You turn things to your own ideas so. However, we must put up with that, though none of my daughters have ever done it; for which I am truly thankful. But now there is very little time to lose. The meaning of this thing must be cleared up at once. And there is another thing to be done as well, quite as important in my opinion. I will go to London with you to-morrow, if you like. My clever little Cornishman will see to things here, the man that sets up all the angles.”

“But why should I hurry you to London so?” I asked. “Surely any good country jeweller could manage it? Or let us break it open.”

“On no account,” he answered; “we might spoil it all; besides, the great risk to the diamonds, which are very brittle things. To London we must take it, for this reason—the closure of this case is no jeweller’s work, of that I have quite convinced myself. It is the work of a first-rate lapidary; and the same sort of man must undo it.”

To this I agreed quite readily, because of such things I knew nothing; whereas my host spoke just as if he had been brought up to both those walks of art. And then I put a question which had long been burning on my tongue.

“What made you imagine, Major Hockin, that this very beautiful face could have ever been that of the old lady living in the ruin?”

“In Desolate Hole? I will tell you at once; and then call it, if you like, an imagination. Of all the features of the human face there is none more distinctive than the eyebrow. ‘Distinctive’ is not exactly what I mean—I mean more permanently marked and clear. The eyes change, the nose changes, so does the mouth, and even the shape of the forehead sometimes; but the eyebrows change very little, except in colour. This I have noticed, because my own may perhaps be a little peculiar; and they have always been so. At school I received a nick-name about it, for boys are much sharper than men about such things; and that name after fifty years fits as well as ever. You may smile, if you like; I shall not tell you what it was, but leave you to re-invent it, if you can. Now look at this first-rate miniature. Do you see an unusual but not uncommonly formation of the eyebrows?”

“Certainly I do; though I did not observe it, until you drew my attention. I had only regarded the face, as a whole.”

“The face, as a whole, is undoubtedly fine. But the eyebrows have a peculiar arch, and the least little turn at the lower end, as if they designed to rise again. The lady of Desolate Hole has the same.”

“But how can you tell? How very strange! I thought she let nobody see her face.”

“You are perfectly right about that, Erema; so far at least as she has vouchsafed to exhibit her countenance to me. Other people may be more fortunate. But when I met her for the second time, being curious already about her, I ventured to offer my services, with my inborn chivalry, at a place where the tide was running up, and threatened to

surround her. My politeness was not appreciated, as too often is the case; for she made me a very stiff bow, and turned away. Her face had been covered by the muffler of her cloak, as if the sea breeze were too much for her; and she did not even raise her eyes. But before she turned away, I obtained a good glance at her eyebrows—and they were formed like these.”

“But her age, Major Hockin! Her age—what is it?”

“Upon that proverbially delicate point I can tell you but little, Erema. Perhaps, however, I may safely say that she cannot be much under twenty.”

“It is not right to provoke me so. You call her ‘the old woman,’ and compare her to your letter-box. You must have some idea—is she seventy?”

“Certainly not, I should say; though she cannot expect me to defend her, when she will not show her face to me; and what is far worse, at my time of life, she won’t even pay me a halfpenny of rent. Now let us go back to Aunt Mary, my dear; she always insists upon packing over night.”

CHAPTER XLVII.

CADMEIAN VICTORY.

BEFORE two o’clock of the following day, Major Hockin and myself were in London, and ready to stay there for two or three days, if it should prove needful. Before leaving Bruntsea, I had written briefly to Lord Castlewood, telling him that important matters had taken me away from Shoxford, and as soon as I could explain them, I would come and tell him all about it. This was done only through fear of his being annoyed at my independence.

From London Bridge the Major took a cab direct to Clerkenwell; and again I observed that of all his joys one of the keenest was to match his wits against a cabman’s. “A regular muff, this time,” he said, as he jerked up and down with his usual delight in displaying great knowledge of London; “no sport to be had out of him. Why he stared at me when I said ‘Rosamond Street,’ and made me stick on ‘Clerkenwell.’ Now here he is taking us down Snow Hill, when he should have been crossing Smithfield! Smithfield, cabby, Smithfield!”

“Certain, Sir, Smiffle, if you gives the order;” and he turned the poor horse again, and took us up the hill, and among a great number of barriers. “No thoroughfare, No thoroughfare,” on all hands stretched across us; but the cabman threaded his way between, till he came to the brink of a precipice. The horse seemed quite ready, like a Roman, to leap down it, seeing nothing less desirable than his present mode of life, till a man with a pickaxe stopped him.

"What are you at?" cried the Major, with fury equalled by nothing except his fright—"Erema, untie my big rattan. Quick—quick——"

"Captain," said the cabman coolly, "I must have another shilling for this job. A hextra mile and a quarter, to your orders. You knows Lunnon so much better. Smiffle stopped—new railway—new meat-market—never heered of that now, did you?"

"You scoundrel, drive straight to the nearest police office."

"Must jump this little ditch, then, Captain. Five pun' fine for you, when we gets there. Hold on inside, old gentleman. Kuck, kuck, Bob, you was a hunter once. It aint more than fifty feet deep, my boy."

"Turn round, turn round, I tell you, turn round. If your neck is forfeit, you rogue, mine is not. I never was so taken in, in my life!" Major Hockin continued to rave, as amid many jeers we retreated humbly, and the driver looked in at us with a gentle grin;—"and I thought he was so soft, you know. Erema, may I swear at him?"

"On no account," I said. "Why, after all, it is only a shilling, and the loss of time. And then you can always reflect that you have discharged, as you say, a public duty, by protesting against a vile system."

"Protesting is very well, when it pays," the Major answered gloomily; "but to pay for protesting is another pair of shoes."

This made him cross, and he grew quite fierce when the cabman smote him for eightpence more. "Four parcels on the roof, Captain," he said, looking as only a cabman can look at his money, and spinning his extra shilling. "Twopence each under new hact, you know. Scarcely thought a hofficer would 'a tried evasion."

"You consummate scoundrel—and you dress yourself like a countryman! I'll have your badge endorsed, I'll have your license marked. Erema, pay the thief; it is more than I can do."

"Captain, your address, if you please. I shall summon you for scurrilous language, as the hact directs. Ah, you do right to be driven to a pawn-shop!"

Triumphantly he drove off, while the Major cried, "Never tie up my rattan again. Oh, it was Mrs. Hockin, was it? What a fool I was not to stop on my own manor!"

"I pray you to disdain such low impudence," I said, for I could not bear to see him shake like that, and grieved to have brought him into it. "You have beaten fifty of them—a hundred of them—I have heard you say."

"Certainly I have, my dear; but I had no Bruntsea then, and could not afford to pay the rogues. That makes me feel it so bitterly, so loftily, and so righteously. To be treated like this, when I think of all my labours for the benefit of the rascally human race. My Institute, my Lyceum, my Mutual Improvement Association, and Christian Young Men's something—there is no institution, after all, to be compared to the treadmill."

Recovering himself with this fine conclusion, he led me down a little

sloping alley, scarcely wide enough for a wheelbarrow, to an old black door, where we set down our parcels; for he had taken his, while I carried mine; and not knowing what might happen yet, like a true peacemaker I stuck to the sheaf of umbrellas and the rattan-cane. And thankful I was, and so might be the cabman, to have that weapon nicely sheathed with silk.

Major Hockin's breath was short, through too much talking without action; and he waited for a minute at this door, to come back to his equanimity. And I thought that our female breath falls short for the very opposite reason—when we do too much, and talk too little; which happily seldom happens.

He was not long in coming back to his usual sprightliness and decision. And it was no small relief to me, who was looking at him miserably, and longing that his wife was there, through that very sad one-and-eightpence, when he pulled out a key, which he always carried, as signor and lord of Bruntsea, the key of the town-hall which had survived lock, door, and walls by centuries, and therewith struck a door which must have reminded that key of its fine old youth.

Before he had knocked so very many times, the door was opened by a young man wearing an apron and a brown paper cap, who knew Major Hockin at once, and showed us upstairs to a long low workshop. Here were many wheels, and plates, and cylinders revolving, by energy of a strap which came through the floor, and went through the ceiling. And the young man told us to be careful how we walked, for fear of getting entangled. Several men, wearing paper caps and aprons of leather or baize, were sitting doing dexterous work, no doubt, and doing it very easily, and the master of them all was hissing over some fine touch of jewel, as a groom does at a horse. Then seeing us, he dropped his holders, and threw a leather upon his large lens, and came and took us to a little side-room.

“Are you not afraid to leave them?” asked the Major, “they may secrete some gems, Mr. Handkin.”

“Never,” said the lapidary, with some pride. “I could trust these men with the Koh-i-noor; which we could have done better, I believe, than it was done by the Hollanders. But we don't get the chance to do much in diamonds, through the old superstition about Amsterdam, and so on. No, no; the only thing I can't trust my men about, is to work as hard when I am away as when I am there. And now, sir, what can I do for you? Any more Bruntsea pebbles? The last were not worth the cutting.”

“So you said; but I did not think so. We have some agates as good as any from Aberystwith or Perthshire. But what I want now is to open this case. It must be done quite privately, for a most particular reason. It does open, doesn't it? I am sure it does.”

“Certainly it opens,” Mr. Handkin answered; while I trembled with anxiety, as he lightly felt it round the edges with fingers engrained with

corundum. "I could open it in one instant, but the enamel might fly. Will you risk it?"

The Major looked at me, and I said, "Oh no, please not to risk anything, if any slower process will do it without risk. We want it done without injury."

"Then it will cost a good bit," he replied; "I can open it for five shillings, if you run the risk. If that rests with me, I must charge five pounds."

"Say three," cried the Major. "Well, then, say four guineas; I have a lot of work in store for you."

"I never overcharge, and I never depart from my figures," the lapidary answered. "There is only one other man in London who knows the secret of this enamel, and he is my brother. They never make such enamel now. The art is lost, like that of the French paste of a hundred years ago, which almost puzzles even me until I go behind it. I will give you my brother's address, if you like; but instead of five pounds, he will charge you ten guineas—if it must be done in private. Without that condition, I can do it for two pounds. You wish to know why that should make such a difference. Well, for this simple reason, to make sure of the job, it must be done by daylight. It can be done only in my chief work-room. If no one is to see what I am about (and my men have sharp eyes, I can tell you), all my hands must be sacked for the afternoon, but not without their wages. That alone would go far towards the difference; and then there is the dropping of the jobs in hand, and waste of power, and so on. I have asked you too little, Major Hockin, I assure you; but having said, I will stick to it. Although I would much rather you would let me off."

"I have known you for many years," the Major answered, "ever since you were a boy, with a flat box, working at our Cornish opals. You would have done a lot of work for five pounds then. But I never knew you overcharge for anything. We agree to your terms, and are obliged to you. But you guarantee no damage?"

"I will open this locket, take out its contents, whatever they may be, and reclose it, so that the maker, if still alive—which is not very probable—should not know that it had been meddled with."

"Very well, that is exactly what we want; for I have an idea about it which I may try to go on with afterwards. And for that it is essential to have no symptom that it ever has been opened. What are these brilliants worth, Mr. Handkin?"

"Well, sir, in the trade about a hundred and fifty; though I daresay they cost three hundred. And the portrait is worth another hundred, if I find on the back the marks I expect."

"You do not mean to say that you know the artist!" I could not help exclaiming, though determined not to speak. "Oh then, we shall find out everything!"

"Erema, you are a—well, you are a silly!" Major Hockin exclaimed;

and then coloured with remembering that rather he should have let my lapse pass. But the lapidary seemed to pay no attention, only to be calling down to some one far below. "Now mind what you say," the Major whispered to me, just as if he were the essence of discretion.

"The work-room is clear now," Mr. Handkin said; "the fellows were delighted to get their afternoon. Now you see that I have to take off this hoop, and there lies the difficulty. I could have taken out the gold back, as I said, with very little trouble, by simply cutting it. But the locket would never have been quite the same, though we put a new back; and more than that the pressure of the tool might flaw the enamel or even crack the portrait, for the make of this thing is peculiar. Now first I submit the rim or verge, without touching the brilliants, mind you, to the action of a little preparation of my own, a gentle but penetrative solvent. You are welcome to watch me, you will be none the wiser; you are not in the trade, though the young lady looks as if she would make a good polisher. Very well—if this were an ordinary closure, with two flat surfaces meeting, the solvent would be absorbed into the adhesion, expansion would take place, and there we have it. But this is what we call a cyme-joint, a cohesion of two curved surfaces, formed in a reflex curve which admits the solvent most reluctantly, or indeed not at all, without too long application. For that, then, another kind of process is needful, and we find it in frictional heat applied most gradually and judiciously. For that I must have a buff-leather wheel, whose revolutions are timed to a nicety, and that wheel I only have in this room. Now you see why I sent the men away."

Though I watched his work with great interest, it is out of my power to describe it now, and, moreover, it is not needful. Major Hockin, according to his nature, grew quite restless and impatient, and even went out for a walk with his cane unpacked and unsheathed against cabmen. But I was content to wait and watch, having always heard and thought that good work will not do itself, but must have time and skill to second it. And Mr. Handkin, moving arms, palms, and fingers beautifully, put the same thought into words.

"Good work takes a deal of time to do, but the man that does it all the time knows well that it will take long to undo. Here it comes undone at last!"

As he spoke, the excitable Major returned.

"Done it, eh? Well, you are a clever fellow. Now, don't look inside it; that is no part of your business, nor mine either, unless this young lady desires it. Hand it to her first, my friend."

"Wait half a minute," said the lapidary; "it is so far opened that the hoop spins round, but it must not be taken off until it cools. The lady may lift it then with care. I have done this job as a piece of fine art. I have no wish to see any more of it."

"Handkin, don't you be so touchy to a brother Cornishman. I thought that I was Cornish enough. But you go cliffs beyond me."

“Well, Major Hockin,” the lapidary answered, “I beg your pardon if I said harm. But a man doing careful and skilled work—and skilled work it is, at every turn of the hand, as Miss can bear witness, while you walked off—he don’t care who it is, Major Hockin, he would fight his own brother to maintain it.”

“Very well, very well. Let us come away. I always enter into everybody’s feelings. I see yours as clearly, Handkin, as if you had laid them open on that blessed wheel. My insight has always been remarkable. Everyone, without exception, says that of me. Now come away, come away—will you never see?”

Intent as I was upon what lay in my left palm relaxing itself, I could not help being sorry for the way in which the man of art, after all his care, was ground down by his brother Cornishman. However, he had lived long enough in the world to feel no surprise at ingratitude.

Now I went to one of the windows, as the light (which had been very good) began to pale from its long and laboured sufferance of London, and then, with soft and steady touch, I lifted off the loosened hoop. A smell of mustiness—for smells go through what nothing else can—was the first thing to perceive, and then, having moved the disc of gold, I found a piece of vellum. This was doubled, and I opened it, and read, in small clear writing—

“May 7, 1809 A.D., George, Lord Castlewood, married Winifred, only child of Thomas Hoyle, as this his signature witnesseth—

Castlewood.

(Witness) Thomas Hoyle.”

There was nothing more inside this locket, except two little wisps of hair tied with gold thread, and the miniature upon ivory, bearing on the back some anagram, probably that of the artist.

Already had I passed through a great many troubles, changes, chances, and adventures which always seem strange (when I come to look back), but never surprised me at the moment. Indeed, I might almost make bold to pronounce that not many persons of my age and sex have been visited, wholly against their own will, by such a series of incidents, not to say marvellous, but, at any rate, fairly to be called unusual. And throughout them perhaps it will be acknowledged by all who have cared to consider them, that up to the present time I did not fail more than themselves might have done in patience. And in no description of what came to pass have I coloured things at all in my own favour—at least, so far as intention goes—neither laid myself out to get sympathy, though it often would have done me a world of good.

But now I am free to confess that my patience broke down very sadly. Why, if what was written on that vellum were true, and Major Hockin correct as well, it came to no less than this, that my own dear father was a base-born son, and I had no right to the name I was so proud of! If, moreover, as I now began to dream, that terrible and

mysterious man did not resemble my father so closely without some good reason, it seemed too likely that he might be his elder brother, and the proper heir.

This was bad enough to think of, but an idea a thousandfold worse assailed me in the small hours of the night, as I lay on Mrs. Strouss's best bed, which she kept for consuls, or foreign barons, or others whom she loved to call "international notorieties." Having none of these now, she assigned me that bed after hearing all I had to say, and not making all that she might have done of it, because of the praise that would fall to Mrs. Busk.

However, she acknowledged that she knew nothing of the history of "the poor old lord." He might have carried on, for all she could tell, with many wives before his true one, a thing she heard too much of; but as for the Captain not being his true son, and the proper heir to the peerage, let any one see him walk twice, and then have a shadow of a doubt about it! This logic pleased, but convinced me not; and I had to go to bed in a very unhappy, restless, and comfortless state of mind.

I hope that, rather than myself, that bed, full of international confusion, is to blame for the wicked ideas which assailed me while I could not even try to sleep. One of them—and a loyal daughter could scarcely have a worse one—was that my own dear father, knowing Lord Castlewood's bad behaviour, and his own sad plight in consequence, and through that knowledge caring little to avenge his death, for wife and children's sake preferred to foil inquiry rather than confront the truth and challenge it. He might not have meant to go so far, at first beginning with it; but starting once might be driven on by grievous loss, and bitter sense of recreant friends, and the bleak despair of a homeless world before him. And serving as the scapegoat thus, he might have received from the real culprit a pledge for concealment of the family disgrace.

Amalfi, Pæstum, Capri.

THE road between Vietri and Amalfi is justly celebrated as one of the most beautiful pieces of coast scenery in Italy. Its only rivals are the roads from Castellammare to Sorrento, from Genoa to Sestri, and from Nice to Mentone. Each of these has its own charm; and yet their similarity is sufficient to invite comparison: under the spell of each in turn, we are inclined to say—this then, at all events, is the most beautiful. On first quitting Vietri, Salerno is left low down upon the seashore, nestling into a little corner of the bay which bears its name, and backed up by gigantic mountains. With each onward step these mountain-ranges expand in long aerial line, revealing reaches of fantastic peaks, that stretch away beyond the plain of Pæstum, till they end at last in mist and sunbeams shimmering on the sea. On the left hand hangs the cliff above the deep salt water, with here and there a fig-tree spreading fan-like leaves against the blue beneath. On the right rises the hill-side, clothed with myrtle, lentisk, cistus, and pale yellow coronilla—a tangle as sweet with scent as it is gay with blossom. Over the parapet that skirts the precipice hang heavy-foliaged locust-trees, and the terraces in sunny nooks are set with lemon orchards. There are but few olives and no pines. Meanwhile each turn in the road brings some change of scene—now a village with its little beach of grey sand, lapped by clearest seawaves, where bare-legged fishermen mend their nets, and naked boys bask like lizards in the sun—now towering bastions of weird rock, broken into spires and pinnacles like those of Skye, and coloured with bright hues of red and orange—then a ravine, where the thin thread of a mountain streamlet seems to hang suspended upon ferny ledges in the limestone—or a precipice defined in profile against sea and sky, with a lad, half dressed in goat-skin, dangling his legs into vacuity and singing—or a tract of cultivation, where the orange, apricot, and lemon-trees nestle together upon terraces with intermingled pergolas of vines.

Amalfi and Atrani lie close together in two of these ravines, the mountains almost arching over them, and the sea washing their very house-walls. Each has its crowning campanile; but that of Amalfi is the stranger of the two, like a Moorish tower at the top, and coloured with green and yellow tiles that glitter in the sunlight. The houses are all dazzling white, plastered against the naked rock, rising on each other's shoulders to get a glimpse of earth and heaven, jutting out on coigns of vantage from the toppling cliff, and pierced with staircases as dark as night at noonday. Some frequented

lanes lead through the basements of these houses; and as the donkeys pick their way from step to step in the twilight, bare-chested macaroni-makers crowd forth like ants to see us strangers pass. A myriad of swallows or a swarm of mason bees might build a town like this.

It is not easy to imagine the time when Amalfi and Atrani were one town, with docks and arsenals and harbourage for their associated fleets, and when these little communities were second in importance to no port of Christian Europe. The Byzantine Empire lost its hold on Italy during the eighth century; and after this time the history of Calabria is mainly concerned with the republics of Naples and Amalfi, their conflict with the Lombard dukes of Benevento, their opposition to the Saracens, and their final subjugation by the Norman conquerors of Sicily. Between the year 839 A.D., when Amalfi freed itself from the control of Naples and the yoke of Benevento, and the year 1131, when Roger of Hauteville incorporated the republic in his kingdom of the two Sicilies, this city was the foremost naval and commercial power of Italy. The burghers of Amalfi elected their own doge; founded the Hospital of Jerusalem, whence sprang the knightly order of S. John; gave their name to the richest quarter in Palermo; and owned trading establishments or factories in all the chief cities of the Levant. Their gold coinage of *tari* formed the standard of currency before the Florentines had stamped the lily and S. John upon the Tuscan florin. Their shipping regulations supplied Europe with a code of maritime laws. Their scholars, in the darkest depth of the dark ages, prized and coned a famous copy of the Pandects of Justinian; and their seamen deserved the fame of having first used, if they did not actually invent, the compass.

To modern visitors those glorious centuries of Amalfitan power and independence cannot but seem fabulous; so difficult is it for us to imagine the conditions of society in Europe when a tiny city, shut in between barren mountains and a tideless sea, without a circumjacent territory, and with no resources but piracy or trade, could develop maritime supremacy in the Levant, and produce the first fine flowers of liberty and culture.

If the history of Amalfi's early splendour reads like a brilliant legend, the story of its premature extinction has the interest of a tragedy. The republic had grown and flourished on the decay of the Greek empire. When the hard-handed race of Hauteville absorbed the heritage of Greeks and Lombards and Saracens in Southern Italy, these adventurers succeeded in annexing Amalfi. But it was not their interest to extinguish the state. On the contrary, they relied for assistance upon the navies and the armies of the little commonwealth. New powers had meanwhile arisen in the north of Italy, who were jealous of rivalry upon the open seas; and when the Neapolitans resisted King Roger in 1135, they called Pisa to their aid, and sent her fleet to destroy Amalfi. The ships of Amalfi were on guard with Roger's navy

in the bay of Naples. The armed citizens were under Roger's orders at Aversa. Meanwhile the little republic lay defenceless on its mountain-girdled sea-board. The Pisans sailed into the harbour, sacked the city, and carried off the famous Pandects of Justinian as a trophy. Two years later they returned, to complete the work of devastation. Amalfi never recovered from the injuries and the humiliation of these two attacks. It was ever thus that the Italians, like the children of the dragon's teeth which Cadmus sowed, consumed each other. Pisa cut the throat of her sister-port Amalfi, and Genoa gave a mortal wound to Pisa, when the waters of Meloria were dyed with blood in 1284. Venice fought a duel to the death with Genoa in the succeeding century; and what Venice failed to accomplish, was completed by Milan and the lords of the Visconti dynasty, who crippled and enslaved the haughty queen of the Ligurian Riviera.

The naval and commercial prosperity of Amalfi was thus put an end to by the Pisans in the twelfth century. But it was not then that the town assumed its present aspect. What surprises the student of history more than anything is the total absence of fortifications, docks, arsenals, and breakwaters, bearing witness to the ancient grandeur of a city, which numbered 50,000 inhabitants, and traded with Alexandria, Syria, and the far East. Nothing of the sort, with the exception of a single solitary tower upon the Monte Aureo, is visible. Nor will he fail to remember that Amalfi and Atrani, which are now divided by a jutting mountain buttress, were once joined by a tract of sea-beach, where the galleys of the republic rested after sweeping the Levant, and where the fishermen drew up their boats upon the smooth grey sand. That also has disappeared. The violence of man was not enough to reduce Amalfi to its present state of insignificance. The forces of nature aided;—partly by the gradual subsidence of the land which caused the lower quarters of the city to be submerged, and separated Amalfi from her twin-port by covering the beach with water—partly by a fearful tempest accompanied by earthquake in 1343. Petrarch, then resident at Naples, witnessed the destructive fury of this great convulsion; and the description he wrote of it soon after its occurrence is so graphic that some notice may well be taken of it here.

His letter, addressed to the noble Roman, Giovanni Colonna, begins with a promise to tell something of a storm which deserved the title of "poetic," and in a degree so superlative that no epithet but "Homeric" would suffice to do it justice. This exordium is singularly characteristic of Petrarch, who never forgot that he was a literary man, and lost no opportunity of dragging the great names of antiquity into his rhetorical compositions. The catastrophe was hardly unexpected; for it had been prophesied by an astrological bishop, whom Petrarch does not name, that Naples would be overwhelmed by a terrible disaster, in December, 1343. The people were, therefore, in a state of wild anxiety, repenting of their sins, planning a total change of life

under the fear of imminent death, and neglecting their ordinary occupations. On the day of the predicted calamity women roamed in trembling crowds through the streets, pressing their babies to their breasts, and besieging the altars of the saints with prayers. Petrarch, who shared the general disquietude, kept watching the signs of the weather; but nothing happened to warrant an extraordinary panic. At sunset the sky was quieter than usual; and he could discern none of the symptoms of approaching tempest, to which his familiarity with the mountains of Vaucluse accustomed him. After dusk he stationed himself at a window to observe the moon, until she went down, before midnight, obscured by clouds. Then he betook himself to bed; but scarcely had he fallen into his first sleep, when a most horrible noise aroused him. The whole house shook; the night-light on his table was extinguished; and he was thrown with violence from his couch. He was lodging in a convent; and soon after this first intimation of the tempest, he heard the monks calling to each other through the darkness. From cell to cell they hurried, the ghastly gleams of lightning falling on their terror-stricken faces. Headed by the Prior, and holding crosses and relics of the saints in their hands, they now assembled in Petrarch's chamber. Thence they proceeded in a body to the chapel, where they spent the night in prayer and expectation of impending ruin. It would be impossible, says the poet, to relate the terrors of that hellish night—the deluges of rain, the screaming of the wind, the earthquake, the thunder, the howling of the sea, and the shrieks of agonising human beings. All these horrors were prolonged, as though by some magician's spell, for twice the duration of a natural night. It was so dark that at last by conjecture rather than the testimony of their senses, they knew that day had broken. A hurried mass was said. Then, as the noise in the town above them began to diminish, and a confused clamour from the sea-shore continually increased, their suspense became unendurable. They mounted their horses, and descended to the port—to see and perish. A fearful spectacle awaited them. The ships in the harbour had broken their moorings, and were crashing helplessly together. The strand was strewn with mutilated corpses. The breakwaters were submerged, and the sea seemed gaining momentarily upon the solid land. A thousand mountains surged up into the sky between the shore and Capri; and these massive billows were not black or purple, but hoary with a livid foam. After describing some picturesque episodes—such as the gathering of the knights of Naples to watch the ruin of their city, the procession of court ladies headed by the queen to implore the intercession of Mary, and the wreck of a vessel freighted with 400 convicts bound for Sicily—Petrarch concludes with a fervent prayer that he may never have to tempt the sea, of whose fury he had seen so awful an example.

The capital on this occasion escaped the ruin prophesied. But Amalfi was inundated; and what the waters then gained has never been restored to man. This is why the once so famous city ranks now upon

a level with quiet little towns whose names are hardly heard in history—with San Remo, or Rapallo, or Chiavari—and yet it is still as full of life as a wasp's nest, especially upon the molo, or raised piazza paved with bricks, in front of the *Albergo de' Cappuccini*. The changes of scene upon this tiny square are so frequent as to remind one of a theatre. Looking down from the inn-balcony, between the glazy green pots gay with scarlet amaryllis-bloom, we are inclined to fancy that the whole has been prepared for our amusement. In the morning, the corn for the macaroni-flour, after being washed, is spread out on the bricks to dry. In the afternoon the fishermen bring their nets for the same purpose. In the evening the city magnates promenade and whisper. Dark-eyed women, with orange or crimson kerchiefs for head-gear, cross and re-cross bearing baskets on their shoulders. Great lazy large-limbed fellows, girt with scarlet sashes and finished off with dark blue night-caps, for a contrast to their saffron-coloured shirts, white breeches, and sunburnt calves, slouch about or sleep face downwards on the parapets. On either side of this same molo stretches a miniature beach of sand and pebble, covered with nets, which the fishermen are always mending, and where the big boats lade or unlade, trimming for the sardine fishery, or driving in to shore with a whirr of oars and a jabber of discordant voices. As the land-wind freshens, you may watch them set off one by one, like pigeons taking flight, till the sea is flecked with twenty sail all scudding in the same direction. The torrent runs beneath the molo, and finds the sea beyond it; so that here too are the washerwomen, chattering like sparrows; and everywhere the naked boys, like brown sea-urchins, burrow in the clean warm sand, or splash the shallow brine. If you like the fun, you may get a score of them to dive together and scramble for coppers in the deeper places, their lithe bodies gleaming wan beneath the water in a maze of interlacing arms and legs.

Over the whole busy scene rise the grey hills, soaring into blueness of air-distance, turreted here and there with ruined castles, capped with parti-coloured campanili and white convents, and tufted through their whole height with the orange and the emerald of the great tree-spurge, and with the live gold of the blossoming broom. It is difficult to say when this picture is most beautiful—whether in the early morning, when the boats are coming back from their night-toil upon the sea, and along the headlands in the fresh light lie swathes of fleecy mist, betokening a still, hot day—or at noontide, when the houses on the hills stand, tinted pink and yellow, shadowless like gems, and the great caruba-trees above the tangles of vines and figs are blots upon the steady glare—or at sunset, when violet and rose, reflected from the eastern sky, make all these terraces and peaks translucent with a wondrous glow. The best of all, perhaps, is night, with a full moon hanging high overhead. Who shall describe the silhouettes of boats upon the shore, or sleeping on the misty sea? On the horizon lies a dusky film of brownish golden haze, between the moon and the glimmering water; and here and there

a lamp or candle burns with a deep red. Then is the time to take a boat and row upon the bay, or better, to swim out into the waves and trouble the reflections from the steady stars. The mountains, clear and calm, with light-irradiated chasms and hard shadows cast upon the rock, soar up above a city built of alabaster, or sea-foam, or summer clouds. The whole is white and wonderful: no similes suggest an analogue for the lustre, solid and transparent, of Amalfi nestling in moonlight between the grey-blue sea and lucid hills. Stars stand on all the peaks, and twinkle, or keep gliding, as the boat moves, down the craggy sides. Stars are mirrored on the marble of the sea, until one knows not whether the oar has struck sparks from a star-image or has scattered diamonds of phosphorescent brine.

All this reads like a rhapsody; but indeed it is difficult not to be rhapsodical when a May night of Amalfi is in the memory, with the echo of rich baritone voices, chanting Neapolitan songs to a mandoline. It is fashionable to complain that these Italian airs are opera-tunes; but this is only another way of saying that the Italian opera is the genuine outgrowth of national melody, and that Weber was not the first, as some German pedants have supposed, to string together *Volkslieder* for the stage. Northerners, who have never seen or felt the beauty of the south, talk sad nonsense about the superiority of German over Italian music. It is true that much Italian music is out of place in Northern Europe, where we seem to need more travail of the intellect in art. But the Italians are rightly satisfied with such facile melody and such simple rhythms as harmonise with sea and sky and boon earth sensuously beautiful. "Perchè pensa? Pensando s' invecchia," expresses the same habit of mind as another celebrated saying, "La musica è il lamento dell' amore o la preghiera agli Dei." Whatever may be the value of Italian music, it is in concord with such a scene as Amalfi by moonlight; and he who does not prefer this to any more artificial combination of sights and sounds in Wagner's theatre at Bayreuth, has scarcely learned the first lesson in the lore of beauty.

There is enough and to spare for all tastes at Amalfi. The student of architecture may spend hours in the Cathedral, pondering over its high-built western front, and wondering whether there is more of Moorish or of Gothic in its delicate arcades. The painter may transfer its campanile, glittering like dragon's scales, to his canvas. The lover of the picturesque will wander through its aisles at mass-time, watching the sunlight play upon those upturned southern faces with their ardent eyes; and happy is he who sees young men and maidens on Whit-Sunday crowding round the chancel rails, to catch the marigolds and gillyflowers scattered from baskets which the priest has blessed. Is this a symbol of the Holy Spirit's gifts, or is it some quaint relic of Pagan *spariones*? This question, with the memory of Pompeian *graffiti* in our mind, may well suggest itself in Southern Italy, where old and new faiths are so singularly blended. Then there is Ravello on the hills above. The

path winds upward between stone-walls tufted with maidenhair; and ever nearer grow the mountains, and the sea-line soars into the sky. An Englishman has made his home here in a ruined Moorish villa, with cool colonnaded cloisters, and rose-embowered terraces, lending far prospect over rocky hills and olive-girdled villages to Pæstum's plain. The churches of Ravello have rare mosaics and bronze doors and marble pulpits, older perhaps than those of Tuscany, which tempt the archæologist to ask if Nicholas, the Pisan, learned his secret here. But who cares to be a sober antiquary at Amalfi? Far pleasanter is it to climb the staircase to the Capuchins, and linger in those caverns of the living rock, and pluck the lemons hanging by the mossy walls; or to row from cove to cove along the shore, watching the fishes swimming in the deeps beneath, and the medusas spreading their filmy bells; to land upon smooth slabs of rock, where corallines wave to and fro; or to rest on samphire-tufted ledges, when the shadows slant beneath the westering sun.

There is no point in all this landscape which does not make a picture. Painters might even complain that the pictures are too easy, and the poetry too facile, just as the musicians find the melodies of this fair land too simple. No effect, carefully sought and strenuously seized, could enhance the mere beauty of Amalfi bathed in sunlight. You have only on some average summer day to sit down and paint the scene. Little scope is afforded for suggestions of far-away weird thoughts, or for elaborately studied motives. Daubigny and Corot are as alien here as Blake or Dürer.

What is wanted, and what no modern artist can successfully recapture from the wasteful past, is the mythopœic sense—the apprehension of primæval powers akin to man, growing into shape and substance on the borderland between the world and the keen human sympathies it stirs in us. Greek mythology was the proper form of art for scenery like this. It gave the final touch to all its beauties, and added to its sensuous charm an inbreathed spiritual life. No exercise of the poetic faculty, far less that metaphysical mood of the reflective consciousness which “leads from nature up to nature's God,” can now supply this need. From sea, and earth, and sky, in those creative ages when the world was young, there leaned to greet the men whose fancy made them, forms imagined and yet real—human, divine—the archetypes and everlasting patterns of man's deepest sense of what is wonderful in nature. Feeling them there, for ever there, inalienable, ready to start forth and greet successive generations—as the Hamadryad greeted Rhaicos from his father's oak—those mythopœists called them by immortal names. All their pent-up longings, all passions that consume, all aspirations that inflame—the desire for the impossible, which is disease, the day-dreams and the visions of the night, which are spontaneous poems—were thus transferred to nature. And nature, responsive to the soul that loves her, gave them back transfigured and translated into radiant beings of like

substance with mankind. It was thus, we feel upon these southern shores, that the gods of Greece came into being. The statues in the temples were the true fine flower of all this beauty, the culmination of the poetry which it evoked in hearts that feel and brains that think.

In Italy, far more than in any other part of Europe, the life of the present is imposed upon the strata of successive past lives. Greek, Latin, Moorish, and medieval civilisations have arisen, flourished, and decayed on nearly the same soil; and it is common enough to find one city, which may have perished twenty centuries ago, neighbour to another that enjoyed its brief prosperity in the middle of our era. There is not, for example, the least sign of either Greek or Roman at Amalfi. Whatever may have been the glories of the republic in the early middle ages, they had no relation to the classic past. Yet a few miles off along the bay rise the ancient Greek temples of Pæstum, from a desert—with no trace of any intervening occupants. Poseidonia was founded in the sixth century before Christ, by colonists from Sybaris. Three centuries later the Hellenic element in this settlement, which must already have become a town of no little importance, was submerged by a deluge of recurrent barbarism. Under the Roman rule it changed its name to Pæstum, and was prosperous. The Saracens destroyed it in the ninth century of our era; and Robert Guiscard carried some of the materials of its buildings to adorn his new town of Salerno. Since then the ancient site has been abandoned to malaria and solitude. The very existence of Pæstum was unknown, except to wandering herdsmen and fishers coasting near its ruined colonnades, until the end of the last century. Yet, strange to relate, after all these vicissitudes, and in the midst of this total desolation, the only relics of the antique city are three Greek temples—those very temples where the Hellenes, barbarised by their Lucanian neighbours, met to mourn for their lost liberty. It is almost impossible to trace more than the mere circuit of the walls of Poseidonia. Its port, if port it had in Roman days, has disappeared. Its theatre is only just discernible. Still not a column of the great hypæthral temple, built by the Sybarite colonists two thousand and five hundred years ago, to be a house for Zeus or for Poseidon, has been injured. The accidents that erased far greater cities, like Syracuse, from the surface of the earth—pillage, earthquake, the fury of fanatics, the slow decay of perishable stone, or the lust of palace-builders in the middle ages—have spared those three houses of the gods, over whom, in the days of Alexander, the funeral hymn was chanted by the enslaved Hellenes.

“We do the same,” says Aristoxenus in his *Convivial Miscellanies*, “as the men of Poseidonia, who dwell on the Tyrrhenian Gulf. It befell them, having been at first true Hellenes, to be utterly barbarised, changing to Tyrrhenes or Romans, and altering their language, together with their other customs. Yet they still observe one Hellenic festival, when they meet together and call to remembrance their old names and

bygone institutions ; and having lamented one to the other, and shed bitter tears, they afterwards depart to their own homes. Even thus a few of us also, now that our theatres have been barbarised, and this art of music has gone to ruin and vulgarity, meet together and remember what once music was." *

This passage has a strange pathos, considering how it was penned, and how it has come down to us, tossed by the dark *insouciant* stream of time. The Aristoxenus, who wrote it, was a pupil of Aristotle, born at Tarentum, and therefore familiar with the vicissitudes of Magna Græcia. The study of music was his chief preoccupation ; and he used this episode in the agony of an enslaved Greek city, to point his own conservative disgust for innovations in an art of which we have no knowledge left. The works of Aristoxenus have perished, and the fragment I have quoted is embedded in the gossip of Egyptian Athenæus. In this careless fashion has been opened for us, as it were, a little window on a grief now buried in the oblivion of a hundred generations. After reading his words one May morning, beneath the pediment of Pæstum's noblest ruin, I could not refrain from thinking that if the spirits of those captive Hellenes were to revisit their old habitations, they would change their note of wailing into a thin ghostly pæan, when they found that Romans and Lucanians had passed away, that Christians and Saracens had left alike no trace behind them, while the houses of their own ἀντίλοι θεοί—dawn-facing deities—were still abiding in the pride of immemorial strength. Who knows whether buffalo-driver or bandit may not ere now have seen processions of these Poseidonian phantoms, bearing laurels and chaunting weird hymns on the spot where once they fell each on the other's neck to weep ? Gathering his cloak around him, and cowering closer to his fire of sticks, the night-watcher in those empty colonnades may have mistaken the Hellenic outlines of his shadowy visitants for fevered dreams, and the melody of their evanished music for the whistling of night winds, or the cry of owls. So abandoned is Pæstum in its solitude that we know not even what legends may have sprung up round those relics of a mightier age.

The shrine is ruined now ; and far away
To east and west stretch olive groves, whose shade
Even at the height of summer moon is grey.

Asphodels sprout upon the plinth decayed
Of these low columns, and the snake hath found
Her haunt 'neath altar-steps with weeds o'erlaid.

Yet this was once a hero's temple, crowned
With myrtle-boughs by lovers, and with palm
By wrestlers, resonant with sweetest sound

* Athenæus, xiv. 632.

Of flute and fife in summer evening's calm,
 And odorous with incense all the year,
 With nard and spice, and galbanum and balm.

These lines sufficiently express the sense of desolation felt at Pæstum, except that the scenery is more solemn and mournful, and the temples are too august to be the shrine of any simple hero. There are no olives. The sea plunges on its sandy shore within the space of half a-mile to westward. Far and wide on either hand stretch dreary fever-stricken marshes. The plain is bounded to the north, and east, and south, with mountains, purple, snow-peaked, serrated, and grandly broken like the hills of Greece. Driving over this vast level where the Silarus stagnates, the monotony of the landscape is broken now and then by a group of buffaloes standing up to their dewlaps in reeds, by peasants on horse-back, with goads in their hands, and muskets slung athwart their backs, or by patrols of Italian soldiers crossing and re-crossing on the brigand-haunted roads. Certain portions have been reclaimed from the swamp, and here may be seen white oxen in herds of fifty grazing; or gangs of women at field-labour, with a man to oversee them, cracking a long hunting-whip; or the mares and foals of a famous stud-farm browsing under spreading pines. There are no villages, and the few farm-houses are so widely scattered as to make us wonder where the herdsmen and field-workers, scanty as they are, can possibly be lodged.

At last the three great temples come in sight. The rich orange of the central building contrasts with the paler yellow of its two companions, while the glowing colour of all three is splendidly relieved against green vegetation and blue mountain-flanks. Their material is travertine—a calcareous stone formed by the deposit of petrifying waters, which contains fragments of reeds, spiral shells, and other substances, embedded in the porous limestone. In the flourishing period of old Poseidonia these travertine columns were coated with stucco, worked to a smooth surface, and brilliantly tinted to harmonise with the gay costumes of a Greek festival. Even now this coating of fine sand, mingled with slaked lime and water, can be seen in patches on the huge blocks of the masonry. Thus treated, the travertine lacked little of the radiance of marble, for it must be remembered that the Greeks painted even the Pentelic cornice of the Parthenon with red and blue. Nor can we doubt that the general effect of brightness suited the glad and genial conditions of Greek life.

All the surroundings are altered now, and the lover of the picturesque may be truly thankful that the hand of time, by stripping the buildings of this stucco without impairing their proportions, has substituted a new harmony of tone between the native stone and the surrounding landscape, no less sympathetic to the present solitude than the old symphony of colours was to the animated circumstances of a populous Greek city. In this way those critics who defend the polychrome decorations of the classic architects, and those who contend that

they cannot imagine any alteration from the present toning of Greek temples for the better, are both right.

In point of colour the Pæstum ruins are very similar to those of Girgenti; but owing to their position on a level plain, in front of a scarcely indented sea-shore, we lack the irregularity which adds so much charm to the row of temples on their broken cliff in the old town of Agrigentum. In like manner the celebrated asymmetreia of the buildings of the Athenian Acropolis, which causes so much variety of light and shade upon the temple-fronts, and offers so many novel points of view when they are seen in combination, seems to have been due originally to the exigencies of the ground. At Pæstum, in planning out the city, there can have been no utilitarian reasons for placing the temples at odd angles, either to each other or the shore. Therefore we see them now almost exactly in line and parallel, though at unequal distances. If something of picturesque effect is thus lost at Pæstum through the flatness of the ground, something of impressive grandeur on the other hand is gained by the very regularity with which those phalanxes of massive Doric columns are drawn up to face the sea.

Poseidonia, as the name betokens, was dedicated to the god of the sea; and the coins of the city are stamped with his effigy bearing a trident, and with his sacred animal, the bull. It has therefore been conjectured that the central of the three temples, which was hypæthral and had two entrances—east and west—belonged to Poseidon; and there is something fine in the notion of the god being thus able to pass to and fro from his cella through those sunny peristyles down to his chariot, yoked with sea-horses, in the brine. Yet hypæthral temples were generally consecrated to Zeus, and it is therefore probable that the traditional name of this vast edifice is wrong. The names of the two other temples, *Tempio di Cerere* and *Basilica*, are wholly unsupported by any proof or probability. The second is almost certainly founded on a mistake; and if we assign the largest of the three shrines to Zeus, one or other of the lesser belonged most likely to Poseidon.

The style of the temples is severe and primitive. In general effect their Doric architecture is far sterner than that adapted by Ictinus to the Parthenon. The entablature seems somewhat disproportioned to the columns and the pediment; and, owing to this cause, there is a general effect of heaviness. The columns, again, are thick-set; nor is the effect of solidity removed by their gradual narrowing from the base upwards. The pillars of the *Neptune* are narrowed in a straight line; those of the *Basilica* and *Ceres* by a gentle curve. Study of these buildings, so sublime in their massiveness, so noble in the parsimony of their decoration, so dignified in their employment of the simplest means for the attainment of an indestructible effect of harmony, heightens our admiration for the Attic genius, which found in this grand manner of the elder Doric architects resources as yet undeveloped; creating, by slight and subtle alterations of outline, proportion, and rhythm of parts, what may fairly be

classed as a style unique because exemplified in only one transcendent building.

It is difficult not to return again and again to the beauty of colouring at Pæstum. Lying basking in the sun upon a flat slab of stone, and gazing eastward, there spreads a foreground of dappled light and shadow, across which the lizards run—quick streaks of living emerald—making the bunches of yellow rue and little white serpyllum in the fissures of the masonry nod as they hurry past. Then come two stationary columns, built, it seems, of solid gold, where the sunbeams strike along their tawny surface. Between them lies the landscape, a medley first of brake-fern and asphodel, and feathering acanthus and blue spikes of bugloss. Then a white farm in the middle distance, roofed with the reddest tiles and sheltered by a velvety umbrella pine. Beyond and above the farm, a glimpse of mountains purple almost to indigo with cloud shadows, and flecked with snow. Still higher—but for this we have to raise our head a little—the free heavens enclosed within the framework of the tawny travertine, across which sail hawks and flutter jackdaws, sharply cut against the solid sky. Down from the architrave, to make the vignette perfect, hang tufts of crimson snapdragons. Each opening in the peristyle gives a fresh picture.

The temples are overgrown with snapdragons and mallows, yellow asters and lilac gillyflowers, white allium and wild fig. When a breeze passes, the whole of this many-coloured tapestry waves gently to and fro. The fields around are flowery enough; but where are the roses? I suppose no one who has read his Virgil at school, crosses the plain from Salerno to Pæstum without those words of the *Georgics* ringing in his ears: *biferique rosaria Pæsti*. They have that wonderful Virgilian charm which, by a touch, transforms mere daily sights and sounds, and adds poetic mystery to common things. The poets of ancient Rome seem to have felt the magic of this phrase; for Ovid has imitated the line in his *Metamorphoses*, tamely substituting *tepidi* for the suggestive *biferi*, while again in his *Elegies* he uses the same termination with *odorati* for his epithet. Martial sings of *Pæstanæ rosæ* and *Pæstani gloria ruris*. Even Ausonius, at the very end of Latin literature, draws from the rosaries of Pæstum a pretty picture of beauty doomed to premature decline:

Vidi Pæstano gaudere rosaria cultu
Exoriente novo roscida Lucifero.

‘I have watched the rose-beds that luxuriate on Pæstum’s well-tilled soil, all dewy in the young light of the rising dawn-star.’

What a place indeed was this for a rose-garden, spreading far and wide along the fertile plain, with its deep loam reclaimed from swamps and irrigated by the passing of perpetual streams! But where are the roses now? As well ask, *où sont les neiges d’antan*?

We left Amalfi for Capri in the freshness of an early morning at the end of May. As we stepped into our six-oared boat, the sun rose above

the horizon, flooding the sea with gold and flashing on the terraces above Amalfi. High up the mountains hung pearly and empurpled mists, set like resting-places between a world too beautiful and heaven too far for mortal feet. Not a breath of any wind was stirring. The water heaved with a scarcely perceptible swell, and the vapours lifted gradually as the sun's rays grew in power. Here the hills descend abruptly on the sea, ending in cliffs where light reflected from the water dances. Huge caverns open in the limestone; on their edges hang stalactites like beards, and the sea within sleeps dark as night. For some of these caves the maidenhair fern makes a shadowy curtain; and all of them might be the home of Proteus or of Calypso, by whose side her mortal lover passed his nights in vain home-sickness:

ἐν σπέσσι γλαφυροῖσι παρ' οὐκ ἐθέλων ἔθελουσα.

This is a truly Odyssean journey. Soon the islands of the Sirens come in sight,—bare bluffs of rock shaped like galleys taking flight for the broad sea. As we row past in this ambrosial weather, the oarsmen keeping time and ploughing furrows in the fruitless fields of Nereus, it is not difficult to hear the siren voices—for earth and heaven and sea make melodies far above mortal singing. The water round the Galli—so the islands are now called, as antiquaries tell us, from an ancient fortress named Guallo—is very deep, and not a sign of habitation is to be seen upon them. In bygone ages they were used as prisons; and many doges of Amalfi languished their lives away upon those shadeless stones, watching the sea around them blaze like a burnished shield at noon, and the peaks of Capri deepen into purple when the west was glowing after sunset with the rose and daffodil of southern twilight.

The end of the Sorrentine promontory, Point Campanella, is absolutely barren—grey limestone, with the scantiest overgrowth of rosemary and myrtle. A more desolate spot can hardly be imagined. But now the morning breeze springs up behind; sails are hoisted, and the boatmen ship their oars. Under the albatross wings of our lateen sails we scud across the freshening waves. The precipice of Capri soars against the sky, and the Bay of Naples expands before us with those sweeping curves and azure amplitude that all the poets of the world have sung. Even thus the mariners of ancient Hellas rounded this headland when the world was young. Rightly they named yon rising ground beneath Vesuvius, Posilippo—rest from grief. Even now, after all those centuries of toil, though the mild mountain has been turned into a mouth of murderous fire, though Roman emperors and Spanish despots have done their worst to mar what nature made so perfect, we may here lay down the burden of our cares, gaining tranquillity by no mysterious lustral rites, no penitential prayers or offerings of holocausts, but by the influence of beauty in the earth and air, and by sympathy with a people unspoiled in their healthful life of labour alternating with simple joy.

The last hour of the voyage was beguiled by stories of our boatmen,

some of whom had seen service on distant seas, while others could tell of risks on shore and love adventures. They showed us how the tunny-nets were set, and described the solitary life of the tunny-watchers, in their open boats, waiting to spear the monsters of the deep, entangled in the chambers made for them beneath the waves. How much of Æschylean imagery, I reflected, is drawn from this old fisher's art—the toils of Clytemnestra and the tragedy of Psyttaleia rising to my mind. One of the crew had his little son with him, a child eight years old; and when the boy was restless, he spoke of Barbarossa and Timberio (*sic*) to keep him quiet; for the memory of the Moorish pirate and the mighty emperor is still alive here. The people of Capri are as familiar with Tiberius as the Bretons with King Arthur; and the hoof-mark of illustrious crime is stamped upon the island. Capri offers another example of the versatility of Southern Italy. If Amalfi brings back to us the naval and commercial prosperity of the early middle ages; if Pæstum remains a monument of the oldest Hellenic civilisation; Capri, at a few miles' distance, is dedicated to the Roman Emperor, who made it his favourite residence, when, life-weary with the world and all its shows, he turned these many peaks and slumbering caves into a summer palace for the nursing of his brain-sick phantasy. Already, on landing, we are led to remember that from this shore was loosed the galley bearing that great letter—*verbosa et grandis epistola*—which undid Sejanus and shook Rome. Riding to Ana-Capri and the Salto di Tiberio, exploring the remains of his famous twelve villas, and gliding over the smooth waters paved with the white marbles of his baths, we are for ever attended by the same forbidding spectre. Here, perchance, were the *sedes arcanarum libidinum* whereof Suetonius speaks; the Spintrian medals, found in these recesses, still bear witness that the biographer trusted no mere fables for the picture he has drawn. Here too, below the Villa Jovis, gazing 700 feet sheer down into the waves, we tread the very parapet whence fell the victims of that maniac lust for blood. “After long and exquisite torments,” says the Roman writer, “he ordered condemned prisoners to be cast into the sea before his eyes; marines were stationed near to pound the fallen corpses with poles and oars, lest haply breath should linger in their limbs.” The Neapolitan Museum contains a little bas-relief representing Tiberius, with the well-known features of the Claudian house, seated astride upon a donkey, with a girl before him. A slave is leading the beast and its burden to a terminal statue under an olive-tree.* This curious relic, discovered some while since at Capri, haunted my fancy as I climbed the olive-planted slopes to his high villa on the Arx Tiberii. It is some relief, amid so much that is tragic in the associations of this place, to have the horrible Tiberius burlesqued and brought into donkey-riding relation with the tourist of to-day. And what a curious revenge of time it is

* See Suetonius, Tiberius, 43, 3.

that his famous Salto should be turned into a restaurant, where the girls dance tarantella for a few coppers, that a toothless hermit should occupy a cell upon the very summit of his Villa Jovis, and that the Englishwoman's comfortable hotel should be called *Timberio* by the natives! A spiritualist might well believe that the emperor's ghost was forced to haunt the island, and to expiate his old atrocities by gazing on these modern vulgarisms.

Few problems suggested by history are more darkly fascinating than the madness of despots; and of this madness, whether inherent in their blood or encouraged by the circumstance of absolute autocracy, the emperors of the Claudian and Julian houses furnish the most memorable instance.* It is this that renders Tiberius ever present to our memory at Capri. Nor will the student of Suetonius forget his even more memorable grand-nephew Caligula. The following passage is an episode from the biography of that imperial maniac, whose portrait in grey basalt, with the strain of dire mental tension on the forehead, is still so beautiful that we are able at this distance of time to pity more than loathe him. "Above all, he was tormented with nervous irritation, by sleeplessness; for he enjoyed not more than three hours of nocturnal repose, nor even these in pure untroubled rest, but agitated by phantasmata of portentous augury; as, for example, upon one occasion, among other spectral visions, he fancied that he saw the sea, under some definite impersonation, conversing with himself. Hence it was, and from this incapacity of sleeping, and from weariness of lying awake, that he had fallen into habits of ranging all night long through the palace, sometimes throwing himself on a couch, sometimes wandering along the vast corridors, watching for the earliest dawn, and anxiously wishing its approach."† Those corridors, or loggie, where Caligula spent his wakeful hours, opened perchance upon this bay of Naples: for we know that one of his great follies was a palace built above the sea on piles at Baiæ; and where else could *Pelagus*, with his cold azure eyes and briny locks, have more appropriately terrified his sleep with prophecy, conveyed in dreams? The very nature of this vision, selected for such special comment by Suetonius as to show that it had troubled Caligula profoundly, proves the fantastic nature of the man, and justifies the hypothesis of insanity. But it is time to shake off the burden of the past. Only students, carrying superfluity of culture in their knapsacks, will ponder over the imperial lunatics who made Capri and Baiæ fashionable in the days of ancient Rome. Neither Tiberius nor Caligula, nor yet Ferdinand of Aragon or Bomba for that matter, has been able to leave trace of vice or scar of crime on nature in this Eden. A row round the island, or a supper-party in the loggia above the sea at sunset time, is no less charming now, in spite of Roman memories, than when the world was young.

* De Quincey, in his essay on *The Cæsars*, has worked out this subject with such artistic vividness that no more need be said.

† This paraphrastic version is quoted from De Quincey.

Sea-mists are frequent in the early summer mornings, swathing the cliffs of Capri in impenetrable wool, and brooding on the perfectly smooth water till the day-wind rises. Then they disappear like magic, rolling in smoke wreaths from the surface of the sea, condensing into clouds and climbing the hill-sides like Oceanides in quest of Prometheus, or taking their station on the watch-towers of the world, as in the chorus of the *Nephelei*. Such a morning may be chosen for the *giro* of the island. The blue grotto loses nothing of its beauty, but rather gains by contrast, when passing from dense fog, you find yourself transported to a world of wavering subaqueous sheen. It is only through the opening of the very topmost arch that a boat can glide into this cavern; the arch itself spreads downward through the water, so that all the light is transmitted from beneath and coloured by the sea. The grotto is domed in many chambers; and the water is so clear that you can see the bottom, silvery, with black-finned fishes diapered upon the blue white sand. The body of a diver in this water showed like the faces of children playing at snapdragon; all around him the spray leapt up with living fire; and when the oars struck the surface, it was as though a phosphorescent sea had been smitten, and the drops ran from the blades in blue pearls. I have only once seen anything (outside the magic-world of a pantomime) to equal these effects of blue and silver; and that was when I made my way into an ice-cave in the Great Aletsch glacier—not an artificial gallery such as they cut at Grindelwald, but a natural cavern, arched, hollowed into fanciful recesses, and hung with stalactites of pendent ice. The difference between the glacier-cavern and the sea-grotto was that in the former all the light was transmitted through transparent sides, so that the whole was one uniform azure, except in rare places where little chinks opened upwards to the air, and the light of day came glancing with a roseate flush. In the latter the light sent from beneath through the water played upon a roof of rock; reflections intermingled with translucence; and a greater variety of light and shadow compensated the lack of that strange sense of being shut within a solid gem.

Numberless are the caves at Capri. The so-called green grotto has the beauty of moss-agate in its liquid floor; the red grotto shows a warmer chord of colour; and where there is no other charm to notice, endless beauty may be found in the play of sunlight upon roofs of limestone, tinted with yellow, orange, and pale pink, mossed over, hung with fern, and catching tones of blue or green from the still deeps beneath.

Sheets of water, wherever found, are the most subtle heighteners of colour. To those who are familiar with Venetian or Mantuan sunsets, or who have seen the flocks of flamingoes reflected on the lagoons of Tunis, or who have watched stormy red flakes tossed from crest to crest of great Atlantic waves on our own coasts, this need hardly be said. Yet I cannot leave this beauty of the sea at Capri without touching on a melodrama of light and colour I once saw at Castellammare. It was a

feſta-night, when the people ſent up rockets and fireworks of every hue from the molo. The ſurf rolled ſhoreward like a bath of molten metals, all confuſed of blue, and red, and green, and gold—dying dolphin tints that burned ſtrangely beneath the purple ſkies and tranquil ſtars. Boats at ſea hung out their crimſon cſſets, flickering in long lines on the bay; and larger craft moved ſlowly with rows of lamps defining their curves; while the full moon ſhed over all her “vitreous pour, juſt tinged with blue.” To ſome taſtes this mingling of natural and artificial effects would ſeem unworthy of ſober notice; but I confeſs to having enjoyed it with childiſh eagereſs like a rich feaſt never to be forgotten.

After a day upon the water it is pleaſant to reſt at ſunſet in the loggia above the ſea. The bay of Naples ſtretches far and wide in front, beautiful by reaſon chiefly of the long fine line deſcending from Veſuvius, dipping almoſt to a level and then gliding up to join the high-lands of the north. Now ſun and moon begin to mingle, waning and waxing ſplendours. The cliffs above our heads are ſtill bluſhing a deep flame-colour, like the heart of ſome tea-roſe; when lo! the touch of the huntreſs is laid upon thoſe eaſtern pinnacles, and the horizon glimmers with her riſing. Was it on ſuch a night that Ferdinand of Aragon fled from his capital before the French, with eyes turned ever to the land he loved, chanting, as he leaned from his galley’s ſtern, that melancholy pſalm—“Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain”—and ſeeing Naples dwindle to a white blot on the purple ſhore?

Our journey takes the oppoſite direction. Farewell to Capri, welcome to Sorrento! The roads are ſweet with ſcent of acacia and orange flowers. When you walk in a garden at night, the white ſpecks beneath your feet are fallen petals of lemon bloſſoms. Over the walls hang cataracts of roſes, honey-pale cluſters of the Banksia roſe, and pink buſhes of the China roſe, growing as we never ſee them grow with us. The grey rocks wave with gladiolus—feathers of crimſon, ſet mid tufts of roſemary, and myrtle, and tree-ſpurge. In the clefts of the ſandſtone, and behind the orchard-walls, ſleeps a dark green night of foliage, in the miſt of which gleam globed oranges, and lemons dropping like great pearls of paleſt amber dew. It is difficult to believe that the lemons have not grown into length by their own weight, as though mere hanging on the bough prevented them from being round—ſo waxen are they. Overhead ſoar ſtone-pines—a roof of ſombre green, a lattice-work of ſtrong red branches, through which the moon peers wonderfully. One part of this marvellous *piano* is bare rock tufted with keen-ſcented herbs, and ſparſely grown with locuſt-trees and olives. Another waves from ſea to ſummit with beech-copſes and oak-woods, as verdant as the moſt abundant Engliſh valley. Another region turns its hoary raiment of olive-gardens to the ſun and ſea, or flouriſhes with fig and vine. Every-where, the houſes of men are dazzling white, perched on natural coigns of vantage, cluſtered on the brink of brown cliffs, neſtling under

mountain eaves, or piled up from the sea-beach in ascending tiers, until the broad knees of the hills are reached, and great Pan, the genius of solitude in nature, takes unto himself a region yet untenanted by man. The occupations of the sea and land are blent together in this region; and the people are both blithe and gentle. It is true that their passions are upon the surface, and that the knife is ready to their hand. But the combination of fierceness and softness in them has an infinite charm, when one has learned by observation that their lives are laborious and frugal, and that their honesty is hardly less than their vigour. Happy indeed are they—so happy that, but for crimes accumulated through successive generations by bad governors, and but for superstitions cankering the soul within, they might deserve what Shelley wrote of his imagined island in *Epipsychidion*.

J. A. S.

A Study of Lower Life.

As has well been observed, the phrase *omne ignotum pro magnifico* is not more appropriate or true than its reverse or opposite. And it constitutes one of the greatest advantages of natural history study, that it directs our attention to new and curious features in the commonest living forms around us, and, by aiding both our mental and physical perceptions, largely extends the range of the most commonplace observation. The "sight" of the natural historian is, in fact, anything but "unassisted;" but, on the contrary, discerns beauty and grace where vision of the latter description could perceive nothing worthy of attention or study. If Pope's dictum, that "the proper study of mankind is man," be accepted as literally true, and as tending to limit human observation to the investigation of its own peculiarities, the zoologist may fitly remind the poet that the study of lower forms not only assists our appreciation of human affairs, but sometimes actually explains and elucidates points in man's history which otherwise would remain utterly obscure. Thus the spirit of a liberal science is most decided in its opposition to any exclusiveness in the objects submitted to its scrutiny: since, recognising the independence of the various branches of knowledge, we learn that the advance of one study really means the improvement of all.

No better illustration of the manner in which a simple study in biology may be made to form a text for the illustration of some facts and points interesting to the world at large can well be selected, than that comprised in the life-history of the little animal known as the *Hydra*, or "common fresh-water Polype." The examination of this common denizen of our pools and ditches may convince the sceptical that the issues of scientific study are not only varied and interesting, but that they also sometimes lead us to contemplate phases of life and growth not very far removed from some of the most important problems which can well occupy the consideration of the human mind.

The hydra of the zoologist by no means recalls to mind, as regards its form at any rate, the famous being of mythological lore; although, as will hereafter be noted, in certain of its features, the modern hydra may fitly bear comparison with its mythical namesake. If we take some water from a quiet pool, which has become stagnant and overgrown with lower plant life and water-weeds flourishing apace under the kindly influences of the summer sun, and place this water along with a small quantity of the weeds in a clear glass vessel exposed to the light, we may be almost sure to find that in due time certain small bodies of greenish

colour have attached themselves to the sides of the vessel. These bodies will congregate chiefly on the side of the vessel next the light, and as regards their size, the beings referred to are seen to be by no means large. A length of about a quarter of an inch may be regarded as a fair statement of their average dimensions; although occasionally a specimen may greatly exceed the proportions of its neighbours, and exhibit a length of half an inch or more.

Examined by aid of a hand-lens, each of these little organisms or hydræ is seen to possess a tubular or cylindrical body, which is attached by one extremity to the glass or duck-weed, and which exhibits at the opposite and free extremity a mouth-opening, surrounded by a circle of arms or tentacles. These latter are delicate, thread-like organs, which in the undisturbed and natural state of the animal remain outstretched in the water. In the common or green hydra, the tentacles are not disproportionately developed as regards the body, but in certain other forms or species, in which the body is coloured brown (*Hydra fusca*), the tentacles are very long, and the animal obtains in consequence the distinctive name of the "Long-armed Hydra."

The observation of the common incidents of the hydra's life reveals certain interesting features, which assist us in some degree in the appreciation of the nature and structure of these organisms. When the tentacles are touched, they at once contract and shorten, and the body also shrinks or shrivels up into a somewhat rounded mass. This simple fact proves to us that the hydra is sensitive to outward impressions, a feature in its history which is of high interest when we endeavour to understand the nature and relations of the nervous system of higher animals; and that these animals are also sensitive to more delicate impressions is proved by their clustering in numbers on that side of the glass vessel which is next the light. If the hydra is left in an undisturbed condition after being irritated, the body and tentacles will become elongated and expanded, and will once more resume their normal condition.

That the polypes are not permanently rooted or attached to the weeds in which they are commonly found, may be proved by the simple observation of their habits. They may be seen to detach themselves from fixed objects, and to move slowly about in leech-like fashion, or like the looping caterpillars, by alternately fixing and extending the mouth and root-extremity of the body; whilst occasionally they may be seen to float listlessly, with extended tentacles, amid their native waters.

When any minute animal, such as a water-flea, or some similar organism, comes in contact with the tentacles of the hydra, an interesting series of acts is witnessed. The tentacles are then observed to act as organs for the capture of prey, the victim being seized and conveyed by their contraction towards the mouth of the animal, within which cavity it finally disappears from view. That the hydra therefore possesses instincts common to all forms of animal life, high and low alike, and which lead it to supply the wants of its frame, cannot be doubted; and

Schiller's maxim that hunger is one of the powers that rule the universe, may thus be aptly illustrated within the small domain and in the simple life-history of the hydra.

As might be expected, the prey at first struggles violently to escape from the clutches of its captor, but after a short period the efforts become less and less marked, and the captive may be noted to become somewhat suddenly helpless and paralysed. The observation of these details leads us to expect that the hydra possesses some offensive apparatus, through the action of which the capture of prey is facilitated. And an examination, by aid of the microscope, of the tentacles of the polype, and in fact of its body-substance as well, would reveal the presence of numerous minute capsules, named "thread-cells," which are developed in the tissues of the body. Each of these curious little cells consists of a tough outer membrane, within which a delicate thread or filament lies coiled up amidst fluid. When one of these structures is irritated, as by pressure, the cell is observed to rupture, the thread being thrown out or everted, whilst the fluid at the same time escapes. A thread-cell of the hydra, in its ruptured condition, appears as an oval capsule having attached to one extremity the thread, which is provided at its base with three little spines or hooks. The consideration of the structure and functions of these thread-cells clearly indicates their offensive nature. Each may in fact be regarded as representing a miniature poison-apparatus; the "thread" being the dart or sting, and the fluid constituting the venom. The prey of these polypes has little chance of escape from the attack of these cells; since wounded by the threads, which doubtless become attached to its body by the hooks, and poisoned by the fluid, even animals of tolerably large size, when compared with the hydra, may be seen to succumb to its attack. The polypes are thus seen to be singularly well provided as regards offensive apparatus, the particular form and action of which reminds one, in some degree, of the famous "lasso" of Western nations. And it is at the same time interesting to note that thread-cells of essentially similar nature to those found in the hydra, confer on the jelly-fishes and allied forms the stinging powers which render these beings the terror of tender-skinned bathers.

The internal structure of our polype is of the simplest possible description. It may seem strange to talk of an animal body which lives and grows without any of the structures or machinery we are accustomed to associate with the higher animals. Yet the hydra exemplifies the former condition; since we might accurately enough describe its body as consisting of a simple tube, the interior of which contains no organs of any kind, and which communicates with the outer world through the mouth. If we further suppose that the walls of this tubular body are composed of two closely applied layers or membranes—the outer somewhat dense and tough, and the inner of more delicate nature—we shall have formed a broad but accurate idea of the constitution of these polypes. When the prey or food is swallowed, it therefore passes into

the interior of the tubular body, which evidently serves as a stomach-sac. Here the morsel is digested or dissolved, and as the result of this process, a fluid perfectly adapted for the nourishment of the polype is formed. This fluid or blood is kept circulating throughout the interior of the simple body, by the constant movements or vibrations of numerous minute processes named *cilia*, which exist like a fringe on the lining membrane of the body cavity, and which therefore perform the functions of the heart of higher animals. Thus it may be said that every part of the hydra's body is brought directly into contact with this nutritive fluid, since we note that the fluid is transmitted from membrane to membrane and from cell to cell by the process of imbibition. And in this simple manner does the hydra repair the continual waste of its parts; this process of waste being the inevitable result of the acts and functions of every living being, and the invariable concomitant of life itself.

We have already noted that the hydra possesses the power of appreciating sensations, since it shrinks when touched, and exhibits other proofs of its sensitiveness. In the possession of this power the polype resembles some plants, and most if not all other animals, including man himself. Broadly stated, this power which the hydra possesses may be regarded as presenting us with the idea of a nervous system in its simplest phase. The functions of such a system may be summarised in the statement that it is adapted for bringing the animal into relation with its surroundings. We thus say that the nervous system exercises the function of "relation;" whilst from the fact that the animal performs this function through impressions being made upon it, we are also accustomed to speak of the nervous power as exercising the function of "irritability." This power, in fact, stands mediately between the animal and the world in which it lives. The higher we ascend in the animal scale the more perfectly do we find the nervous system adapted for placing the animal in possession of a knowledge of its environments; although, as will be presently remarked, the differences between the nervous powers of higher and lower animals are to be considered rather differences of degree than of kind.

But as an examination of the hydra demonstrates to us, the view just taken of the nervous functions can hardly be considered of a complete kind. For we find that the polype when touched is enabled to act upon the knowledge or sensation which the touch conveys; since its tentacles contract, and its whole body shrinks as if in irritation and alarm. The reception of a sensation by the nervous system is therefore accompanied by a power of acting upon "information received:" and it cannot be doubted that a certain and definite correspondence must exist between the impression and the act it evokes. Indeed, amongst lower forms of animal life this correspondence is not only exceedingly well marked, but constitutes in itself the sum total of the nervous functions in such beings. But the highest animals, including man himself, may be said to acquire a knowledge of their surroundings in an exactly similar manner. When

we talk of exercising our senses—or when, to use a comprehensive term, we speak of “feeling”—we are simply expressing the idea of obtaining a certain knowledge of our environments, and as a result, we are further enabled to act upon that knowledge in ways and fashions relative thereto.

Some such ideas as those just stated, have given rise to the conception—widely known and discussed in these days under the name of the “automatic doctrine”—that the acts of all animals, including those of man—“the paragon of animals,” as Hamlet terms him—bear in reality a much closer relation to their surroundings than they are generally supposed to possess. The simple acts of a hydra’s life, and the most intricate operations of the human mind; the nervous action which enables a polype to obtain a particle of food, and the nerve-changes evolving thoughts which emanate from minds like those of Goethe, Shakespeare, Newton, and Milton—thoughts which will re-echo in the minds of men throughout all time—are thus held to present, when analysed out to their fullest extent, a striking community of origin. The polype is said to be really an “automaton,” in that it simply acts through its nervous powers, as these powers are first acted upon by outer impressions; and man, we are told, must also be held as sharing this automaton nature, since his acts are determined in like manner by outward circumstances, and simply by the succession or order in which these circumstances have been impressed upon his nervous centres. “The question is,” as Dr. Carpenter has expressed it, “whether the Ego is completely under the necessary domination of his original or inherited tendencies, modified by subsequent education; or whether he possesses within himself any power of directing and controlling these tendencies.” Or as the case is put by Professor Huxley: “Descartes’ line of argument is perfectly clear. He starts from reflex action in man, from the unquestionable fact that in ourselves co-ordinate purposive actions may take place without the intervention of consciousness or volition, or even contrary to the latter. As actions of a certain degree of complexity,” continues Huxley, “are brought about by mere mechanism, why may not actions of still greater complexity be the result of a more refined mechanism?”

As may readily be noted, this theory of the physical origin of man’s mental powers necessarily carries with it a special and peculiar interpretation of man’s moral nature and obligations. For it implies the belief that we cannot act in any other fashion than is determined by our character; and this latter, in its turn, results from or is developed by the action of outer and physical circumstances upon the organism. Consciousness, or that knowledge of *self* which most people hold lies at the root and foundation of our mental existence, except as a secondary matter, is thus put altogether out of court; and the powers of mind come in this view to represent so many effects of the long-continued action of experience and custom in inducing various mental states, as the result of certain combinations of outer impressions.

The fierce conflict to which the discussion of this automatic doctrine has given rise can be readily understood and explained. It is no light matter to assert that the mental powers and intellect of man are, after all, simply material in their nature and origin, and that they merely represent a high development and modification of the simple nervous impressions seen in lower states of existence. Yet there is a latent truth in this view of the matter, which, when recognised and brought into relation with facts and ideas external to such a theory, presents us with a rational explanation of the origin of man's mental nature. Whatever may have been the origin of man's intellect, there can firstly be no question of the impassable nature of the gulf which exists between the human type of mind and the instincts of all other forms of life. Even if man's total origin from a lower form or forms were a proved fact, the recognition of the fact could never lessen by an iota our estimation of the infinite superiority of man, regarded as a thinking intelligent being, over his nearest allies. Preconceived notions and ideas might and probably would revolt against such an idea of the origin of man's mind; but the spirit of a liberal science would content itself with the fact that no considerations regarding its origin and development can detract from the high or immeasurable superiority of the human over every other type and form of nervous functions.

Turning next to inquire into the existence of automatic or instinctive acts amongst animals, we may in the first place be surprised to note that in the hydra, sensitive although the polype is seen to be to outward impressions, no traces of a nervous system or of analogous organs can be discerned. The polypes are thus literally sensitive, without possessing any appreciable or visible apparatus for exercising that sense. The hydra is, however, by no means alone in this respect. The sea-anemones, which are animals nearly related to the hydra, are equally if not more sensitive than the latter; since the anemones may be seen to withdraw their tentacles and to contract their bodies on being touched, or even if the light falling upon them be suddenly intercepted, as by the shadow of a passing cloud. Yet the anemones, like hydra, utterly want a nervous system. But certain plants may also not only exhibit symptoms of irritation or sensitiveness when touched, but may act upon their sensations—a feature well exemplified by the drooping leaflets and leaf-stalk of the sensitive plant; by the closure of the leaf of the Venus fly-trap, and by definite movements of contraction observed in other plants, resulting from alterations in temperature. In plants, it is almost needless to remark, no nervous system has been demonstrated to exist; and no botanist has even suggested the possibility of the existence of nervous tissues within the limits of the vegetable creation. Yet, tested by the acts of their lives, we might truly say to such plants, with Shakespeare—

Sense you have,

Else could you not have motion;

and, judging from the sensitiveness of the plants just mentioned, the conclusion appears inevitable that plants possess means for receiving and for acting upon sensations, and that in this light they may be fitly compared with the hydra and all lower animals in which a nervous system has not been demonstrated to exist.

It is perfectly clear that the acts of these plants, and of such animals as the hydra and sea-anemone, must be considered of a purely automatic kind. We cannot reasonably suppose that consciousness, or a knowledge of why or how the acts are performed, plays any part in the life-history of such forms. And even if it be maintained that mere sensation and consciousness in this case are identical or closely allied, the latter quality must be so far removed in its nature from the consciousness of humanity as to render the comparison quite inadmissible. The hydra and its neighbours are in truth automata pure and simple, in that they are stimulated by outward circumstances and respond to such stimuli without possessing any appreciation of the why and wherefore of any act of their lives.

But that automatic acts may represent the whole life, or a very large share of the actions, of animals much higher than these polypes, can readily be demonstrated. A centipede, for example, when cut in halves, will exhibit lively and independent movements in each half of its body—a fact readily explained when we note that each joint of the animal's body possesses a nerve-centre which supplies the surrounding parts with powers of movement. And if the central portion of the nervous system of the animal be destroyed whilst its body remains intact, the front portion of the body and the front legs together with the legs lying behind the destroyed portion will continue to push the animal forwards. Here the action of the hinder legs is purely automatic. But in the insect-class we find many examples of automatic acts, which at first sight actually seem to suggest the development of a high intelligence. The young insect, just liberated from its chrysalis state, performs at once and perfectly all the operations of its life. And even in the case of the wonderful operations exemplified by the ants, bees, and their allies, we find examples of automatism. The acts of these insects are in reality determined by surrounding conditions; and each insect, destitute of all previous knowledge, enters upon its duties and discharges them with unerring skill, immediately after its birth or when it has attained its full development. Here, therefore, there can be no intelligent appreciation or consciousness of the nature of the duties performed. Indeed, as Dr. Carpenter has well remarked in speaking of the adaptation of such insects to their duties, "the very perfection of the adaptation, again, is often of itself a sufficient evidence of the unreasoning character of the beings which perform the work; for if we attribute it to their own intelligence, we must admit that this intelligence frequently equals, if it does not surpass, that of the most accomplished Human reasoner."

Turning lastly to the investigation of man's actions as a type of those

of higher animals generally, we find that physiology makes us acquainted with the performance of many automatic acts and movements in the common existence of humanity. The earliest acts of the infant are purely automatic; they are performed without the slightest appreciation of their meaning, and without any intelligent conception of their order and succession, that order and succession being really determined by the outward or physical conditions of life. The person who walks along the street absorbed in a reverie or day-dream, but who nevertheless and all unconsciously to himself avoids his neighbours and the lamp-posts, is so far an automaton in that the complicated muscular movements of his limbs and the general equilibrium of the body are being co-ordinated independently of his knowledge and will. And very many other examples might be cited in support of the allegation that automatic acts and movements play a very important part in the existence of higher animals.

Thus we may hold it to be fully proved that automatism has a veritable existence, and really forms the basis of all nervous acts. That in itself it constitutes the essence of all the intellectual acts of man is, however, a conclusion by no means involved in the preceding statement. That the "physical" act involved in the execution of any movement—such an act being exemplified by the change which nerve-tissue undergoes even in the act of thinking—is connected and associated with another action, the "mental" act, cannot be doubted, if it be admitted at all that we possess a rational cognisance of ourselves and our actions. And that the "mental" act in the higher animal may represent the actual source, origin, and cause of the physical act, is also, as far as human intelligence can assure us, an undoubted fact. Hence we are forced to conclude that however this mental act has originated in man, it has really come to assume a place, dominion, and power in the constitution and working of his nervous system which is utterly unrepresented in any lower forms. If man may be proved or believed to be hereditarily the "slave of antecedent circumstances," it must also be admitted that a new power has been developed out of the action upon his nervous system of these same circumstances, this power being represented by the formation of the conscious self-knowing Ego or Mind. That hereditary influences and inherited constitution possess a large share in moulding the mind, as they undoubtedly operate in producing a certain conformation of body, is but a reasonable belief. And the formation of the character of the child, and through the development of the latter that of the adult mind also, must accordingly depend to a certain extent upon influences for which neither is in any way responsible, and over which, in the first instance, neither can have any control. That automatic acts derived from and moulded upon preceding acts of like character make up the chief part of human existence in a savage state is a statement of readily proved kind, since man in his primitive condition can hardly be supposed to speculate much concerning himself, but has his acts directed and controlled to a greater or less extent by outward circumstances and by the exigencies which his physical sur-

roundings induce. But as in man's physical development, so in his mental nature, new features appear; and explain it how we may, we are forced to recognise that out of the mere instinct and pure automatism of his earlier state has been developed that fuller knowledge and command of self which brings with it the moral sense and all the noble conceptions of his race: a progress of mental development this, imitated by the mental advance of man as he emerges from the savage to the civilised state, and typified in a closer fashion still by the growth and progress of the infant's mind, from the indefinite mists of unconsciousness to the clearer light of a rational intelligence. The development of the child's intellect in this view presents us with a panoramic picture of the stages through which we may conceive the mind of man to have passed in its progress from the condition of a hydra-like automaton to the higher phase in which he obtains a knowledge of himself. And it seems to me that only through the ideas involved in some such theory of the origin of man's mental powers can we reasonably explain the possession by lower animals of many qualities and traits of character which we are too apt to regard as peculiar to man. The community of instincts in man and lower animals, in fact, affords a powerful argument in favour of the idea that the higher intellect of humanity has originated through the progressive development of lower instincts.

Our survey of the relations and origin of nervous acts has led us far afield into the domain of metaphysics, and has in some measure alienated us from our more sober study of the commonplace hydra. We have, however, noted that our polype forms a text for the illustration of some points highly interesting to humanity at large, and in what remains to be told of its life-history we shall find exemplified several other features of highly interesting if not of most remarkable kind.

Of these latter features, probably the most notable relate to the various modes in which the hydra may reproduce its kind. We have already observed how the animal makes provision for the wants of its own existence, and how it repairs the local and continually occurring death of its parts by the reception and digestion of food, and by the circulation from cell to cell of the products of nutrition. Such a view of the polype's organisation, however, presents us after all with a one-sided aspect; and like most partial and incomplete surveys of things, our ideas of the polype's life-history are apt to become erroneous and liable to misconstruction. Every living being, in addition to the duty imposed upon it of repairing its individual loss of substance, has to bear a share in the reparation of the injuries and losses which death is the means of inflicting on its species or race. Through the processes of reproduction and development, new beings are ushered into the field of active life to take part in carrying on the life of the species, just as the process of nutrition made good the wants and supplied the exigencies of the single form.

The Harveian motto, "*omne ex ovo*," holds good in the case of hydra, inasmuch as we find that the animal in summer more especially may be

seen to produce eggs, from which, through a process of regular and defined development, new hydræ are produced. But we may concern ourselves less with this normal phase of development than with certain strange and out-of-the-way features which our polype may be observed to exhibit. There are very few persons outside the ranks of biologists who would be inclined to associate a veritable process of "budding" with the functions of an animal organism. Yet in hydra, in a large number of its neighbours, and in a few other groups of the animal world, a veritable process of this nature occurs, whereby from a parent-body certain portions are gradually budded out to assume in due time the form and likeness of the being which has produced them.

Thus, when the hydra is well nourished, little projections may be observed to sprout from the side of the body. As these projections increase in size, each is seen gradually to develop a mouth and little tentacles at its free end, and in due time presents us with the spectacle of a young hydra, which has budded from the parent to which, save in size, it bears a close resemblance. Sometimes, also, it so happens that this young bud grows and multiplies like its parent, and produces a bud in its turn. So that we meet, in such a case, with a veritable genealogical tree, presenting us with three generations of hydræ, adhering to each other, and connected by the closest ties of blood-relationship. Not only, therefore, is our hydra coloured like a plant: it also imitates the plant-creation in certain aspects of its life-history, and by the process of budding converts itself from a single into a compound animal. Whilst the young buds remain attached to the parent, free and perfect communication exists between the simple body-cavities of the connected individuals, and the compound organism is thus nourished by as many mouths as there are animals in the colony. But this connected and compound state is not permanent in hydra; although, as seen in the zoo-phytes, it presents us with a complicated and enduring fabric, numbering it may be many hundreds of included animals which have been produced by a process of budding. Sooner or later the young hydra-buds will break contact with the parent-body, and will float away through the surrounding water on their way to root themselves to fixed objects, and to begin life on their own account.

More astonishing by far, however, is it to find that we possess the means for propagating hydræ at will. We may actually imitate the experiment performed of old by that redoubtable demi-god Hercules, since by the artificial division of one polype we may give origin to new beings, and may multiply the species through the destruction of a single individuality. These curious results, also obtained by experimentation on the sea-anemones, were first made known to the world at large by Trembley, an Englishman, who was tutor to the sons of Count Bentinck, and who also, whilst resident at Geneva about the middle of the last century, contrived to find time and opportunity for close observation of those polypes. In 1744 Trembley published his memoir on the hydra,

and we shall leave the ingenious naturalist to detail in his own language the method and results of his experiments. Surprised at the curious life-history and plasticity of these creatures under almost every condition, Trembley resolved to ascertain if the reproductive powers of hydra were further allied to those of plants in their ability to reproduce their like by being divided into "slips." Having divided a hydra crosswise and nearer to the mouth than to the root-extremity, he put the two parts into a flat glass which contained water four or five lines in depth, and in such a manner that each portion of the polype could be easily observed through a strong magnifying glass. "On the morning of the day after having cut the polyp, it seemed to me that on the edges of the second part, which had neither head nor arms, three small points were issuing from these edges. This surprised me extremely, and I waited with impatience for the moment when I could clearly ascertain what they were. Next day they were sufficiently developed to leave no doubt on my mind that they were true arms. The following day two new arms made their appearance, and some days after, a third appeared, and I now could trace no difference between the first and second half of the polyp which I had cut."

Experimenters since Trembley's time, but following in the track of that ingenious observer, have cut and divided the hydra in almost every possible fashion, with the result of finding that the polype possesses an unlimited power, not only of resisting injuries—the least of which would be sufficient to insure the death of any ordinary organism, plant, or animal—but of utilising the results of mutilation in the multiplication of its race. But as a final feature in the hydra's history, we must allude to one point which perhaps we should deem as even of more extraordinary kind than the traits of character just described; this point being exemplified by certain experiments of Trembley, in which he actually succeeded in turning these polykes inside out, without in the slightest degree interfering with their ultimate vitality. In 1742, Trembley first succeeded in his endeavour to place the polype *hors de combat*, and his *ruse* or plan of procedure was of so ingenious a nature that we may again let him speak for himself. He tells us that he commenced operations "by giving a worm to the polyp, and put it, when the stomach was well filled, into a little water, which filled the hollow of my left hand. I pressed it afterwards with a gentle pinch towards the posterior extremities. In this manner I pressed the worm which was in the stomach against the mouth of the polyp, forcing it to open—continuing the pinching pressure until the worm was partly pressed out of the mouth. When the polyp was in this state I conducted it gently out of the water, without damaging it, and placed it upon the edge of my hand, which was simply moistened in order that the polyp should not stick to it. I forced it to contract itself more and more, and, in doing so, assisted in enlarging the mouth and stomach. I now took in my right hand a thick and pointless boar's bristle, which I held as a lancet is held

in bleeding. I approached its thicker end to the posterior extremity of the polyp, which I pressed until it entered the stomach, which it does the more easily since it is empty at this place and much enlarged. I continued to advance the bristle, and in proportion as it advanced the polyp became more and more inverted. When it came to the worm, by which the mouth is kept open on one side, and the posterior part of the polyp is passed through the mouth, the creature is thus turned completely inside out; the exterior superficies of the polyp has become the interior."

The operation thus described was occasionally frustrated in a manner by the hydræ; since, in less than an hour, Trembley observed some specimens to succeed in restoring themselves to their natural position. This observer, however, prevented the latter result in one or two instances by spitting the polype, a needle being passed through the body close under the mouth; and when thus treated the animal, with wisdom which humanity might sometimes advantageously imitate, accommodated itself without murmur to the exigencies of its position. Trembley appears to have taken the state of the appetite of his polypes as a very natural and rational test of their state of health after being operated upon; since he remarks that a hydra which had been turned inside out ate "a small worm two days after the operation;" whilst to conclude, he remarks that "the same polyp may be successively inverted, cut in sections, and turned back again, without being seriously injured." After the recital of these experiments—to which, seeing that the hydra possesses no traces of a nervous system, the most tender-hearted anti-vivisectionist could offer no objection—we may well question whether the hydra of zoology is not after all a more wonderful animal than its mythical and fabulous namesake.

The attentive consideration of these features in our polype's biography, naturally suggests some remarks on the nature of the beings which possess powers so wondrous of resisting mutilation and of recovering from serious injury. In virtue of what description or amount of vitality, it may be asked, or on what supposition can we account for the amazing reparative powers of the hydra? The answer to the question may be prefaced by the remark that the hydræ are not singular in respect of their fertility under apparently disadvantageous circumstances. As already remarked, and as the writer can testify from experiment, the sea-anemones may be subjected to the ordeal of trial by slicing and chopping with favourable results, as far as the artificial increase of the race is concerned. But animals occupying a much higher place in the scale of animal society may also exhibit reparative powers of a singular and extensive kind. A starfish, for example, need not in the slightest degree be disconcerted by the loss of its rays, for these astronomical beings may be met with on the sea-beach in the condition of grim old warriors who have left portions of their organisation on numerous battle-fields, and possessing, it may be, but a single intact ray; the other four rays having most likely served voracious codfishes as

dainty if somewhat tough morsels. Or, again, the crabs and lobsters may be cited as examples of animals to whom the loss of a limb, less or more, makes but little difference. Indeed, the lobsters seem to part with even the largest of their members on very slight provocation; for a sudden noise, such as the report of cannon, has been known to serve as the exciting cause of dismemberment. Or, lastly, to select animals of a higher grade still, it is well-known that our familiar eft or newt may lose half of its tail without suffering any permanent loss; a natural process of reparation and growth in the starfish, in the crab and lobster, and in the newt, in due time providing new members for old ones. Man in one sense may well envy the reparative powers of his inferior neighbours; since even in the comparatively small matter of teeth he has to place himself under the tender mercies of the dentist in event of loss and must view with hopeless gaze the disappearance of the last joint of a finger or toe.

Although the physiologist is unable in the present state of his science to explain the exact and intimate manner in which the hydra and other animals reproduce their tissues, we may nevertheless by a very homely simile contrive to gain a broad idea of the nature of these reparative powers. We thus must firstly note that the process is simply one of nutrition, or nutritive growth carried out to a high degree of development. We are dealing in fact, in such cases, with an increase of the ordinary powers and processes whereby, as we have already stated, the bodily waste is made good. But at the same time we note that these powers and processes vary throughout the animal world doubtless in obedience to some law which determines the closer interdependence of the different parts of animals the higher we advance in the zoological scale. To put the matter in its plainest light, we may compare the organisation of the hydra and its neighbours to that of the "republic." The essential feature of this form of human association I take to be comprised in the broad statement that one man or member of the republic is as good as any other man or member, and that each man (theoretically) has an equal voice with his neighbour in the conduct and rule of the State. In that form of government to which the name of "limited monarchy" is applied, the levelling and equalising tendencies of the republic are wanting. Every one person is not equal in rank or value to every other person; but, although each has theoretically his definite place and voice in the rule and management of the State, some assume a higher rank and power than others. Applying the comparison to the case before us, we can form at least an intelligent conception of the relative nature of the powers of the lower and higher animal. The hydra emphatically represents an animal democracy—a veritable republic. One part is as good as any other part, when demands are made upon it for reparation and growth; and this quality of self-support and independence, this power of existing separate from other parts, forms the feature in virtue of which the organisation of the hydra becomes so plastic under the most trying

conditions, and so well adapted in virtue of its inherent powers to rebuild the disorganised fabric. In man and higher animals, on the other hand, we find exemplified a form of vital government represented most nearly by the limited monarchy. Here, whilst each portion of the organism possesses a certain share in the constitution and management of affairs, some parts, and notably the nervous system, take precedence of, and serve to unite and combine the others. The principle of regulation and interdependence thus involved, simply renders it impossible for all parts to possess equal reparative powers. Hence lost parts are not commonly replaced in higher animals, for the reason that the loss has entailed a separation from other parts possessing no inherent powers of reproduction within themselves, and has divided the sustenance and life of the lost parts from that of the entire, connected, and interdependent system.

The process of growth and the harmonious relation of organs and parts observed in the hydra and in most other living beings, suggest, as a final feature worthy of note, the consideration of what is implied in the growth and increase of living organisms generally. The body of hydra was, at an early stage of our investigation, seen to be composed of tissues, and these tissues, again, to be made up of minute elements or cells. The growth of the hydra, therefore, in reality, means the increase of each of its minute parts; and when we reflect on the law of growth thus evolved, we may be puzzled to account for or explain the intimate nature of the mysterious power which is seen to operate in controlling and directing in so remarkable a manner the functions of this humble organism. In the hydra, then, as representing a single organism, or, still better, in the zoophyte, which consists of a colony numbering, it may be, hundreds of animals, united in a close structural relationship, or in the bodies of higher animals still, we find the principle of the perfect co-operation of many different parts to one harmonious end, namely, the maintenance of the organism, beautifully exemplified. In most of the grave affairs of life, man strives to secure the co-operation of his fellows; but humanity, unfortunately for the success of its schemes, exhibits many little weaknesses and failings, and the common tendency of one mind to assert its supremacy over another may result in the demolition of the co-operative idea. Man might, therefore, well strive to imitate the unselfish union of aims and ends which a zoophyte-colony exemplifies, or which the vital mechanism of his own tissues illustrates. When the political economist shall have succeeded in inaugurating a scheme of human co-operation for any purpose, on the successful model of Nature's colonies in lower life, he will have good cause to congratulate himself and his fellows on having solved one of the paramount difficulties which beset his day and generation.

But, lastly, the true nature of the growth of a living being can only be fully understood if we for a moment compare that process with the increase of a lifeless body. No better, truer, or more eloquent descrip-

tion of the differences between the growth of the living and that of the non-living could well be found than in the following passages, culled from an essay,* by one of the most liberal and advanced scholars of our day, intended to illustrate the progressive nature of philosophic science. "There is one kind of progress," says the writer, "which consists simply of addition of the same to the same, or of the external accumulation of materials. But increase by addition, even though it be ordered or regulated addition, is not the highest kind of advancement. Pile heap on heap of inorganic matter, and you have a result in which nothing is changed; the lowest stratum of the pile remains to the last what it was at the first; you keep all you ever had in solid permanence. Add stone to stone or brick to brick, till the house you have built stands complete from foundation to copestone; and here, though in order and system there may be a shadow of something higher than mere quantity, there is still only addition without progress. You have here also what the superficial mind covets as the sign of value in its possessions—permanent results, solid and stable reality. Every stone you place there remains to the last cut, hewn, shaped, in all its hard external actuality, what it was at the first: and the whole edifice, in its definite outward completeness, stands, it may be, for ages, a permanent possession of the world.

"But when you turn from inorganic accumulation or addition of quantities to organic growth, the kind of progress you get is altogether different. Here you never for a single day or hour keep firm possession of what you once had. Here there is never-resting mutation. What you now have is no sooner reached than it begins to slip away from your grasp. One form of existence comes into being only to be abolished and obliterated by that which succeeds it. Seed or germ, peeping bud, rising stem, leaf and blossom, flower and fruit, are things that do not continue side by side as part of a permanent store, but each owes its present existence to the annulling of that which was before. You cannot possess at one and the same time the tender grace of the vernal woods and the rich profusion of colour and blossom of the later growth of summer; and if you are ever to gather in the fruit, for that you must be content that the gay blossoms should shrivel up and drop away. Yet though in organic development you cannot retain the past, it is not destroyed or annihilated. In a deeper way than by actual matter-of-fact presence and preservation, it continues. Each present phase of the living organism has in it the vital result of all that it has been. The past is gone, but the organism could not have become what it is without the past. Every bygone moment of its existence still lives in it, not indeed, as it was—but absorbed, transformed, worked up into the essence of its new and higher being. And when the perfection of the organism is reached, the unity of the perfectly developed life is one which gathers

* *Progressiveness of the Sciences*, by John Caird, D.D., Principal of Glasgow University. Glasgow: Maclehose, 1875.

up into itself, not by juxtaposition or summation, but in a far deeper way, the concentrated results of all its bygone history. And by how much life is nobler than dead matter, by so much are the results and fruits of life the manifestation of a nobler kind of progress than that which is got by the accumulation of things which are at once permanent and lifeless, and permanent *because* they are lifeless."

The hydra equally with the higher animal, and the lowliest plant equally with the lordly oak, present the distinctions and differences thus forcibly expressed as existing between living and non-living matter. There is thus a constant replacement of old particles by new ones; and this change is not, after all, a mere replacement, but also includes and carries with it a process of growth and increase—of which latter, as seen in the living being, perhaps the most wonderful feature is that whereby, amid all the constant changes which living and being involve, the animal or plant should preserve and retain the form in which it was, so to speak, originally limned.

A study of the denizens of a stagnant pool may thus be shown to lead up, unconsciously it may be, but also naturally, to some matters of weighty consideration and interest, even to the most unscientific of observers. And it will be found not the least characteristic and valuable feature of all such studies, that they serve as literal starting-points and as vantage-grounds whence we may shape an intellectual course, leading us by many and diverse radii from limited perceptions and finite aims, outwards and upwards to the Infinite itself.

“Royal and Noble” Gossip.



A KING might once have been defined as a person who was flattered to his face and abused behind his back. A curious book might indeed be written in two parts—Part I. containing, What has been said to Royalty; Part II., What has been said of Royalty. Compare, for instance, the dedication of the authorised version of the English Bible, in which James I. is described as the sun in his strength, a “most tender and loving nursing Father” of the Church, &c., with the *Sporus* and *Locusta* scandal which must have formed the staple of courtly gossip in the ante-chamber of Whitehall. It might have been thought that the force of fulsome adulation could no further go than it went in that famous production of British theologians in the year 1611, but we have the authority of Madame Sévigné for knowing that French divines could sink into even lower depths of servility. Writing in June 1685, she says: “They tell us that the Minims of your Provence have dedicated a thesis to the king, in which they compare him to God, but in a manner to show clearly that God is only the copy. They showed it to M. de Meaux, who took it to the king, saying that his Majesty ought not to suffer it. The king was of the same opinion; the thesis has been sent to the Sorbonne to be judged. Too much is too much.” It is satisfactory to learn that Bossuet at least considered his royal master human, and that Louis was graciously pleased to admit the fact. “I could never get him to understand,” said Madame de Maintenon of her second husband, “that humility was a Christian virtue.” Indeed, people spoke freely enough concerning the great monarch behind his back, and did not scruple to tell each other that Majesty had (for instance) made a beast of itself at dinner. In the correspondence of the Princess Palatine there is a marvellous account of the capacities of Louis for the assimilation of food. “I have often seen him,” writes the Princess, “eat four large plates full of different soups, a whole pheasant, a partridge, a large plate of salad, two large slices of ham, some mutton dressed with garlic sauce, a plate of pastry, and then some fruit and hard-boiled eggs.” Perhaps one could forgive much in such a dinner, but to wind up with hard-boiled eggs seems wholly indefensible. In any case it was one of those meals over which Elia would have forbidden the saying of grace, unless it were such a prayer as La Tolone, a gentleman of Touraine, was in the habit of offering up after every copious repast—and all his repasts were copious—“Lord, give me grace to well digest what I have eaten.” It is reported

of this same worthy that he regarded all things human, and apparently all things divine as well, from the sole point of view of their bearing upon dinner. "It will be a fine day for a walk," said some one in his hearing. "Yes, and a fine one for eating," quoth La Tolone. Among royal gluttons, by the way, few seem to have equalled the Emperor Claudius Albinus, whose usual breakfast consisted of five hundred figs, a hundred peaches, ten melons, a hundred beccaficoes, four dozen oysters, and a quantity of grapes. The Emperor Maximinus gorged himself very much in the same fashion, and ultimately grew so fat that his wife's bracelets served him excellently instead of rings. Kings, alas! are often outdone by their subjects. Thus we read of a comedian, Phagon by name, who, in the presence of the Emperor Aurelian, devoured a wild boar, a sheep, a sucking pig, and a hundred rolls, besides drinking twenty-four measures of wine. According to the *Nuits Parisiennes*, which, however, are not written with that strict accuracy which is characteristic of the works of Hallam and Grote, there was once a woman of Syria who daily consumed thirty chickens, and complained she could never get enough; but it is stated that Macedonius cured her of this inordinate appetite by making her drink holy water. Perhaps the woman was as mythical as the French soldier who is the hero of the following (and wholly unedifying) story. A discussion had arisen at a dinner-party as to the capacities of the human stomach, and whether indeed, as there seemed almost reason to believe, it was capable of indefinite expansion. After some surprising feats of gluttony had been narrated, an officer in the Royal Guard said he quite believed them, for he had a soldier in his company who could eat a whole calf at a sitting, and think very little of the achievement. The company laughed, but the officer assured them he was serious, and a heavy bet was the result. On the appointed day the parties repaired to a restaurant, and the soldier was soon seated at table. The officer had been careful to order that the different portions of the calf should be served in a variety of appetising forms. The soldier despatched one dish after another with astonishing rapidity. Those who had betted against his powers were losing all hope, when he was observed at the seventh or eighth dish to look grave. "Ah! ça, mon capitaine," he objected, "I think it is high time for them to serve the veal, otherwise I can't answer for my being able to make you win your bet." He had thought that all the previous dishes were merely intended to serve as stimulants to his appetite, which having been made apparent, the other side expressed themselves ready to pay at once. The story reminds one of the English farmer, who, after despatching a score or so of apple dumplings, observed that they were very good, and that some day he would come and make "a regular meal of them."

To return to royal gluttons, it must be confessed that they are an illustrious band, including as they do Cæsar, Frederic, Napoleon, William III. of England, Henry IV. of France, Henry Beauclerc, and many others. Cæsar probably freshened himself up with emetics. Our Dutch

deliverer loved to stay five or seven hours at table, while the story of his devouring a dish of young peas without offering any to the Princess Anne is perfectly historical, and earned him the name of Caliban, which was bestowed upon him by her indignant Highness. Macaulay, by the way, in repeating the story, is careful to add that it must not be supposed Anne was a reader of Shakespeare. Her knowledge of the existence was derived from the "Enchanted Isle," a wretched piece, of which the plot was stolen from "The Tempest," and which once drew crowded houses. Another authentic piece of gluttony may be said to have largely contributed to the deliverance of Europe from the yoke of France. It was the opinion of one of Napoleon's staff that the Emperor was not himself at the battle of Leipsic, his faculties being almost paralysed from the effects of an indigestion caused by a surfeit of shoulder of mutton stuffed with onions. Frederic not only ate enormously, but in his latter years the honour of an invitation to the Royal table must have been received by dyspeptic men with a secret terror; for the great King was passionately fond of pepper, and the royal cooks peppered him to his heart's content. He required, moreover, that his food should be heated to something not far removed from white heat, and a miserable guest at Potsdam has immortalised a certain pie which looked and tasted "as hot as if it had been baked in hell." The mention of which classical region reminds one of the explanation given by Marshal Roquelaure to Henry IV. of France, who asked him why it was that when he was King of Navarre only, and had nothing to eat, he had such an excellent appetite, whereas now that he was King of France, and had all that he could wish for, he found nothing to his taste. "The fact is," commented the Marshal, "that then you were excommunicated, and an excommunicated man eats like the devil." Whether Henry was or was not a sincere Catholic after his "conversion" seems an open question; at all events it did not prevent him from jesting at things sacred or quasi-sacred, but he seems to have laughed, at least in public, more at Protestants than at Catholics. Hearing that a well-known physician had been received into the Church of Rome, "your religion," he said to Sully, "is in a bad way—it is given up by the doctors." He once declared that there were two things which nobody believed, but which were yet perfectly true—one that the King of France was a good Catholic, and the other that the Queen of England (Elizabeth) had died a maid.

Bibulous monarchs have probably been as common as gluttonous ones, and with some curious results to mankind, from the time when Ahasuerus issued his remarkable proclamation that "all the wives should give to their husbands honour," down to our own. It is worth remembering that the Bible recommends temperance to all, but total abstinence only to kings (Proverbs xxxi. 4, 5). Some Jewish and some Mussulman princes may have followed the precept of Lemuel's mother; not, it may safely be affirmed, many Christian monarchs. It is related, however, that Charles XII. of Sweden, when a very young man, one day

drank to excess, and presented himself before his mother in a condition of intoxication. The Queen was shocked and pained beyond measure, a circumstance of which a friend had the courage to inform the young King as he sat next morning at breakfast. He immediately filled a bumper, and, with the full goblet in his hand, went to his mother's apartments. Entering the room where she was seated, he made this little speech: "Madam, I have learned that yesterday, while under the influence of wine, I was wanting in respect to you. I am come to ask your pardon; and that I may never fall into drunkenness again, I drink this glass to your health: it shall be the last in my life." He kept his word, and never again drank wine. If only he had taken a vow at the same time never to break men alive on the wheel, it might have been pleasanter for several people, and for John Pathul in particular. But many tipplers have been pleasanter men than this sober madman, the infirmities of whose temper sometimes manifested themselves in a ludicrous fashion. It is said that he had a violent objection to the practice of wearing shoes, which had been recently introduced into his kingdom, and which he thought good only for women. Men, he thought, even civilians, should always be booted. One day he went to call on his Chancellor, Mullern, and found his lordship still in bed, and asleep. He would not allow him to be awakened, and for some time waited patiently enough in an anteroom, where a huge fire was burning. By-and-by, however, casting his eyes around the room, he espied several pairs of shoes which the Chancellor, at considerable expense, had had sent him from Germany, then the home of good shoemakers, for his own use. The King threw them all into the fire, and took his departure. Presently Mullern, awaking, smelt a smell of burnt leather, and asked the reason; which, when it had been told him, he merely remarked, "'Tis a strange King whose Chancellor must always be booted."

The antipathies of royal and famous personages would form a strange catalogue. Henry III. of France could not stay alone in a room where there was a cat. The Marshal-Duke of Schomberg, Governor of Languedoc, is said to have had the same aversion. "The Emperor Ferdinand," says M. Guérard, "showed the Cardinal of Lorraine, at Innspruck, a gentleman who had such a fear of cats that his nose would bleed if he merely heard one of them mewling at a distance." The Duke of Épernon would faint at the sight of a leveret. Marshal d'Albret was obliged to leave the table if a sucking-pig was one of the dishes. One Ladislaus, King of Poland, would tremble and take to flight if he saw an apple. The smell of fish regularly sent Erásmus into a fever. Scaliger was seized with shivering at the sight of watercress. Tycho-Brahé felt his legs giving way under him whenever he met a hare or a fox. Boyle would be seized with convulsions at the fall of water coming from a tap. La Mothe le Vayer could not suffer the sound of any musical instrument, but took a lively pleasure in the noise of thunder. Marie de Medicis had perhaps the strangest of all dislikes.

She could not bear the sight of a rose, even in a picture, though she was fond of all other flowers—a statement for which the learned Pancoucke is responsible, as well as for many another curious one, not perhaps to be too closely examined. Ivan II., Czar of Moscow, would faint away at the sight of a woman. At least so say the *Mémoires Anecdotiques du règne de Louis XIV. et de Louis XV.* French, too, is the authority for a marvellous statement that "the Chancellor Bacon would fall into a swoon every time there was an eclipse of the moon." Our lively neighbours may take the compliment for what it is worth, but they are certainly the most amusing collectors of scandal ever known among men, occasionally displaying a contempt for probabilities which is quite refreshing.

A good many of the stories that are told of Royal precocity are perhaps truer than they might appear at first sight, for princes are apt to be made much of in their youth as well as in their manhood, and their wits not unnaturally ripen the sooner under fostering care. History has few pleasant traits to record of Louis XIII.; one is therefore the more glad to recall something which represents him at least under a naïve and amusingly pert aspect. Louis was never fond of books; and his aversion to letters caused some anxiety to his mother, who may possibly have heard of William the Conqueror's remark that an unlettered King was no better than a crowned ass. Deeply meditating on the subject, the Royal lady decided that a love of letters must be instilled into her son's mind by the homely means of producing a slight irritation of the cuticle; and M. de Souvré, Governor to the King, was ordered to take the necessary measures. The young monarch expressed a decided objection to the course proposed to be followed in regard to him. Seeing, however, that resistance was vain, he contented himself with begging a modification of the terms. "I see too well," he sorrowfully remarked, "that I must submit; but, M. de Souvré, go gently to work, I beseech of you." A veil may be drawn over the painful scene which followed. Next day the young King went to see his mother, who, at her son's approach, rose and made him a low curtsy. "Oh, Madam," quoth he, "show me less respect, and do not have me whipped." Louis may have heaved a sigh of regret, if he was ever told in his infancy of the honourable post of vicarious whipper to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, which was once an institution at the Scottish Court, and which in his brother of Great Britain's days had been no sinecure. More than one writer has made merry over this singular method of imparting knowledge to the youthful James; but if one is to judge by result, it succeeded admirably, for there is no doubt that the British Solomon was a fine scholar. *À propos* of James's proficiency in classical knowledge, Bouhier in his *Souvenirs* relates an anecdote which seems to show that Gondomar was hardly so good a diplomatist as some historians have been inclined to give him credit for being. He was talking with the King in Latin, and making numerous mistakes, at each of which James laughed outright. The Spanish Am-

bassador at length lost his temper, and said, "The Latin I speak is the Latin of a King, and that of your Majesty is the Latin of a pedant."

As a rule, however, it may be doubted whether many boys have been flogged, vicariously or otherwise, into knowledge. The Jewish King who so earnestly inculcated the maxim which the Orbili of this world love to quote, either did not himself put it into practice or found it singularly inefficacious in the case of his own graceless son. And the truth about the boyhood of great men seems to be that they generally showed ability or character in early youth, but not so often an aptitude for the studies towards which their seniors desired more especially to turn their minds. Very curious, for instance, and significant, is the account which one of his biographers gives of the early youth of Lamennais. "In 1794" (he was then twelve years old), "having been sent to live with an uncle, this relation, not knowing what to do with a wilful boy, used to shut him up for whole days in a library consisting of two compartments, one of which, called 'Hell,' contained a large number of prohibited books which little Robert was enjoined not to read. But the lad already cared for none but books of reflection, and finding some of these on the prohibited shelves that division became his favourite. Long hours were thus spent in reading the ardent pages of Rousseau, the thoughtful volumes of Mallebranche, and other writers of sentiment and philosophy. Such a course of literature, far from producing its usual effects of precocious vain-glory and unbelief on so young a mind, served rather to ripen his judgment and to develop that religious fervour which was a part of his nature."

But to return to Kings. Perhaps the line of sovereigns which has furnished the largest amount of material to the chronicler of scandal is the Russian; for the power of Czars and Czarinas has in all generations been a very real one, and has consequently—such is human nature—been used in a fashion more eccentric than pleasant. Even the benevolent despots of Muscovy were persons with whom it would have been more agreeable to keep up a correspondence from the safe distance of London or Paris than to live in habits of intimacy.

Thus one reads that Euler, who was invited into Russia by Catherine I., arrived there on the very day the Empress died. Nevertheless, he remained in St. Petersburg for some years, including the period of Biren's ascendancy. The impression made on him by that cruel reign was deep and lasting. In 1741 he accepted an invitation from Frederick the Great to take up his residence at the Court of Prussia, where he soon after arrived in due course, and was presented to the Queen-Mother. Her good-natured Majesty noticed that the learned geometrician answered her questions with a marked timidity of manner. Gently rallying him on his apparent fears, which she knew she herself ought not to cause anyone, "Why," asked the Queen, "do you reply to me trembling and in monosyllables?" "Madam," rejoined Euler, "it is because I come from a country where, if one speaks at greater length and with more freedom, one runs the risk of being hanged." Still more characteristic of the moral

effect produced by despotism is a story told of Catherine II. The Empress was one day looking out from a balcony of the Hermitage on the scene below, when she saw a woman fall into the Neva. She immediately sent assistance, and the poor creature was saved. The next step was to bring her, dripping and shivering, before the Czarina, who had her dressed out of her own wardrobe, and otherwise carefully and kindly tended. Finally, Catherine dismissed her, after slipping a few gold coins into her hand, and bidding her come to the palace whenever she might wish to be married—for it was a young girl who had been rescued from the water. Once again among her friends she was naturally asked how she had felt in the presence of the Empress. "Ah!" she exclaimed, "I was more frightened then than when I fell into the water." No wonder. A despot may occasionally be in a bad humour, and may then take disagreeable ways of expressing a parental interest in the concerns of his subjects. Thus, one bright spring morning, Nicholas I.—of blessed memory—was, like his august grandmother, contemplating the doings of his subjects from a window of the palace. The Neva was but partially frozen over, and rapidly thawing. A great crowd was collected on the banks watching a man who, with extraordinary courage and dexterity, was crossing over to the opposite side—jumping from one block of floating ice to another. The Czar despatched an aide-de-camp to obtain further particulars. On his return, the officer said, "Sire, it is a peasant who has betted twenty-five roubles that he will cross the Neva, and is trying to win his bet." "Let him have twenty-five stripes," commanded Nicholas; "a man who will peril his life for a mere nothing is capable of doing anything for money." To take away the taste of this imperial story, here is another and cheerier one, which again illustrates the better side of Catherine II.'s nature. She had noticed a woman standing for two whole hours, in a time of bitter North-Russian cold, before the door of the imperial kitchen, and had sent a valet to find out what this might mean. The servant told her, "It is a woman who has a lover employed in the kitchen, and he is waiting for an opportunity of abstracting a ham and giving it her." "Go and tell her," said the Empress, "to take care that she is not seen by the Grand-Chamberlain, for he cannot understand a joke." But one regrets that Catherine did not order the ham to be given to the poor woman, seasoned, if need be, with a little moral advice, but still freely given. Another anecdote of *débonnaire* royalty tells how Frederick the Great issued an order that no officer in the army should enter the royal garden except in uniform. One day he saw a lieutenant of infantry lounging there in civilian costume. Though the King knew him by sight, the officer did not recognise the King, who entered into conversation with him, and asked him who he was. "An officer," was the reply, "but" (with a knowing look) "I am *incognito* here." "I advise you to be off pretty quickly, or the King may see you," answered Majesty good-naturedly.

From the days of Haroun-al-Raschid Kings have loved to go disguised

in search of adventures, but, outside of the *Arabian Nights*, they do not often seem to have met with them. Authentic accounts of what *incognito* Royalty did actually see or do on a given occasion are generally tame enough. Madame du Deffaud relates an incident in the life of the Emperor Joseph II. which is so thoroughly humdrum, that it may be said to be stamped with an unmistakable air of veracity. Joseph was travelling on one of his own high-roads when he came upon a gentleman who had had the misfortune to be landed by a clumsy coachman in a wayside ditch. Finding the stranger's destination was the same as his own, Joseph, without revealing himself, offered him a seat in his carriage, which was gladly accepted. As they journeyed they talked, and Joseph's companion—being a dull man—had nothing better to say than to bid his new acquaintance guess what he (the dull man) had that day eaten for his dinner. "A fricassee of chicken?" suggested the Emperor. "No." "A leg of mutton?" "No." "An omelette?" "No." At length the Emperor guessed aright, when his new friend gleefully slapped him on the thigh, and cried, "You've hit it!" "Now," said Joseph, "it's my turn. We don't know each other—tell me what I am." "An officer?" "One can be that and something more." "You are too young to be a general—are you a colonel?" "No." "A major?" "No." "A captain?" "No." "Are you a governor?" "No." "Who are you? Are you the Emperor?" "You've hit it!" said Joseph, returning the slap on the thigh. The poor man, who had had no suspicion of the truth, and who had only put the last question in jest, was dumbfounded, and wished to descend from the carriage at once. "No, no," said the Emperor, "I knew who I was when I asked you to step in; I did not know who you were; nothing is changed—let us continue our route."

This plain unvarnished tale, with its disappointing tameness, is doubtless truer than many a pretty story of the Fitzjames and Douglas type. One or two of these, however, are worth telling; notably one in which the merry monarch of France, maternal grandfather of our own merry monarch, plays the principal part. One evening, a few days before the battle of Ivry, the *Improvisateur Français* assures us, Henry arrived *incognito* at the town of Alençon, and repaired to the house of an officer who was devoted to his cause, but who happened to be away from home. His wife, who did not know the King by sight, accorded him nevertheless a hearty welcome, believing him to be one of the chiefs of the Royal army. Perceiving, however, his hostess's manner to be slightly embarrassed, Henry frankly expressed a hope that he was not causing trouble, and bade her stand on no sort of ceremony with him. "Monsieur," the good dame replied, "I will tell you candidly what is my difficulty. To-day is Thursday; I have had the town scoured, and it is absolutely impossible to buy anything to eat, and so you see me in despair. . . . Only, there is an honest artisan, my neighbour, who has a fat turkey, but he will not consent to part with it except on condition of being asked to eat his share of it." "Very well. Is he good com-

pany?" "Yes, monsieur, he is the wag of the place; a very honest man, too—a good Frenchman, a zealous Royalist, and comfortably off." "By all means let him come, madam. I am very hungry, and even if he does bore us a little, it is better to sup with him than not to sup at all." So the artisan was invited, and soon made his appearance, in his Sunday best, and, what was more to the purpose, turkey in hand. While it was being cooked, the artisan talked so pleasantly, and told such capital stories, that the King, though dying of hunger, awaited supper without impatience. The meal proved a delightful one; and the more the King laughed, the gayer and wittier did the self-invited guest seem to grow. When the time came for him to take his leave, he threw himself at the feet of the prince, and thus addressed him: "Pardon, sire, pardon! this day has been the proudest in my life. I knew your Majesty; I have served—I fought for my King at the battle of Arques; I could not resist the desire to be admitted to his table. Pardon, sire, once more; I wished to amuse you for a few moments, and I feared that I should be the less able to do so if your Majesty knew that you were recognised. But, sire, the glory of my King is dear to me, and I cannot think without pain of how much it is tarnished by the company of such a rascallion as myself. I see only one way of remedying the evil." "What is that?" "To grant me a patent of nobility." "To you?" "Why not, sire? Though an artisan, I am also a Frenchman; I have a heart like another man's, and I deem myself worthy of the honour, if only for the steadfast loyalty I bear my King." "Very good, my friend; but what arms would you take?" "My turkey; to-day it has brought me too much honour." "Well, be it so—*ventre-saint-gris!* you shall be a gentleman, and you shall bear a turkey impaled," said the monarch.

Henry had more than one dining adventure. Thus on another occasion it befel that, being out hunting, he lost his way, and, entering a wayside inn, sat down to table with some tradesmen who were ignorant of his rank. After dinner the company fell to talking of the King's recent renunciation of Protestantism. "Don't tell me," said a pork-butcher, with an air of authority; "the herring-barrel will always smell of fish." Presently, the King having placed himself at the window, some lords of his suite rode up, and immediately saluted him, when Henry called them in. The pork-butcher, hearing the words "Sire" and "Majesty," looked extremely miserable, and possibly expected to be ordered off for immediate execution. As Henry left the inn, he tapped the man on the shoulder, and said, "Good man, the herring-barrel does always smell of the herring; but this is true of you, and not of me. I am, thank God, a good Catholic, but you have still a leaven of the League about you."

But a really charming story of the King, and one which appears to rest on the best possible authority, is related by Theodore Agrippa d'Aubigné (grandfather of Madame de Maintenon), in his *Universal History*. One night, when he was sleeping in Henry's dressing-room, it being his turn of duty as gentleman-in-waiting, he turned to La Force,

who lay by his side, and whispered, "La Force, your master is the most ungrateful mortal on the face of the earth." La Force, half asleep, asked him what he was saying. "Lazybones," said the King from the adjoining room, "he's telling you I am the most ungrateful of men." "Pray go to sleep, sire," quoth d'Aubigné imperturbably; "we have a good deal more of the same kind to say to each other." The historian adds that the King never showed him the less kindness afterwards.

An exquisite example of forbearance was also shown by the Emperor Antoninus Pius, after he had offered the Stoic philosopher Apollonius, who resided at Chalcis, the place of tutor to Marcus Aurelius, his adopted son. Apollonius accepted the appointment, and came to Rome. As soon as the Emperor heard of his arrival, he sent to say that he awaited him with impatience. Apollonius, who to the pride of a sophist joined the boorishness of a clown, replied to the Emperor's gracious message by observing that it was the duty of the disciple to go and seek the master, and not for the master to go and seek the disciple. When this polite speech was repeated to him, Antoninus merely smiled. He confessed "he was surprised that Apollonius, having got as far as Rome, found the way from his lodgings to the palace longer than from Chalcis to the capital;" but, without more words, ordered Marcus Aurelius forthwith to repair to the abode of the philosopher.

In spite, however, of a few noble exceptions to the rule, the atmosphere of Courts cannot be pronounced healthy; and the contempt with which the professional courtier is regarded by his fellow-men is not altogether unmerited. One may confess to a grim sympathy with Suwarrow in his treatment of a certain Count K——, prime favourite of the Emperor Paul. Having recalled the great general from exile, the Czar sent Count K—— with a complimentary message. The imperial emissary having been announced, "K——," exclaimed Suwarrow, "Count K——! Don't know any Russian family of that name. But let him in." The Count is introduced. The Marshal feigns astonishment on hearing his name, and ends by demanding of what country he is a native. "I am a native of Turkey," the Count answers for himself; "it is to the grace of the Emperor I owe my title." "Ah! you have no doubt rendered important services to the State. In what corps did you serve? In what battles have you fought?" "I have never served in the army." "Never? You are then in the civil service. In what department?" "In no department. I have always been in attendance on the august person of his Majesty." "Good God! in what capacity, pray?" "I have been first *valet de chambre* to his Imperial Majesty." "Ah! very good." Then turning to his servant, "Ivan," the Marshal calls out, "Do you see this nobleman? He has been as you are. True, his master has been our gracious sovereign. What a glorious path he has followed! He is become a Count! He is decorated with the Orders of Russia! So, Ivan, be a good lad. Who knows what you may become?"

Paul one day sent for Suwarrow into his presence; he wished to put

him at the head of the army of Italy. For some time past the victor of Rynnick had been in disgrace; he made his appearance in an undress coat, without his decorations, without even his sword. The Emperor—who, to do him honour, has taken his seat on the throne, and is surrounded by a brilliant staff—looks thunderstruck. Suwarrow throws himself flat on his face, and with the aid of his hands and feet crawls to the steps of the throne. "Come, now, Alexander, son of Basil," begins the Czar, coaxingly; "come, Marshal, my son, art thou then mad? Get up." "No, no, sire! I wish to make my way, I too, in this Court; and I know it is only by crawling that one can approach your Majesty."

Suwarrow is worth studying, especially at the present time, as a typical Russian. In him the Tartar was covered with the very thinnest possible coating of French varnish, but he had some great qualities, such as patriotism, and (what is too rarely found in the bravest soldiers) civil courage of a high order. How strange, by the way, must have been the state of society in St. Petersburg almost within living memory, when it was possible for Suwarrow at evening parties to go about from one lady to another, kissing the portrait of Catherine II., which each of them wore on their breast! Some of Suwarrow's personal habits must have contributed to render these pseudo-loyal caresses extremely unpleasant to the objects of them. It would be quite out of the question to enter much into details, unless we were to write in Latin, but, for one thing, the Marshal was ignorant of the use of pocket-handkerchiefs. Other incidents in Suwarrow's domestic economy are, as Mr. Carlyle might say, "too Samoyedic" to be dwelt upon. To his credit, however, be it said, Suwarrow tubbed regularly once a day in cold water, and that at a time when even Englishmen were by no means excessively fond of the pure element either externally or internally applied. The widow of Sir Philip Francis, in her account of his life, mentions it as a circumstance worthy of remark that her husband washed his whole body in water every morning.

ἡμεῖς τοὶ προγόνων μὲγ' ἀμείνονες εὐχόμεθ' εἶναι—

which is perhaps the most comforting moral to be deduced from the gossips of history. Though doubtless our great-grandchildren, when they read the "Chronique scandaleuse" of the latter half of the nineteenth century, will repeat the same line with equal sincerity and truth.

Folk-Dirges.

THERE are probably many persons who could repeat by heart the greater portion of the last scene in the last book of the *Iliad*, and who yet have never been struck by the fact, that not its least excellence consists in its setting before us a carefully accurate picture of a group of usages which for the antiquity of their origin, the wide area of their observance, and the tenacity with which they have been preserved, may be fairly said to occupy an unique position amongst popular customs and ceremonials. First, we are shown the citizens of Troy bearing their vanquished hero within the walls amidst vehement demonstrations of grief: the people cling to the chariot wheels, or prostrate themselves on the earth; the wife and the mother of the dead tear their hair and cast it to the winds. Then the body is laid on a bed of state, and the leaders of a choir of professional minstrels sing a dirge, which is at times interrupted by the wailing of the women. When this is done, Andromache, Hecuba, and Helen in turn give voice each one to the feelings awakened in her by their common loss; and afterwards—so soon as the proper interval has elapsed—the body is burnt, wine being poured over the embers of the pyre. Lastly, the ashes are consigned to the tomb, and the mourners sit down to a banquet. “Such honours paid they to the good knight Hector;” and such, in their main features, are the funeral rites which may be presumed to date back to a period not only anterior to the siege of Troy, granting for the moment that event to have veritably taken place, but also previous to the crystallisation of the Greek or any other of the Indo-European nationalities which flowed westward from the uplands of the Hindu Kush. The custom of hymning the dead, which is just now what more particularly concerns us, once prevailed over most if not all parts of Europe; and the firmness of its hold upon the affections of the people may be inferred from the persistency with which they adhered to it, even when it was opposed not only by the working of the gradual, though fatal, law of decay to which all old usages must in the end submit, but also by the active interposition of persons in authority. Charlemagne, for instance, tried to put it down in Provence—desiring that all those attending funerals, who did not know by rote any of the appropriate psalms, should recite aloud the *Kyrie eleison* instead of singing “profane songs” made to suit the occasion. But the edict seems to have met with a signal want of success; for, some five hundred years after it was issued, the Provençals still hired *Præficiæ*, and still introduced within

the very precincts of their churches, whole choirs of lay dirge-singers, frequently composed of young girls who were stationed in two companies, that chanted songs alternately to the accompaniment of instrumental music; and this notwithstanding that the clergy of Provence showed the strongest objection to the performance of observances at funerals, other than such as were approved by ecclesiastical sanction. The custom in question bears an obvious affinity to Highland coronachs and Irish keens, and here in England there is reason to believe it to have survived as late as the seventeenth century. That Shakespeare was well acquainted with it is amply testified by the fourth act of *Cymbeline*; for it is plain that the song pronounced by Guiderius and Arviragus over the supposed corpse of Imogene was no mere poetic outburst of regret, but a real and legitimate dirge, the singing or saying of which was held to constitute Fidele's obsequies. In the Cotton Library there is a MS., having reference to a Yorkshire village in the reign of Elizabeth, which relates: "When any dieth, certaine women sing a song to the dead bodie recyting the journey that the partye deceased must goe." Unhappily our English *Nenia* are nearly all lost and forgotten; we know of no genuine specimen extant, except the famous Lyke Wake (i.e. Death Watch) dirge beginning:—

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
Everie nighte and alle,
 Fire and sleete and candle lighte,
And Christe receive thy saule, &c.

To the present day we find practices closely analogous with those recounted in the *Iliad* scattered here and there from the shores of the Mediterranean to the banks of Lake Onega; and the Trojan Threnody is even now reproduced in Ireland, in Corsica, Sardinia, and Roumania, in Russia, in Greece, and South Italy. Students who may be tempted to make observations on this strange survival of the old world, will do well, however, to set about it at once, in parts which are either already invaded or else threatened with an imminent invasion of railways, for the screech of the engine sounds the very death-knell of ancient customs. Thus the Irish practice of keening is becoming less and less general. On recently making inquiries of a gentleman residing in Leinster, we learnt that it had quite gone out in that province; he added that he had once seen keeners at a funeral at Clonmacnoise (King's County), but was told they came from the Connaught side of the Shannon. The keens must not be confused with the peculiar wail or death-cry known as the Ullagone; they are articulate utterances, in a strongly-marked rhythm, extolling the merits of the dead, and reproaching him for leaving his family, with much more in the same strain. The keeners may or may not be professional, and the keens are more often of a traditional than of an improvised description. One or two specimens in Gaelic have appeared in the *Journal of the Irish Archæological Association*, but on the whole the subject is far from having received the attention it deserves. The Irish

keepers are invariably women,⁵ as also are all the Continental dirge-singers of modern times. Whether by reason of the somewhat new-fashioned sentiment which forbids a man to exhibit his feelings in public, or from other motives not unconnected with selfishness, the onus of discharging the more active and laborious obligations prescribed in popular funeral rites has bit by bit been altogether shifted upon the shoulders of the weaker sex; e.g. in places where scratching and tearing of the face forms part of the traditional ritual, the women are expected to continue the performance of this unpleasant ceremony which the men have long since abandoned. Of the precise origin of the employment of Public Wailers, or *Præfica*, not much has been ascertained. One distinguished writer on folk-lore suggests that it had its rise not in any lack of consideration for the dead, but in the apprehension lest the repose of their ghosts should be disturbed by a display of grief on the part of those who had been nearest and dearest to them in life; and his theory gains support in the abundant evidence forthcoming to attest the existence of a widely-spread notion that the dead are pained, and even annoyed and exasperated, by the tears of their kindred. Traces of this belief are discoverable in Zend and Hindu writings; also amongst the Slavs, Germans, and Scandinavians—and, to look nearer home, in Ireland and Scotland. On the other hand, it is possible that the business of singing before the dead sprang from the root of well-nigh every trade—that its duties were at first exclusively performed by private persons, and their passing into public hands resulted simply from people finding out that they were executed with less trouble and more efficiency by a professional functionary; a common-place view of the matter which is somewhat borne out by the circumstance, that whenever a member of the family is qualified and disposed to undertake the dirge-singing, there seems to be no prejudice against her doing so. It is often far from easy to determine whether such or such a death-song was composed by a hired *præfica* who for the time being assumed the character of one of the dead man's relatives, or by the latter speaking in her own person.

In Corsica, the wailing and chanting is kept up, off and on, from the hour of death to the hour of burial. The news that the head of a family has expired is quickly communicated to his relations and friends in the surrounding hamlets, who hasten to form themselves into a troop or band locally called the *Scirrata*, and thus advance in procession towards the house of mourning. If the death was caused by violence, the *scirrata* makes a halt when it arrives in sight of the village; and then it is that the Corsican women tear their hair and scratch their faces till the blood flows—just as do their sisters in Dalmatia and Montenegro. Shortly after this, the *scirrata* is met by the deceased's fellow-villagers, accompanied by all his near relatives with the exception of the widow, to whose abode the whole party now proceeds with loud cries and lamentations. The widow awaits the *scirrata* by the door of her house, and, as it draws near, the leader steps forward and throws a black veil over her head to symbo-

lise her widowhood ; the term of which must offer a dreary prospect to a woman who has the misfortune to lose her husband while she is still in the prime of life, for public opinion insists that she remain for years in almost total seclusion. The mourners and as many as can enter the room assemble round the body, which lies stretched on a table or plank supported by benches ; it is draped in a long mantle, or it is clothed in the dead man's best suit. Now begins the dirge, or Vocero. Two persons will perhaps start off singing together, and in that case the words cannot be distinguished ; but more often only one gets up at a time. She will open her song with a quietly-delivered eulogy of the virtues of the dead, and a few pointed allusions to the most important events of his life ; but before long she warms to her work, and pours forth volleys of rhythmic lamentation with a fire and animation that stir up the women present into a frenzied delirium of grief, in which, as the præfica pauses to take breath, they howl, dig their nails into their flesh, throw themselves on the ground, and sometimes cover their heads with ashes. When the dirge is ended they join hands and dance frantically round the plank on which the body lies. More singing takes place on the way to the church, and thence to the grave-yard. After the funeral the men do not shave for weeks, and the women let their hair go loose and occasionally cut it off at the grave—cutting off the hair being, by the way, a universal sign of female mourning ; it was done by the women of ancient Greece, and it is done by the women of India. A good deal of eating and drinking brings the ceremonials to a close. If the bill of fare comes short of that recorded of the funeral feast of Sir John Paston, of Barton, when 1,300 eggs, 41 pigs, 40 calves, and 10 nete were but a few of the items—nevertheless the Corsican baked meats fall very heavily upon the pockets of such families as deem themselves compelled to “keep up a position.” Sixty persons is not an extraordinary number to be entertained at the banquet, and there is, over and above, a general distribution of bread and meat to poorer neighbours. Mutton in summer, and pork in winter, are esteemed the viands proper to the occasion. In happy contrast to all this lugubrious feasting is the simple cup of milk drunk by each kinsman of the shepherd who dies in the mountains ; in which case his body is laid out, like Robin Hood's, in the open air, a green sod under his head, his loins begirt with the pistol belt, his gun at his side, his dog at his feet. Curious are the superstitions of the Corsican shepherds touching death. The dead, they say, call the living in the night time, and he who answers will soon follow them ; they believe, too, that, if you listen attentively after dark, you may hear at times the low beating of a drum, which announces that a soul has passed.

A notable section of the voceri treats of that insatiable thirst after vengeance which formerly provided as fruitful a theme to French romancers as it presented a perplexing problem to French legislators. In these dirges we see the vendetta in its true character, as the outgrowth and relic of times when people were, in self-defence, almost coerced into

lawlessness through the perpetual miscarriage of constituted justice, and they enable us to better understand the process by which what was at the outset something of the nature of a social necessity, developed into the ruling passion of the race, and led to the frightful abuses that are associated with its name. All that he held sacred in heaven or on earth became bound up in the Corsican's mind with the obligation to avenge the blood of his kindred. Thus he made Hate his deity, and the old inexorable spirit of the Greek *Oresteia* lived and breathed in him anew, the Furies themselves finding no bad counterpart in the frenzied women who officiated at his funeral rites. As is well known, when no man was to be found to do the deed a woman would often come forward in his stead, and this not only among the lower orders, but in the highest ranks of society. A lady of the noble house of Pozzo di Borgo once donned male attire, and in velvet-tasselled cap, red doublet, high sheepskin boots, with pistol, gun, and dagger for her weapons, started off in search of an assassin at the head of a band of partisans. When he was caught, however, after the guns had been two or three times levelled at his breast, she decided to give him his life. Another fair avenger whose name has come down to us was Maria Felice di Calacuccia, of Niolo. Her vocero may be cited here as affording a good idea of the tone and spirit of the vendetta dirges in general.

“I was spinning at my distaff when I heard a loud noise; it was a gun-shot, it re-echoed in my heart. It seemed to say to me: ‘Fly! thy brother dies.’ I ran into the upper chamber. As I unlatched the door, ‘I am struck to the heart,’ he said; and I fell senseless to the ground. If I too died not, it was that one thought sustained me. Whom wouldst thou have to avenge thee? Our mother, nigh to death, or thy sister Maria? If Lario was not dead surely all this would not end without bloodshed. But of so great a race, thou dost only leave thy sister: she has no cousins, she is poor, an orphan, young. Still be at rest—to avenge thee, she suffices!”

A dramatic vocero, dealing with the same subject, is that of the sister of Canino, a renowned brigand, who fell at Nazza in an encounter with the military. She begins by regretting that she has not a voice of thunder wherewith to rehearse his prowess. Alas! one early morning the soldiers (“barbarous set of bandits that they are!”) sallied forth on his pursuit, and pounced upon him like wolves upon a lamb. When she heard the bustle of folks going to and fro in the street, she put her head out of window and asked what it was all about. “Thy brother has been slaughtered in the mountains,” they reply. Even so it was; his arquebuse was of no use to him; no, nor his dagger, nor his pistol, nor yet his amulet. When they brought him in, and she beheld his wounds, the bitterness of her grief redoubled. Why did he not answer her—did he lack heart to do so? “Canino, heart of thy sister,” she cries, “how thou art grown pale! Thou that wert so stalwart and so full of grace, thou who didst appear like unto a nosegay of flowers. Canino, heart of thy

sister, they have taken thy life. I will plant a blackthorn in the land of Nazza, that none of our house may henceforth pass that way—for there were not three or four, but seven men against one. Would I could make my bed at the foot of the chestnut tree beneath whose shade they fired upon thy breast. I desire to cast aside these women's skirts, to arm me with poniard, and pistol, and gun, to gird me with the belt and pouch; Canino, heart of thy sister, I desire to avenge thy death." In the lamentations over one Matteo, a doctor who was murdered in 1745, we have an example of the songs improvised along the road to the grave. This time there are plenty of male relatives—brothers, brothers-in-law, and cousins—to accomplish the vendetta. The funeral procession passes through the village where the crime was committed, and one of the inhabitants, perhaps as a peace offering, invites the whole party to come in and refresh themselves. To this a young girl replies: "We want none of your bread and wine; what we do want is your blood." She invokes a thunderbolt to exterminate every soul in the blood-guilty place. But an aged dame interposes, for a wonder, with milder counsels; she bids her savage sisters calm their wrath: "Is not Matteo in heaven with the Lord? Look at his winding sheet," says she, "and learn from it that Christ dwells above, who teaches forgiveness. The waters are troubled enough already without your goading on your men to violence." It is not unlikely that the Corsicans may have been in the habit, like the Irish, of intentionally parading the coffin of a murdered man past the door of the suspected murderer, in order that they might have a public opportunity of branding the latter with infamy.

Having glanced at these hymns of the avenger, we will turn to the laments expressive of grief unmixed with threats or anger. In these, also, Corsica is very rich. Sometimes it is a wife who deplores her husband struck down by no human hand, but by fever or accident. In one such vocero the widow pathetically crowds epithet on epithet, in the attempt to give words to her affection and her sorrow. "You were my flower, my thornless rose, my stalwart one, my column, my brother, my hope, my prop, my eastern gem, my most beautiful treasure," she says to her lost "Petru Francescu!" She curses fate which in a brief moment has deprived her of her paladin—she prayed so hard that he might be spared, but it was all in vain. He was laid low, the greatly courageous one, who seemed so strong! Is it indeed true, that he, the clever-headed, the handy-handed, will leave his Nunziola all alone? Then she bids Mari, her little daughter, come hither to where papa lies, and beg him to pray God in paradise that she may have a better lot than her little mother. She wishes her eyes may change into two fountains ere she forgets his name; for ever would she call him her Petru Francescu. But most of all she wishes that her heart might break so that her poor little soul could go with his, and quit this treacherous world where there is no more joy.*

* The typical keen given in Carleton's *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry* is so like Nunziola's vocero, that in parts it might be taken for a translation of it.

Sometimes it is a plaint of a mother whose child has met the fate of those "whom the gods love." That saying about the gods has its equivalent in the Corsican lines :

Chi nasci pe u paradisu
A stu mondu un po' imbecchia,

which occur in the lament of La Dariola Danesi, of Zuani, who mourns her sixteen-year-old daughter Romana. Decked in feast-day raiment the damsel sleeps in the rest of death, after all her sufferings. Her sweet face has lost its hues of red and white ; it is like a gone-out sun. Romana was the fairest of all the young girls, a rose among flowers ; the youths of the country round were consumed by love of her, but in her presence they were filled with decorous respect. She was courteous to all, familiar with none ; in church everybody gazed at her, but she looked at no one ; and the minute mass was over she would say : "Mamma, let us go." Never can the mother be consoled, albeit she knows her darling fares well up there in heaven where all things smile and are glad. Of a surety this earth was not worthy to contain so fair a face. "Ah ! how much more beautiful Paradise will be now she is in it !" cries the voceratrice, with the sublime audacity of maternal love. In another dirge we have pictured a troop of girls coming early to the house of Maria, their young companion, to escort her to the Church of St. Elia : for this morning the father of her betrothed has settled the marriage portion, and it is seemly that she should hear mass, and make an offering of wax tapers. But the maiden's mother comes forth to tell the gladsome band that to-day's offering to St. Elia is not of waxen tapers ; it is a peerless flower, a bouquet adorned with ribands—surely the saint will be well pleased with such a fine gift ! For the bride elect lies dead ; who will now profit by her possessions—the twelve mattresses, the twenty-four lambs ? "I will pray the Virgin," says the mother, "I will pray my God that I may go hence this morning, pressing my flower to my heart." The playfellows bathe Maria's face with tears : sees she not those who loved her ? Will she leave them in their sadness ? One runs to pluck flowers, a second to gather roses ; they twine her a garland, a bridal crown—will she depart all the same, lying upon her bier ? But, after all, why should there be all this grief ? "To-day little Maria becomes the spouse of the Lord ; with what honour will she not be greeted in paradise !" Alas for broken hearts ! they were never yet healed by that line of argument. Up the street steals the chilling sound of the funeral chant, *Ora pro ea*. They are come to bear the maiden to St. Elia's Church ; the mother sinks to the ground ; fain would she follow the body to the grave, but she faints with sorrow ; only her streaming tears can pay the tribute of her love.

It will be observed that it is usual for the survivors to be held up as objects of pity rather than the dead, who are generally regarded as well off ; but now and then we come across less optimist presages of the

future life. A woman named Maddelè complains that they have taken her blonde daughter, her snow-white dove, her "Chili, cara di Mamma," to the worst possible of places, where no sun penetrates, and no fire is lit.

Sometimes to a young girl is assigned the task of bewailing her playmate. "This morning my companion is all adorned," begins a maiden dirge-singer; "one would think she was going to be married." But the ceremony about to take place differs sadly from that other. The bell tolls slowly, the cross and banner arrive at the door; the dead companion is setting out on a long journey, she is going to find their ancestors—the voceratrice's father, and her uncle the curé—in the land whither each one must go in his turn and remain for ever. Since she has made up her mind thus to change country and climate (though it be all too soon, for she has not yet done growing), will she at any rate listen for an instant to her friend of other days? She wishes to give her a little letter to carry to her father; and, besides the letter, she would like her to take him a message, and give him news of the family he left so young, all weeping round his hearth. She is to tell him that all goes well; that his eldest daughter is married and has a boy, a flowering lily, who already knows his father, and points at him with his finger. The boy is called after the grandpapa, and old friends declare him to be his very image. To the curé she is to say that his flock flourish and do not forget him. Now the priest enters, bringing the holy water; everyone lifts his hat; they bear the body away: "Go to heaven dear; the Lord awaits you."

It is hardly necessary to add that the voceri of Corsica are without exception composed in the native speech of the country, which the accomplished scholar, lexicographer, and poet, Niccolò Tommaseo, speaks of with perfect truth as one of "the most Italian of the dialects of Italy."* The time may come when the people will renounce their own language in favour of the idiom of their rulers, but it has not come yet; nor do they show much disposition to abandon their old usages, as may be guessed from the fact that even in their Gallicanised capital the dead are considered slighted if the due amount of wailing is left undone.

The Sardinian *Attitido*—a word which has been thought to have some connection with the Greek *ororoi*, and the Latin *atat*—is made on exactly the same pattern as the Corsican vocero. Very few specimens of it have, unfortunately, found their way into print; but amongst these few, in Canon Spano's *Canti popolari Tempiesi*, there is one that is highly interesting. Doubts have been raised as to whether the bulk of the songs in Canon Spano's collection are of purely illiterate origin; but even if the author of the dirge to which we allude was guilty of that heinous offence in the eyes of the strict folk-lore gleaner—the knowledge of the alphabet—it must still, we think, be judged a remarkable production. The *attidora* laments the death of a much-beloved bishop:—

* *Canti del Popolo Corso*, p. 6.

“It was the pleasure of this good father, this gentle pastor,” she says, “at all hours to nourish his flock; to the bread of the soul he joined the bread of the body. Was the wife naked, her sons starving and destitute? He laboured unceasingly to console them all. The one he clothed, the others he fed. None can tell the number of the poor whom he succoured. The naked came to him that they might be clothed, the hungry came to him that they might be fed, and all went their way comforted. How many had suffered hunger in the winter’s cold, had not his tender heart proffered them help! It was a grand sight to behold so many poor gathered together in his house—above, below, they were so numerous there was no room to pass. And these were the comers of every day. I do not count those to whom once a month he supplied the needful food, nor yet those other poor to whose necessities he ministered in secret. By the needy rogue he let himself be deceived with shut eyes: he recognised the fraud, but he esteemed it gain so to lose. Ah, dear father, father to us all, I ought not to weep for thee! I mourn our common bereavement, for thy death this day has been a blow to all of us, even to the strongest men.”

It would be hard to conceive a more lovely portrait of the Christian priest; it is scarcely surpassed by that of Monseigneur Bienvenu in *Les Misérables*, of whose conduct in the matter of the silver candlesticks we are not a little reminded by the good Sardinian bishop’s compassion for the needy rogue. Neither the one nor the other realises an ideal which would win the unconditional approval of the Charity Organisation Society, and we must perhaps admit that humane proclivities which indirectly encourage swindling are more a mischief than an advantage to the State. Yet who can be insensible to the beauty of this unconquerable pity for the evil-doer, this charity that believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things?

We have been told on trustworthy authority that in some districts in the island the keening over a married man is performed not by a dirge-singer but by his own children, who chant a string of homely sentences, such as: “Why art thou dead, papa? Thou didst not want for bread or wine!” A practice may here be mentioned which recalls the milk and honey and nuts of the Roman Inferie, and which, so far as we are aware, lingers on nowhere except in Sardinia; the attidora, whilst she sings, scatters on the bier handfuls of almonds or—if the family is well-to-do—of sweetmeats, to be subsequently buried with the body.

The government of Olonetz would not, on the face of things, suggest a likelihood of common customs with the Mediterranean isles; yet if we transport ourselves thither we discover the first cousin of the voceratrice and the attidora in the Russian Voplénitsa (“the Sobbing one”). But the jurisdiction of this functionary is of wider extent: she is mistress of the ceremonies at marriages as well as at funerals, and in both cases either improvises new songs or adapts old ones. We will give no samples of the Slavonic nenixæ, because Mr. Ralston has lately familiarised

English readers with several excellent specimens in his work on the *Songs of the Russian People*. The Slavs are everywhere very strict in all that regards the cult of the dead, and the observances which have to be gone through by Russians who have lost friends or relations are by no means confined to the date of death and burial. Even when they have experienced no personal loss they are still thought called upon to visit the cemeteries on the second Tuesday after Easter and howl lustily over the tombs of "their ancestors." Nor would it be held sufficient to strew flowers upon the graves as is done on the Catholic All Souls' day; the most orthodox ghosts want something more substantial, and libations of beer and spirits are poured over their resting-places. Furthermore, disagreeable consequences have been said to result upon an omission of like marks of respect due to "the rude forefathers of the hamlet;" there is no making sure that a highly estimable individual will not, when thus incensed, re-enter an appearance on life's stage in the shape of a vampire. A small volume might be written on the preventive measures adopted to procure immunity from such-like visitations. The people of Havelland and Altmark put a small coin into the mouths of the dead in the hope that, so placated, they will not assume vampire form; but this time the superstition, like a vast number of others, is clearly a later invention to explain a custom the original significance of which is forgotten. The peasants of Roumelia also place pieces of money in the coffins, not as an insurance against vampires—who they think may be best avoided by burning instead of burying the mortal remains of any person they credit with the prospect of becoming one—but to pay the entrance fee into Paradise; a more authentic version of the old fable. The setting apart of a day, fixed by the Church or varying according to private anniversaries, for the special commemoration of the dead, is a world-wide custom. The Letts and Esthonians observe this Feast of Souls by spreading a banquet of which they suppose their spirit relatives to partake; they put torches on the graves to light the ghosts to the repast, and they imagine every sound they hear through the day to be caused by the movements of the invisible guests. Both these peoples celebrate death-watches with much singing and drinking, the Esthonians addressing long speeches to the dead, and asking him why he did not stay longer, if his pudder (gruel) was not to his taste, &c., precisely after the style of the keeners of less remote parts. In some countries the entire system of life would seem to be planned and organised mainly with a view to honouring the dead. In Albania, for example, one of the foremost objects pursued by the peasantry is that of marrying their daughters near home; not so much from any affectionate unwillingness to part with them, as in order to secure their attendance at the *vai* or lamentations which take place on the death of a member of the family; and so rigorous are the mourning regulations that even married women who have lost their fathers remain year after year shut up in houses deprived of light and draped in black—they may not even go out to church. The Albanian keens are not

always versified ; they sometimes consist simply in the endless reiteration of a single phrase. M. Auguste Dozon reports that he was at one time constantly hearing "les hurlements" of a poor Mussulman widow who bewailed two sons ; on certain anniversaries she took their clothes out of a chest, and, placing them before her, she repeated, without intermission, *χαλασια μου*.* The Greeks have the somewhat analogous practice, on the recurrence of the death-days of their dear ones, of putting their lips close to the graves and whispering to their silent tenants that they still love them.

The near relations in Greece leave their dwelling, as soon as they have closed the eyes of the dead, to take refuge in the house of a friend, with whom they sojourn till the more distant connections have had time to arrive, and the body is dressed in holiday gear. Then they return, clothe themselves in white dresses, and take up their position beside the bier. After some inarticulate wailing, which is strenuously echoed back by the neighbours, the dirge is sung, the chief female mourner usually leading off, and whosoever feels disposed following wake. When the body is lowered into the earth, the best-beloved of the dead—his mother or perhaps his betrothed—stoops down to the ground and imploringly utters his name, together with the word "Come !" On his making no reply, he is declared to be indeed dead, and the grave is closed. The usage points to a probability that all the exhortations to awake and to return with which the dirges of every nation are interlarded are remnants of ancient makeshifts for a medical certificate of death ; and we may fancy with what breathless excitement these apostrophes were spoken in former days when they were accompanied by an actual, if faint, expectation that they would be heard and answered. It is conceivable that the complete system of making as much noise as possible at funerals may be derived from some sort of notion that the uproar would wake the dead if he were not dead at all, but sleeping. As elsewhere, so in Greece, the men take no part in the proceedings beyond bidding one last farewell just before they retire from the scene. Præfices are still employed now and then ; but the art of improvisation seems to be the natural birthright of Greek peasant women, nor do they require the inspiration of strong grief to call their poetic gifts into operation ; it is stated to be no unusual thing to hear a girl stringing elegies over some lamb, or bird, or flower which may have died, while she works in the fields. The Greeks send communications and even flowers by the dead to the dead : "Now is the time," the folk-poet makes one say whose body is about to be buried, "for you to give me any messages or commissions ; and if your grief is too poignant for utterance, write it down on paper and bring me the letter." The Greek *neniæ* are marked by great vigour and variety of imagery, as is apparent in the subjoined extract from the dirge of a poor young country-woman who was left a widow with two children :—

* *Chansons Populaires Bulgares inédites*, p. 328.

“The other day I beheld at our threshold a youth, of lofty stature and threatening mien; he had outstretched wings of gleaming white, and in his hand was a sword. ‘Woman, is thy husband in the house?’ ‘Yes; he combs our Nicos’ hair, and caresses him so he may not cry. Go not in, terrible youth; do not frighten our babe.’ The white-winged would not listen; I tried to drive him back, but I could not; he darted past me, and ran to thy side, O my beloved. Hapless one, he smote thee; and here is thy little son, thy tiny Nicos, whom likewise he was fain to strike.” . . .

So vivid was the impression created by the woman’s fantasy that some of the spectators looked towards the door, half expecting the white-winged visitant to advance in their midst; others turned to the child, huddled by his mother’s knees. She, coming down from flights of imagination to the bitter realities of her condition, exclaimed as she flung herself sobbing upon the bier: “How can I maintain the children? How will they be able to live? What will they not suffer in the contrast between the rough lot in store for them and the tender care which guarded them in the happy days when their father lived?” At last, worn out by the force of her emotions, she sank senseless to the floor. The laments of widows, which are very rare in some localities, are often to be met with in Greece. In one of them we come upon an original idea respecting the requirements of spirits: the singer prays that her tears may swell into a lake or a sea, so they may trickle through the earth to the nether regions, to moisten those who get no rain, to be drink to those who thirst, and—to fill up the dry inkstands of the writers! “Then will they be able to chronicle the chagrins of the loved ones who cross the river, taste its wave, and forget their homes and their poor orphans.” Every species of Grecian peasant-song abounds in classical reminiscences, which are easy to identify, although they betray some mental confusion of the attributes and functions belonging to the personages of antiquity. Of all the early myths, that of the Stygian ferryman is the one which has shown greatest longevity. Far from falling into oblivion, the son of Erebus has gone on diligently accumulating honours that were not his originally, till he has managed to get the arbitrament of life and death into his power, and to enlist the birds of the air as a staff of spies, to give him prompt information should any unlucky individual refer to him in a tone of mockery or defiance. The opinion of Achilles, that it was better to be a slave amongst men than a king over ghosts, is very much that which prevails in the Greece of to-day. Visions of a Christian Paradise above the skies have much less hold on the popular mind than dread of a pagan Tartarus under the earth; and that full conviction that after all it was a very bad thing to die, that tendency to attach a paramount value to life, *per se*, and *quand même*, which constituted so significant a feature of the old Greeks, is equally characteristic of their modern representatives. The next world of the Romaic songs is far from being a place “where all smiles and is glad;”

the forebodings of the Corsican Chilina's mother are common enough here in Greece. "Rejoice in the present world, rejoice in the passing day," runs a *μυρολόγιον*, quoted by Fauriel; "to-morrow you will be under the sod, and will behold the day no more." Down in Tartarus youths and maidens spend their time dimly in asking if there be yet an earth and a sky up above. Are there still churches and golden icons? Do people continue to work at their several trades? "Blessed are the mountains and the pastures," it is said, "where we meet not Charon." The parents of a dying girl ask of her why she is resolved to hasten into the other world where the cock crows not, and the hen clucks not; where there is no water and no grass, and where the hungry find it impossible to eat, and the tired are incapable of sleep. Why is she not content to abide at home? The girl replies she cannot, for yesterday, in the late evening, she was married, and her consort is the tomb. That is the peasant elegist's way of speaking of a sudden death, caused very likely by the chill of nightfall. Of another damsel, who succumbed to a long illness, "who had suffered as none before suffered under the sun," he narrates how she pressed her father's hand to her heart, saying: "Alas! my father, I am about to die." She clasped her mother's hand to her breast, saying: "Alas! my mother, I am about to die." Then she sent for her betrothed, and she bent over him and kissed him, and whispered softly into his ear: "Oh, my friend, when I am dead deck my grave as you would have decked my nuptial bed." We find in Greek poesy the universal legend of the lover who kills himself on hearing of the death of his mistress; but, as a rule, the regret of survivors is depicted as neither desperate nor durable. Long ago, three gallant youths plotted together to contrive an escape from Hades, and a fair-haired maiden prayed that they would take her with them; she did so wish to see her mother mourning her loss, her brothers weeping because she is no more. They answered: "As to thy brothers, poor girl, they are dancing, and thy mother diverts herself with gossiping in the street." The mournfully beautiful music that Schubert wedded to Claudius's little poem *Der Tod und das Mädchen* might serve as melodious expression to many a one of these Grecian lays of dead damsels. Death will not halt because he hears a voice crying: "Tarry; I am still so young!" The future is as irrevocably fixed as the past; and if Fate deals hardly by mortals, there is nothing to fall back upon but the sorry resignation of despair; such is the sombre folk philosophy of the land of eternal summer. Perhaps it is the very brightness of the sky and air that makes the quitting of this mortal coil so unspeakably grievous. The most horribly painful idea associated with death in the mind of the modern as of the ancient Greek is the idea of darkness, of separation from what Dante, yet more Greek than Italian in his passionate sun-worship, describes in a line which seems somehow to hold incarnate the thing it tells of—

. . . l'aer dolce che dal sol s'allegra.

It is worth noting that, whether the view entertained of immortality be cheerful or the reverse, in the songs of Western nations the disembodied soul is universally taken to be the exact duplicate of the creature of flesh and blood, in wants, tastes, and semblance. The European folk-singer could no more grasp a metaphysical conception of the eternity of spirit, such as that implied in the grand Indian dirge which craves everlasting good for the "unborn part" in man, than he would know what to make of the scientific theory of the indestructibility of matter shadowed forth in the ordinary Sanskrit periphrases for death, signifying "the resolution of the body into its five elementary constituents."

Various companies of Greek settlers arrived in the southern extremity of the Italian peninsula during the latter half of the tenth century; or, rather, it would be more correct to say that the most plausible conjecture as to their advent places it in that period, for no positive record of the date when they landed has up till now come to light. Niebuhr troubled himself about their history, and Pott about their language, but without conclusive results; and so large is the range of the hypotheses they have provoked, that, while they were formerly held to be the remains of ancient colonies of Magna Græcia, it has been of late contended that at least a portion of them must have migrated after the fall of the Byzantine Empire. Any way, there is no question that Calabria and Terra d'Otranto are partly peopled by Greeks, some of whom retain the use of an unmistakably Grecian dialect. Among the strongholds of the Greek-speaking subjects of Victor Emmanuel are Bova, Amendolea, and Cardeto in Calabria, and Corigliano, Martano, and Castrignana de' Greci in Terra d'Otranto: at these places and at others where the Greeks are massed dirge-singing exists in its highest development. When first the immigrants made Southern Italy their home, the custom was decidedly in full force across the Straits of Messina; and it may be that it was also tolerably general on the main-land; but, assuming this to have been the case, it need still cause no surprise that the Greeks should have kept to it longer than the rest of the population; for, let alone other reasons, their fidelity to their language argues them to have dwelt in a degree of isolation essentially favourable to the maintenance of a traditional order of things. With them a peculiar metre is set apart to the composition of the *nenia*, and the office of public wailer is transmitted from mother to daughter; so that the living *præficæ* are the lineal descendants of the *præficæ* who lived of old in the Grecian Motherland.* Unrivalled in the matter of her improvisations as in the manner of their delivery, the hereditary dirge-singer no doubt, like a good actress, keenly realises at the moment the sorrow not her own, of which she undertakes the interpretation in return for a trifling gratuity, and to her hearers she appears as the genius or high priestess of woe: she excites them into a whirlwind of

* *Studi sui dialetti greci della Terra d'Otranto*, del Prof. Dott. G. Morosi.

ecstatic paroxysms not greatly differing from kindred phenomena vouched for by the historians of religious mysticism. There are, however, one or two of the Græco-Italic death-songs which bear too clear and touching a stamp of sincerity for us to attribute them even to the most skilled of hired "sobbing ones." There is no savour of vicarious mourning in the plaint of the desolate girl, who says to her dead mother that she will wait for her, so that she may tell her how she has passed the day; at eight she will await her, and if she does not come she will begin to weep; at nine she will await her, and if she comes not she will grow black as soot; at ten she will await her, and if she does not come at ten she will turn to earth, to earth that may be sown in. And it is difficult to believe that aught save the anguish of a mother's broken heart could have quickened the senses of an ignorant peasant to the tragic intensity of the following lament:—

Now they have buried thee, my little one,

Who will make thy little bed?

Black Death will make it for me

For a very long night.

Who will arrange thy pillows,

So thou mayst sleep softly?

Black Death will arrange them for me

With hard stones.

Who will awake thee, my daughter,

When day is up?

Down here it is always sleep,

Always dark night.

This my daughter was fair.

When I went (with her) to high mass,

The columns shone,

The way grew bright.

The *neniæ* of Terra d'Otranto and of Calabria are not uncommonly composed in a semi-dramatic form. Professor Comparetti cites one,* in which the friend of a dead girl is represented as going to pay her a visit, in ignorance of the misfortune that has happened. She sees a crowd at the door, and she exclaims: "How many folks are in thy house! they come from all the neighbourhood; they are bidden by thy mother, who shows thee the bridal array!" But on crossing the threshold she finds that the shutters are closed: "Alas!" she cries, "I deceive myself—I enter into darkness." Again she repeats: "How many folks are in thy house! All Corigliano is there." The mother says: "My daughter has bidden them by the tolling of the bell." Then the daughter is made to ask: "What ails thee, what ails thee, my mother? wherefore dost thou rend thy hair?" The mother rejoins: "I think of thee, my daughter, of how thou liest down in darkness." "What ails thee, what ails thee, my mother, that all around one can hear thee wailing?" "I

* *Saggi dei dialetti Greci dell'Italia meridionale.*

think of thee, my daughter, of how thou art turned black as soot." A sort of chorus is appended to the effect: "All, all the mothers weep and rend their hair: let them weep, the poor mothers who lose their children." Here are the last four lines, as they were originally set on paper:—

Ole sole i mane i cluene
 Isirnune anapota ta maddia,
 Afi na clapsune tio mane misere
 Pu ichannune ta pedia!

Professor Comparetti has shaped them into looking more like Greek:—

"Ολαιοι, ὄλαις ἢ μάταιι ἠκλαίουνε
 Ἡσίρνονε ἀνάποδα τὰ μαλλιά
 Ἄφησε νὰ κλάψουνε ταῖς μάταις *misere*
 Ποῦ ἠχάνουνε τὰ παιδιὰ!

The subject of this paper invites a more searching examination than it has received in the preceding pages: in fact, our immediate purpose has been rather to indicate than to explore a point in comparative folklore which is calculated to reward inquiry by something besides the mere satisfaction of scientific curiosity. One conclusion incidentally forced upon us by the study of these dirges must seem strange when we remember how few are the cultured poetesses who have attained eminence—to wit, that with the unlettered multitude the poetic faculty is equally the property of women as of men. The investigation of funeral rites, of whatever nature, confronts us with much that would be ludicrous were it not so very pitiful, for humanity has displayed a fatal tendency to rush into the committal of ghastly absurdities by way of manifesting the most sacred form of grief; but, take them all in all, the simple laments of the people offer a pleasant sample of the better kind of homage "Life may give for love to death."

The Veterans of the Grand Army meeting Napoleon's
Ashes from St. Helena.

(FROM THÉOPIHILE GAUTIER.)



BORED, and thus forced out of my room,
Along the Boulevard I passed,
Around me hung December's gloom,
The wind was cold, the showers drove fast.

Then straight I saw (how strange the sight !)
Escaped from their grim dwelling-place,
Trampling through mud in sorry plight,
Ghosts at mid-day, ghosts face to face.

Night is the time when shades have power,
Whilst German moonlight silvers all,
Within some old and tottering tower,
To flit across the pillared hall.

'Tis night when fairies from the floods
In dripping robes rise like a breath,
Then drag beneath their lily buds
Some boy whom they have danced to death.

'Twas night, if Zedlitz singeth true,
When (half-seen shade) the Emperor
Marshalled in line, for that review,
The shades of Austerlitz once more.

But spectres in the public street,
Scarce from the playhouse paces two,
Veiled nor by mist, nor winding-sheet,
Who stand there wearied and wet through.

Well may we wonder as we gaze ;
Three grumbling phantoms hover dim,
In uniform of other days,
One ex-guard, two hussars with him.

Not these the slain, who, though they die,
Still hear through earth Napoleon's drum ;
But veterans of a time gone by
Waked up to see his relics come.

Who, since that last, that fatal fight,
Have grown, or fat, or lean and grim ;
Whose uniforms, unless too tight,
Float wide around each wasted limb.

Oh noble rags, still like a star
To you the Cross of Honour clings,
Sublimely ludicrous, ye are
Grander than purple worn by kings !

A nerveless plume, as if with fear,
Trembles above the bearskin frayed ;
Moth-fretted the pelisse is, near
Those holes by hostile bullets made ;

The leathern overalls, too large,
Round the shrunk thigh in wrinkles fall,
And rusty sabres, wearying charge,
Drag on the ground, or beat the wall.

The next one is grotesque, with chest
Stretching a coat too small by half ;
But for the stripes that deck his breast,
At the old war-wolf we might laugh.

My brothers, mock them not too much ;
Rather salute, with heads low bent,
These heroes of an Iliad, such
As Homer never could invent.

Greet each bald head with reverence due,
For on brows, bronzed by many a clime,
A lengthening scar oft reddens through
The lines that have been dug by time.

Their skins, by a strange blackness, tell
Of Egypt's heat, and blinding light ;
Russia's snow-powder, as it fell,
Has kept those thin locks ever white.

Their hands may tremble ; yes, still keen
The cold of Beresina bites ;
They limp, for long the march between
Cairo and Wilna's frozen heights.

They droop, bent double, since in war
No sheets but flags for sleep had they ;
The helpless sleeve may flutter, for
A round shot tore the arm away.

Laugh not, though round them leaps and jeers
The howling street-boy with delight ;
They were the day of those proud years,—
The evening we—perchance the night.

They recollect, if we forget,
Lancers in red, ex-guard in blue,
And worship, at his column met,
The only God they ever knew.

Proud of the pains endured so long,
Grateful for miseries nobly borne—
They feel the heart of France beat strong
Under that clothing soiled and worn.

Our tears then check the smile that played,
To see this strange pomp on its way—
The Empire's ghostly masquerade—
Dim as a ball when dawns the day.

Through skies which yet her splendours fill,
The Eagle of our armies old,
From depths of glory, burning still,
Spreads over them her wings of gold.

François Villon, Student, Poet, and Housebreaker.

PERHAPS one of the most curious revolutions in literary history is the sudden bull's-eye light cast by M. Longnon, only last winter, on the obscure existence of François Villon.* His book is not remarkable merely as a chapter of biography exhumed after four centuries. To readers of the poet it will recall, with a flavour of satire, that characteristic passage in which he bequeaths his spectacles—with a humorous reservation of the case—to the hospital for blind paupers known as the Fifteen-Score. Thus equipped, let the blind paupers go and separate the good from the bad in the cemetery of the Innocents! For his own part the poet can see no distinction. Much have the dead people made of their advantages. What does it matter now that they have lain in state beds and nourished portly bodies upon cakes and cream? Here they all lie, to be trodden in the mud; the large estate and the small, sounding virtue and adroit or powerful vice, in very much the same condition; and a bishop not to be distinguished from a lamplighter with even the strongest spectacles.

Such was Villon's cynical philosophy. Four hundred years after his death, when surely all danger might be considered at an end, a pair of critical spectacles have been applied to his own remains; and though he left behind him a sufficiently ragged reputation from the first, it is only after these four hundred years that his delinquencies have been finally tracked home, and we can assign him to his proper place among the good or wicked. It is a staggering thought, and one that affords a fine figure of the imperishability of men's acts, that the stealth of the private inquiry office can be carried so far back into the dead and dusty past. We are not so soon quit of our concerns as Villon fancied. In the extreme of dissolution, when not so much as a man's name is remembered, when his dust is scattered to the four winds, and perhaps the very grave and the very graveyard where he was laid to rest have been forgotten, desecrated, and buried under populous towns,—even in this extreme let an antiquary fall across a sheet of manuscript, and the name will be recalled, the old infamy will pop out into daylight like a toad out of a fissure in the rock, and the shadow of the shade of what was once a man will be heartily pilloried by his descendants. A little while ago and Villon was almost totally forgotten; then he was revived for the sake of his verses; and now he is being revived with a vengeance in the detection of his mis-

* *Etude Biographique sur François Villon.* Paris: H. Menu.

demeanors. How unsubstantial is this projection of a man's existence, which can lie in abeyance for centuries and then be brushed up again and set forth for the consideration of posterity by a few dips in an antiquary's inkpot! This precarious tenure of fame goes a long way to justify those (and they are not few) who prefer cakes and cream in the immediate present.

A WILD YOUTH.

François de Montcorbier, *alias* François des Loges, *alias* François Villon, *alias* Michel Mouton, Master of Arts in the University of Paris, was born in that city in the summer of 1431. It was a memorable year for France on other and higher considerations. A great-hearted girl and a poor-hearted boy made, the one her last, the other his first appearance on the public stage of that unhappy country. On the thirtieth of May the ashes of Joan of Arc were thrown into the Seine, and on the second of December our Henry Sixth made his Joyous Entry dismally enough into disaffected and depopulating Paris. Sword and fire still ravaged the open country. On a single April Saturday twelve hundred persons, besides children, made their escape out of the starving capital. The hangman, as is not uninteresting to note in connection with Master Francis, was kept hard at work in 1431; on the last of April and on the fourth of May alone, sixty-two bandits swung from Paris gibbets.* A more confused or troublous time it would have been difficult to select for a start in life. Not even a man's nationality was certain; for the people of Paris there was no such thing as Frenchmen. The English were the English indeed, but the French were only the Armagnacs, whom, with Joan of Arc at their head, they had beaten back from under their ramparts not two years before. Such public sentiment as they had, centred about their dear Duke of Burgundy, and the dear Duke had no more urgent business than to keep out of their neighbourhood. . . . At least, and whether he liked it or not, our disreputable troubadour was tubbed and swaddled as a subject of the English crown. On this account he may find some indulgence at the hands of Mrs. Grundy.

We hear nothing of Villon's father except that he was poor and of mean extraction. His mother was given piously, which does not imply very much in an old Frenchwoman, and quite uneducated. He had an uncle, a monk in an abbey at Angers, who must have prospered beyond the family average, and was reported to be worth five or six hundred crowns. Of this uncle and his money-box the reader will hear once more. In 1448 Francis became a student of the University of Paris; in 1450 he took the degree of Bachelor, and in 1452 that of Master of Arts. His *bourse*, or the sum paid weekly for his board, was of the amount of two sous. Now two sous was about the price of a pound of salt butter in the

* *Bourgeois de Paris*, ed. Panthéon, pp. 688, 689.

bad times of 1417; it was the price of half-a-pound in the worse times of 1419; and in 1444, just four years before Villon joined the University, it seems to have been taken as the average wage for a day's manual labour.* In short, it cannot have been a very profuse allowance to keep a sharp-set lad in breakfast and supper for seven mortal days; and Villon's share of the cakes and pastry and general good cheer, to which he is never weary of referring, must have been slender from the first.

The educational arrangements of the University of Paris were, to our way of thinking, somewhat incomplete. Worldly and monkish elements were presented in a curious confusion, which the youth might disentangle for himself. If he had an opportunity, on the one hand, of acquiring much hair-drawn divinity and a taste for formal disputation, he was put in the way of much gross and flaunting vice upon the other. The lecture-room of a scholastic doctor was sometimes under the same roof with establishments of a very different and peculiarly unedifying order. The students had extraordinary privileges, which by all accounts they abused extraordinarily. And while some condemned themselves to an almost sepulchral regularity and seclusion, others fled the schools, swaggered in the street "with their thumbs in their girdle," passed the night in riot, and behaved themselves as the worthy forerunners of Jehan Frolo in the romance of *Notre Dame de Paris*. Villon tells us himself that he was among the truants, but we hardly needed his avowal. The burlesque erudition in which he sometimes indulged implies no more than the merest smattering of knowledge; whereas his acquaintance with blackguard haunts and industries, and the unaffected impudence of his corruption, could only have been acquired by early and consistent impiety and idleness. He passed his degrees, it is true; but some of us who have been to modern universities will make their own reflections on the value of the test. As for his three pupils, Colin Laurent, Girard Gossovyn, and Jehan Marceau—if they were really his pupils in any serious sense—what can we say but God help them? And sure enough, by his own description, they turned out as ragged, rowdy, and ignorant as was to be looked for from the views and manners of their rare preceptor.

At some time or other, before or during his university career, the poet was adopted by Master Guillaume de Villon, chaplain of Saint Benoît-le-Bétourné near the Sorbonne. From him he borrowed the surname by which he is known to posterity. It was most likely from his house, called the *Porte Rouge*, and situated in a garden in the cloister of St. Benoît, that Master Francis heard the bell of the Sorbonne ring out the Angelus while he was finishing his *Small Testament* at Christmas-tide in 1546. Towards this benefactor he usually gets credit for a respectable display of gratitude. But with his trap and pitfall style of writing, it is easy to make too sure. His sentiments are about as much to be relied on as those of a professional beggar; and in this, as in so

* *Bourgeois*, pp. 627, 636, and 725.

many other matters, he comes towards us whining and piping the eye, and goes off again with a whoop and his finger to his nose. Thus, he calls Guillaume de Villon his "more than father," thanks him with a great show of sincerity for having helped him out of many scrapes, and bequeaths him his portion of renown. But the portion of renown which belonged to a young thief, distinguished (if, at the period when he wrote this legacy, he was distinguished at all) for having written some more or less obscene and scurrilous ballads, must have been little fitted to gratify the self-respect or increase the reputation of a benevolent ecclesiastic. The same remark applies to a subsequent legacy of the poet's library, with specification of one work which was plainly neither decent nor devout. We are thus left on the horns of a dilemma. If the chaplain was a godly, philanthropic personage, who had tried to graft good principles and good behaviour on this wild slip of an adopted son, these jesting legacies would obviously cut him to the heart. The position of an adopted son towards his adoptive father is one full of delicacy; where a man lends his name he looks for great consideration. And this legacy of Villon's portion of renown may be taken as the mere fling of an unregenerate scapegrace who has wit enough to recognise in his own shame the readiest weapon of offence against a prosy benefactor's feelings. The gratitude of Master Francis figures, on this reading, as a frightful *minus* quantity. If, on the other hand, those jests were given and taken in good humour, the whole relation between the pair degenerates into the unedifying complicity of a debauched old chaplain and a witty and dissolute young scholar. At this rate the house with the red door may have rung with the most mundane minstrelsy; and it may have been below its roof that Villon, through a hole in the plaster, studied, as he tells us, the leisures of a rich ecclesiastic.

It was, perhaps, of some moment in the poet's life that he should have inhabited the cloister of Saint Benoît. Three of the most remarkable among his early acquaintances are Catherine de Vausselles, for whom he entertained a short-lived affection and an enduring and most unmanly resentment; Regnier de Montigny, a young blackguard of good birth; and Colin de Cayeux, a fellow with a marked aptitude for picking locks. Now we are on a foundation of mere conjecture, but it is at least curious to find that two of the canons of Saint Benoît answered respectively to the names of Pierre de Vaucel and Etienne de Montigny, and that there was a householder called Nicolas de Cayeux in a street—the Rue des Poirées—in the immediate neighbourhood of the cloister. M. Longnon is almost ready to identify Catherine as the niece of Pierre; Regnier as the nephew of Etienne, and Colin as the son of Nicolas. Without going so far, it must be owned that the approximation of names is significant. As we go on to see the part played by each of these persons in the sordid melodrama of the poet's life, we shall come to regard it as even more notable. Is it not Clough who has remarked that, after all, everything lies in juxtaposition? Many a man's destiny has been

settled by nothing apparently more grave than a pretty face on the opposite side of the street and a couple of bad companions round the corner.

Catherine de Vausselles (or de Vaucel—the change is within the limits of Villon's licence) had plainly delighted in the poet's conversation; near neighbours or not, they were much together; and Villon made no secret of his court, and suffered himself to believe that his feeling was repaid in kind. This may have been an error from the first, or he may have estranged her by subsequent misconduct or temerity. One can easily imagine Villon an impatient wooer. One thing, at least, is sure; that the affair terminated in a manner bitterly humiliating to Master Francis. Indeed, if you run over on your fingers all the ridiculous mishaps by which a tender sentiment may be unworthily concluded and suppressed, you will scarcely imagine a more deplorable upshot than the one in question. In presence of his lady love, perhaps under her window and certainly with her connivance, he was unmercifully thrashed by one Noë le Joly—beaten, as he says himself, like dirty linen on the washing-board. The story oozed out and created infinite merriment among his friends: he became a byword in Paris. It is characteristic that his malice had notably increased between the time when he wrote the *Small Testament* immediately on the back of the occurrence, and the time when he wrote the *Large Testament* five years after. On the latter occasion nothing is too bad for his "damsel with the twisted nose," as he calls her. She is spared neither hint nor accusation, and he tells his messenger to accost her with the vilest insults. Villon, it is thought, was out of Paris when these amenities escaped his pen; or no doubt the strong arm of Noë le Joly would have been again in requisition. So ends the love story, if love story it may properly be called. Poets are not necessarily fortunate in love; but they usually fall among more romantic circumstances and bear their disappointment with a better grace. Actual bastinado is a sad pass, and trying for a man's self-respect; but St. Paul was beaten with many stripes and could speak of them with pride. As for Master Francis he had not even the wit to hold his tongue; he must bear malice five years together and rail like a fish-woman against her whom he professed to love. What should have been at worst a five days' scandal in the Latin Quarter he has so cooked up and handed down that, after the lapse of four centuries, we can still hear Noë le Joly emphatically chastising, and still behold, in plausible imagination, a threadpaper poet reversed across his knee with squalls and agonies. Nor did he confine himself to mere reviling in the style of the rejected beggar. With a whine that is pre-eminently characteristic of the man, he declares this cruel fair one to be the cause of his misfortunes, and wishes to enroll himself as one of the martyrs of love. One would not condemn a dog on the evidence of Master Francis; and besides, where a man is born a blackguard it requires no very elaborate chain of circumstances to put him in a blackguard way of life. But the whine is worth recording.

The neighbourhood of Regnier de Montigny and Colin de Cayeux

was probably more instrumental in hurrying our poet towards disgrace, than either the contempt of Catherine or the strong arm of Noë le Joly. For a man who is greedy of all pleasures and provided with little money and less dignity of character, we may prophesy a safe and speedy voyage downward. Humble or even truckling virtue may walk unspotted in this life. But only those who despise the pleasures, can afford to despise the opinion of the world. A man of a strong, heady temperament, like Villon, is very differently tempted. His eyes lay hold on all provocations greedily, and his heart flames up at a look into imperious desire; he is snared and broached to by anything and everything, from a pretty face to a piece of pastry in a cookshop window; he will drink the rinsing of the wine cup, stay the latest at the tavern party; tap at the lit windows, follow the sound of singing, and beat the whole neighbourhood for another reveller, as he goes reluctantly homeward; and grudge himself every hour of sleep as a black, empty period when he cannot follow after pleasure. Such a person is lost if he have not dignity, or failing that, at least pride, which is its shadow and in many ways its substitute. Master Francis, although he was not so thick-skinned but he could smart under the affront of Noë le Joly's cudgelling, was, on the whole, singularly devoid of these incommodious and honourable qualities. I fancy he could follow his own eager instincts without much spiritual struggle. And we soon find him fallen among thieves in sober, literal earnest, and counting as friends the most disreputable people he could lay his hands on: fellows who stole ducks in Paris Moat; sergeants of the criminal court, and archers of the watch; blackguards who slept at night under the butchers' stalls, and for whom the aforesaid archers peered about carefully with lanterns; Regnier de Montigny, Colin de Cayeux and their crew, all bound on a favouring breeze towards the gallows; the disorderly abbess of Port Royal who went about at fair time with soldiers and thieves, and conducted her abbey on the queerest principles; and most likely Perette Mauger, the great Paris receiver of stolen goods, not yet dreaming, poor woman! of the last scene of her career when Henry Cousin, executor of the high justice, shall bury her, alive and most reluctant, in front of the new Montigny gibbet.* Nay, our friend soon began to take a foremost rank in this society. He could string off verses, which is always an agreeable talent; and he could make himself useful in many other ways. The whole ragged army of Bohemia, and whosoever loved good cheer without at all loving to work and pay for it, are addressed in contemporary verses as the "Subjects of François Villon." He was a good genius to all hungry and unscrupulous persons; and became the hero of a whole legendary cycle of tavern tricks and cheateries. At best, these were doubtful levities, rather too thievish for a school-boy, rather too gamesome for a thief. But he would not linger long in this equivocal border land. He must soon have complied with

* *Chronique Scandaleuse*, ed. Panthéon, p. 237.

his surroundings. He was one who would go where the cannikin clinked, not caring who should pay; and from supping in the wolves' den, there is but a step to hunting with the pack. And here, as I am on the chapter of his degradation, I shall say all I mean to say about its darkest expression, and be done with it for good. Some charitable critics see no more than a *jeu d'esprit*, a graceful and trifling exercise of the imagination, in the grimy ballad of Fat Peg (*Grosse Margot*). I am not able to follow these gentlemen to this polite extreme. Out of all Villon's works that ballad stands forth in flaring reality, gross and ghastly, as a thing written in a contraction of disgust. M. Longnon shows us more and more clearly at every page that we are to read our poet literally, that his names are the names of real persons, and the events he chronicles were actual events. But even if the tendency of criticism had run the other way, this ballad would have gone far to prove itself. I can well understand the reluctance of worthy persons in this matter; for of course it is unpleasant to think of a man of genius as one who held, in the words of Marina to Boulton—

A place, for which the pained'st fiend
Of hell would not in reputation change.

But beyond this natural unwillingness, the whole difficulty of the case springs from a highly virtuous ignorance of life. Paris now is not so different from the Paris of then; and the whole of the doings of Bohemia are not written in the sugar-candy pastorals of Murger. It is really not at all surprising that a young man of the fifteenth century, with a knack of making verses, should accept his bread upon disgraceful terms. The race of those who do, is not extinct; and some of them to this day write the prettiest verses imaginable. . . . After this, it were impossible for Master Francis to fall lower: to go and steal for himself would be an admirable advance from every point of view, divine or human.

And yet it is not as a thief, but as a homicide, that he makes his first appearance before angry justice. On June 5, 1455, when he was about twenty-four, and had been Master of Arts for a matter of three years, we behold him for the first time quite definitely. Angry justice had, as it were, photographed him in the act of his homicide; and M. Longnon, rummaging among old deeds, has turned up the negative and printed it off for our instruction. Villon had been supping—copiously we may believe—and sat on a stone bench in front of the church of St. Benoit, in company with a priest called Gilles and a woman of the name of Isabeau. It was nine o'clock, a mighty late hour for the period, and evidently a fine summer's night. Master Francis carried a mantle, like a prudent man, to keep him from the dews (*serain*), and had a sword below it dangling from his girdle. So these three dallied in front of St. Benoît, taking their pleasure (*pour soy esbatre*). Suddenly there arrived upon the scene a priest, Philippe Chermoye or Sermaise, also with sword and cloak, and accompanied by one Master Jehan le Mardi. Sermaise,

according to Villon's account, which is all we have to go upon, came up blustering and denying God; as Villon rose to make room for him upon the bench, thrust him rudely back into his place; and finally drew his sword and cut open his lower lip, by what I should imagine was a very clumsy stroke. Up to this point, Villon professes to have been a model of courtesy, even of feebleness; and the brawl, in his version, reads like the fable of the wolf and the lamb. But now the lamb was roused; he drew his sword, stabbed Sermaise in the groin, knocked him on the head with a big stone, and then, leaving him to his fate, went away to have his own lip doctored by a barber of the name of Fouquet. In one version, he says that Gilles, Isabeau, and Le Mardi ran away at the first high words, and that he and Sermaise had it out alone; in another, Le Mardi is represented as returning and wresting Villon's sword from him: the reader may please himself. Sermaise was picked up, lay all that night in the prison of Saint Benoît, where he was examined by an official of the Châtelet and expressly pardoned Villon, and died on the following Saturday in the Hôtel Dieu. He was plainly not a man of execution like Noë le Joly; and on the whole, a poor, crapulous being, mused with drink.

This, as I have said, was in June. Not before January of the next year, could Villon extract a pardon from the king; but while his hand was in, he got two. One is for "François des Loges, alias (*autrement dit*) de Villon;" and the other runs in the name of François de Montcorbier. Nay, it appears there was a further complication; for in the narrative of the first of these documents, it is mentioned that he passed himself off upon Fouquet, the barber-surgeon, as one Michel Mouton. M. Longnon has a theory, that this unhappy accident with Sermaise was the cause of Villon's subsequent irregularities; and that up to that moment he had been the pink of good behaviour. But the matter has to my eyes a more dubious air. A pardon necessary for Des Loges and another for Montcorbier? and these two the same person? and one or both of them known by the *alias* of Villon, however honestly come by? and lastly, in the heat of the moment, a fourth name thrown out with an assured countenance? A ship is not to be trusted that sails under so many colours. This is not the simple bearing of innocence. No—the young master was already treading crooked paths; already, he would start and blench at a hand upon his shoulder, with the look we know so well in the face of Hogarth's Idle Apprentice; already, in the blue devils, he would see Henry Cousin, the executor of high justice, going in dolorous procession towards Montfaucon, and hear the wind and the birds crying around Paris gibbet.

A GANG OF THIEVES.

In spite of the prodigious quantity of people who managed to get hanged, the fifteenth century was by no means a bad time for criminals.

A great confusion of parties and great dust of fighting favoured the escape of private housebreakers and quiet fellows who stole ducks in Paris Moat. Prisons were leaky; and as we shall see, a man with a few crowns in his pocket and perhaps some acquaintance among the officials, could easily slip out and become once more a free marauder. There was no want of a sanctuary, where he might harbour until troubles blew by; and accomplices helped each other with more or less good faith. Clerks, above all, had remarkable facilities for a criminal way of life; for they were privileged, except in cases of notorious incorrigibility, to be plucked from the hands of rude secular justice and tried by a tribunal of their own. In 1402, a couple of thieves, both clerks of the University, were condemned to death by the Provost of Paris. As they were taken to Montfaucon, they kept crying "high and clearly" for their benefit of clergy, but were none the less pitilessly hanged and gibbeted. Indignant Alma Mater interfered before the king; and the Provost was deprived of all royal offices, and condemned to return the bodies and erect a great stone cross, on the road from Paris to the gibbet, graven with the effigies of these two holy martyrs.* We shall hear more of the benefit of clergy; for after this the reader will not be surprised to meet with thieves in the shape of tonsured clerks, or even priests and monks.

To a knot of such learned pilferers our poet certainly belonged; and by turning over a few more of M. Longnon's negatives, we shall get a clear idea of their character and doings. Montigny and De Cayeux are names already known; Guy Tabary, Petit-Jehan, Dom Nicolas, little Thibault, who was both clerk and goldsmith, and who made picklocks and melted plate for himself and his companions—with these the reader has still to become acquainted. Petit-Jehan and De Cayeux were handy fellows and enjoyed a useful pre-eminence in honour of their doings with the picklock. "*Dictus des Cahyeus est fortis operator crochetorum,*" says Tabary's interrogation, "*sed dictus Petit-Jehan, ejus socius, est forcius operator.*" But the flower of the flock was little Thibault; it was reported that no lock could stand before him; he had a persuasive hand; let us salute capacity wherever we may find it. Perhaps the term *gang* is not quite properly applied to the persons whose fortunes we are now about to follow; rather they were independent malefactors, socially intimate and occasionally joining together for some serious operation, just as modern stockjobbers form a syndicate for an important loan. Nor were they at all particular to any branch of misdoing. They did not scrupulously confine themselves to a single sort of theft, as I hear is common among modern thieves. They were ready for anything, from pitch-and-toss to manslaughter. Montigny, for instance, had neglected neither of these extremes, and we find him accused of cheating at games of hazard on the one hand, and on the other of the murder of one Thevenin Pensete in a house by the Cemetery of St. John. If time had only spared us some

* MONSTRELET : *Pantheon Littéraire*, p. 26.

particulars, might not this last have furnished us with the matter of a grisly winter's tale ?

At Christmas-time in 1456, readers of Villon will remember that he was engaged on the *Small Testament*. About the same period, *circa festum nativitatis Domini*, he took part in a memorable supper at the Mule Tavern, in front of the Church of St. Mathurin. Tabary, who seems to have been very much Villon's creature, had ordered the supper in the course of the afternoon. He was a man who had had troubles in his time and languished in the Bishop of Paris's prisons on a suspicion of picking locks ; confiding, convivial, not very astute—who had copied out a whole improper romance with his own right hand. This supper-party was to be his first introduction to De Cayeux and Petit-Jehan, which was probably a matter of some concern to the poor man's muddy wits ; in the sequel, at least, he speaks of both with an undisguised respect, based on professional inferiority in the chapter of picklocks. Dom Nicolas, a Picardy monk, was the fifth and last at table. When supper had been despatched and fairly washed down, we may suppose, with white Baigneux or red Beaune, which were favourite wines among the fellowship, Tabary was solemnly sworn over to secrecy on the night's performances ; and the party left the Mule and proceeded to an unoccupied house belonging to Robert de Saint-Simon. This, over a low wall, they entered without difficulty. All but Tabary took off their upper garments ; a ladder was found and applied to the high wall which separated Saint-Simon's house from the court of the College of Navarre ; the four fellows in their shirt-sleeves (as we might say) clambered over in a twinkling ; and Master Guy Tabary remained alone beside the overcoats. From the court the burglars made their way into the vestry of the chapel, where they found a large chest, strengthened with iron bands and closed with four locks. One of these locks they picked, and then, by levering up the corner, forced the other three. Inside was a small coffer, of walnut wood, also barred with iron, but fastened with only three locks, which were all comfortably picked by way of the keyhole. In the walnut coffer—a joyous sight by our thieves' lantern—were five hundred crowns of gold. There was some talk of opening the aumries, where, if they had only known, a booty eight or nine times greater lay ready to their hand ; but one of the party (I have a humorous suspicion it was Dom Nicolas, the Picardy monk) hurried them away. It was ten o'clock when they mounted the ladder ; it was about midnight before Tabary beheld them coming back. To him they gave ten crowns, and promised a share of a two-crown dinner on the morrow ; whereat we may suppose his mouth watered. In course of time, he got wind of the real amount of their booty and understood how scurvily he had been used ; but he seems to have borne no malice. How could he, against such superb operators as Petit-Jehan and De Cayeux ; or a person like Villon, who could have made a new improper romance out of his own head, instead of merely copying an old one with mechanical right hand ?

The rest of the winter was not uneventful for the gang. First they made a demonstration against the Church of St. Mathurin after chalices, and were ignominiously chased away by barking dogs. Then Tabary fell out with Casin Chollet, one of the fellows who stole ducks in Paris Moat, who subsequently became a sergeant of the Châtelet and distinguished himself by misconduct, followed by imprisonment and public castigation, during the wars of Louis Eleventh. The quarrel was not conducted with a proper regard to the king's peace, and the pair publicly belaboured each other until the police stepped in, and Master Tabary was cast once more into the prisons of the Bishop. While he still lay in durance, another job was cleverly executed by the band in broad daylight, at the Augustine Monastery. Brother Guillaume Coiffier was beguiled by an accomplice to St. Mathurin to say mass ; and during his absence, his chamber was entered and five or six hundred crowns in money and some silver plate successfully abstracted. A melancholy man was Coiffier on his return ! Eight crowns from this adventure were forwarded by little Thibault to the incarcerated Tabary ; and with these he bribed the jailor and reappeared in Paris taverns. Some time before or shortly after this, Villon set out for Angers, as he had promised in the *Small Testament*. The object of this excursion was not merely to avoid the presence of his cruel mistress or the strong arm of Noë le Joly, but to plan a deliberate robbery on his uncle the monk. As soon as he had properly studied the ground, the others were to go over in force from Paris—picklocks and all—and away with my uncle's strong box ! This throws a comical sidelight on his own accusation against his relatives, that they had "forgotten natural duty" and disowned him because he was poor. A poor relation is a distasteful circumstance at the best, but a poor relation who plans deliberate robberies against those of his blood, and trudges hundreds of weary leagues to put them into execution, is surely a little on the wrong side of toleration. The uncle at Angers may have been monstrously undutiful ; but the nephew from Paris was upsides with him.

On the 23rd April, venerable and discreet person, Master Pierre Marchand, Curate and Prior of Paray-le-Monial, in the diocese of Chartres, arrived in Paris and put up at the sign of the Three Chandeliers, in the Rue de la Huchette. Next day, or the day after, as he was breakfasting at the sign of the Armchair, he fell into talk with two customers, one of whom was a priest and the other our friend Tabary. The idiotic Tabary became mighty confidential as to his past life. Pierre Marchand, who was an acquaintance of Guillaume Coiffier's and had sympathised with him over his loss, pricked up his ears at the mention of picklocks, and led on the transcriber of improper romances from one thing to another, until they were fast friends. For picklocks the Prior of Paray professed a keen curiosity ; but Tabary, upon some late alarm, had thrown all his into the Seine. Let that be no difficulty, however, for was there not little Thibault, who could make them of all shapes and sizes, and to whom

Tabary, smelling an accomplice, would be only too glad to introduce his new acquaintance? On the morrow, accordingly, they met; and Tabary, after having first wet his whistle at the prior's expense, led him to Notre Dame and presented him to four or five "young companions," who were keeping sanctuary in the church. They were all clerks, recently escaped, like Tabary himself, from the episcopal prisons. Among these we may notice Thibault, the operator, a little fellow of twenty-six, wearing long hair behind. The prior expressed, through Tabary, his anxiety to become their accomplice and altogether such as they were (*de leur sorte et de leurs complices*). Mighty polite they showed themselves, and made him many fine speeches in return. But for all that, perhaps because they had longer heads than Tabary, perhaps because it is less easy to wheedle men in a body, they kept obstinately to generalities and gave him no information as to their exploits, past, present, or to come. I suppose Tabary ground under this reserve; for no sooner were he and the prior out of the church than he fairly emptied his heart to him, gave him full details of many hanging matters in the past, and explained the future intentions of the band. The scheme of the hour was to rob another Augustine monk, Robert de la Porte, and in this the prior agreed to take a hand with simulated greed. Thus, in the course of two days, he had turned this wineskin of a Tabary inside out. For a while longer the farce was carried on; the prior was introduced to Petit-Jehan, whom he describes as a little, very smart man of thirty, with a black beard and a short jacket; an appointment was made and broken in the De la Porte affair; Tabary had some breakfasts at the prior's charge and leaked out more secrets under the influence of wine and friendship; and then all of a sudden, on the 17th of May, an alarm sprang up, the prior picked up his skirts and walked quietly over to the Châtelet to make a deposition, and the whole band took to their heels and vanished out of Paris and the sight of the police.

Vanish as they like, they all go with a clog about their feet. Sooner or later, here or there, they will be caught in the fact, and ignominiously sent home. From our vantage of four centuries afterwards, it is odd and pitiful to watch the order in which the fugitives are captured and dragged in.

Montigny was the first. In August of that same year, he was laid by the heels on many grievous counts; sacrilegious robberies, frauds, incorrigibility, and that bad business about Thevenin Pensete in the house by the cemetery of St. John. He was reclaimed by the ecclesiastical authorities as a clerk; but the claim was rebutted on the score of incorrigibility, and ultimately fell to the ground; and he was condemned to death by the Provost of Paris. It was a very rude hour for Montigny, but hope was not yet over. He was a fellow of some birth; his father had been king's pantler; his sister, probably married to some one about the court, was in the family way, and her health would be endangered if the execution was proceeded with. So down comes Charles

the Seventh with letters of mercy, commuting the penalty to a year in a dungeon on bread and water, and a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. James in Galicia. Alas! the document was incomplete; it did not contain the full tale of Montigny's enormities; it did not recite that he had been denied benefit of clergy, and it said nothing about Thevenin Pensete. Montigny's hour was at hand. Benefit of clergy, honourable descent from king's pantler, sister in the family way, royal letters of commutation—all were of no avail. He had been in prison in Rouen, in Tours, in Bordeaux, and four times already in Paris; and out of all these he had come scatheless; but now he must make a little excursion as far as Montfaucon with Henry Cousin, executor of high justice. There let him swing among the carrion crows.

About a year later, in July 1458, the police laid hands on Tabary. Before the ecclesiastical commissary, he was twice examined, and, on the latter occasion, put to the question ordinary and extraordinary. What a dismal change from pleasant suppers at the Mule, where he sat in triumph with expert operators and great wits! He is at the lees of life, poor rogue; and those fingers which once transcribed improper romances are now agonisingly stretched upon the rack. We have no sure knowledge, but we may have a shrewd guess of the conclusion. Tabary, the admirer, would go the same way as those whom he admired.

The last we hear of, is Colin de Cayeux. He was caught in autumn 1460, in the great Church of St. Leu d'Esserens, which makes so fine a figure in the pleasant Oise valley between Creil and Beaumont. He was reclaimed by no less than two bishops; but the Procureur for the Provost held fast by incorrigible Colin. 1460 was an ill-starred year: for justice was making a clean sweep of "poor and indigent persons, thieves, cheats, and lockpickers," in the neighbourhood of Paris;* and Colin de Cayeux, with many others, was condemned to death and hanged.†

VILLON AND THE GALLOWS.

Villon was still absent on the Angers expedition when the Prior of Paray sent such a bombshell among his accomplices; and the dates of his return and arrest remain undiscoverable. M. Campaux plausibly enough opined for the autumn of 1457, which would make him closely follow on Montigny, and the first of those denounced by the Prior to fall into the toils. We may suppose, at least, that it was not long thereafter; we may suppose him competed for between lay and clerical courts; and we

* *Chron. Scand.* ut supra.

† Here and there, principally in the order of events, this article differs from M. Longnon's own reading of his material. The ground on which he defers the execution of Montigny and De Cayeux beyond the date of their trials, seems insufficient. There is a law of parsimony for the construction of historical documents; simplicity is the first duty of narration; and hanged they were.

may suppose him alternately pert and impudent, humble and fawning, in his defence. But at the end of all supposing, we come upon some nuggets of fact. For first, he was put to the question by water. He who had tossed off so many cups of white Baigneux or red Beaune, now drank water through linen folds, until his bowels were flooded and his heart stood still. After so much raising of the elbow, so much outcry of fictitious thirst, here at last was enough drinking for a life-time. Truly, of our pleasant vices, the gods make whips to scourge us. And secondly he was condemned to be hanged. A man may have been expecting a catastrophe for years, and yet find himself unprepared when it arrives. Certainly, Villon found, in this legitimate issue of his career, a very staggering and grave consideration. Every beast, as he says, clings bitterly to a whole skin. If everything is lost, and even honour, life still remains; nay, and it becomes, like the ewe lamb in Nathan's parable, as dear as all the rest. "Do you fancy," he asks, in a lively ballad, "that I had not enough philosophy under my hood to cry out: 'I appeal?' If I had made any bones about the matter, I should have been planted upright in the fields, by the St. Denis Road"—Montfaucon being on the way to St. Denis. An appeal to Parliament, as we saw in the case of Colin de Cayeux, did not necessarily lead to an acquittal or a commutation; and while the matter was pending, our poet had ample opportunity to reflect on his position. Hanging is a sharp argument, and to swing with many others on the gibbet adds a horrible corollary for the imagination. With the aspect of Montfaucon he was well acquainted; indeed, as the neighbourhood appears to have been sacred to junketing and nocturnal picnics of wild young men and women, he had probably studied it under all varieties of hour and weather. And now, as he lay in prison waiting the mortal push, these different aspects crowded back on his imagination with a new and startling significance; and he wrote a ballad, by way of epitaph for himself and his companions, which remains unique in the annals of mankind. It is, in the highest sense, a piece of his biography—which delicate readers may omit:—

La pluye nous a debuez et lavez,
 Et le soleil dessechez et noirciz;
 Pies, corbeaulx, nous ont les yeux cavez,
 Et arrachez la barbe et les sourcilz.
 Jamais, nul temps, nous ne sommes rassis;
 Puis çà, puis là, comme le vent varie,
 A son plaisir sans cesser nous charie,
 Plus becquetez d'oiseaulx que dez à couldre.
 Ne soyez donc de nostre confrairie,
 Mais priez Dieu que tous nous vueille absouldre.

There is some genuine thieves' literature after so much that was spurious; sharp as an etching, written with a shuddering soul. There is an intensity of consideration in the piece, that shows it to be the transcript of familiar thoughts. It is the quintessence of many a doleful night-

mare on the straw ; when he felt himself swing helpless in the wind, and saw the birds turn about him, screaming and menacing his eyes.

And, after all, the Parliament changed his sentence into one of banishment ; and to Roussillon, in Dauphiny, our poet must carry his woes without delay. Travellers between Lyons and Marseilles may remember a station on the line, some way below Vienne, where the Rhone fleets seaward between vine-clad hills. This was Villon's Siberia. It would be a little warm in summer perhaps, and a little cold in winter in that draughty valley between two great mountain fields ; but what with the hills, and the racing river, and the fiery Rhone wines, he was little to be pitied on the conditions of his exile. Villon, in a remarkably bad ballad, written in a breath, heartily thanked and fulsomely belauded the Parliament ; the *envoi*, like the proverbial postscript of a lady's letter, containing the pith of his performance in a request for three days' delay to settle his affairs and bid his friends farewell. He was probably not followed out of Paris, like Antoine Fradin, the popular preacher, another exile of a few years later, by weeping multitudes ; * but I dare say one or two rogues of his acquaintance would keep him company for a mile or so on the south road, and drink a bottle with him before they turned. For banished people, in those days, seem to have set out on their own responsibility, in their own guard, and at their own expense. It was no joke to make one's way from Paris to Roussillon alone and penniless in the fifteenth century. Villon says he left a rag of his tails on every bush. Indeed, he must have had many a weary tramp, many a slender meal, and many a to-do with blustering captains of the Ordonnance. But with one of his light fingers, we may fancy that he took as good as he gave ; for every rag of his tail, he would manage to indemnify himself upon the population in the shape of food, or wine, or ringing money ; and his route would be traceable across France and Burgundy, by housewives and inn-keepers lamenting over petty thefts, like the track of a single human locust. A strange figure he must have cut in the eyes of the good country people ; this ragged, blackguard city poet, with a smack of the Paris student, and a smack of the Paris street arab, posting along the highways, in rain or sun, among the green fields and vineyards. For himself, he had no taste for rural loveliness ; green fields and vineyards would be mighty indifferent to Master Francis ; but he would often have his tongue in his cheek at the simplicity of rustic dupes, and often, at city gates, he might stop to contemplate the gibbet with its swinging bodies, and hug himself on his escape.

How long he stayed at Roussillon, how far he became the protégé of the Bourbons, to whom that town belonged, or when it was that he took part, under the auspices of Charles of Orleans, in a rhyming tournament already mentioned in the pages of this Magazine, are matters that still remain in darkness, in spite of M. Longnon's diligent rummaging among

archives. When we next find him, in summer 1461, alas! he is once more in durance: this time at Méun-sur-Loire, in the prisons of Thibault d'Aussigny, Bishop of Orleans. He had been lowered in a basket into a noisome pit, where he lay, all summer, gnawing hard crusts and railing upon fate. His teeth, he says, were like the teeth of a rake: a touch of haggard portraiture all the more real for being excessive and burlesque, and all the more proper to the man for being a caricature of his own misery. His eyes were "bandaged with thick walls." It might blow hurricanes overhead; the lightning might leap in high heaven; but no word of all this reached him in his noisome pit. "Il n'entre, ou gist, n'escler ni tourbillon." Above all, he was fevered with envy and anger at the freedom of others; and his heart flowed over into curses, as he thought of Thibault d'Aussigny, walking the streets in God's sunlight, and blessing people with extended fingers. So much we find sharply lined in his own poems. Why he was cast again into prison—how he had again managed to shave the gallows—this we know not, nor, from the destruction of authorities, are we ever likely to learn. But on October 2nd, 1461, or some day immediately preceding, the new King, Louis Eleventh, made his Joyous Entry into Méun. Now it was a part of the formality on such occasions for the new King to liberate certain prisoners; and so the basket was let down into Villon's pit, and hastily did Master Francis scramble in, and was most joyfully hauled up, and shot out, blinking and tottering, but once more a free man, into the blessed sun and wind. Now or never is the time for verses! Such happy revolution would turn the head of a stocking-weaver, and set him jingling rhymes. And so—after a voyage to Paris, where he finds Montigny and De Cayeux clattering their bones upon the gibbet, and his three pupils roystering in Paris streets, "with their thumbs under their girdles,"—down sits Master Francis to write his *Large Testament*, and perpetuate his name in a sort of glorious ignominy.

THE *LARGE TESTAMENT*.

Of this capital achievement and, with it, of Villon's style in general, it is here the place to speak. The *Large Testament* is a hurly-burly of cynical and sentimental reflections about life, jesting legacies to friends and enemies, and, interspersed among these, many admirable ballads, both serious and absurd. With so free a design, no thought that occurred to him would need to be dismissed without expression; and he could draw at full length the portrait of his own bedevilled soul, and of the bleak and blackguardly world which was the theatre of his exploits and sufferings. If the reader can conceive something between the slap-dash inconsequence of Byron's *Don Juan* and the racy humorous gravity and brief noble touches that distinguish the vernacular poems of Burns, he will have formed some idea of Villon's style. To the latter writer—except in the ballads, which are quite his own, and can be paralleled

from no other language known to me—he bears a particular resemblance. In common with Burns he has a certain rugged compression, a brutal vivacity of epithet, a homely vigour, a delight in local personalities, and an interest in many sides of life that are often despised and passed over by more effete and cultured poets. Both also, in their strong, easy colloquial way, tend to become difficult and obscure; the obscurity in the case of Villon passing at times into the absolute darkness of cant language. They are perhaps the only two great masters of expression who keep sending their readers to a glossary.

“Shall we not dare to say of a thief,” asks Montaigne, “that he has a handsome leg?” It is a far more serious claim that we have to put forward in behalf of Villon. Beside that of his contemporaries, his writing, so full of colour, so eloquent, so picturesque, stands out in an almost miraculous isolation. If only one or two of the chroniclers could have taken a leaf out of his book, history would have been a pastime, and the fifteenth century as present to our minds as the age of Charles Second. This gallows-bird was the one great writer of his age and country, and initiated modern literature for France. Boileau, long ago, in the period of perukes and snuff-boxes, recognised him as the first articulate poet in the language; and if we measure him, not by priority of merit, but living duration of influence, not on a comparison with obscure fore-runners, but with great and famous successors, we shall instal this ragged and disreputable figure in a far higher niche in glory’s temple than was ever dreamed of by the critic. It is, in itself, a memorable fact that, before 1542, in the very dawn of printing, and while modern France was in the making, the works of Villon ran through seven different editions. Out of him flows much of Rabelais; and through Rabelais, directly and indirectly, a deep, permanent, and growing inspiration. Not only his style, but his callous pertinent way of looking upon the sordid and ugly sides of life, becomes every day a more specific feature in the literature of France. And only last year, a work of some power appeared in Paris, and appeared with infinite scandal, which owed its whole inner significance and much of its outward form to the study of our rhyming thief.

The world to which he introduces us is, as before said, blackguardly and bleak. Paris swarms before us, full of famine, shame, and death; monks and the servants of great lords hold high wassail upon cakes and pastry; the poor man licks his lips before the baker’s window; people with patched eyes sprawl all night under the stalls; chuckling Tabary transcribes an improper romance; bare-bosomed lasses and ruffling students swagger in the streets; the drunkard goes stumbling homewards; the graveyard is full of bones; and away on Montfaucon, Colin de Cayeux and Montigny hang dragged in the rain. Is there nothing better to be seen than sordid misery and worthless joys? Only where the poor old mother of the poet kneels in church below the painted windows, and makes tremulous supplication to the Mother of God.

In our mixed world, full of green fields and happy lovers, where not long before, Joan of Arc had led one of the highest and noblest lives in the whole story of mankind, this was all worth chronicling that our poet could perceive. His eyes were indeed sealed with his own filth. He dwelt all his life in a pit more noisome than the dungeon at Méun. In the moral world, also, there are large phenomena not cognisable out of holes and corners. Loud winds blow, speeding home deep-laden ships and sweeping rubbish from the earth; the lightning leaps and cleans the face of heaven; high purposes and brave passions shake and sublimate men's spirits; and meanwhile, in the narrow dungeon of his soul, Villon is mumbling crusts and picking vermin.

Along with this deadly gloom of outlook, we must take another characteristic of his work: its unrivalled insincerity. I can give no better similitude of this quality than I have given already: that he comes up with a whine, and runs away with a whoop and his finger to his nose. His pathos is that of a professional mendicant who should happen to be a man of genius; his levity that of a bitter street arab, full of bread. On a first reading, the pathetic passages preoccupy the reader, and he is cheated out of an alms in the shape of sympathy. But when the thing is studied the illusion fades away; in the transitions, above all, we can detect the evil, ironical temper of the man; and instead of a flighty work where many crude but genuine feelings tumble together for the mastery as in the lists of tournament, we are tempted to think of the *Large Testament* as of one long-drawn epical grimace, pulled by a merry-andrew, who has found a certain despicable eminence over human respect and human affections by perching himself astride upon the gallows. Between these two views, at best, all temperate judgments will be found to fall; and rather, as I imagine, towards the last. For it is hardly given to a man of sordid and dishonourable soul, either to weep with generosity, or laugh without a sneer.

There were two things on which he felt with perfect and, in one case, even threatening sincerity.

The first of these was an undisguised envy of those richer than himself. He was for ever drawing a parallel, already exemplified from his own words, between the happy life of the well-to-do and the miseries of the poor. Burns, too proud and honest not to work, continued through all reverses to sing of poverty with a light, defiant note. Béranger waited till he was himself beyond the reach of want, before writing the *Old Vagabond* or *Jacques*. Samuel Johnson, although he was very sorry to be poor, "was a great arguer for the advantages of poverty" in his ill days. Thus it is that brave men carry their crosses, and smile with the fox burrowing in their vitals. But Villon, who had not the courage to be poor with honesty, now whiningly implores our sympathy, now shows his teeth upon the dung-heap with an ugly snarl. He envies bitterly, envies passionately. Poverty, he protests, drives men to steal, as hunger makes the wolf sally from the forest. The poor, he goes on, will always



"OSWALD, FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE WHO IS THIS LADY?"

have a carping word to say, or, if that outlet be denied, nourish rebellious thoughts. It is a calumny on the noble army of the poor. Thousands in a small way of life, ay, and even in the smallest, go through life with tenfold as much honour and dignity and peace of mind, as the rich gluttons whose dainties and state-beds awakened Villon's covetous temper. And every morning's sun sees thousands who pass whistling to their toil. But Villon was the "mauvais pauvre" defined by Victor Hugo, and, in its English expression, so admirably stereotyped by Dickens. He was the first wicked sansculotte. He is the man of genius with the mole-skin cap. He is mighty pathetic and beseeching here in the street, but I would not go down a dark road with him for a large consideration.

The second of the points on which he was genuine and emphatic was common to the middle ages: a deep and somewhat snivelling conviction of the transitory nature of this life and the pity and horror of death. Old age and the grave, with some dark and yet half-sceptical terror of an after-world—these were ideas that clung about his bones like a disease. An old ape, as he says, may play all the tricks in its repertory, and none of them will tickle an audience into good humour. "Tousjours vieil synge est desplaisant." It is not the old jester who receives most recognition at a tavern party, but the young fellow, fresh and handsome, who knows the new slang, and carries off his vice with a certain air. Of this, as a tavern jester himself, he would be pointedly conscious. As for the women with whom he was best acquainted, his reflections on their old age, in all their harrowing pathos, shall remain in the original for me. Enough that no more unkind details were ever wrested to a nastier purpose. Horace has disgraced himself to something the same tune; but what Horace throws out with an ill-favoured laugh, Villon dwells upon with a maudlin and unmanly whimper. . . . And it is in death that he finds his truest inspiration; in the swift and sorrowful change that overtakes beauty; in the strange revolution by which great fortunes and renowns are diminished to a handful of churchyard dust; and in the utter passing away of what was once loveable and mighty. It is in this that the mixed texture of his thought enables him to reach such poignant and terrible effects, and to enhance pity with ridicule, like a man cutting capers to a funeral march. It is in this, also, that he rises out of himself into the higher spheres of art. So, in the ballad by which he is best known, he rings the changes on names that once stood for beautiful and queenly women, and are now no more than letters and a legend. "Where are the snows of yester year?" runs the burden. And so, in another not so famous, he passes in review the different degrees of bygone men, from the holy Apostles and the golden Emperor of the East, down to the heralds, pursuivants, and trumpeters, who also bore their part in the world's pageantries and ate greedily at great folks' tables: all this to the refrain of "So much carry the winds away!" Probably, there was some melancholy in his mind for a yet lower grade, and Montigny and Colin de Cayeux clattering their bones

on Paris gibbet. Alas, and with so pitiful an experience of life, Villon can offer us nothing but terror and lamentation about death! No one has ever more skilfully communicated his own disenchantment; no one ever blown a more ear-piercing note of sadness. This unrepentant thief can attain neither to Christian confidence, nor to the spirit of the bright Greek saying, that whom the gods love, die early. It is a poor heart, and a poorer age, that cannot accept the conditions of life with some heroic readiness.

* * * * *

The date of the *Large Testament* is the last date in the poet's biography. After having achieved that admirable and despicable performance, he disappears into the night from whence he came. How or when he died, whether decently in bed or trussed up to a gallows, remains a riddle for foolhardy commentators. It appears his health had suffered in the pit at Méun; he was thirty years of age and quite bald; with the notch in his under lip where Sermaise had struck him with the sword, and what wrinkles the reader may imagine. In default of portraits, this is all I have been able to piece together, and perhaps even the baldness should be taken as a figure of his destitution. A sinister dog, in all likelihood, but with a look in his eye, and the loose flexile mouth that goes with wit and an overweening sensual temperament. Certainly the sorriest figure on the rolls of fame.

R. L. S.

Carità.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE WORST SCRAPE OF ALL.



A RUMOUR had spread in the little hamlet which had gathered about the junction, of some travellers who had missed their train. The faintest rumour echoes a long way in the quiet of the country, and as the village was chiefly formed of the cottages of railway labourers and porters, it was natural that this kind of report should travel more swiftly than anything else. Oswald and his companion walked down the still road in the soft dusk like two ghosts. In the mind of Agnes

nothing less than despair was supreme. What was to become of her? Shame, disgrace, destruction, the loss of all things. How could she dare to face the wondering women in the House? Sister Mary Jane might understand her, but who else? And what comments there would be, and what talk! And home—how could she go home? To spend a night at an inn at all was something entirely strange to Agnes. But thus—all alone, and with a gentleman, one who was not related to her, of whom she could give no account or befitting explanation! A wild fancy seized her of flying from him, disappearing into some corner behind a high hedge, some nook under the trees. But this was as futile as everything else, and might be worse than anything else. She had the bondage of custom before her, though she had put herself into a position in which all her familiar habits were thrown to the winds. And yet going to the inn with Oswald was about as bad as spending a night in direful desolation in the dark corner of a field. The one was not much better than the other! If she could have got away at once, it was the field she would have chosen. She could have crept into a

corner in the dark, and there waited, though she might have been frightened, till morning broke and there was an early train. Had she but done that at once, stolen away before he could see what she was doing! But she could not disappear from his side now, at the risk of being pursued and argued with and entreated and brought back. So, with her mind in a blank of despair, not knowing what to think, she walked close by his side between the hedgerows through the soft darkness. Oh, what a punishment was this for the indiscretion of the day! It was indiscretion, perhaps, but surely the punishment was more terrible than the guilt. She drew the thick gauze veil which was attached to her bonnet over her face. What could anyone think of her—in that dress? Then there came into her mind, to increase her pain, an instant vivid realisation of what her mother would say. Mrs. Burchell would judge the very worst of any such victim of accident. “Why did she lose her train?” her mother would have said. “Depend upon it, such things don’t happen when people take common care.” Agnes knew how her mother would look, denouncing the unfortunate with hard eyes in which was no pity; and naturally her mother was her standard. So, no doubt, people would think—people who were respectable, who never placed themselves in embarrassing situations. They would go further, she thought, with a still more poignant touch of anguish—they would say that this is what comes of religious vagaries, of sisterhoods, of attempts at being or doing something more than other people. They would laugh and sneer, and hold her up as an example—and oh, never, never, never, could she get the better of this! it would cling to her all her life—never, never could she hold up her head again!

Oswald too was full of thought, planning in his mind how he was to carry out his intentions, his mind so overflowing with plans that he could not talk. He had been grieved to the heart by the dilemma into which his carelessness had plunged them. But now he began to recover, and a certain sensation of boyish pleasure in the escapade came stealing into his mind. He would not have acknowledged it, but still there it was. The village was a mere collection of common cottages in yellow brick, as ugly as it was possible to imagine; but the inn was an old roadside inn of past times, red, with a high-pitched roof all brown with lichen, showing the mean modernness of the others. An inquisitive landlady stood at the door watching for them, inquisitive but good-natured, the fame of their failure having travelled before them. Oswald strode on in advance when he saw the woman. “Good evening,” he said, taking off his hat, which was a civility she was not used to. “If you are the landlady, may I speak to you? There is a young lady here who has missed her train. She is very much frightened and distressed. Can you give her a room and take care of her: It is all an accident. Can you take care of her for the night?”

“And you too, sir?” asked the woman.

“Oh, never mind me. It is the young lady who is important. Yes,

Miss Burchell," he said, going back to Agnes, "here is some one who will attend to you. I will not ask you to talk to me to-night," he added, dropping his voice, "but do not be surprised if you find me gone in the morning. I shall be off by the first train, and you will wait for me here. I think you will be comfortable—everything shall be settled directly."

"Oh, how can I, how can I? Mr. Meredith, it is not possible. I must bear it. It was not our fault. I will tell them everything, and—I will go home."

"Yes, darling, with your husband. What does it matter this month or next? You have promised me one way or the other. There is no harm in getting married," he said, with a breathless eagerness in his voice. "Is it not by far the best thing? And then all will be settled at once."

"No, not that!" she said, breathless too with excitement. "But if you will go to the House and tell Sister Mary Jane everything—you must tell her everything——"

"I will," he said, fervently. "Surely you may trust me. And I will bring her to you in the afternoon. Everything shall be right. Now go, my dearest, and rest, and don't worry yourself. I will take all the blame upon myself."

"The blame was mine too," she said, gravely. She strained her eyes through the darkness to see his face. Was he taking it with levity—was he unaware of the terrible, terrible seriousness of the whole business? She could not bear the idea that it was anything less than tragic to him too.

"No, I cannot allow that. It was my folly, my thoughtlessness. But could I be expected to think to-day? I can't even say good-night to you, darling. Promise me to sleep, and not to worry yourself with thinking. By six o'clock I shall be off to set all right."

"To bring the Sister?" she said, casting a soft look back at him. "I shall be very, very grateful. Good-night."

"Good-night," he said. He stood in the little hall and watched her going upstairs, her slight little figure drooping in its black drapery, the cheerful landlady preceding her with a light. What a revolution since the morning! Then she had been a kind of divinity worshipped at a distance, now she was his; and not only his, but already dependent upon him, absolutely in his hands. To do Oswald justice, this consciousness only increased the touch of reverence which had always mingled with his love. She was not a girl like other girls, though, indeed, full of levity and carelessness as he was, Oswald had never been disrespectful even of those "other girls," who were not to be mentioned in the same breath with Agnes. She was by herself; there was no one like her. Even in this indiscretion which she had committed—and though it was entirely his fault yet it could not be denied that it was an indiscretion—what a delicate veil of maidenly reserve had been about her! Still like one of

Perugino's angels just touching earth, ready to fly if exposed to a look or word less exquisite than her own purity. This was how he thought of her, and it is well for all parties when young lovers think so; though not the wildest extravagance of "fastness" could be worse than what Agnes thought of it in the silence of the little room upstairs where she had already fallen down upon her knees by the bed, crying her heart out, her face hidden in an anguish of shame. Oswald's feelings were less acute. He went out when she disappeared, and sat down on the bench outside, where two or three silent men were sitting smoking, drinking their beer, and giving forth a fragmentary remark at intervals. There was no light but that which streamed from the open door, and the little red-curtained window beside it, where the same kind of dull sociable drinking was going on. Outside, the soft night air and pale yet warm night sky elevated the homely scene. Oswald took off his hat and exposed his head to the fresh caressing of the air, which blew his hair about and refreshed his body and soul. He was tired, for he had taken an unusual amount of exercise, not to speak of the strain of mind he was still undergoing. He took a mighty draught of beer, and felt himself strong again. Naturally there had been no such beverage in the boat, and even the smile of Agnes, which, though sweet, was very timid, did not sustain his strained muscles; and he had rowed hard for the last half-hour at least, and was unaccustomed to the exertion—out of training, as he would have said. So that altogether it was in a very agreeable moment of repose that he set himself to a final arrangement of his plan. He was in a scrape, no doubt; but that he was used to, and this time what a glorious scrape it was! a fit climax to all the others of which he had exhausted the sensations; but for Agnes indeed, and her pain, it was, he said to himself, the very way he would have chosen to settle his marriage. No lingering negotiations, no presentations to her family, and sense of being on his best behaviour while they inspected him, no fuss of presents and trousseau, and tiresome delay (to tell the truth, no one would have enjoyed the presents and the preparations, and all the importance of the intervening time, more than Oswald; but his easy mind easily ignored this, and took refuge in the most desirable aspect of the alternative). The only thing he disliked in the prospect before him was the idea of having to get up very early in the morning, which, especially after the fatigue and excitement of this day, was a bore to think of. Otherwise everything was ideal, he persuaded himself. He watched a light come into a window overhead as he sat resting enjoying the fresh air. That must be her room, bless her! Poor darling, how pale she had grown, how frightened! But never in her sweet life to come should there be anything to be frightened of. Thus Oswald resolved in his tender thoughts.

"Do you know at what hour the first train goes?" he asked of one of the men who were sitting by.

"Well, master, mostly it's at six o'clock," was the answer; "but to-morrow, you see, being Sunday——"

“Good heavens! Sunday!” he said, with a cry of dismay.

“Well, wherever ’ave you been a-living not to know it was Sunday? Any fool knows that. I reckon, master, as you’ve come from abroad. They don’t take no notice of Sundays there, I’ve heard say. It’s Sunday, and ten o’clock is the first train; and early enough too,” said the man, who was a porter on the railway, and felt the hardship of the rest disturbed.

Oswald could not find a word to say. He had forgotten this terrible fact. It made everything doubly terrible for the moment, and it turned all his own plans into foolishness. He sat dumb, unable to say a word, unable even to think, his mouth open, his heart beating. What was to be done? Now, indeed, he felt the harm of his folly; a whole day lost, and Agnes kept in this equivocal position, and all tongues let loose. This fairly sobered the light-hearted young man. He stole upstairs to the little bedroom which had been prepared for him, still speechless, as much cast down as Agnes was. What were they to do? He flung himself on his bed in a kind of despair.

Next morning, though it was not his custom, Oswald was awake as early as if the train had been at six o’clock, as he thought. It was better not to let her know, not to agitate her further. Having once got this idea into his head, he went further, and resolved upon the most disinterested course of action possible. He would go all the same, though he could do nothing he wished to do—and carry out her will; she should be satisfied. To do this, with newborn delicacy, he left the inn early, so that she might suppose he had only carried out his original intention. What would Sister Mary Jane say to him? He would be the wolf and Agnes the lamb in her eyes. How could anyone think otherwise? But what did it matter so long as Agnes had justice? He went up to town in the aggravating tedium of a slow Sunday train. It was true he had come down in a slow train the day before, but that was entirely different, there was no tedium in it. The streets were very still when he got to town, everybody being at church, as good Christians ought, and it was only after repeated knockings that he got admission at the big door of the House. The portress gave a little scream at sight of him. “Oh, sir, can you tell us anything of Miss Burchell? She never wrote to say she was going to stay, and we’ve been that anxious about her!”

“Can I speak to the Sister Superior?” said Oswald, somewhat troubled in his mind as to the reception he would receive.

“The Sister Superior has been sent for to the mother-house, sir,” said the portress. “She had to go yesterday. It is some meeting—nobody knew it till yesterday. Perhaps she will be back to-morrow, but we don’t know. Would Sister Catherine do? If it was anything about Miss Burchell——”

“It was the Sister Superior I wanted,” said Oswald, and after a pause he turned away. He would not say anything about Miss Burchell. After he had left the House, it occurred to him that even this humble portress

would have been better than nothing, but then it was too late. He walked about the streets for a whole hour, questioning with himself what he ought to do. His mother? She was very kind, but she was not without her prejudices; and would not she recollect afterwards that her first sight of her daughter-in-law had been at the railway inn at the junction, in a semi-conventual dress, and a most equivocal position? If he could but have laid hands on Cara? But on what excuse could he run away with a second young lady? No—there was nothing for it now; he must go back to Agnes, and tell her of his non-success, which was not his fault, and next day he must carry out his own plan. There was nothing else for it. He went to the chambers of a friend, not venturing to go home, and borrowed some clothes; then went back again in the afternoon. There were few trains, and not many people were travelling so far. He was the only individual who got out at the junction, where already he was a person of importance.

“The young lady said as there was another lady coming,” the porter said to him, who had told him last night about the train; and the man looked suspiciously about the carriage, in the netting and under the seat.

“Do you think I’ve made away with her?” said Oswald; but he trembled as he walked down the road to the inn between the two high hedgerows. Agnes was walking about, waiting, with wistful eyes. He saw at a glance that she had modified her dress by some strange art not to be divined by man. Her cloak was laid aside; her long black dress looked severely graceful in comparison with the snippings and trimmings of fashion, but not otherwise extraordinary. And she had a simple hat, borrowed from the landlady’s daughter, over the warm golden brown Perugino hair. She stood still, clasping her hands, when she saw he was alone.

“It is no fault of mine,” he said, going up to her in hurried apology and desperation. Agnes grew so pale that he lost all his courage.

“She would not come then?” the poor girl cried, with a half-sobbing sigh.

“No, no; not that; she was not there. It is our bad luck. She was gone to the mother-house, whatever that may be. What could I do? I have done nothing but think since I left you. O Agnes, forgive me, my darling, for having brought you into this! My own plan is the only one; but I never thought of this—Sunday—to-morrow, to-morrow everything can be arranged.”

This was the text upon which he enlarged for the whole afternoon. There was not another train till the evening, and what could they do even if there had been trains? They had to eat the chicken which the curious landlady had prepared, together, and went out again in the afternoon, and sat under a tree and talked. They were miserable, or at least Agnes was miserable—and yet happy. Oh, if she had but known, if she

had but gone on this morning, or back to Limpet Bay, where there were Sisters and a shelter! But now! every moment compromised her more, and made it more impossible to do anything but acquiesce in what he proposed. And so the long, slow, weary, anxious, miserable, delicious Sunday wore to a close; it was all these things together. They took the landlady into their confidence, and told her all that had happened, while Agnes sat crying. She thought even this woman would shrink from her; but the woman, on the contrary, was deeply interested, delighted, and flattered. There was the parsonage half a mile off, and the clergyman the kindest old gentleman. A wedding in the house! She could not contain herself with pride and pleasure. Crying! what was the young lady crying about? An 'usband that adored her instead of them nunnery places as she never could abide to hear of. This unexpected support quite exhilarated Oswald, and it cowed Agnes, who had no power of self-assertion left.

In this way it all came about according to Oswald's rapid programme which he had sketched out as soon as he knew they were too late on Saturday night. He was so much in earnest, so eager to carry out his plans, that, much as it went against his mind to do so, he went to town again on Monday by the six o'clock train. As soon as the offices were opened he presented himself at the proper place (wherever that may be; I have not the information) and got his licence. By this time he was so much himself again, his light heart had so regained its characteristic boyish ease, and the tragicality had gone so completely out of the situation, that it seemed to him the best of jokes—a delightful, practical pleasantry, a piece of charming mischief to startle all sober people. He went about in his hansom with involuntary smiles on his lips, the chief thing that alarmed him being the chance of meeting Edward or Cara or some one who would know him. How startled they would be when they knew! Poor dear little Cara, would she *feel* it just a little? But for the rest it was the greatest joke. To come down upon them with his wife—his *wife*! Oswald laughed in spite of himself, half with happiness, half with a sense of the fun. When he had got his licence safe in his pocket—which gave a kind of legality to the whole—he went to a famous milliner's, and had a large boxful of things packed up. This was a business which delighted him. He chose a little white bonnet, a white dress, partially made, which the lady's maid could arrange in an hour, the smiling milliner assured him, a veil which would envelope the figure of Agnes from top to toe, a hat in which she could travel. How she was to be transported to London in that white silk dress it did not occur to him to ask; for he was still young and thoughtless, though on the eve of being married. He had never seen her surrounded by any of the pretty finery which girls love, in nothing but her black dress and poke bonnet. To throw the veil about her, to see her Perugino countenance under the large-leaved hat with its drooping feathers, what a transformation it would be! And when, having done all his business, he travelled

back to the junction with his big dressmaker's box, all thoughts except those of delighted anticipation had gone out of Oswald's mind. The junction had a friendly look to him, and he walked down the lane to the inn with the feeling of going home.

What a fortunate thing that the poor old governor had died when he did! Poor old fellow! his son did not grudge him his existence as long as he remained in this world, or rather in the other world across the seas in India, where he interfered with nobody. But as he did mean to die, what a thing it was that he should have done it just then! Oswald made a hurried run to his bankers while he was in town, and supplied himself with money, that grand requisite of all extravagant and eccentric proceedings. He was as happy as a child walking down the lane, the porters, grinning and knowing all about it, carrying the big box after him; he had got his own portmanteau, too, with his best clothes in it, according to the orders which he had telegraphed to the Square; and all was ready for the wedding. Surely a stranger wedding never was. The little cluster of houses at the junction was as much excited as if the event had been a family one concerning each house. How did they know? Who could say? The landlady swore it was no doing of hers. Agnes would not wear the white silk which he had bought for her, but consented to put on a plain white muslin which the dressmaker next door had luckily just made for herself, and which she was free to dispose of at a profit. And so the soft June twilight dropped, and the dews fell once more, and quite a little crowd hung about the inn, trying for a peep at "them." Only three days since they came from London in separate carriages to meet "by accident" on the sands. And now they were bridegroom and bride, and to-morrow was their wedding-day.

CHAPTER XLIV.

CLEARING UP.

MR. BURCHELL was brought upstairs with some solemnity. Though Mrs. Meredith's mind was very full of all that had been passing, and with no small amount of personal feeling, a father in such a case could not be put off. They were all agitated in different ways, the elder people painfully, the young ones happily. As for Edward, his energy and satisfaction knew no bounds. He even jarred upon the feelings of the others, though most innocently, his heart was so light. "You are like Oswald," his mother said to him, with a sigh of anxiety; "you are not like yourself." "I feel like Oswald," said Edward. He did not seem able to put his self-gratulation into fitter words. The sense of being second, of being the shadow to Oswald's sunshine, went out of his mind; and, with it, all sense of grudging and everything like envy, which, however deeply repressed and disapproved, had been in his heart hitherto, an involuntary weakness,

All that was over now. That Cara loved him he scarcely ventured to believe; but she was free; she was not swept up like every other good thing by his elder brother. What an ease diffused itself through his heart! And with Cara, too, the sensation was that of ease; her bonds were broken. She might have stood faithful still as the Screen (for indeed that poor lady was in the *Vita Nuova*, and it was not kind of great Dante, great as he was!), but circumstances had broken her bonds. Cara had not been intimate with Agnes Burchell that she should be much disturbed by finding out her identity with Oswald's Agnes. And after the first shock she was confident that nothing amiss could have happened to her while Oswald was there. And her own pre-occupations made the whole matter but secondary in her mind. Was it selfish of her? But she could not help it. She had cast off more than one burden; her young frame was tingling with the excitement of the two disclosures she had made, one of which had brought her father to her, the other—well, the other at least had set her free; it had set her right with others, if nothing more. It was Edward who went to the dining-room to conduct Mr. Burchell upstairs, feeling such a friendliness towards him as words could not express. Had not he been the occasion of it all? "My mother begs that you will come upstairs," he said, feeling an inclination to hug his visitor, though he was little captivating. Mr. Burchell had a feeling of disapproval of the house and all that were in it. It was the house Roger had given an account of, where he had dined on Sunday, and where the lady lived who was so intimate with Mr. Beresford. The Rector disapproved of all such intimacy. But he was anxious and rather unhappy about his daughter, and it was his duty to take Cara back out of this doubtful, perhaps polluted house. So he followed his conductor upstairs, looking about him with involuntary criticism. These kind of people had so many comforts that did not fall to the lot of their superiors in every moral sense. Large comfortable houses, many servants, the *Times* every day (he found it on the table in the dining-room), and many other luxuries. He could not help making this remark to himself; he could not afford such pleasures; and now his child, his daughter, not theirs who perhaps deserved it, had gone away. Matters were not mended when Mrs. Meredith, with all her usual sweetness, but with a thrill of agitation still about her, came up to him holding out her hand.

"Cara tells me that you are anxious about your daughter, and that my son—knows her," she said, faltering. It was so difficult to know what to say.

"So she tells me," said the Rector. "You will understand it is not from me; I know nothing of it. Agnes has said nothing; and perhaps," he added, looking round with a little natural defiance, "her absence may turn out to be quite simple; there may be nothing in it. She is not a good correspondent. But we are anxious, her mother and I."

"I do not know where Oswald is. Oh! heaven knows, if my son has anything to do with it, I shall be grieved, grieved and ashamed to

the heart! But no harm will happen to her in Oswald's company," said Mrs. Meredith, raising her head in her turn with tearful pride. "I know my boy."

"It is what I would not say of any child of mine, or of myself, for that matter," said the Rector. "Who can tell what a moment may bring forth? But if there should be anything in it, and you have any clue to your son's movements——"

"I have none. Thursday or Friday he said he would come back. Cara, if you can tell us anything——"

Cara told at once what she knew; how he had heard that Agnes was going somewhere, she did not remember where, and that he had made up his mind to go too, and explain himself. "Limpet Bay; she is not there," said Mr. Burchell. He took no interest in the rest of the story, which excited the others so much, that half of them spoke together. Edward, however, had the *pas* as being most energetic. "I will go at once to Limpet Bay," he said, "and find out if anything is known of them; that seems the best thing." Mr. Burchell looked at him with a half-suspicion in his eyes. But this was how it was finally arranged. The Rector himself seemed to have greater confidence in wandering about town. He was going now to his sister's at Notting Hill, and then to the House. Then he would come back again to the Square, to see if any news had come. "My son Roger will be in London in an hour or two," he added, with a kind of vague trust in that. But he neither sanctioned nor objected to Edward's mission. He had no notion himself what to do. He had no faith in his own child, and even thought worse of Mrs. Meredith—if there could be a worse or a better about such a person—for thinking well of hers. When he went away at last in his heavy distress they were all relieved. He was to come back in a few hours to see if any news had been received. As for Edward, he was like a man transformed. He ran upstairs with airy energy, thrust what he wanted into a bag, tossed a heap of notebooks on the floor (where his mother found them, and, picking them up carefully, put them away behind his bureau where he could not find them), and came down again swiftly and lightly, ready for anything. Then it was arranged that Cara and her father should walk with him to the "House" to see if anything had been heard there. This new chapter of anxiety was a relief to all of them, strange as it may seem to say so. Even Mrs. Meredith was comforted, after all the personal excitement of the afternoon, to have this outlet to her emotion. She was not afraid that anything very dreadful could have happened to Oswald, nor, though Mr. Burchell thought her confidence wicked, to anyone else, through her boy. She knew Oswald's faults, she said to herself—who better? but Agnes would get no harm from him. On the other hand, the fact that they had disappeared together was in itself active harm. The boy was safe enough, but the girl—that was a more difficult matter; and even a young man who decoyed away, or could be said to have decoyed away, not a poor milliner or housemaid, but a girl in

his own rank—society would look but darkly, there could be no doubt, on such a man. It was evident that in any point of view to find Oswald was the chief thing to be thought of. In the meantime, however, they had been reckoning without their train. There was not one going to Limpet Bay till six o'clock, and a pause perforce had to be made. And people began to come in, to call in the midst of their agitation, the first being actually shown up into the drawing-room while they still stood together talking in their scarcely subsiding excitement. This was more than the others could bear. Mrs. Meredith indeed met her visitors with her usual smiles, with hands stretched out, with all the air of soft and kind interest in them which bound her friends so close to her; the air of agitation about her only increased the kindness of her looks; but the three others were not so courageous. They all forsook her, stealing away one by one. Mr. Beresford went to his library, where he had so many things to think of. Cara and Edward, stealing away one after the other, met on the stairs. "Will you come into the Square," he said, "till it is time for my train?" The Square was a spot where they had played together when they were children. It had been avoided by both of them without any reason given; now they went out and took refuge in it, where the little ladies and gentlemen of the Square were still playing. They wandered demurely under the flowery shrubs and those kind trees which do not despise London, their hearts beating softly yet loud, their young lives in a tender harmony. They seemed to be walking back into the chapter of their childhood and to see themselves playing hide-and-seek among the bushes. "You used to look just like that," Edward said, pointing to a pretty child in a white sun-bonnet with her lap full of daisies, who looked up at them with serious blue eyes as they passed. Cara was not so very much older, and yet what a world of youthful experience lay between her and this child! Then naturally they began to talk of what had happened to their knowledge, and of what might have happened which they did not know.

"And you think he really loved her," Edward said, his voice at this word taking a reverential tone. "He must indeed—or else——. But was he in earnest?—he was always so full of levity. And where can they have gone?"

"He did not mean to have gone for more than the day. It must have been some accident. He would not have done anything again to get her scolded. *I* scolded him for it before."

"You scolded him. I wish you would scold me, Cara," said Edward, looking at her. "You never talk to me as you used to talk to him. What bad feelings you used to rouse in my mind—you who are as good as an angel! hatred and malice, and all uncharitableness. I went very near to hating my brother. Poor Oswald, I shall stand by him now through thick and thin."

"I am glad of that," said Cara, thankfully ignoring what went before.

"That is your doing too, like the other; Cara—there seem so many things that I want to say to you."

"Oh, we must not talk of anything to-day, but how to get this settled," cried the girl, with a nervous shiver. "What a trouble for your mother, to see all these people to-day! I could not stay to help her—it seemed impossible; but she—she could not be unkind to anyone," said Cara, with generous fervour; though indeed Mrs. Meredith, unwittingly, had strewn a few thorns in Cara's pathway too.

"Yes," said Edward; "I don't think my mother is a humbug—at least, yes, she is, in the way of kindness. She can't bear that anyone should feel neglected—and yet she means it, too," he added, doubtfully looking up at the window, at which some of her visitors showed, for the day was very warm. Her friends had flooded back upon her, notwithstanding her recent widowhood. It was not like going into society, they all said. Society, indeed, went to her instead. To desert her in her troubles was not a friend's part. The consequence of this doctrine was that her receptions were almost as crowded as ever, and that all who considered themselves her intimates were more punctual than ever they had been.

"Ought we not to go?" said Cara at last, and they turned and came out through the dusty bushes once more. The Square was not lovely in itself, but it looked like a garden of Eden to the two, when they had been walking in the cool of the day, like Adam and Eve, thinking of each other, talking, with little breaks and relapses into thoughts which were dangerous, but very sweet, of other things. Now they came out again, side by side. As they crossed the road, Roger Burchell joined them. He had been sent for, and had hurried up, poor fellow, to do his duty, and look for his lost sister. It was not a happy errand to begin with, nor was it exactly happiness for him to see Cara, though the thought of doing so had lent wings to his feet. He looked at her with a face full of suppressed agitation, longing and yet suspicious. This was not the Meredith he was afraid of—this was the one with whom he was rather in sympathy, the unfortunate one, like himself. But there was something in the looks of the two which hurt Roger and angered him, he could scarcely have told why.

He addressed Edward rather roughly. "If you are going after them, tell me," he said, with a hoarse tone in his voice, "or I will do it. There is no time to lose."

"I am waiting only for the train," said Edward. It was a valid excuse enough, and yet poor Roger felt that he might have waited hours for the train without being amused meantime in this heavenly fashion. The gate of the garden was at some little distance from the house, close to the thoroughfare which passed along the end of the Square. They could see along this line of road as they turned to go back.

"We must go for Mr. Beresford," Edward was saying. "He was to go with us first to the House."

Here he stopped short, open-mouthed, and the others stopped too, by that curious instinct which makes one man share in the startled sensations of his companion, without knowing what they mean. They were both startled like Edward. A carriage had drawn up within a little distance, and two people were getting out of it. Cara's eye, following Edward's, reached this little group. She ran forward, with a low cry. The newcomers, seeing nobody, occupied with themselves, advanced steadily. They came up to the corner of the Square. Just within that comparative stillness, they too started and stopped, he facing the others boldly, with smiles on his face, she drooping, blushing, trembling, with her hand on his arm.

"Oswald! for heaven's sake, who is this lady?" cried Edward, stepping in advance. The others waited with equal eagerness, though they knew very well who she was.

"Edward, my good fellow, you must make much of her," said Oswald. He was really moved, and his gay voice faltered. "You and Cara—we want you and Cara to make up our happiness. This is my wife."

Though it was the public road, or, at least, the corner of the Square, Cara rushed forward and threw herself upon Agnes, who, red as a rose, with downcast face and eyes that could not bear the light, stood on her trial, as it were. Edward put out one hand to her and another to his brother, without saying a word. He came unthinking between Roger and his sister.

"You and Cara." He and Cara; nothing to say to the brother, who stood behind, red and lowering, looking on, noticed by no one, like a stranger. The two pairs fell together as by nature; Roger was the one who was left out. Is it not the very essence of all youthful story, even of all childish games, that some one should be left out? The little girl in the sun-bonnet in the Square garden could have produced half a dozen instances—that there is no fun without this; from puss-in-the-corner upwards, the situation is invariable. But the left-out one does not see the fun. Roger stood, and changed into all manner of colours. He was not wanted. He and Agnes—he and Cara; for himself nobody, no companion, no notice, no share in it all. To take it sentimentally and sadly, and turn away, in all the dignity of the neglected, is one way; to be angry and resent is another. Roger, who felt the hot blood tingling down to his very finger-points, chose the latter. He made a step forward, pushing Edward aside, even thrusting aside Cara, and seized his sister roughly by the arm.

"What is the meaning of all this?" he said. "Agnes, what do you want here? where have you been? My father has come up to town in trouble about you; my mother is ill of it at home. Where have you been? These people have nothing to do with you. You've got to give me an explanation of it—and you too, sir!" cried Roger, with natural inconsistency, turning fiercely upon Oswald. What!

this fellow, who had appropriated Cara so calmly, was he to have Agnes too?

"O Roger, don't quarrel—don't quarrel! I went home this morning. Mamma knows," cried Agnes, flushed and tearful, clasping her hands.

"And I am ready to give you every explanation," said Oswald. "You have a right to it. We were married on Tuesday. It was no doing of hers. The fault is all mine. And your mother is satisfied. Come in with us, and you shall have every detail. And come, Roger, shake hands with me. There is no harm done after all."

"Harm done!" cried the young man, in his bitterness; "harm done! is it no harm that she has disgraced herself? I don't know what greater harm is in the world."

"O, Roger, Roger!"

"This has gone far enough," said Oswald; "take care what you say. Agnes, my darling, take my arm, and come to my mother. He does not know what he is saying; and, Ned, come along, you and Cara. There are a hundred things to tell you. I want you to hear everything to-day."

They passed him, while he stood fuming with bitter rage, not on account of Agnes, though she was the excuse for it. She took all the guilt to herself, however, looking at him pitifully, appealing to him as her husband led her to his mother's door.

"Roger, O Roger dear, come with us!" she cried. She had spoken to no one but him.

But Roger paid no attention to Agnes. It was the other pair who had all his thoughts; he seemed to be supplanted over again, to have all the pangs of failure to bear over again. The idea of Oswald's success with Cara had become familiar to him, and there was a little consolation in the fact that Edward, like himself, was unhappy. But at this new change, the poor young fellow ground his teeth. It was more than he could bear. Rage and anguish were in his eyes. Even Cara's kind look at him, her little mute apology and deprecation of his wrath, increased it. Why should he go with them? What did it matter to him? His sister? Oh, there were plenty of people to look after his sister, and why should he follow them, who cared so little for him? But, after a while, he did follow them. There is something in this kind of suffering which attracts the sufferer to the rack. He is in course of healing when he has the courage to turn his back upon it, and go firmly away.

The whole young party went into the dining-room, where the *Times* which Mr. Burchell had grudged to Mrs. Meredith was still on the table. A dining-room is an oppressive place for such a purpose. It looks like bad interviews with fathers, when there are admonitions to be given, or those fearful moments when a young offender is detained after the others have left the cheerful table, to be told of his faults. Agnes went into the house of her husband's mother, with her heart in her mouth, or,

at least, in her throat, leaping wildly, ready to sink into the ground with shame and terror. How would Mrs. Meredith receive her? Her own mother had yielded only to the arguments which the poor girl despised the most, to the details of Oswald's income, and the settlements, about which he had already written to his lawyer. This mollified her—not Agnes's weeping explanations; and the bride's heart was still sore from the pang of this forgiveness, which Oswald, not caring in the least for Mrs. Burchell, had been quite satisfied with. He did not care very much for anything except herself, she had already found out, and took all disapproval with the frankest levity of indifference, which made it burn all the more into the heart of Agnes. Perhaps it was necessary for her to have a burden of one kind or another. And his mother; how would his mother look upon her? Would she set her down, as it was so natural for mothers to do, as the guilty party, the chief offender? Agnes had felt that her own mother had done this. She had excused Oswald. "No man would ever think of such a thing, if he had not got encouragement." Even Sister Mary Jane had said so, in a modified and more generous way. Was it always the poor girl's, the poor wife's fault? Agnes shrank into a corner. She could not take any courage from Cara's caressings, who came and hung about her, full of admiration and interest.

"I was his confidante all the time," said Cara; "but how was I to know that his Agnes was you?"

Agnes did not get much comfort out of this; she was not quite sure even that she liked him to have had a girl confidante. Though she was "happy" in the ordinary sense of the word, as applied to brides, happy in the love of her new husband, and in her own love for him, yet the troubles of the moment had seized hold upon her at their worst. She trembled for the opening of the door. She was almost at the limit of her powers of endurance. Her "happiness" had cost her dear. She had got it at the sacrifice of all her tender prejudices, all her little weaknesses of sentiment. She took Roger's angry speech for true, and endorsed it. However happily it might all turn out, though everything should be better than she thought, still she would have disgraced herself. Nobody could be so much shocked at the whole business as she herself was. To everyone who censured her she was ready to say amen. It may be supposed, therefore, that the feelings with which she awaited Oswald's mother were agitating enough. If Mrs. Meredith received her unkindly, or coldly—and how was it possible that a mother could receive otherwise than coldly such an unexpected bride?—it seemed to Agnes, in her discouragement and terror, that she must fall at her feet and die.

"Go and tell my mother, Ned," said Oswald, who was himself rather breathless with suspense. "Go, you and Cara—take Cara with you. She will be kinder if you go together."

"Was she ever unkind?" said Cara, half indignant.

“Come all the same,” said Edward, taking her hand in the freedom of the moment. “If I offer to make a sacrifice to her if she will forgive them,” he whispered, as they went upstairs together—“it will not be true—Cara, may I do it, not being true?”

“Does she want to be paid for her kindness?” said Cara, whispering back; but she smiled, notwithstanding, not knowing what he meant, yet knowing quite well what he meant. They went into the drawing-room thus, still for the moment hand in hand, which Mrs. Meredith perceiving, turned round from her guests with a little excitement. What had they come to tell her? She disengaged herself from the people whom she was talking to, and hurried towards them, breathless—“Children, what is it?” the conjunction had already had its effect.

“Mother, Oswald and his wife are downstairs; come and speak to them—come and console her.”

“His wife! Good heavens! has it gone so far?—and is that all?” the mother said inconsistently in one breath.

Edward went up close to her, and whispered in her ear—“And I no longer think of going to India. If that pleases you, forgive them.”

“Traitor!” said Mrs. Meredith; “that is not the reason;” and then, “God bless you, my darling!” she said, with tears in her eyes.

CHAPTER XLV.

CONCLUSION.

It is not necessary to go into details, and tell how Mrs. Meredith forgave her son and received her new daughter. In any case, I don't believe she would have been capable of “hurting Agnes's feelings” by a cold reception; but as it was, she was as tender to her as if she had been her own daughter, and Oswald was the stranger husband who had to be forgiven. A great deal of this was that superlative politeness which was part of her nature, and part of it was the result of Edward's communication. The cloud which had spoilt everything was definitely lifted from her life, and to be good to the trembling, timid bride, which was the first kind action within her reach, was Mrs. Meredith's way of thanksgiving for her happiness. It must be allowed it is not a bad way, as good as giving public thanks in church, or perhaps better, though that is good too. When Agnes began a faltering confession of wrong doing, Mrs. Meredith kissed her and stopped her.

“My dear, we will think nothing more of that,” she said; “we might have wished it otherwise; but no one is beyond the reach of accident, and this will end most happily, please God, for all of us.”

The result of the interview was that Agnes fell in love with her mother-in-law—not a very usual thing, if one puts one's faith in books,

yet not unparalleled. They understood each other, or rather the elder woman understood the younger, and with her warm natural charity was able to comprehend and excuse everything. She looked with a little wonder and amusement at the awe with which Agnes still regarded her bridegroom. That there should be some one in the world who did not simply make allowance for Oswald, and love him in spite of his faults, but to whom his faults were as yet invisible, and himself worthy of deepest respect and admiration, was a thing which was very amusing to his mother. She could scarcely keep from smiling when she saw the serious looks of veneration which his wife gave him. "Hush, hush," she said, when Edward, grown saucy, ventured to smile at his brother, and when she even herself felt tempted to say "How like Oswald!" Oswald was like everything that was fine and noble and generous to his bride.

"And if he did not think of himself quite so much, how good my poor boy is!" the mother said, with tears in her eyes; and in future, perhaps, he would not think so much of himself.

Anyhow, on the other side everybody was quite satisfied. Oswald, never ungenerous, made settlements upon his wife after they were married which filled the Burchell family with admiration. And they got a pretty little house, and made a kind of religion of furnishing it; and for every pretty thing they got, Agnes, compunctious, hurried down to the House and devised something for the orphans. Sister Mary Jane grew used to these visits, and, being a wise woman, restrained undue liberalities. She gave a great deal of good advice to the young wife. "If you take on another child for every bit of china," she said, "there will soon be no room for the girls, and no money left in the purse."

"Oh, how can I let money be spent for nothings, when I know how much need there is in the world!" cried Agnes. It was difficult to answer such arguments. As for Oswald, he never attempted to answer them. He gave her to understand that she was a mixture of a goose and an angel.

"Both have wings, you know," he said, going away light-hearted to his pleasures, and understanding about as much of the more serious feelings in her mind as her baby did when she had one, which fortunately was in good time. He made the best of husbands, ever eager that she should spend more money on her dressmaker, entertain more, have all manner of pleasures. Louisa Burchell, who was the next sister, thought the little house in Mayfair was like heaven; and Mrs. Burchell kept a list of the important people to whose houses Agnes was asked, looking up her noble acquaintances in the peerage, and finding out the incomes of the rich ones, and the works of those who wrote or painted (though these last figured much less largely in her mind). And Agnes was happy. To have a husband you love, and in due time a pretty baby; and a delightful little house in Mayfair, and a pair of ponies, and more dresses and bonnets than you wish for—could there be a happier lot? If a young woman in such beatific circumstances got confused sometimes in her

mind, and wondered whether it might not be better to walk about at the head of a procession of school girls in a black cloak and poke-bonnet, and to work in stuffy schoolrooms, and to have no more recreation than could be got among the girls in S. Cecilia, what could that be but momentary aberration or even a kind of temporary insanity? Is not a wife better than a Sister? Oswald had no kind of doubt on the subject when he saw his beautiful young wife at the head of his table, and reflected with inward complacency upon the aspect she bore when first he saw her, though at that time he had thought the poke-bonnet half-divine. But Agnes was not so sure, had not such unhesitating convictions as her husband, and wondered. This, perhaps, was the penalty she paid for her escapade. Oswald's light-heartedness was alien to her serious mood. He took his existence so easily! and she knew that life was not so easy a matter, and would take an occasional panic as the fair landscape glided past her, the beautiful days and years flying away from her as fields and trees do on a journey, when you seem yourself to be stationary, and it is the country about that flies and travels on either side.

If she had known him longer, if she had known him better, would it have made any difference? In all probability not the slightest, and she did not ask herself that question; for, after all, Oswald was Oswald, and the only man in the whole world —

As for the other personages mentioned in these pages, their affairs worked themselves out as was to be expected, with no very extraordinary results. Roger Burchell recovered of his wound because he could not help it, not with any will of his; and went out to India in due time, where he did very well and made steady progress, but neither then nor now became very remarkable. He married too in the due course of events, when he could afford it—as most men do, except perhaps in the very heart and centre of society, a sect so small that it does not affect the world's continuance, nor need necessarily affect our peace of mind who look on. He forgot Cara and the chapter in his life which was dominated by her, far more completely than the romantic reader would believe possible, and was not at all sure after he had been some years married whether it was not he who had behaved badly to her; and, indeed, I think his wife had this impression, and, never having seen this object of his early affections, was rather pleased to believe Cara a little flirt with whom her Roger had been involuntarily “entangled,” but escaped in time. So stories are travestied and turned into myths with piquant change of circumstance all over the world.

Mr. Maxwell had a more unlikely fate. Bursting out of No. 6 in the Square, in the trouble of his mind, after that unlucky interference which had come to less than nothing, but which must, he felt sure, cost him his friends, he went with murderous energy through all his round of patients, and took it out of them with unregulated zeal, making his hypochondriacs really ill by way of variety, twisting the joints and cramping the sinews of the unhappy people in his

hands as cruelly as Prospero. This way of avenging himself upon mankind, however, did not prevent him from suffering tortures in his own person. Should he apologise—should he appeal to Cara to intercede for him? Should he go humbly to the feet of the injured one, and ask to be kicked and forgiven? He adopted another expedient more wonderful than any of these. Next day was the day of his weekly visit to the Hill. Lovelier lights and visions than those that revealed themselves through the openings of the trees on that sweetest day of June could scarcely be. The sky was as soft as a child's eyes—the air as its breath. The trees hung rich and close still in their early green, throwing their wealth of foliage all the more closely together to hide that the flowers were over, the may faded, the golden laburnum boughs all dropped to dust. Through the leafy arches came glimpses of the great plain all billowy with trees, shadowing far into the blue distance, and the great grey castle with its royal flag. Underneath on the hedgerows there was one flush of the wild rose lighting up the winding road as with a smile. To live on such a day was enough for pleasure. To move through it easily without fatigue, with trees waving over you, and the unfathomable blue shining, and the sun throwing magical gleams over the landscape, hushed even the most restless soul to a semblance of goodness and happiness. Unless you happened to be toiling along a dusty road, in the blaze of the sunshine, in tight boots, or a dress too warm for the season, which circumstances I allow to be contrary both to happiness and goodness, I cannot understand how you could refuse to be good and happy on such a day.

But everything promoted these exemplary sensations about the Hill. Fatigue was not there, nor dust, nor undue heat. Old Miss Charity in her sun-bonnet, and less old but still not young Miss Cherry in her cool and soft grey gown, were on the lawn, surrounded by a world of roses—roses everywhere in standards, in dwarfs, on trellis-work, over arches, along the walls. The air was just touched by them to a delicate sweetness, to be elevated into beatitude when you approached your face to a particular flower. Mr. Maxwell arrived with his troubled soul, and the ladies made much of him. They compassionated him for his hot drive. They offered him tea; they gave him, on his refusal of the tea, claret cup with great bits of ice tinkling in it, and making a grateful noise. They gave him a comfortable chair on the lawn, where he had his doctor's talk with old Miss Charity, and felt her pulse and admired its steady beat, not one more or less than it ought to be. "Please God, if I live long enough, I'll pull you along to a hundred," he said, with professional enthusiasm. "But I shall not live long enough," he added, in a despondent tone.

"How old are you now?" said Miss Charity. "Fifty? phoo, nonsense! I am seventy-three. I want only seven-and-twenty of the hundred. You will be just over my present age when we've accomplished it. And what a thing to have lived for!" The old lady was more ready for the joke than he was—he shook his head.

"You can't think what foolish things I have been doing," he said; "never man made a greater fool of himself."

"You have been asking some one to marry you, my poor man!"

"No, by Jove! I never thought of that," he said, looking up quickly. Miss Cherry had walked discreetly out of hearing, as she always did while they had their medical talk. This was evidently a new idea to the doctor. "No," he went on, "trying to keep other people from marrying, that was all."

"Still sillier; they will hate you for ever and ever," Miss Charity said, in her ignorance, seated cool and smiling in her garden chair.

Meanwhile Miss Cherry strayed to one of the openings and looked wistfully across the country. She wanted to hear about "the child." A thousand questions were on her lips, but in her soft old-maidenly self-consciousness she did not like to take the doctor aside in her turn, and there were questions which she did not wish to ask in her aunt's presence. It may be imagined then what her surprise was when, startled by a voice at her elbow, she turned round and found the doctor by her side. "The views are lovely to-day," he said; but he was not thinking of the views, Miss Cherry could see. Had he something painful to tell her—had anything gone wrong? She began to ask a few faltering questions. "Tell me about Cara," she said. "I am so hungering for news of the child." Miss Cherry looked up pathetically in the doctor's face with wistful anxiety in her soft eyes—everything about her was soft, from her grey gown to her eyes. A mild consolatory woman, not charming like Mrs. Meredith, not clever like other people he knew, but a refreshment, like green lawns and green leaves and quietness to the heart. The doctor turned round to see that nobody was looking. The old lady, who had her suspicions of him, had gone in, and, like a naughty old lady as she was, had gone upstairs to a bedroom window, where she stood behind the curtains, chuckling to herself, to watch the result. When Mr. Maxwell saw the coast was clear and nobody looking (as he thought), he turned round again to Miss Cherry, who stood anxiously waiting for the next word, and deliberately, without a word of preface, fired as it were point blank into her with a pistol at her heart—that is to say, he proposed. A greater shock never was administered by any human being to another. Right off on the spot, without wasting any words, he offered her himself and his brougham and his practice and all that he had. The old lady at the window—naughty old lady!—could make out the very moment when it was done, and saw Cherry's start and jump of amazement. "Will she have him?" she asked herself. "I could not put up with a man in my house." But it does not do to take a gentle old maiden like Miss Cherry so suddenly. In the very extremity of her surprise, she said no. How she trembled! "Oh no, I could not, I could not, thank you, Mr. Maxwell! I am too old *now*. Long ago I might have thought of such a thing; but I could not, I could not. It is not possible. You must excuse me *now*."

"Oh, no one will force you, Miss Cherry, against your inclination," said the doctor, angry and discomfited. And without waiting to say good-day to his patient, he went off and threw himself into his brougham more uncomfortable than before.

Whether Miss Cherry ever regretted this I cannot tell—perhaps if she had not been so entirely taken by surprise—but "Oh no, oh no," she said to herself, "I could not have done it. It would have been cheating Cara." But what a shock it was on that June afternoon! As if the man had brought an electric battery with him, Miss Charity said, who was the only one of the three, however, to whom it was an amusement and no shock at all.

Such was the end of this middle-aged wooing, which was all over in a quarter of an hour. The other of which we know, which had been going on so long, and which only artificial motives made into a wooing at all, had been broken off very abruptly by that interpellation of Dr. Maxwell's and all that followed. It was not till after the commotion caused by Oswald's return, and all the arrangements consequent upon his marriage, were over, that the two friends returned to this broken chapter again. The changes which had happened had not thrown them apart, however, and the naturalness with which, even in the suspense of this question between themselves, their intercourse went on, showed plainly either that warmer relationships were unlikely or that they were the most natural things in the world; but which? Each of them had been slightly piqued by the absence of enthusiasm on the part of the other, but even that pique produced no enthusiasm in themselves. They were exactly in the same state of feeling, their minds only too much alike. But a return to the question was inevitable one way or other, and Mr. Beresford took it in hand, not without a little tremor, one still summer evening at the usual hour, when they were sitting in their usual places, their windows open, but the lamps lighted, and the soft dusk outside relieving with its shadowy background the soft illumination within.

"Do you remember," he said, "the talk we had one evening before all these agitations began? It was not decided. You would not say yes, or no."

"Would I not say no? it was because it has too harsh a sound. Why should there be yes'es or no'es between you and me?"

"Ah, but it was needful. What do you say now? I can only repeat what I said then. You know all my heart. Speak to me, dear. Shall it be yes or no?"

She had nothing to do with blushing at her age—yet she blushed and was ashamed of it; but looked at him frankly, openly, all the same, holding out her hands. "Dear," she said, "I will call you so too. No; why should we do this and disturb our life and trouble our children with new ideas. Listen, James Beresford. I would rather marry you than lose you; but there is no thought of losing you in any case."

"None, my dear, none—none, whatever comes of it."

“Then why should we trouble each other with new ideas and disturb our lives? We cannot be happier in our intercourse, you and I; we have all we want in each other. Let the children marry; it is natural. What a blessing of God it is that we have these dear proxies, James! And my boy is not going away,” she said, the tears coming to her eyes. “And I love your girl as if she were my own—and we are the father and mother without any trouble. What could heart wish for more?”

And no more was said. The subject was closed at once and for ever. Such is the perversity of human nature, that when James Beresford went home that evening he felt just a little cast down, disgusted, lonely, and slighted as it were by fate. He had not really wished for the change; indeed, did not really wish for it now; but yet—On the other side of the wall, Mrs. Meredith was much more comfortable—for why? she had been permitted the woman’s privilege of being the refuser, which banished all possibilities of pique, and made it impossible for her to feel herself slighted. But by-and-by they were both a great deal happier, and at their ease, which they had not been for weeks before.

And do I need to tell how the natural conclusion which their father and mother wisely and happily evaded arrived for Edward and Cara? Not quite immediately, however, for the young man gathered his note-books together again, and, having given up India, entered upon his course of dinners, and betook himself (like most other people) to the bar. He was “called” before the marriage took place; and when the marriage did take place the young people remained along with the old people in the two houses which were one. It would be hard to make an absolute appropriation of what belongs to No. 6 and what belongs to No. 8 in the Square. The thing which is most like a fixture is Mrs. Meredith, who sits smiling in the same chair as the years go on, hearing what everybody has to say. She is not expected to go to anyone; but everyone comes to her; and her chair is the only absolutely undisputed piece of property in the two houses. The young people are very happy and go honeymooning as once their elders did; and sometimes Mr. Beresford will make a journey in the interests of science or art. But nothing has touched the double house, nor is likely to touch it, till death does those sworn companions part.

THE END.



THE BLISS OF A GOOD MAN'S REST.

THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

SEPTEMBER, 1877.

Crema; or, My Father's Sin.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

A RETURN CALL.



IN the morning I laboured to dismiss these thoughts, these shameful suspicions, almost as hurtful to my father's honour as was the vile criminal charge itself. And calling back my memories of him, and dwelling on what Mr. Shovelin said, and Uncle Sam and others, I became quite happy in the firm conviction that I ought to be put upon bread and water for having such black visions. Then suddenly a thing came to my mind which shattered happy penitence.

Major Hockin had spoken of another purpose which he had in store while bringing me thus to London—another object, that is to say, beside the opening of

the trinket. And this his second intention was to “have it out,” as he expressed it, “with that league of snakes, and scorpions, and curs, Vypan, Goad, and Terryer.” This was the partnership whose card of

business had been delivered at the saw-mills, under circumstances which, to say the least, required explanation. And the Major, with strong words and tugs of his head-crest, had vowed to get that explanation, or else put the gang of them into a police-dock.

Moreover, when at the opening of the locket, I did not think fit to show the lapidary what I had found inside it, except the painting on ivory (which proved to be as he expected), and when my companion suppressed curiosity at the risk of constitution, and while I could scarcely tell what I was about (through sudden shock and stupidity), I must have been hurried on to tell Major Hockin the whole of the private things I had discovered. For in truth there was scarcely any time to think; and I was afraid of giving way, which must have befallen me without relief of words; and being so much disturbed I may, in the cab, have rushed off for comfort to the Major sitting so close to me. No doubt I did so from what happened afterwards; but in the morning, after such a night, I really could not be certain what I had said to Betsy, and what to him.

A large mind would have been steady throughout, and regarded the question of birth as a thing to which we, who are not consulted about it, should bear ourselves indifferently. And gladly would I have done so, if I could; but the power was not in me. No doubt it served me right for having been proud about such a trifle; but though I could call it a trifle as long as it seemed to be in my favour, my strength of mind was not enough to look at it so, when against me.

Betsy told me not to be like that, for I had a great deal to go through yet, and must not be drawing on my spirit so, every atom of which would be needful. For the General—as she called the Major—was coming to fetch me at eleven o'clock to face some abominable rascals, and without any breakfast how could I do it? Then I remembered all about the appointment to go to Messrs. Vypan, and beginning to think about them I saw sad confirmation of my bad ideas. My father's wicked elder brother, by another mother, had left his own rights pending, as long as my father lived, for good reason. For if the latter had turned against him, through a breach of compact, things might go ill in a criminal court; but having him silenced now by death, this man might come forward boldly and claim estates and title. His first point would be to make sure as sure could be of the death of my father, to get hold of his private papers, and of me, who might possess dangerous knowledge. And if this were so, one could understand at once Mr. Goad's attempt upon Uncle Sam.

“Now, none of this, none of this, I say, Erema!” Major Hockin exclaimed, as he ran in and saw me scarcely even caring to hold my own with the gentle Maximilian—to which name Mr. Strouss was promoted from the too vernacular “Hans”—“my dear, I never saw you look ill before. Why, bless my heart, you will have crows-feet! Nurse, what are you doing with her? Look at her eyes, and be ashamed of yourself. Give her goulard, tisane, tiffany—I never know what the proper word is—something, anything, volatile Sally, hartshorn, ammonia, aromatic vine-

gar, saline draught, or something strong; why I want her to look at her very, very best."

"As if she was a-going to a ball, poor dear," Betsy Strauss replied with some irony. "A young lady full of high spirits by nature, and have never had her first dance yet! The laws and institutions of this kingdom is too bad for me, General. I shall turn foreigner, like my poor husband."

"It is vere goot, vere goot always," said the placid Maximilian; "foreigner dis way, foreigner dat way; according to de hills, or de sea, or de fighting, or time to be born, or someting else."

"Hold your tongue, Hans," cried his Wilhelmina; "remember that you are in England now, and must behave constitutionally. None of your loose outlandish ideas will ever get your bread in England. Was I born according to fighting, or hills, or sea, or anything less than the will of the Lord, that made the whole of them, and made you too? General, I beg you to excuse him, if you can. When he gets upon such things, he never can stop. His goodness is very great; but he must have a firm hand put upon his 'philosophy.' Maximilian, you may go, and smoke your pipe for an hour and a quarter, and see where the cheapest greens and oil are, for His Excellence is coming in to-night; and mind you get plenty of stump in them. His Excellence loves them, and they fill the dish, besides coming cheaper. Now, Miss Erema, if you please come here. Trust you in me, Miss, and soon I will make you a credit to the General."

I allowed her to manage my dress and all that, according to her own ideas; but when she entreated to finish me up with the "leastest little touch of red—scarcely up to the usual colour, by reason of not sleeping," I stopped her at once, and she was quite content with the colour produced by the thought of it. Meanwhile Major Hockin, of course, was becoming beyond all description impatient. He had made the greatest point of my being adorned, and expected it done in two minutes! And he hurried me so, when I did come down, that I scarcely noticed either cab or horse, and put on my new gloves anyhow.

"My dear, you look very nice," he said at last, when thoroughly tired of grumbling; "that scoundrel of a Goad will be quite amazed at sight of the child he went to steal."

"Mr. Goad!" I replied, with a shudder, caused perhaps by dark remembrance; "if we go to the office, you surely will not expect me to see Mr. Goad himself?"

"That depends, as the Frenchmen say. It is too late now to shrink back from anything. If I can spare you, I will. If not, you must not be ashamed to show yourself."

"I am never ashamed to show myself. But I would rather not go to that place at all. If things should prove to be as I begin to think, I had better withdraw from the whole of it, and only lament that I ever began. My father was right, after all my father was wise; and I

ought to have known it. And perhaps Uncle Sam knew the truth, and would not tell me, for fear of my rushing to the Yosemite. Calman, please to turn the horse, and go in the opposite direction." But the Major pulled me back, and the driver lifted his elbow and said "All right."

"Erema," the Major began quite sternly; "things are gone a little too far for this. We are now embarked upon a most important investigation"—even in my misery I could scarce help smiling at his love of big official words—"an investigation of vast importance. A crime of the blackest dye has been committed, and calmly hushed up, for some petty family reason, for a period of almost twenty years. I am not blaming your father, my dear, you need not look so indignant. It is your own course of action, remember, which has led to the present—the present—well, let us say imbroglia. A man of honour and an officer of Her Majesty's service stands now committed at your request, mind at your own request——"

"Yes, yes, I know; but I only meant you to—to go as far as I should wish."

"Confidential instructions, let us say; but there are times when duty to society over-rides fine feeling. I have felt that already. The die is cast. No half-and-half measures, no beating about the bush, for me. After what I saw yesterday, and the light that burst upon me, I did not act hastily—I never do; though slow coaches may have said so. I put this and that together carefully, and had my dinner, and made up my mind. And you see the result in that man on the box."

"The cabman? Oh yes, you resolved to have a cab, and drive to those wicked informers."

"Where are your eyes? You are generally so quick. This morning you are quite unlike yourself—so weak, so tearful, and timorous! Have you not seen that by side of the cabman there sits another man altogether? One of the most remarkable men of the age—as your dear Yankees say."

"Not a policeman in disguise, I hope. I saw a very common insignificant man. I thought he was the driver's groom, perhaps."

"Hush! he hears everything, even on this granite. He is not a policeman; if he were, a few things that disgrace the force never would happen. If the policemen of England did their duty as our soldiers do, at once I would have gone to them; my duty would have been to do so. As it is, I go to our private police, who would not exist if the force were worth a rap. Vypan, Goad, and Terryer, in spite of Goad's clumsiness, rank second; I go to the first of all these firms, and I get their very cleverest rascal."

Major Hockin, speaking in this hoarse whisper—for he could not whisper gently—folded his arms, and then nodded his head, as much as to say, "I have settled it now. You have nothing to do but praise me."

But I was vexed and perplexed too much to trust my voice with an answer.

"The beauty of this arrangement is," he continued with vast complacency, "that the two firms hate one another, as the devil hates—no, that won't do, there is no holy water to be found amongst them—well, as a snake hates a slow-worm, let us say. 'Set a thief to catch a thief,' is a fine old maxim; still better, when the two thieves have robbed one another."

As he spoke, the noble stranger slipped off the driving-seat, without troubling the cabman to stop his jerking crawl; and he did it so well that I had no chance of observing his nimble face or form. "You are disappointed," said the Major, which was the last thing I would have confessed; "you may see that man ten thousand times, and never be able to swear to him. Ha, ha, he is a oner!"

"I disdain such mean tricks, beyond all expression," I exclaimed, as was only natural; "and everything connected with them. It is so low to talk of such things. But what in the world made him do it? Where does he come from, and what is his name?"

"Like all noble persons, he has got so many names that he does not know which is the right one; only his are short and theirs are long. He likes 'Jack' better than anything else, because it is not distinctive. 'Cosmopolitan Jack' some call him, from his combining the manners and customs, features and figures, of nearly all mankind. He gets on with every one, for every one is gratified by seeing himself reflected in him. And he can jump from one frame to another, as freely as Proteus, or the populace. And yet with all that he is perfectly honest to any allegiance he undertakes. He would not betray us to Vypan, Goad, and Terryer, for your great nugget and the Castlewood estates."

"I have heard that there are such people," I said; "but what can he possibly know about me? And what is he coming to do for us now?"

"He knows all about you, for a very simple reason. That you do not know him, is a proof of his ability. For you must have met him, times out of number. This is the fellow employed by your good but incapable cousin, Lord Castlewood."

"He is not incapable; he is a man of great learning, and noble character——"

"Well, never mind that—you must not be so hot. What I mean is, that he has done nothing for you, beyond providing for your safety. And that he certainly did right well, and at considerable expense, for this man can't be had for nothing. You need have been under no terror at all, in any of the scenes you have been through. Your safety was watched for continually."

"Then why did he not come and help me? Why did he not find out that horrible man?"

"Because it was not in his orders; and Jack is the last man to go beyond those. He is so clever that the stupid Moonites took him for a

stupid Moonite. You should have employed him yourself, Erema ; but you are so proud and independent."

"I should hope so indeed. Should I put up with deceit? If the truth is not to be had without falsehood, it becomes itself a falsehood. But what is this man to do here now?"

"That depends upon circumstances. He has better orders than I could give, for I am no hand at scheming. Here we are ; or here we stop. Say nothing till I tell you. Pray, allow me the honour. You keep in the background, remember, with your veil, or whatever you call it, down. Nobody stops at the very door. Of course that is humbug—we conform to it."

With a stiff inclination, the gallant Major handed me out of the cab in a quiet corner of a narrow street, then paid the driver with less fuss than usual, and led me into a queer little place marked in almost illegible letters, "Little England Polygon." "You have the card, my dear?" he whispered; "keep it till I call you in. But be ready to produce it in a moment. For the rest, I leave you to your own wit. Jack is on the watch, mind."

There were two doors near together, one a brave door with a plate, and swung on playing hinges, the other of too secluded a turn to even pronounce itself "private." We passed through the public door, and found only a lobby, with a boy on guard. "Mr. Goad? Yes, sir. This way, sir," cried the boy. "Lady stay? Yes, sir, waiting-room for ladies. Chair, Miss, here, if you please, first right. Mr. Goad, second on the left. Knock twice. Paper, Miss? Poker chained at this time of year. Bell A, glass of water. Bell B, cup of tea, if ladies grows impatient."

If I had been well, I might have reduced this boy to his proper magnitude, for I never could endure young flippancy; but my spirits were so low that the boy banged the door, with a fine sense of having vanquished me. And before there was any temptation to ring Bell A, not to mention Bell B, the sound of a wrathful voice began coming. Nearer and nearer it came, till the Major strode into the "ladies' waiting-room," and used language no ladies should wait for.

"Oh, don't," I said; "what would Mrs. Hockin say? And consider me too, Major Hockin, if you please."

"I have considered you, and that makes me do it. Everybody knows what I am. Did I ever exaggerate in all my life? Did I ever say anything without just grounds? Did I ever take any distorted views? Did I ever draw upon my imagination? Erema, answer me, this instant!"

"I do not remember a single instance of your drawing upon your imagination." I answered gravely, and did not add—"because there is none to draw upon."

"Very well. I was sure of your concurrence. Then just come with me. Take my arm, if you please, and have the thief's card ready. Now keep your temper, and your self-command."

With this good advice, the Major, whose arm and whole body were jerking with loss of temper, led me rapidly down the long passage and through a door, and my eyes met the eyes of the very man who had tried to bribe Uncle Sam of me. He never saw me then, and he did not know me now; but his insolent eyes fell under mine. I looked at him quietly, and said nothing.

"Now, Mr. Goad, you still assert that you never were in California—never even crossed the Atlantic. This young lady under my protection—don't you be afraid, my dear—is the Honourable Erema Castlewood, whom you, in the pay of a murderer, went to fetch, and perhaps to murder. Now, do you acknowledge it? You wrote her description, and ought to know her. You double-dyed villain, out with it!"

"Major Hockin," said Mr. Goad, trying to look altogether at his ease, but failing, and with his bull-dog forehead purple, "if indeed you are an officer—which I doubt for the credit of Her Majesty's service—if the lady were not present, I should knock you down." And the big man got up as if to do it.

"Never mind her," my companion answered in a magnanimous manner; "she has seen worse than that, poor thing. Here I am—just come, and do it."

The Major was scarcely more than half the size of Mr. Goad, in mere bodily bulk, and yet he defied him in this way! He carefully took his blue lights off, then drew up the crest of his hair, like his wife's most warlike cock a-crowing, and laid down his rattan upon a desk, and doubled his fists and waited. Then he gave me a blink from the corner of his gables, clearly meaning "please to stop, and see it out." It was a distressing thing to see, and the Major's courage was so grand that I could not help smiling. Mr. Goad, however, did not advance, but assumed a superior manner.

"Major," he said, "we are not young men; we must not be so hasty. You carry things with too high a hand, as veteran officers are apt to do. Sir, I make allowance for you; I retract my menace, and apologise. We move in different spheres of life, sir; or I would offer you my hand."

"No thank you!" the Major exclaimed, and then looked sorry for his arrogance. "When a man has threatened me, and that man sees the mistake of doing so, I am pacified, sir, in a moment; but it takes me some time to get over it. I have served His Gracious Majesty, and now Hers, in every quarter of the civilized globe, with distinction, sir, with distinction, and thanks, and no profit to taint the transaction, sir. In many battles I have been menaced with personal violence, and have received it, as in such positions is equitable. I am capable, sir, of receiving it still, and repaying it, not without interest."

"Hang it, Major, if a man is sorry, a soldier forgives him frankly. You abused me, and I rashly threatened you. I beg your pardon, as a man should do, and that should be an end to it."

"Very well, very well; say no more about it. But am I to under-

stand that you still deny, in that barefaced manner, with my witness here, the fact of your having been at Colonel Gundry's—my cousin, sir, and a man not to be denied, without an insult to myself—a man who possesses ingots of gold, ingots of gold, enough to break the Bank of England, and a man whose integrity doubles them all. Have you not heard of the monster nugget, transcending the whole of creation, discovered by this young lady looking at you, in the bed of the Saw-Mill River, and valued at more than half-a-million?"

"You don't mean to say so? When was it? Sylvester never said a word about it. The papers, I mean, never mentioned it."

"Try no more—well I won't say lies, though they are confounded lies—what I mean is no further evasion, Mr. Goad. Sylvester's name is enough, sir. Here is the card of your firm, with your own note of delivery on the back, handed by you to my cousin, the Colonel. And here stands the lady who saw you do it."

"Major, I will do my very best to remember. I am here, there, everywhere—China one day, Peru the next, Siberia the day after. And this young lady found the nugget, did she? How wonderfully lucky she must be!"

"I am lucky; I find out everything; and I shall find out you, Mr. Goad." Thus I spoke on the spur of the moment, and I could not have spoken better after a month of consultation. Rogues are generally superstitious. Mr. Goad glanced at me with a shudder, as I had gazed at him some three years back; and then he dropped his bad oily-looking eyes.

"I make mistakes sometimes," he said, "as to where I have been, and where I have not. If this young lady saw me there, it stands to reason that I may have been there. I have a brother extremely similar. He goes about a good deal also. Probably you saw my brother."

"I saw no brother of yours, but yourself. Yourself—your mean and cowardly self—and I shall bring you to justice."

"Well, well," he replied, with a poor attempt to turn the matter lightly; "I never contradict ladies; it is an honour to be so observed by them. Now, Major, can you give me any good reason for drawing upon a bad memory? My time is valuable. I cannot refer to such by-gone matters for nothing."

"We will not bribe you, if that is what you mean," Major Hockin made answer scornfully. "This is a criminal case, and we have evidence you little dream of. Our only offer is—your own safety, if you make a clean breast of it. We are on the track of a murderer, and your connection with him will ruin you. Unless you wish to stand in the dock at his side, you will tell us everything."

"Sir, this is violent language."

"And violent acts will follow it; if you do not give up your principal, and every word you know about him, you will leave this room in custody. I have Cosmopolitan Jack outside, and the police at a sign from him will come."

"Is this job already in the hands of the police, then?"

"No, not yet. I resolved to try you first. If you refuse, it will be taken up at once; and away goes your last chance, sir."

Mr. Goad's large face became like a field of conflicting passions and low calculations. Terror, fury, cupidity, and doggedness never had a larger battle-field.

"Allow me at least to consult my partners," he said in a low voice and almost with a whine; "we may do things irregular sometimes, but we never betray a client."

"Either betray your client or yourself!" the Major answered with a downright stamp. "You shall consult no one. You have by this watch forty-five seconds to consider it."

"You need not trouble yourself to time me," the other answered sulkily; "my duty to the firm over-rides private feeling. Miss Castlewood, I call you to witness, since Major Hoekin is so peppery——"

"Peppery, sir, is the very last word that ever could be applied to me. My wife, my friends, every one that knows me, even my furthest-off correspondents, agree that I am pure patience."

"It may be so, Major; but you have not shown it. Miss Castlewood, I have done you no harm. If you had been given up to me, you would have been safer than where you were. My honour would have been enlisted. I now learn things which I never dreamed of—or, at least, at least, only lately. I always believed the criminality to be on the other side. We never ally ourselves with wrong. But lately things have come to my knowledge, which made me doubtful as to facts. I may have been duped—I believe I have been—I am justified, therefore, in turning the tables."

"If you turn tables," broke in the Major, who was grumbling to himself at the very idea of having any pepper in his nature; "Goad, if you turn tables, mind you, you must do it better than the mesmerists. Out of this room you do not stir; no darkness—no bamboozling! Show your papers, sir, without sleight of hand. Surrender; or you get no quarter."

To me it was quite terrifying to see my comrade thus push his victory. Mr. Goad could have killed him at any moment, and but for me perhaps would have done so. But even in his fury, he kept on casting glances of superstitious awe at me, while I stood quite still and gazed at him. Then he crossed the room to a great case of drawers, unlocked something above the Major's head, made a sullen bow, and handed him a packet.

CHAPTER XLIX.

WANTED, A SAWYER.

To judge Mr. Goad by his own scale of morality and honour, he certainly had behaved very well through a trying and unexpected scene. He fought for his honour a great deal harder than ever it could have deserved of him; and then he strove well to appease it with cash, the mere thought of which must have flattered it. However, it was none the worse for a little disaster of this kind. At the call of duty it coalesced with interest and fine sense of law, and the contact of these must have strengthened it to face any future production.

For the moment he laid it aside in a drawer—and the smallest he possessed would hold it—and being compelled to explain his instructions (partly in short-hand, and partly in cipher), he kindly, and for the main of it truly, interpreted them as follows:—

“*July 31, 1858.*—Received directions from M. H. to attend without fail, at whatever expense, to any matter laid before us by a tall dark gentleman bearing his card. M. H. considerably in our debt; but his father cannot last long. Understand what he means, having dealt with this matter before, and managed well with it.

“*August 2.*—Said gentleman called, gave no name, and was very close. Had experienced some great wrong. Said that he was true heir to the C. estates now held by Lord C. Only required a little further evidence to claim them; and some of this was to be got through us. Important papers must be among the effects of the old lord’s son, lately dead in California, the same for whom a reward had been offered, and we had been employed about it. Must get possession of those papers, and of the girl, if possible. Yankees to be bribed, at whatever figure, and always stand out for a high one. Asked where funds were to come from; gave good reference, and verified it. To be debited to the account of M. H. Said we would have nothing to do with it, without more knowledge of our principal. Replied, with anger, that he himself was Lord C., ousted by usurpers. Had not the necessary proofs as yet, but would get them, and blast all his enemies. Had serious doubts about his sanity, still more serious about his solvency. Resolved to enquire into both points.

“*August 3.*—M. H. himself, as cool as ever, but shammed to be indignant. Said we were fools if we did not take it up. Not a farthing would he pay of his old account, and fellows like us could not bring actions. Also a hatful of money was to be made of this job, managed snugly. Emigrants to California were the easiest of all things to square up. A whole train of them disappeared this very year, by Indians or Mormons, and no bones made. The best and most active of us must go—too ticklish for an agent. We must carry on all above board out there,

and as if sent by British Government. In the far West, no one any wiser. Resolved to go myself, upon having a certain sum in ready.

"August 5.—The money raised. Start for Liverpool to-morrow. Require a change, or would not go. May hit upon a nugget, &c. &c."

Mr. Goad's memoranda of his adventures, and signal defeat by Uncle Sam, have no claim to be copied here, though differing much from my account. With their terse unfeeling strain, they might make people laugh, who had not sadder things to think of. And it matters very little how that spy escaped; as such people almost always seem to do.

"Two questions, Goad, if you please," said Major Hockin, who had smiled sometimes, through some of his own remembrances; "what has happened since your return, and what is the name of the gentleman whom you have called 'M. H.'?"

"Is it possible that you do not know, sir? Why he told us quite lately that you were at his back! You must know Sir Montague Hockin."

"Yes, yes; certainly I do," the old man said shortly, with a quick gleam in his eyes; "a highly respected gentleman now, though he may have sown his wild oats like the rest. To be sure; of course I know all about it. His meaning was good, but he was misled."

In all my little experience of life, nothing yet astonished me more than this. I scarcely knew whom to believe, or what. That the Major, most upright of men, should take up his cousin's roguery—all new to him—and speak of him thus! But he gave me a nudge; and being all confusion, I said nothing, and tried to look at neither of them; because my eyes must always tell the truth.

"As to the other point," Mr. Goad went on; "since my embassy failed, we have not been trusted with the confidence we had the right to expect. Ours is a peculiar business, sir; 'Trust me in all, or trust me not at all,' as one of our modern poets says, is the very essence of it. And possibly, Major, if that had been done, even your vigour and our sense of law might not have extorted from me what you have heard. Being cashiered, as we are, we act according to the strictest honour, in divulging things no longer confided to us."

"Goad, you have done yourself the utmost credit, legally, intellectually, and—well I will not quite say morally. If I ever have a nasty job to do—at least I mean a stealthy one—which God, who has ever kept me straight, forbid!—I will take care not to lose your address. I have a very queer thing occurring on my manor—I believe it is bound up with this affair—never mind; I must think—I hate all underhanded work."

"Major, our charges are strictly moderate. We do in a week what takes lawyers a twelvemonth. Allow me to hand you one of our new cards."

"No, no. My pockets are all full. And I don't want to have it found among my papers. No offence, Mr. Goad, no offence at all.

Society is not as it was when I was young. I condemn no modern institutions, Sir; though the world gets worse every day of its life."

In terror of committing himself to any connection with such a firm, the Major put on his dark lights again, took up his cane, and let everybody know, with a summary rap on the floor, that he might have relaxed, but would not allow any further liberty about it. And as he marched away, not proudly, yet with a very nice firmness, I was almost afraid to say anything to him, to disturb his high mental attitude. For Mrs. Hockin must have exclaimed that here was a noble spectacle.

"But one thing," I forced myself to suggest; "do ask one thing before we go. That strange man who called himself 'Lord Castlewood' here, and 'Captain Brown' at Soberton—have they any idea where to find him now? And why does he not come forward?"

My comrade turned back, and put these questions; and the private enquirer answered that they had no idea of his whereabouts, but could easily imagine many good reasons for his present reserve of claim. For instance, he might be waiting for discovery of further evidence; or (which was even more likely) for the death of the present Lord Castlewood, which could not be very far distant, and would remove the chief opponent. It grieved me deeply to find that my cousin's condition was so notorious, and treated of in such a cold-blooded way, like a mule fallen lame, or a Chinaman in Frisco.

"My dear, you must grow used to such things," Major Hockin declared, when he saw that I was vexed, after leaving those selfish premises; "if it were not for death, how could anybody live? Right feeling is shown by considering such points, and making for the demise of others even more preparation than for our own. Otherwise there is a selfishness about it, by no means Christian-minded. You look at things always from such an intense and even irreligious point of view. But such things are out of my line altogether. Your Aunt Mary understands them best."

"Would you be able," I said, "to account to Aunt Mary conscientiously for that dreadful story which I heard you tell? I scarcely knew where I stood, Major Hockin."

"You mean about Montague? Family honour must be defended at any price. Child, I was greatly pained to go beyond the truth; but in such a case it is imperative. I was shocked and amazed at my cousin's conduct; but how could I let such a fellow know that? And think what I owe to his father, Sir Rufus! No, no; there are times when Bayard himself must stretch a point. Honour and religion alike demand it; and Mrs. Hockin need never hear of it."

"Certainly, I shall not speak of it," I answered, though a little surprised at his arguments; "but you mean, of course, to find out all about it. It seems to me such a suspicious thing. But I never could bear Sir Montague."

The Major smiled grimly, and, perceiving that he wished to drop the

subject, I said no more. He had many engagements in London always, and I must not attempt to engross his time. However, he would not for a moment bear of leaving me anywhere but with Betsy, for perhaps he saw how strange I was. And, being alone at last with her, I could keep up my pride no longer.

Through all that had happened, there never had been such a dreadful trial as I had borne this day without a word to any one. Danger, and loss, and sad dreariness of mind, from want of young companionship ; mystery also, and obscurity of life, had always been my fortune. With all of these I had striven, to the best of my very small ability, having from nature no gift except the dull one of persistence. And throughout that struggle I had felt quite sure that a noble yearning for justice and a lofty power of devotion were my two impelling principles. But now, when I saw myself sprung of low birth, and the father of my worship base-born, down fell all my arduous castles, and I craved to go under the earth and die.

For every word of Mr. Goad, and every crooked turn of little things in twist against me—even the Major's last grim smile—all began to work together, and make up a wretched tumult, sounding in my ears like drums. Where was the use of going on, of proving anybody's guilt, or anybody's innocence, if the utmost issue of the whole would be to show my father an impostor? Then, and only then, I knew that love of abstract justice is to little minds impossible, that sense of honour is too prone to hang on chance of birth, and virtue's fountain, self-respect, springs but turbidly from soiled soil.

When I could no longer keep such bitter imaginings to myself, but poured them forth to Betsy, she merely laughed, and asked me how I could be such a simpleton. Only to think of my father in such a light was beyond her patience! Where was my pride, she would like to know, and my birth, and my family manners? However, she did believe there was something in my ideas, if you turned them inside out, and took hold of them by the other end. It was much more likely, to her mind, that the villain, the unknown villain at the bottom of all the misery, was really the son born out of wedlock, if any such there were at all ; and, therefore, a wild, harum-scarum fellow like Ishmael in the Book of Genesis. And it would be just of a piece, she thought, with the old lord's character to drive such a man to desperation by refusing to give him a farthing.

"All that might very well be," I answered ; "but it would in no way serve to explain my father's conduct, which was the great mystery of all." Nevertheless, I was glad to accept almost any view of the case, rather than that which had forced itself upon me since the opening of the locket. Any doubt of that most wretched conclusion was a great relief while it lasted ; and, after so long a time of hope and self-reliance, should I cast away all courage through a mere suspicion?

While I was thus reassuring myself, and being reassured by my

faithful nurse, sad news arrived and drove my thoughts into another crooked channel. Mrs. Hockin, to meet my anxiety for some tidings from California, had promised that, if any letter came, she would not even wait for the post, but forward it by special messenger. And thus, that very same evening, I received a grimy epistle, in an unknown hand, with the post-mark of Sacramento. Tearing it open, I read as follows:—

“MISS REMA,—No good luck ever came, since you, to this Blue River Station, only to be washed away, and robbed by greasers, and shot through the ribs, and got more work than can do, and find an almighty nugget sent by Satan. And now the very worst luck of all have come, wholly and out of all denial, by you, and your faces and graces, and French goings on. Not that I do not like you, mind; for you always was very polite to me, and done your best when you found me trying to put up with the trials put on me. But now this trial is the worst of all that ever come to my establishings; and to go away now as I used to think of doing when tyrannised upon, is out of my way altogether, and only an action fit for a half-breed. Sawyer Gundry hath cut and run, without a word behind him—no instructions for orders in hand, and pouring in—no directions where to find him, not even ‘God bless you’ to any one of the many hands that looked up to him. Only a packet of dollars for me to pay the wages for two months to come, and a power of lawyer to receive all debts, and go on anyhow just the same. And to go on just the same is more than the worst of us has the heart for, without the sight of his old red face. He may have been pretty sharp, and too much the master now and then, perhaps; but to do without him is a darned sight worse; and the hands don’t take to me like him. Many’s the time I have seen his faults, of having his own way, and such likes, and paying a man beyond his time, if his wife was out of order. And many’s the time I have said myself I was fitter to be at the head of it.

“About that I was right enough, perhaps, if I had started upon my own hook; but to stand in the tracks he has worn to his own foot, is to go into crooked compasses. There is never a day without some hand threatening to strike and to better himself, as if they were hogs to come and go according to the acorns; and such low words I can never put up with, and packs them off immediate. No place can be carried on if the master is to shut up his lips to impudence. And now I have only got three hands left, with work enough for thirty, and them three only s’opped on, I do believe, to grumble of me if the Sawyer do come home!

“But what we all want to know—and old Suan took a black stick to make marks for you—is why the old man hath run away, and where. Young Firm, who was getting a sight too uppish for me to have long put up with him, he was going about here, there, and everywhere, from the very first time of your going away, opening his mouth a deal too much, and asking low questions how long I stopped to dinner. Old

Suan said he was troubled in his mind, as the palefaces do be about young girls, instead of dragging them to their wigwams; and she would give him a spell to get over it. But nothing came of that; and when the war broke out, he had words with his grandfather, and went off, so they said, to join the rebels.

"Sawyer let him go, as proud as could be, though he would sooner have cut his own head off; and the very same night he sat down by his fire, and shammed to eat supper as usual. But I happened to go in to get some orders, and, my heart, I would never wish to see such things again!

"The old man would never waste a bit of victuals, as you know, Miss Rema; and, being acquaint with Suan's way of watching, he had slipped all his supper aside from his plate, and put it on a clean pocket-handkerchief, to lock it in the press till his appetite should serve; and I caught him in the act, and it vexed him. 'Han't you the manners to knock at the door?' he said; and I said 'Certainly,' and went back and done it; and, troubled as he was, he grinned a bit. Then he bowed his great head, as he always did when he knew he had gone perhaps a trifle too far with a man in my position. I nodded to forgive him, and he stood across, and saw that he could do no less than liquor me, after such behaviour. But he only brought out one glass; and I said, 'Come, Colonel, square is square, you know.' 'Excuse of me, Martin,' he said; 'but no drop of strong drink passes the brim of my mouth till this gallivanting is done with. I might take too much, as the old men do, to sink what they don't want to think on.' 'You mean about bullycock Firm,' says I; 'rebel Firm—nigger-driver Firm.' 'Hush,' he said; 'no bad words about it! He has gone by his conscience and his heart. What do we know of what come inside of him?'

"This was true enough, for I never did make that boy out to my liking: and the old man now was as stiff as a rock, and pretty nigh as peculiar. He made me a cocktail of his own patent, to show how firm his hand was; but the lines of his face was like wainscote mouldings, and the cords of his arm stood out like cogs. Then he took his long pipe, as he may have done perhaps every blessed night for the last fifty years; but that length of time ought to have learned him better than to go for to fill it upside down. 'Ha! ha!' he said, 'everything is upside down, since I was a man, under heaven—countries, and nations, and kindreds, and duties; and why not a old tobacco-pipe? That's the way babies blow bubbles with them. We shall all have to smoke 'em that way, if our noble Republic is busted up. Fill yours, and try it, Martin.'

"Instead of enjoying my cocktail, Miss 'Rema, I never was so down at mouth; for, to my mind, his old heart was broken, while he carried on so. And let everybody say what they will, one thing there is no denying of. Never was seen, on this side of the big hills, a man fit to walk in the tracks of Uncle Sam, so large and good-hearted according to

his lights, hard as a grizzly bear for a man to milk him, but soft in the breast bone as a young prairie-hen for all folk down upon their nine-pins.

“You may be surprised, Miss, to find me write so long. Fact is the things won’t go out of my mind without it. And it gives me a comfort, after all I may have said, to put good opinions upon paper. If he never should turn up again, my language will be to his credit; whereas if he do come back, with the betting a horse to a duck against it, to his pride he will read this testimonial of yours, faithfully,

“MARTIN CLOGFAST.

“P.S.—Can’t carry on like this much longer. Enough to rip one’s heart up. You never would know the old place, Miss. The heads of the horses is as long as their tails with the way they carry them; the moss is as big as a Spaniard’s beard upon the kitchen door-sill; and the old dog howls all day and night, like fifty thousand scalpers. Swan saith, if you was to come back, the lad might run home after you. Tisn’t the lad I cares about so much, but poor old Sawyer, at his time of life, swallowed up in the wilderness.”

CHAPTER I.

THE PANACEA.

As if my own trouble were not enough, so deeply was I grieved by this sad news that I had a great mind to turn back on my own and fly to far-off disasters. To do so appeared for the moment a noble thing, and almost a duty; but now, looking back, I perceive that my instinct was right when it told me to stay where I was, and see out my own sad story first. And Betsy grew hot at the mere idea of my hankering after a miller’s affairs, as she very rudely expressed it. To hear about lords and ladies, and their crimes and adventures, was lovely; but to dwell upon people of common birth, and in trade, was most unbecoming. A man who mended his own mill, and had hands like horn—well, even she was of better blood than that, she hoped.

Before these large and liberal views had fairly been expounded, Major Hockin arrived, with his mind in such a state that he opened his watch every second.

“Erema, I must speak to you alone,” he cried; “no, not even you, Mrs. Strouss, if you please. If my ward likes to tell you, why of course she can; but nobody shall say that I did. There are things that belong to the family alone. The most loyal retainers—you know what I mean.”

“General, I was not aware that you belonged to the family. But this way, Sir; this way, if you please. There is lath and plaster to that wall, and a crack in the panel of the door, Sir. But here is a room where I keep my jams, with double brick, and patent locks, from sweet-toothed

lodgers. The scutcheon goes over the key-hole, General. Perhaps you will see to that, while I roll up the carpet outside; and then, if any retainers come, you will hear their footsteps."

"Bless the woman, what a temper she has!" whispered the Major, in dread of her ears; "is she gone, Erema? She wants discipline."

"Yes, she is gone," I said, trying to be lightsome; "but you are enough to frighten any one."

"So far from that, she has quite frightened me. But never mind such trifles. Erema, since I saw you I have discovered, I may almost say, everything."

Coming upon me so suddenly, even with all allowance made for the Major's sanguine opinion of his own deeds, this had such effect upon my flurried brain that practice alone enabled me to stand upright and gaze at him.

"Perhaps you imagined when you placed the matter in my hands, Miss Castlewood," he went on, with sharp twinkles from the gables of his eyes, but soft caresses to his whiskers, "that you would be left in the hands of a man who encouraged a crop of hay under his feet. Never did you or anybody make a greater mistake. That is not my character, Miss Castlewood."

"Why do you call me 'Miss Castlewood' so? You quite make me doubt my own right to the name."

Major Hockin looked at me with surprise, which gladdened even more than it shamed me. Clearly his knowledge of all, as he described it, did not comprise the disgrace which I feared.

"You are almost like Mrs. Strouss to-day," he answered with some compassion. "What way is the wind? I have often observed that when one female shows asperity, nearly all the others do the same. The weather affects them more than men, because they know nothing about it. But to come back—are you prepared to hear what I have got to tell you?"

I bowed without saying another word. For he should be almost the last of mankind to give a lecture upon irritation.

"Very well; you wish me to go on. Perceiving how sadly you were upset by the result of those interviews, first with Handkin, and then with Goad, after leaving you here I drove at once to the office, studio, place of business, or whatever you please to call it, of the famous fellow in the portrait line, whose anagram, private mark, or whatever it is, was burnt into the back of the ivory. Handkin told me the fellow was dead, or of course his work would be worth nothing; but the name was carried on, and the register kept, at a little place somewhere in Soho; where, on the strength of his old repute, they keep up a small trade with inferior hands. I gave them a handsome order for a thing that will never be handsome, I fear—my old battered physiognomy. And then I produced the locket which in some queer state of mind you had given me, and made them hunt out their old books, and at last discovered the very entry. But to verify it I must go to Paris, where his son is living."

“Whose son? Lord Castlewood’s?”

“Erema, have you taken leave of your senses? What son has Lord Castlewood? The artist’s son, to be sure; the son of the man who did the likeness. Is it the vellum and the stuff upon it that has so upset your mind? I am glad that you showed it to me, because it would have been mean to do otherwise. But show it to no one else, my dear, except your cousin, Lord Castlewood. He has the first right of all to know it, though he will laugh at it as I do. Trumpery of that sort! Let them produce a certified copy of a register. If they could do that, need they ever have shot that raffish old lord—I beg pardon, my dear—your highly-respected grandfather? No, no; don’t tell me. Nicholas Hockin was never in any way famous for want of brains, my dear, and he tells you to keep your pluck up.”

“I never can thank you enough,” I replied, “for such inspiriting counsel. I have been rather miserable all this day. And I have had such a letter from America.”

Without my intending any offer of the kind, or having such idea at the furthest tip of any radius of mind, I found myself under a weight about the waist, like the things the young girls put on now. And this was the arm of the Major, which had been knocked about in some actions, but was useful still to let other people know, both in this way and that, what he thought of them. And now it let me know that he pitied me.

This kindness from so old a soldier made me partial to him. He had taken an age to understand me, because my father was out of the army almost before I was born, and therefore I had no traditions. Also, from want of drilling, I had been awkward to this officer, and sometimes mutinous, and sometimes a coward. All that, however, he forgave me when he saw me so downhearted; and while I was striving to repress all signs, the quivering of my lips perhaps suggested thoughts of kissing. Whereupon he kissed my forehead with nice dry lips, and told me not to be at all afraid.

“How many times have you been brave?” he enquired, to set me counting, knowing from all his own children, perhaps, that nothing stops futile tears and the waste of sobs like prompt arithmetic. “Six, if not seven, times you have displayed considerable valour. Are you going to fall away through some wretched imagination of your own? Now, don’t stop to argue—time will not allow it. I have put Cosmopolitan Jack as well upon the track of Captain Brown. I have not told you half of what I could tell, and what I am doing; but never mind, never mind; it is better that you should not know too much, my dear. Young minds, from their want of knowledge of the world, are inclined to become uneasy. Now go to bed and sleep soundly, Erema, for we have lots to do to-morrow, and you have had a most worrying day to-day. To-morrow, of course, you must come with me to Paris. You can parleyvoo better than I can.”

However, as it happened, I did nothing of the kind, for when he

came back in the morning, and while he was fidgeting and hurrying me, and vowing that we should lose the tidal train, a letter from Bruntsea was put into my hand. I saw Mrs. Price's clear writing followed by good Aunt Mary's crooked lines, and knew that the latter must have received it too late to be sent by her messenger. In few words it told me that, if I wished to see my cousin alive, the only chance was to start immediately.

Shock, and self-reproach, and wonder, came (as usual) before grief; which always means to stay, and waits to get its mourning ready. I loved and respected my cousin more deeply than any one living, save Uncle Sam; and now to lose them both at once seemed much too dreadful to be true. There was no time to think. I took the Major's cab, and hurried off to Paddington, leaving him to catch his tidal train.

Alas, when I got to Castlewood, there was but a house of mourning! Faithful Stixon's eyes were dim, and he pointed upward, and said, "Hush!" I entered with great awe, and asked, "How long?" And he said, "Four-and-twenty hours now; and a more peaceful end was never seen, and to lament was sinful; but he was blest if he could help it." I told him, through my tears, that this was greatly to his credit, and he must not crush fine feelings, which are an honour to our nature. And he said that I was mistress now, and must order him to my liking.

I asked him to send Mrs. Price to me, if she was not too busy; and he answered that he believed her to be a very good soul, and handy. And if he ever had been thought to speak in a sense disparishing of her, such things should not be borne in mind, with great afflictions over us. Mrs. Price, hearing that I was come, already was on her way to me, and now glanced at the door for Mr. Stixon to depart, in a manner past misunderstanding.

"He gives himself such airs!" she said; "sometimes one would think—but I will not trouble you now with that, Miss Castlewood, or Lady Castlewood—which do you please to be called, Miss? They say that the barony goes on, when there is no more Viscount."

"I please to be called 'Miss Castlewood,' even if I have any right to be called that. But don't let us talk of such trifles now. I wish to hear only of my cousin."

"Well, you know, ma'am, what a sufferer he has been for years. If ever an angel had pains all over, and one leg compulsory of a walking-stick, that angel was his late lordship. He would stand up, and look at one, and give orders in that beautiful silvery voice of his, just as if he was lying on a bed of down. And never a twitch, nor a hitch in his face, nor his words, nor any other part of him. I assure you, Miss, that I have been quite amazed and overwhelmed with interest, while looking at his poor legs, and thinking——"

"I can quite enter into it. I have felt the same. But please to come to what has happened lately."

"The very thing I was at the point of doing. Then last Sunday,

God alone knows why, the pain did not come on at all. For the first time for seven years or more, the pain forgot the time-piece. His lordship thought that the clock was wrong; but waited with his usual patience, though missing it from the length of custom, instead of being happy. But when it was come to an hour too late for the proper attack of the enemy, his lordship sent orders for Stixon's boy to take a good horse and ride to Pangbourne for a highly respectable lawyer. There was no time to fetch Mr. Spines, you see, Miss, the proper solicitor, who lives in London. The gentleman from Pangbourne was here by eight o'clock; and then and there his lordship made his will, to supersede all other wills. He put it more clearly, the lawyer said, than he himself could have put it, but not, of course, in such legal words, but doubtless far more beautiful. Nobody in the house was forgotten; and the rule of law being, it seems, that those with best cause to remember must not witness, two of the tenants were sent for, and wrote down their names legitimate. And then his lordship lay back, and smiled, and said, 'No more pain for me, ever any more.'

"All that night and three days more, he slept as sound as a little child, to make up for so many years. We called two doctors in; but they only whispered and looked dismal, and told us to have hot water ready at any hour of the day or night. Nobody loved him as I did, Miss, from seeing so much of his troubles, and miraculous way of bearing them; and I sat by the hour and hour, and watched him, trusting no paid nurses.

"It must have been eight o'clock on Wednesday morning—what is to-day? Oh, Friday—then Thursday morning it must have been, when the clouds opened up in the east, and the light of the sun was on the window-sill, not glaring or staring, but playing about, with patterns of leaves between it; and I went to screen it from his poor white face; but he opened his eyes, as if he had been half-awake, half-dreaming, and he tried to lift one of his thin, thin hands to tell me not to do it. So I let the curtain stay as it was, and crept back, and asked very softly, 'Will your lordship have some breakfast?'

"He did not seem to comprehend me, but only watched the window; and if ever a blessed face there was, looking towards heaven's glory, his lordship had it, so that I could scarcely keep from sobbing. For I never had seen any living body die, but knew that it must be so. He heard me catching my breath, perhaps, or at any rate he looked at me; and the poor angel knew that I was a woman; and being full of high respect, as he always was for females—in spite of the way they had served him—it became apparent to his mind that the pearl button of his neck was open, as ordered by the doctors. And he tried to lift his hand to do it, and then he tried to turn away, but could not manage either. Poor dear! the only movement he could make was to a better world.

"Then I drew the sheet across his chest, and he gave me a little smile of thanks, and perhaps he knew whose hand it was. But the look

of his kind soft eyes was flickering—not steady, I mean, Miss—but glancing, and stopping, and going astray, as drops of rain do on the window-glass. But I could not endure to examine him much; at such a holy time I felt that to watch death was unholy.

“Perhaps I ought to have rung the bell, for others to be present. But his lordship was always shy, you know, Miss; and with none of his kindred left, and no wife to say ‘good-bye’ to him, right or wrong I resolved alone to see him depart to his everlasting rest. And people may talk about hirelings, but I think nobody loved him as I did.”

Here Mrs. Price broke fairly down; and I could not help admiring her. To a faithful servant’s humility and duty she had added a woman’s pure attachment to one more gifted than herself, and ruined for life by her own sex. But she fell away frightened and ashamed beneath my look, as if I had caught her in sacrilege.

“Well, Miss, we all must come and go,” she began again, rather clumsily; “and, good and great as he was, his lordship has left few to mourn for him. Only the birds, and beasts, and animals, that he was so good to; they will miss him, if men don’t. There came one of his favourite pigeons, white as snow all over, and sat on the sill of the window, and cooed, and arched up its neck for his fingers. And he tried to put his fingers out, but they were ice already. Whether that or something else brought home his thoughts, who knows, Miss? but he seemed to mix the pigeon up with some of his own messages.

“Say that I have forgiven her, if ever she did harm to me,” he whispered, without moving lips. ‘Times and times, when I was young, I was not always steady;’ and then he seemed to wander in his mind among old places; and he would have laughed at something, if his voice had been sufficient.

“‘Bitter grief and pain shall never come again,’ he seemed to breathe, with a calm, soft smile, like a child with its rhyme about the rain when the sun breaks out; and sure enough the sun upon the quilt above his heart was shining, as if there could be no more clouds. Then he whispered a few short words to the Lord, more in the way of thanks than prayer, and his eyes seemed to close of their own accord, or with some good spirit soothing them. And when or how his sleep passed from this world into the other, there was scarcely the flutter of a nerve to show. There he lies, like an image of happiness; will you come and see him?”

I followed her to the bedroom, and am very glad that I did so; for it showed me the bliss of a good man’s rest, and took away my fear of death.

On some French Writers of Verse, 1830-1877.



THÉOPHILE GAUTIER, writing about ten years ago, compared the reader of contemporary French poetry to a wanderer at spring-time in a wood:—“In the grass, trodden by few feet, a slender path is discovered; we follow its first windings; upon its edges, below the oaks and half hidden under last autumn’s withered leaves, we divine by a dim perfume the presence of violets. From among the branches, through which the wind moves with a vague murmur, we hear the song of an invisible bird. It flies at our approach to gain a remoter covert with sudden stroke of wings. We pluck a few violets, and muse on the song of the bird, and go forward. But presently the little wood changes to a forest; glades open, carpeted with grass; rivulets babble around mossy stones, or lie in rocky basins into which the deer gazes at his mirrored form. The violets become less shy, and offer themselves to the hand that gathers. Our tiny nosegay grows to a sheaf with added lily of the valley, the wilding rose, and all the tangled bloom of the woods. From trees, shrubs, thickets, from the forest depths, rise a thousand voices, which ring together—finches, redbreasts, the titmouse, the thrush, the blackbird—while in hurried notes noisier than the rest some jays and magpies jargon, flinging down their dissonance in midst of the general harmony.”*

It must be confessed, however, that if the singing birds are many, there are few of sovereign note, and that rarely is any supreme song audible which makes for itself a central space of silence. The contemporary poets of France, setting apart Victor Hugo, are each like one faculty or one fragment of a great poet. We feel how absurd it would be to expect from any writer of their kind a modern *Divine Comedy*, a poem rendering into imaginative form all science, all theology, the best contemporary tendencies of art, the most fervid political passion, the most exalted human love, the clearest vision of human life, the highest hopes and prophecies of the future, and at the same time the completest culture and guidance obtainable from the past. On the contrary, each writer lives and sings by virtue of some peculiar strength or grace, and runs the risk of becoming a specialist in *technique*. The poets are ready to complain that the public are indifferent to poetry (though such is in fact far from being the case); some affect to despise the people and to care only for the judgment of amateurs, some acquire a genuine disdain

* *Rapport sur le Progrès des Lettres*. Publication faite sous les auspices du Ministère de l’Instruction Publique (1868).

of popularity, and each one ends by writing for a coterie. The coterie consists of a group of persons who, by exclusive attention to certain qualities of a work of art, have come to admire those qualities extravagantly; the artist who labours for them abandons the effort toward universality, accepts his province, and where he has succeeded there he remains. He is tempted to become an imitator of himself, to reproduce his special effects, to accentuate his peculiarities of style. One elects to found his fame upon melody and colour, one upon his plastic quality, one upon fidelity to the idea; this writer excels in sonnets, and that in triolets; one is the poet of despair, and another the poet of joy. In each there is something set, something preposse, something of *parti pris*: it calls for some manliness of character not on all occasions to pose oneself in the admired attitude.

Victor Hugo alone is a master artist—a master artist with gigantic faults—in all departments. We are sensible in every line of his that it has been uttered to an audience of all France, and more than France. His are the large effects, and spaces, and freedom; and when he poses himself it is not with a dainty attitudinising, but with an extravagance of posture which expects to justify itself to the sympathy of a vast and excited crowd. His is the liberal hand which will not be curbed. Fresco pleases him, nor are the most exquisite refinements and delicate felicities unsuitable to the artist of large designs. He works suspended in the dome with fiery eagerness for the upgazing throng below, the sound of whose voices and impatient footsteps reaches him only in a confused murmur. His faults, as well as his excellences, correspond with his position as of one who is in presence of a sympathising and credulous multitude; when he is not grand he is grandiose; sometimes he reminds us of Paul Veronese, and sometimes of the Musée Wiertz; when he is not a true prophet he is a false one, but still a prophet:—

Oh, the crowd must have emphatic warrant!
Theirs the Sinai-forehead's cloven brilliance,
Right-arm's rod-sweep, tongue's imperial fiat.

Victor Hugo has been and is an enfranchising power in French poetry. After studying the fine mechanism of those Parisian toys turned out of the workshops of celebrated verse-makers, we lift our eyes and see the great alexandrine of Victor Hugo surging and springing, alive and ashine, from crest to hollow, and our pride of petty perfection is abated; we know ourselves to be encompassed with the beauty and the mystery of life.

No poet has appeared in France since 1830 who has been able to exercise undisputed sway and bend to his will the imaginations of all men. At that time there was a truly national movement in literature, a movement which brought into harmonious relation qualities so various as the gracious refinement of Alfred de Vigny and Hugo's strangeness of splendour, the vague spiritual reverie of Lamartine and all that was sensuous and all that was passionate in the heart of Musset. It was an

unlucky name which got attached to these writers and their fellows—"the Romantic school." There had been a Romantic school in Germany, which, unable as it was to win the solid prizes of the world by wrestling for them with the real forces of nature and of society, had retreated to a fanciful realm where imaginary treasures were abundant—treasures of spurious sentiment and facile marvels of imagination. Some members of the school had gained a pale aureole around poetic brows by yielding themselves as sentimental-æsthetic converts to the Church of Rome. They died and left no seed. Heine, the last of the Romanticists, the first of the moderns, adorned the crosses of their graves with wreaths into which flowers of mocking significance were woven, and strewed blossoms to their memory which held each for honey in its cup a drop of corrosive irony. Thus the German Romantic school was impotent, and its fate was a little piteous. It was by a critical misnomer that the French movement bore the same name. There was, it is true, a certain predilection on the part of Hugo and others for subjects taken from the Middle Ages; there was at first no direct antagonism to the Catholic Church, but rather the contrary, and the author of *Odes et Ballades* delighted to celebrate the baptism of a duke or the consecration of a king. But these traits were superficial. The Romantic movement in its essence was a return to nature and to reality. In the great age of the Renaissance, in Italy, in England, in Flanders, an unbounded interest was manifested by the artists and by their public in classical mythology; but Michael Angelo and Titian, and the English dramatists and Rubens, handled classical mythology with entire freedom, so that in many respects no art is less like that of Greece than the art of the Renaissance. In like manner the mediævalism of the French Romantic school was, in the main, not archæological nor sentimental, but modern, passionate, and vital. The new demands upon art were made in the spirit of frank self-pleasing. Verse, declared the Romantic leaders, was no longer to be pronounced good or bad according to the degree in which it conformed to certain rules that formulated the pleasures of courtiers and persons of quality whose skulls were filled with the dust of two centuries. New desires have arisen, and it is right that they should be gratified. Freedom of movement, large chromatic effects, limitless variety of forms, novel and rich rhymes, spaces, and colour, and animation delight us, and modern verse must give us these. Self-contemplation is a habit of our minds; we love to utter to ourselves our joys and griefs, our hopes and fears, our pieties and sensualities, our aspirations and our declensions, our loyalties and our treasons, our faiths and our scepticisms, our heroisms and our weaknesses, our illusions and our disillusionings; the ode and the elegy must expand to receive all these. Our imagination is capable of audacities; we as well as Shakspeare's generation can hurry in two hours from event to event through the crowded incidents of a lifetime, can pass from city to city and from land to land; the drama must recognise such a fact as this, and must modify itself accordingly. Such was the spirit of the

Romantic movement, and because, notwithstanding some feverishness and extravagance and folly, it was upon the whole a sane and vigorous spirit, the Romantic movement thrived and bore fruit. The subsequent lives of the foremost men of that movement illustrate by undesigned coincidence its true character. The plaintive lover of Elvire became the standard-bearer—somewhat consciously chivalrous, it may be—of the tricolour in 1848, champion of what supposed itself to be the advanced party of order in opposition to anarchy on the one hand and reaction on the other. The royalist odes of Hugo ceased to be written, and by a strange series of metamorphoses his poems became the brief democratic epics of *La Légende des Siècles*. And Sainte-Beuve, ever the one same personality, yet never in the same position for two successive years, the sometime disciple of Lamennais in his neo-Catholic period, and inoculated with fervour and elevation, afterwards the genial sceptic with certain faiths of his own—Sainte-Beuve preserved his identity by nothing so truly as by his capacity for assuming Protean diversities of form, and no day of his life passed without adding something to his store of erudition, something to the range and flexibility of his sympathies, to the refinement of his perception and the sureness of his tact and taste; a man framed for enjoyment and for toil, to whom every moment of life was a moment of growth. The leaders of the French Romantic movement, after their period of impulsive youth, were still vital and progressive; they did not shrivel and harden; they were not disembowelled, and embalmed honourably, and swathed in the mummy cloth.

“They all come from Chateaubriand,” was Goethe’s remark to Eckermann with reference to Victor Hugo and other French poets of 1827. They all resembled Chateaubriand at least in this, that in a greater or less degree all, like him, were sufferers from—or shall we say, enjoyers of?—the characteristic melancholy of the nineteenth century (*la maladie du siècle*), and all, like him, were prone to self-confession. When Hugo’s chords clashed with less impetuous sound, as when he sang his *Songs of Twilight*, the undertone of sadness could be distinguished. The soul of Lamartine wasted itself in vague yearning for something which should be satisfying, something beautiful but unattainable as the stars. Musset cried because his wounds smarted, and because he was frank and like a child. Sainte-Beuve studied his ailments with curious interest, and tried all remedies in turn. Each of these men was healed of his disease—Lamartine by political activity and ambition, Victor Hugo by his democratic faith and fervour, Musset by death, Sainte-Beuve by indulgent time, by manifold pleasures enriching his nature, and by the happy consciousness of certain faculties ripening hour by hour.

The self-confession which was the poetical habit of the Romantic poets in their earlier period was a result of the expansive character of the movement, which in this respect carried on the tradition handed down through Chateaubriand from Rousseau. The greater part of the poetry which was not strictly dramatic was personal. The poet was himself the

central object of his art ; he caressed his own emotions, he nourished his reverie, he lingered long in the company of his sorrows, he was endlessly effusive. In the ode, the elegy, the sonnet, he sang himself through all his varying moods. The excess of this manner, the affectations it induced, and, after the style had been much cultivated, the banality of these poetic sorrows and aspirations, inevitably resulted in a reaction. When the expansive movement had reached its limit, a movement of concentration, not so powerful but as real, commenced. Gautier, by his natural disposition, was less effusive than the rest ; he was less an emotional egotist, and this circumstance had unquestionably a share in delaying his popularity as a poet until the influence of Musset was on the wane. To Gautier and to Baudelaire there appeared to be something feminine in Musset's sensibility and his eager demand for sympathy. They discerned in what was called the poetry of the heart a certain disorder, an absence of superintendence, which are contrary to the true spirit of art. It is the imagination, not the emotions, which possesses plastic power. Full authority had previously been given to passion, and it had been represented as infallible ; now it was asserted that the heart is a secondary and subordinate organ in the artist's nature. "The heart," says Baudelaire, "contains passion ; the heart contains devotion, crime ; the imagination alone contains poetry." "Sensibility of the heart is not absolutely favourable to the work of a poet. Extreme sensibility of heart may even be injurious to it. Sensibility of the imagination is of another kind ; it knows to choose, to judge, to compare, to avoid this, to seek that, rapidly, spontaneously." Naturally, as a part of this movement of concentration, an increased value was set upon the workmanship of verse, and strict metrical forms—forms not of the old classical types, but rich, varied, and subtle—began to replace such nebulous luminosity as was diffused over many of the pages of Lamartine.

Point de contraintes fausses !

Mais que pour marcher droit

Tu chausse

Muse, un cothurne étroit.

The pole opposite to Musset and the poetry of the heart was reached by neither Gautier nor Baudelaire, but has perhaps been touched by the one poet who in recent years has been accepted by a circle of élite readers as a master, and who is certainly the creator of a style—Leconte de Lisle. In real life a *spirituel* irony suffices to protect his heart ; in his verse, if once and again a cry for escape from the turmoil of existence into the irrevocable peace, the great night and silence of death, forms itself upon his lips, for the most part they are closed with stoical compression against all utterance of personal feeling, while with an enforced calm he proceeds to make his imaginative studies of thoughts and things.

It is noted by Charles Baudelaire that upon the one side Gautier continued the great school of melancholy created by Chateaubriand, and upon the other side "he introduced into poetry a new element, which

may be named 'consolation, by means of the arts.'" From Gautier's latest poetry the melancholy has almost disappeared; the genius of art has subdued the demon of pain. Thus an escape was effected by him from *la maladie du siècle*. Gautier's nature was indeed one framed for a rich enjoyment of life, but such a nature is not out of the reach of a nameless enervating sadness. Gautier, however, possessed an amulet virtuous to repel the invasion of despondency. If happiness is nowhere else to be found, it is to be found unflinching in the presence, and still more in the creation, of beauty. Let the world go its way, and the kings and the peoples strive, and the priests and philosophers wrangle, at least to make a perfect verse is to be out of time, master of all change, and free of every creed. Though Gautier's was a very positive imagination, there is something almost of the mystic's passion in this devotion to art. It includes the infinite and absolute of plastic perfection, of flawless workmanship, which, if endlessly pursued and never attained, leaves the heart as empty and yearning as was that of Lamartine in his religious musings. The combat with rebellious matter, the struggle to impose upon its shapeless anarchy the pure idea of the imagination, has the glory of a combat *à outrance*. To pursue an outline and never wrong its delicate, immortal beauty is a kind of religious service; to be the guardian of pure contour is to purchase to oneself a good degree. In the contemplation of a curve, as in the contemplation of a dogma, it is possible to find oneself led at the last up to an *O altitudo!*

Still this devotion to beauty, to beauty alone, or if not alone yet above all else, was a part of the movement of concentration. It was a kind of hedonist asceticism. A cloistered monk engaged in his round of devotions and mortifications is not more remote from the ideal of sane and complete manhood than was the cultured master of the school of art for art, who could isolate himself from the fears and hopes of his country in her hour of extreme peril to fuse his enamels and cut his cameos. It is certainly well, in a period from which great ideas and large ardours are absent that the æsthetic faculty should keep itself alive, even if not conscious of its highest functions, by the pursuit of beauty out of all relation to conscience, to religion, or the needs and aspirations of a people. And unquestionably by limiting his range an artist can more readily approach to a miniature perfection, and can push certain qualities of his work to a higher degree of development. But the century succeeding the French Revolution, the century in which science rejoices as a young man to run a race, is not an age of Byzantine effete-ness and sterility. Persons who do not receive an exquisite thrill from curious beauty and flawless workmanship have not a right to speak scornfully of these things; but it is possible for one who does receive such exquisite excitement to refuse himself, for the sake of better, larger, wiser things to come, some of these moments of refined delight.

The shelves are crowded with perfumes;
I breathe the fragrance myself, and know it, and like it;
The distillation would intoxicate me also, but I shall not let it.

An artist who should fling himself abroad upon the great hopes and fears, the great strivings and sorrows, the great deeds and thoughts, of our century might indeed suffer as an artist; his work might come forth as faulty as that of the early Christian painters, with other and less engaging tokens of immaturity than their naïve innocence and childlike trustfulness; but his work, like theirs, might prove a prophecy; and if the name of art were denied to it, such work might yet be a wind in our lips, a light in our eyes, more precious for our needs than anything which in our time can be brought to complete and flawless form by the plastic imagination.

The counter-tendencies which a young poet meets in Paris of the Revolution, which contains within it the Paris of "art for art," are amusingly illustrated in a recent prose confession of æsthetic faith by M. Raoul Lafagette.* The young poet arrived from the provinces bearing letters of introduction to some great persons, among others to Eugène Pelletan and Théophile Gautier. On hearing of manuscript verses, the democratic deputy favoured his visitor with a *résumé* of his views on human progress, which reads like a chapter from the *Profession de Foi du XIX^e Siècle*. "Why do you write in verse? No one cares for it now. It is little read, and not at all sold. It is a hieratic form destined to disappear. In the childhood of humanity verse had its *raison d'être*. . . . The first songs are hymns, outbursts of terror or of enthusiasm. . . . But in our age of sceptical maturity and republican independence verse is a superannuated form. We prefer prose, which, by virtue of its freedom of movement, accords more truly with the instincts of democracy." Whereupon followed a demonstration of the same principles from the spectacle of external nature, in which the crystal is type of the strophe, and "the masterpiece which dominates this hierarchy"—woman—with her undulating grace is the analogue of prose. M. Lafagette, enlightened but unconvinced, did not tear up his manuscripts, but carried them a few days afterwards, with a letter of introduction from George Sand, to the house of Gautier.

The exquisite jeweller of the *Émaux et Camées* received the young man with almost paternal kindness, but, when he had read the two pieces of verse submitted to him by the neophyte, spoke as follows:—"Your verses are forty years older than yourself. They are too old, therefore—that is to say, too young. Poets sang in this manner in 1830. Nowadays we desire a more compressed, more concrete, kind of poetry. Lamartine is a sublime bard, but his vague effusions are no longer to our taste. Musset is a great poet, but an exceedingly bad model. Read Hugo much, who is the true master. Read Leconte de Lisle and Théodore de Banville." "And Théophile Gautier?" timidly murmured the visitor. "And me too a little, if you please to do so," replied Gautier, smiling. "You see," he went on, "the arithmetic is in existence: we have not to invent it; we have only to learn it. One must learn to be at home in fugue and counterpoint, and render one's talent supple and limber

* *La Poésie: son Passé, son Présent, son Avenir* (1877). M. Lafagette's introduction to Gautier and Gautier's daughter is also described in verse in his *Chants d'un Montagnard*.

by the gymnastic of words. Words have an individual and a relative value. They should be chosen before being placed in position. This word is a mere pebble, that a fine pearl or an amethyst. Do you read the dictionary? It is the most fruitful and interesting of books. In art the handicraft is almost everything. Inspiration—yes, inspiration is a very pretty thing, but a little *banale*; it is so universal. Every bourgeois is more or less affected by a sunrise or sunset. He has a certain measure of inspiration. The absolute distinction of the artist is not so much his capacity to feel nature as his power of rendering it. This power is a gift, but also a conquest. In genius there is as much of science as of instinct. Your verses are full of imagination and of sentiment, but they are deficient in composition. You are a poet, and must not abandon poetry. Only I advise you to make three or four thousand verses, and, before you publish anything, burn them."

It is impossible to refuse a certain tribute of admiration to a workman so loyal to his craft. One must needs sympathise with the ascetic of beauty as well as with the ascetic of holiness. Would it not be lamentable to see the author of the *Imitation* losing himself in a bustling philanthropy, or endeavouring, for the sake of wider culture, to acquire connoisseurship in the fine arts? And should we not have had cause to grieve if Gautier had taken to the politician's stump or the moralist's chair? When a man possesses a rare faculty, we like to see him jealously preserving it. It is good husbandry for the world to let a poet make verses, and to let a painter paint. There are indeed occasions—occasions which are the test of highest human virtue—when the precious vases of a cabinet might well be employed to feed men and women in a charity soup-kitchen, when a Regnault must offer his breast to the bullets side by side with a piece of commonest mortal clay, when all differences between men are submerged in the flood of our deep humanity; but such are not ordinary occasions. If Gautier grows poetical only in presence of certain objects, and poetry be his highest vocation, we applaud him for resolutely refusing to look at other things, how interesting soever to politician or philanthropist. But why did Gautier grow poetical only in presence of a few selected and comparatively trivial objects which he called beautiful? The answer is, because Gautier was Gautier, and not Dante or Shakespeare. His doctrine with reference to art expresses the limitations of his nature. It is pleasant to walk over the acre of the exquisite horticulturist, and useful to learn how perfect prize-plants can be reared in their charming little pots. But yonder are the mountains, the moors, the forest, the sea. That will be an evil day for English poetry when to the universality of nature and life and the great masters is preferred the provinciality of a Parisian *cénacle*.

King Solomon, while trying all experiments of life, gave his heart for a season to know madness and folly. Such an experimenter in evil holds his permanent self in reserve, and, whether he be worse or better, is not in the same class with the vulgar libertine. "I said in mine heart, 'Go to now; I will prove thee with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure:' and behold this also is vanity." Such was the experiment made with his imagination by Charles Baudelaire, and his confession was

that of the preacher, "This also is vanity." In him we have at least the comfort of dealing with no quacksalver who cries for sale some new antidote to the sorrow of the century; he acknowledges that he has found our disease immedicable, only adding, whether for our grief or our consolation, that the plague-spot is as old as the human race itself, though now, in this age of accumulated shames and poisonous fungus-growths above dead things, it may drive deeper a more cancerous sting. Baudelaire confesses failure, if not as frankly as Musset, yet with more decision. The two poets—both tasters of the fruit of the tree of evil—present an impressive contrast. Musset's wound bleeds; the iron remains in Baudelaire's flesh, and no blood flows, but his face betrays the agony. Musset rebels against the cruelty of his fate; Baudelaire yields with stoical resignation, interrupted only by a short, involuntary iron cry. In Musset the sensibilities predominate; in Baudelaire the intellect. Musset accepts the chance enjoyment which lies in his way; Baudelaire (I speak of him only as seen in his art) chooses, discriminates, knows the artifices by which to heighten pleasure. The former was satisfied for the time by transitory gratifications, as a child's thirst in summer is quenched by a drink, and his sorrow is only disappointment. But Baudelaire, who never quite parts from a higher self kept in reserve, is not for a moment satisfied with the flowers or fruits of evil, and he is still haunted and waylaid by the ideal beauty and calm which by contrast become the sources of so much of his bitterness.

Baudelaire was in a distinguishing degree an intellectual artist. Unelaborated passion, he held, was unfit matter for poetry. The peculiar intensity—a masculine, not a feminine, intensity—of his most characteristic pieces was attained by the constringent force of the intellect acting upon vividly imagined passion. He looked with considerable scorn, as did Gautier, upon writers who proclaim their inspiration, and who do not precisely know whither their genius is about to take them. "He blamed himself whenever he produced anything other than what he had determined to make, even though it were a powerful and original work."* It would have been evidence of a juster intellect if he had recognised the truth which underlies the cant about inspiration. There is in every great artist a stored-up, inherited instinct underlying all that he consciously performs, and which only works the less surely and the less continuously when an attempt is made to turn the full light of the intellect upon its hidden operations. The greatest poets, painters, musicians, have known and have directly or indirectly acknowledged this. To Goethe it seemed to point to a weakness in Schiller that he did not go to work with a certain unconsciousness, but reflected on all he did. *Wilhelm Meister* the author describes as "one of the most incalculable productions," adding, "I myself can scarcely be said to have the key to it." "*Faust* is quite incommensurable, and all attempts to bring it nearer to

* Th. Gautier, notice prefixed to *Fleurs du Mal*, p. 72.

the understanding are in vain." "Idea [in Tasso]!" exclaimed Goethe; "as if I knew anything about it. I had the life of Tasso—I had my own life. . . . I can truly say of my production, It is *bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh.*"* Where an unconscious energy unites itself in the artist with his conscious activity, and these interpenetrate one another, the work of art comes forth, as Schelling has stated it, possessed of the highest clearness of the understanding, together with that inscrutable reality by virtue of which art-products resemble the works of nature.† The enlarging, the enriching, the disciplining of his total character is that which produces the main alterations in a writer's style, down even to the arrangement of pauses in his verse. Allowing for all that can by deliberate effort be acquired in technical mastery, there is something which lies deeper than any conscious volition. In the last resort "all beauty comes from beautiful blood and a beautiful brain."

But Baudelaire loved with a peculiar and almost diseased passion what in the strictest sense is not artistic, but rather artificial, something which does not complete nature, but is contrasted with and opposed to nature. And he justified his preference for the artificial by a theory. With the youth of the world great and simple emotions have disappeared. Then was the dawn, then the breezes whose wings had never flagged, then the virginal horizons; then generous hope, and spontaneous faith, and piteous illusion, and natural affections, and the first thoughts that came, and frank self-utterance. But now life is complex, refined, curious, subtle. A thousand cross and counter influences shatter the primitive emotions into multitudinous fragments. Let us accept the facts of the world. "Literature," Gautier wrote, expounding the principles of his friend, "is like the day; it has a morning, a noon, an evening, and a night. Without idly discussing whether the dawn should be preferred to the twilight, one must paint during one's own hour, whatever that happens to be, and with a palette furnished with the colours needed to render the effects proper to that hour. The coppery reds, the greenish gold, the hues of turquoise melting into sapphire, all the colours which burn and decompose, the clouds of strange and monstrous forms, penetrated by jets of light, and which seem the gigantic ruining of an aerial Babel—do not these suggest as much poetry as the rosy-fringed dawn, which notwithstanding we do not mean to despise?" This plea for the "style of decadence" is admirably expressed, but, although the question may appear to persons of refinement a little *banale*, we must venture to ask, Is it true? In this round world of ours a sunset and a sunrise are for ever taking place at the same hour. In the sunset of the old religions appeared to such eyes as turned toward the springs of light that mysterious glimmer over the hills of Judæa; in the sunset of the

* The quotations are from Goethe's *Conversations with Eckermann*.

† Schelling *On the Relation between the Plastic Art and Nature*. See also some interesting remarks on this subject in Hartmann, *Philosophie des Unbewussten*, bk. vii., and Ruskin, *The Mystery of Life and its Arts*.

empire, turbulent and rich with livid strains of decay, appeared the fiery morning of the barbarian races; in the twilight of feudalism the light was widening for a new age of industry, science, and democracy. A method by which it is possible to secure oneself against ever witnessing a dawn is that of self-seclusion in a little chamber illuminated by a single narrow window which fronts the west—some closet

Long to quiet vowel,
With mothed and drooping arras hung.

There let quaint odours now allure and provoke, and now lull the sense; let the lute be delicately touched, and if in the shadows the demon of *ennui* should lurk, let forms of curious beauty be present to embarrass him in his approaches. To be indifferent to science, to treat politics as "an affair for National Guards," to detest the vulgar feelings of the *bourgeoisie*, are habits of mind very favourable for the discovery that the "style of decadence" is the characteristically modern style. And in truth so much of cheap zeal and noisy claptrap have found their centre in the word "progress," so many millenniums have been announced, so often has the cry been heard "Christ is here!" with the counter-cry "Christ is there!" that it is hardly strange that a writer hating imposture, dreading delusions, and conscious of singular gifts should sever himself from the popular movement. Nor was it a luxurious quietism which Baudelaire sought; in all his work there is an active intellectual element. It is this which gives his poems that astringency which is grateful to a cultured palate. They possess some of the concentration and the keenness of logic, and, like a syllogism, compel assent. Dangerous the floating perfume of these *Fleurs du Mal* may seem at first, because its strangeness mounts to the brain and makes the senses swim; but presently we regain possession of ourselves, and do not lose it a second time; we examine with curious interest the exotic blooms, and taste the peculiar bitter-sweetness of their dews, and stroke the metallic veining of their leaves, and do not die.

It must also be insisted upon that Baudelaire was no devotee of horror, hideousness, and crime. These things exercised indeed a cruel fascination over the Romantic poet's imagination, but they were known as evil by virtue of an ideal of beauty and goodness which never deserted him. Baudelaire might deliberately send forth his imagination upon an analytic study of evil, but his intellect was not to be duped by sin. That which is hideous and detestable in Baudelaire's poetry is the offspring of a civilisation where the soil is fat and poisoned with decay. It is perhaps well that a poetical study of such things should be carried out with thoroughness, in order that, the "style of decadence" having been pushed to its extreme limit, men may estimate at the full value what it has to offer to them. The misery and ugliness of our modern life excited Baudelaire's curiosity, set his imagination abnormally to work, and made him miserable. And he sought a restorative not in simple delights,

which seemed to him to belong to the youth of the world, but in sought-out pleasures; against the artificial he used the artificial as a lenitive, and nature retreated farther and farther into the distance.

Some of his English critics have spoken of Baudelaire as if he were the most eminent member of the school of form in French poetry. To the question, Does Charles Baudelaire belong to the school of art for art? M. Lafagette answers, In no wise. The truth is that Baudelaire's power of vision was not circumscribed by the bounds of his own activity as an artist, and he perceived truths which he did not find himself individually able to put to use. While loyal in his devotion to form, and accepting his place, he had a melancholy consciousness that the movement to which he belonged, though perhaps provisionally needful, was incomplete in its designs, and if pushed to an extreme might prove dangerous—nay, even fatal—to art. At times he writes in a way which might even have contented Proudhon. "The puerile utopia of the school of *art for art*, in excluding morality, and often even passion, was necessarily sterile. It placed itself in flagrant contravention of the genius of humanity. In the name of higher principles, which constitute the universal life of man, we are warranted in declaring it guilty of heterodoxy." And elsewhere, "Literature must go to rehabilitate its powers in a better atmosphere. The time is not far distant when it will be understood that all literature which refuses to advance fraternally between science and philosophy is a homicidal and a suicidal literature."

To associate poetry fraternally with the higher thought of our own day has been part of the work of M. Leconte de Lisle. The effort of criticism in our time has been before all else to see things as they are, without partiality, without obtrusion of personal liking or disliking, without the impertinence of blame or of applause. To see things as they are is the effort of Leconte de Lisle's poetry. Critical curiosity gratifies itself by the accurate perception of facts, and of their relations one to another. In like manner the imagination delights to comprehend after its own fashion the chief attitudes which the spirit of man has assumed in presence of external nature, of God, of life and death, to enter into the faiths of past ages and races while yet holding essentially aloof from them, to distinguish the main features of former societies of men, and to illuminate these without permitting our passions to disturb their calm. Baudelaire happily compared Leconte de Lisle to his distinguished contemporary Ernest Renan. "Notwithstanding the difference between their respective provinces, every person of clear-sighted intelligence will feel that the comparison is just. In the poet, as in the philosopher, I find the same ardent yet impartial curiosity with reference to religions, and the same spirit of universal love, not for humanity in itself, but for the various forms in which man in every age and clime has incarnated beauty and truth. Neither the one nor the other ever offends by absurd impiety. To portray in beautiful verses, of a luminous and tranquil kind, the different modes in which man, up to the present time, has adored God.

and sought the beautiful, such has been the object . . . which Leconte de Lisle has assigned to his poetry." Such poetry, it will be perceived, has close affinities with science, and yet it is in its essence the work of the skilled imagination. It possesses the ardour and the calm of science. One cannot look at the remarkable portrait of the poet by Rajon without recognising the aspiring intellect, the robust enthusiasm, the capacity for sustained effort, of Leconte de Lisle. The lifted head, with eyes which gaze steadfastly forward, might well be that of a sculptor contemplating the block in which he sees the enthralled form of beauty whose deliverance he is presently to effect.* The products of this enthusiasm possess a marmoreal calm; and it is the union of the highest energy with a lofty tranquillity which distinguishes the method of this artist. To persons who expect from poetry a shallow excitement, to persons whose imagination has not been nourished by the intellect, it is possible that Leconte de Lisle's chief poems may seem masterpieces of the *genre ennuyant*. It calls for some disengagement from self, and from the common preoccupations of our lives, to be able to transfer our total being into a world of thoughts and things remote and alien. The imaginative Pantheon of the average reader contains the familiar figures of the gods of Greece and Rome; it is embarrassing when house-room and welcome are required all at once for a throng of strangers of appalling aspect and names gathered from India, from Egypt, from Scandinavia, even from the Polynesian islands, and still more embarrassing to find among the antique gods certain well-known shapes arrived from Palestine which seek admission on equal terms with the rest. And it must be admitted that, after a trial of one's powers of sustained receptiveness by Leconte de Lisle, a trial which cannot be carried through without some fortitude of the imagination, we turn with a peculiar sense of relief to such lyrical sprightliness as that of Théodore de Banville, and find no small recreation for the eye in his mirthful antics upon the tight rope.

Yet Leconte de Lisle's poems are no mere works of erudite archæology. He too, although possessed of a social faith, is, like Baudelaire, ill at ease in the present time. At first upon making his acquaintance we say, Here at least is a man who has escaped the sorrow of our age, who has not known "the something that infects the world;" and we surmise that perhaps it is his Creole blood, perhaps the unvitiated air of his native Isle of Bourbon, which has left him sane and sound. But presently we perceive that this is not so. The stoicism, the impassiveness, the enforced serenity, the strict self-suppression, the resolved impersonality of his writings reveal the fact that he too has been a sufferer. These constitute the regimen by which he would gain sanity and strength. Are you unhappy? Then utter no cry, suppress the idle tear, forbear to turn the tender emotion upon yourself, place yourself under the influ-

* See also the portrait in words by Théodore de Banville, *Camées Parisiens*, troisième série.

ence of things beautiful, calm, and remote, resign your imagination in absolute obedience to the object. And if, after practising such discipline, your unhappiness still survive, the physician adds, Accept the inevitable. Is it so strange and bitter to be defeated? Or does not every law of nature fulfil its course indifferent to our joy or suffering? Bear your sorrow as you would bear the shining of the stars or the falling of the rain.

Thus, while Baudelaire studied with curious attention the evils of his time, and tasked his imagination to render an account of what was abnormal and diseased in the world around him, Leconte de Lisle turns away to seek for calm in the contemplation of nature in her virgin grace or her teeming maternal forces, and of man in states of society and under religious beliefs which possess for us an imaginative and scientific interest rather than the more pressing and painful interest of actuality. To Greece he is attracted as to the immortal patron of beauty; to the primitive peoples of the North, because among them he finds a massive force of passion and of muscle which contrasts happily with the trivialities of the boulevard; to India, because there sages had learned the secret that this turmoil of life is *Mâyâ* (the divine illusion), and that behind *Mâyâ* lies the silence and calm of "le divin Néant." We may prepare ourselves for a fashion of pessimism among our small poets of culture at an early date, and doubtless "le divin Néant" will be celebrated by many self-complacent prophets of despair. Leconte de Lisle is not a pessimist; for the race of men he sees a far-off light towards which it advances, and for his own part life is to be endured and rendered as beautiful and grand as may be with noble forms and the light of large ideas.

Among the poems of Leconte de Lisle his studies of external nature take a high place. When he sets himself down before an object resolved to make it his own by complete imaginative possession, he is not a mere descriptive poet. The great animal painter is not he who can most dexterously imitate wools and furs, but he who can pluck out the heart of the mystery of each form of animal life; and the same may be said of the painter of mountain or of sea. That which he seeks to discover is the true ideal—that is to say, that part of the real which is the most essential as distinguished from the accidental, the permanent as distinguished from the temporary, the dominant as distinguished from the subordinate. He who by penetrative vision can discover the ideal in each thing, or, in plain words, its essential characteristics, may fearlessly go on to paint furs and wools to perfection. And such is the method of Leconte de Lisle. In his choice of subjects (for the poet chooses rather than is chosen by them) he is attracted by the beauty and the wonder of strange exotic things and places. Two moments of the day in the tropics seem to contain for his imagination the highest poetry of the four-and-twenty hours—the dawn, with its solitude, its freshness in the heavens, and light odours rising from the earth, its tender stirring in the foliage and the flowers; and then mid-noon, with the torrent of light, the oppression of

loaded heat, the moveless air, and the languor of all living things. The life in the jungle at midday is the subject of a remarkable study familiar to all readers of Leconte de Lisle. The huge panther lies asleep, his belly to the air, his claws dilating unconsciously, his burning breath escaping as from a furnace, his rosy tongue lolling; around him perfect silence, only the gliding python advancing his head, and the cantharides vibrating in the transparent air :—

Lui, baigné par la flamme et remuant la queue,
Il dort tout un soleil sous l'immensité bleue.

In contrast with this poem, and others of the torrid atmosphere, we find all that is delicious in shadowy repose, in dewy freshness, in the light singing of streams, in the flowers of wan green places, present with us while we read "La Fontaine aux Lianes" and "La Ravine Saint-Gilles." "La Manchy" ("manchy," the palanquin of the Isle Bourbon), so softly breathed upon by the sea-wind and impregnated with exquisite odours of the East, moves delicately forward like the rhythmical stepping of the Hindoo bearers. But of higher imaginative power than any of these is the short piece entitled "Le Sommeil du Condor." No study of the poetry of animal life is of more exciting strangeness and at the same time of more mysterious solemnity than this. Beyond the ladder of the precipitous Cordilleras, beyond the eagle-haunted mists, the vast bird sits :—

L'envergure pendante et rouge par endroits,
Le vaste oiseau, tout plein d'une morose indolence,
Regarde l'Amérique et l'espace en silence,
Et le sombre soleil qui meurt dans ses yeux froids.

And night rolls from the east over the wild pampas, putting to sleep Chili and the Pacific Sea and the divine horizon, and rises with billowy shadows from peak to peak :—

Lui, comme un spectre, seul, au front du pic altier,
Baigné d'une lueur qui saigne sur la neige,
Il attend cette mer sinistre qui l'assiège :
Elle arrive, déferle, et le couvre en entier.
Dans l'abîme sans fond la Croix australe allume
Sur les côtes du ciel son phare constellé.
Il râle de plaisir, il agite sa plume,
Il érige son cou musculeux et pelé ;
Il s'enlève, en fouettant, l'âpre neige des Andes ;
Dans un cri rauque il monte où n'atteint pas le vent,
Et, loin du globe noir, loin de l'astre vivant,
Il dort dans l'air glacé, les ailes toutes grandes.*

None of the most characteristic poems of Leconte de Lisle treat of social subjects which lie near to us in time and place. His poetry selects

* "Le Sommeil du Condor," "Les Jungles," "La Manchy," and the noble poem of melancholy "Le Midi," are given in the fourth volume of Crépet's *Les Poètes français*, an excellent introduction to modern French poetry as far as about fifteen years ago.

as its organs certain of his faculties, and rejects others. To express his political creed he would require to formulate it in prose. Christian and mediæval subjects are treated with the same aloofness, the same *hauteur*, and the same sympathy of intellect as those belonging to ancient Greece and Rome, or to the "barbarian" nations of Judæa, of Egypt, of pagan Europe. But under this impartiality as an artist lie strenuous convictions both with respect to the régime of feudalism and the dogma of the age of faith, and, indeed, the impartiality sometimes impresses the reader who compares the poems with the author's prose confessions of belief as partaking somewhat of the nature of an imperturbable artistic irony. The commoner, more superficial irony is excluded from Leconte de Lisle's work as an artist, but it is made ample use of in the volume *Histoire populaire du Christianisme*, a little treatise which, professing to represent Christian history as told by Christian historians, is certainly not distinguished by the judicial spirit or even by common historical accuracy.

It is not to be wondered at that Leconte de Lisle should be regarded as a master by younger poets who aspire to be something more than mere singers of love and wine. He represents intellect, he represents science in connection with art; he has more of mass than Gautier, more of sanity, or at least of serenity, than Baudelaire; he is distinguished by a rare self-regulating energy of the imagination; he owns a sovereign command over form, a severity and breadth of poetical style which is not to be found in the *Émaux et Camées*, nor even in the *Fleurs du Mal*. But it is true that his subjects of predilection are too much subjects from the museum. He is not a mere antiquary; in his manner of aloofness and of intellectual sympathy he is essentially modern, and in the museum he remains a poet. Still we should like to know of love which was other than that possessed by a mummy; we should like to know of a religion which is not on show as a curiosity in a glass-case; outside we hear the throng in the streets of a great city, and wonder what the lives of our fellow-men are like, and what they signify to them; we think of the fields in which we ourselves were children, and which we did not study curiously, but so tenderly loved.

Within the last ten or twelve years no star of the second or third magnitude has quite succeeded in disengaging itself from the nebulous brilliancy of poetical reputations, which is made up by writers of a younger generation than those already glanced at in this article. M. Coppée's poetry possesses elegance, but hardly in a high sense beauty; it possesses sentiment, but hardly passion; and its idyllic tenderness and refinement are those of the Luxembourg gardens rather than of the plains and hill-sides of the provinces. There is more promise of distinction in M. Catulle Mendès; but it cannot be said that he has, even in his more recent poems, certainly discovered his true direction. In the *Soirs moroses* he is still, in a measure, a pupil of Baudelaire. In the *Contes épiques* there is something of Leconte de Lisle united with something—especially

in the treatment of the *dénouement* of each story—which has been obtained from Victor Hugo. In the earlier *Philomela* are pieces which could hardly have been written had not Théodore de Banville taught modern poets to unite lyrical impulse with the most delicate technical manipulations, and others which have, as it were, an odour acquired from lying among the verses of Théophile Gautier. Two poems of considerable length exhibit the highest attainment of the talent of M. Catulle Mendès. *Hesperus* is the story of a little old Jew of Frankfort-on-the-Main, a dwarf, persecuted by the children and living in misery, yet in his ecstatic trances and visions the possessor of treasures of joy and love. Brightness and gloom are brought together in this poem with as magical and fascinating a power as in some of Rembrandt's etchings; the subject is one which would have been treated with a passionate analysis by Balzac. *Le Soleil de Minuit* is a dramatic poem, the scene of which is laid among the ice-fields of the Polar world. Its human creatures are conceived as untamed animals possessed of fierce appetites and passions, not restrained, and yet already a little modified by the fears and superstitions which are the projections of the primitive conscience of mankind.* It must be said that some of the impressiveness of the poem is gained by its entire disregard—a disregard which one is expected to accept as the artist's duty to his subject—of the reserves of speech that are recognised as human in our developed state of society, from which we have in some degree worked out the original man-bear and woman-wolf. M. Catulle Mendès belongs in the main to the school of "art for art," but he combines qualities which had been divided between its leaders, and he brings over to it some of the strangeness and splendour of Victor Hugo. Two other young poets illustrate the reaction against the school of art for art, which might have been anticipated as inevitable, and which has already become apparent. In *Les Chansons joyeuses* Maurice Bouchor attempted to lead back French poetry to the spirit of facile mirth, the praise of youth and wine, of love and laughter. The Parnassians were to be pelted from their thrones with roses. His second volume—*Les Poèmes de l'Amour et de la Mer*—is written in a more grave and tender spirit; it is the lyrical confession of the sorrow of unfulfilled love, and from love the poet at the last turns for consolation to the fraternal comradeship of art. M. Lafagette puts forth a more ambitious programme. It is his aim to preserve all that has been attained for form and technical mastery of verse by the school of the Parnassians, and to employ this as an artist under influences proceeding from the political convictions of an ardent republican and a philosophical doctrine which it pleases him to term *un naturalisme rationaliste*. His earliest volume certainly confirmed the judgment of Gautier that his verses were deficient in composition, but M. Lafagette has diligently improved the quality of his workmanship, and in *Les Accalmies* he has for a season laid by his sword to take in hand

* A notice of these poems by Mr. E. W. Gosse will be found in a review of M. Mendès' collected poems in the *Academy*, June 16, 1877.

the chisel and the burin ; some of the sonnets and triolets—dated in Revolutionary style, “Messidor, an 83,” “Floréal, an 82,” might have been written in some luxurious studio under the Second Empire. Essentially, however, M. Lafagette’s motto is found in the words of Victor Hugo : “*De nos jours l’écrivain doit être au besoin un combattant ; malheur au talent à travers lequel on ne voit pas un conscience !*” One may trust that, whether or not in our own country a tendency exist to follow the leadership of the French masters of form, in France their influence is about to be reduced to just proportions. In M. Lafagette’s devotion to beauty and to art there mingles a social purpose somewhat akin to that which appeared in the school of Saint-Simon, and which served long since to inspire the writers of “Young Germany.” But, apart from the consideration of the truth or falsehood of the faiths which lie at the basis of the art of M. Lafagette, it is a significant fact that writers who have been in the presence of the poetry of “art for art” brought to the most exquisite degree of refinement, should feel that this does not suffice, and that art, severed from a social faith, becomes, sooner or later, inevitably sterile.

Non, non, ton règne est clos, ô race veule et vaine !
 —Dans l’or pur nous savons bien sertir, comme toi,
 Des bijoux ciselés ; mais une mâle foi
 Nous anime, et le sang qui brûle notre veine
 Nous voulons l’infuser à l’Art en désarroi.

Que la forme éclatante incarne la justice ;
 Songe que l’Art n’est pas un but, mais un moyen,
 Frère ! adore le Beau, car ce culte est païen,
 Mais fixe-lui le Vrai pour éternel solstice ;
 Aime, hais, souffre, vis, sois homme et citoyen.

What social doctrine shall inspire the poetry of the future ? It is not meant here to attempt an answer to this question ; but one more French writer of verse may be named as illustrating the perplexities and hesitations of our age. Sainte-Beuve observed of M. Sully Prudhomme that he belonged to none of the schools of contemporary poetry. “His was rather the noble ambition of conciliating them, of deriving from them, and reuniting in himself what was good in each. With much skill in the treatment of form, he was not indifferent to the idea ; and among ideas, he did not adopt any group to the exclusion of the rest.” This rightly defines the position of Sully Prudhomme. Like Leconte de Lisle, he is intellectual, but, unlike that master, he is tender ; his intellect is not severe and haughty, but humane and sympathetic ; and the sympathy which he gives is more than that which takes its origin from scientific curiosity. He does not traverse the world of ideas as an aristocrat who from his eminence of thought surveys and studies many things, of which none can succeed in mastering his reason or really gaining his affections. Rather he yields to this influence, and yields again to that, and is in danger of “losing himself in countless adjustments.” He has perceptions of truth on one side and on the other, and can deny none of them.

There is something in the pantheistic way of thinking which seems needful to his imaginative interpretation of the facts of consciousness ; there is something in theism which corresponds with the cravings of his heart ; yet he cannot deny a lurking doubt that after all the agnostic may be in the right. This is the burden which he bears, a divided intellect, for ever adapting itself to what appear to be diverse forms of truth. He is not angry with modern science or modern industry ; he would, if possible, conciliate the real with the ideal. He loves the colour of Gautier's verse, the passion and vivid humanity of Musset, and can value the abstractedness, the aspiration, the Druidic nature-worship of Laprade ; he would fain possess something of each ; and his manifold sympathies leave him sad and restless. Sully Prudhomme's unhappiness arises from the lack of a cause, a creed, a church, a loyalty, a love, to which he can devote his total being, and know that such devotion is the highest wisdom. He is a born eclectic, and the only remedy he can apply to his malady is more eclecticism. He may serve as a pathetic witness to the truth that culture, as we too often conceive it nowadays, may lead to an issue less fortunate than that of asceticism. In Edgar Quinet's poetical romance *Merlin* the great enchanter traverses a vast desert to visit the abbey of the famous Prester John. The architecture of the abbey struck Merlin with astonishment. It was a composite style, formed of the pagoda, the Greek temple, the synagogue, the mosque, the basilica, the cathedral, without counting an almost innumerable number of marabouts, minarets, Byzantine and Gothic chapels. When Prester John appears, the magician beholds before him an august old man, with beard of snow descending to his waist. "Upon his head he wore a turban enriched with a sapphire cross. At his neck hung a golden crescent, and he supported himself upon a staff after the manner of a Brahman. Three children followed him, who supported each upon the breast an open book. The first was the collection of the Vedas, the second was the Bible, the third the Koran. At certain moments Prester John stopped and read a few lines from one of the sacred volumes which always remained open before him ; after which he continued his walk, with eyes fixed upon the stars." Prester John was Quinet's type of the eclectic philosopher, and he may equally well represent the modern man of spurious culture. Prester John's architecture is not a true conciliation of styles, nor Prester John's faith of creeds.

M. Sully Prudhomme, however, if he has dwelt for a while in the eclectic abbey, has not divided his heart between ideals of beauty and realities of shame. He is for ever returning to an aspiration after truth, after beauty, after simplicity of life, and yet he has never wandered far from these ; and part of his moral perplexity arises from suggestions and checks to which a person of harder or narrower personality would have been insensible. There is in him something of feminine susceptibility and sensitiveness ; and that a man should possess portion of a woman's tenderness is not wholly ill.

The Princess Paolini.

I.

ONE fine January night, some years ago, the Princess Paolini held a great reception. It was the first entertainment of any kind that had taken place beneath her roof since the death of the old Prince, her husband, and all Rome flocked to attend it. Cardinals and ambassadors, monsignori and generals, Roman duchesses and English tourists, grey-jacketed Papal Zouaves fresh from the field of Mentana, artists and sculptors, statesmen and antiquarians, they streamed up the broad marble staircase in an unending tide; for everybody was anxious to get a sight of the beautiful young Princess, and on an occasion like this invitations were not hard to come by. Outside, the grey, time-worn façade of the old palace was lighted up by a row of flaming torches; the piazza, of which it occupies one entire side, was thronged with carriages, and, from a stage erected near the portico, a brass band brayed forth operatic selections with more or less of cheerfulness and accuracy.

Everybody who knows Rome knows the Palazzo Paolini, and everybody who has any acquaintance with Roman society is aware that its late owner was no lineal descendant of the famous old family whose name he bore, but a partner in the well-known Florentine banking-house of Flocchi and Company. It was upon his marriage with the orphan daughter of poor old ruined Filippo Paolini that he was permitted to assume the title and arms upon which his subsequent career reflected so much credit; and, though I believe that he was somewhat coldly received by the Roman nobility upon his first advent among them, his generosity, his artistic tastes, his fine manners, and, above all, his great wealth, soon sufficed to triumph over the prejudices of the most exclusive, and placed him, ere long, upon as high a social pinnacle as any dweller in the Eternal City, who was neither a priest nor a politician, could aspire to occupy. He bought back the palace and the lands, which had gradually slipped away from the possession of his wife's ancestors; he even, at infinite pains and expense, recovered many of their lost art treasures; he set the old family upon its legs again, and received such members of it as presented themselves to him with open arms and an open purse.

Of these there was no lack. From many a dilapidated farm in the Umbrian marshes, and many a crumbling, moribund city, they flocked to the capital, those handsome, impoverished Paolinis—priests, some of

them, and some soldiers, but most without occupation—and for them all the new Prince willingly expended his money and the influence which money carries with it. He revived the glories of an ancient house in short, and, in so doing, deserved well of his country. Such, at least, was the expressed opinion of His Holiness Pope Gregory XVI. and others, though some people, remembering the past history of the Paolini family, may have thought that the world would have suffered no great loss by the extinction of that race of plotters, poisoners, and spend-thrifts.

And so, for a matter of thirty years, Giuseppe Flocchi, Prince Paolini, reigned in Rome as a leader of society and a liberal patron of the arts, and was beloved by all classes alike, the only drop of bitter in his cup being the want of any child to succeed him in his honours. But when, in the fulness of time, the Princess Paolini died, the widower thought fit to take a step which—at least among the ranks of his relatives—proved immediately fatal to his popularity. If, as the proverb says, no man should be accounted happy, neither perhaps ought he to be deemed wise, until he is dead. At the age of seventy or thereabouts, the sage and experienced Prince Paolini, who had undertaken a journey to London with the pardonable object of diverting his thoughts from the loss which he had sustained, reappeared in Rome, bringing with him, as his second consort, a beautiful English girl fresh from the schoolroom; and his cousin the Cardinal, throwing up his hands and his eyes, cried aloud, in the bitterness of his heart, that there was no fool like an old fool.

The Prince's second experience of married life proved a brief one. He was found dead in his bed one morning very shortly after his return home; and the newspapers, which united in lauding the many good deeds of his long life, differed a little as to the cause of its termination, some speaking of apoplexy, and others of heart disease. Rumour, ever prone to be ill-natured, filled the air, at the time, with whisperings which I should be the last man in the world to think of repeating, especially as they are scarcely relevant to the present narrative; but certain it is that the sad event, which caused many tears to flow from the eyes of those who had been recipients of the dead man's bounty, left his relations wonderfully calm. However, they gave him a magnificent funeral; and I well remember seeing the procession pass slowly and solemnly down the Corso, a troop of monks leading the way, bearing huge lighted candles and chanting a melancholy dirge, some ghastly masked figures, members of the confraternity of the Misericordia, striding on either side of the bier, and a long train of mourners and coaches and carriages following. The Paolinis were all there—a goodly clan of them. They reverently deposited the remains of their departed chief in the church of *Sta. Maria del Popolo*; and then I daresay they drove back as quickly as they could and heard the will read.

I don't know whether it was then or upon some subsequent occasion

that the contents of that document were communicated to the relatives of the deceased ; but, whenever it was, I should have much enjoyed being present and watching their faces while it was announced that, barring a few unimportant legacies, the misguided man had bequeathed the whole of his vast property, real and personal, to his widow. The lady was not even hampered with any of the ordinary provisos which common prudence dictates, with regard to remarriage, or the like. Her husband's wealth was hers, and hers absolutely. The family felt this to be very grievous, and could perhaps hardly be blamed for so feeling, though, no doubt, young Carlo Paolini, of the Guardia Nobile, went a little too far when he declared publicly that, in his opinion, it would be a righteous act to dig the old idiot up out of his grave and fling his body into the Tiber. His uncle, the Cardinal, very properly rebuked him for such a display of temper and bad taste, and suggested the more practical course of disputing the will. Some such attempt was, indeed, subsequently made ; but it proved abortive ; and then the Paolinis, with that common sense which has never yet deserted them where their own interests have been at stake, recognised the fact that by far the best thing they could do would be to keep on good terms with the fortunate foreigner to whom their ancient palace and broad lands now belonged.

Of course, certain people declared that they tried to poison her ; but what will not certain people declare ? There was nothing in the rather abrupt departure of the young Princess for her native land to excite so shocking a suspicion in any but evil-thinking minds ; nor could anything be more natural than that a girl married and widowed at the tender age of eighteen should fly for comfort and consolation to the arms of a fond mother. At all events, Rome saw her again at the end of a couple of years. She took up her abode in the luxurious apartments of the Palazzo Paolini, which had been prepared to receive her as a bride ; she showed herself upon the Pincian in an English-built Victoria drawn by a pair of high-stepping bays, and presently—by way, as it was thought, of manifesting in a public manner that she understood the duties and importance of her position—she issued invitations for the great reception of which mention has already been made.

Those who were privileged to attend this gathering were forced to admit that the demeanour of their hostess afforded little room for adverse criticism, and that, Englishwoman as she was, she bore herself in all respects as became a Roman princess. She was very tall, very beautiful, and very magnificently dressed. With her dark hair and eyes and her clear pale complexion, she might have been an Italian born. She was a little proud and cold perhaps ; but that was a fault upon the right side. Standing at the head of her staircase, with Cardinal Paolini at her elbow and a little court of her relations and other great people grouped behind her, she received her guests like any empress. She made no mistakes. Possibly she had gone through a private rehearsal with the Cardinal, or it may have been that she had taken some pains to learn her part ; at

any rate she was polite to everybody, and more than polite to a favoured few. She had a well-chosen word or two for each of the great ladies whose friendship was worth securing; she advanced a few steps and shook hands with the minister of a country understood to be friendly to the Papal Government, while the representative of another power, with whose action His Holiness had recently had reason to be displeased, was dismissed with a grave, distant bow.

The latter form of recognition was, indeed, the only one vouchsafed to the majority of the Princess's guests, as they defiled before her, and passed on to the picture-gallery and the great ball-room, where a string band was playing for their benefit; but when my own turn came to pay my respects to the lady of the house, I was honoured by a much warmer reception. The fact is that I had entered the Palazzo Paolini uninvited. I had only just arrived in Rome, and, having heard of the proposed festivity, I thought I would walk round after dinner and see how my old friend and playmate, Sybil Ferrars (with whom I had been intimately acquainted since the day when I had the honour to attend her christening), would acquit herself in her new and rather trying situation. I flattered myself, too, that the sight of a familiar face among all those strange ones would not be unwelcome to her; and so I was not at all astonished when the Princess, on recognising me, forgot all her stateliness and dignity for a moment, and held out both her hands with a little glad cry of surprise.

"You here!" she exclaimed. "How delightful! When did you arrive? and how long will you remain? Oh, I hope you are going to stay the whole winter! Where have you been all these long, weary years?" (It was only two years since I had seen her last; but at her time of life two years is a much longer period than it is at mine.) "Will you come and see me to-morrow morning about twelve o'clock? Then we can have a good long talk all by ourselves."

Cardinal Paolini fixed his deep-set black eyes upon my humble person, and looked me through and through. He is a handsome, commanding-looking man, as all the Paolinis are, and he has a way of confronting inferior mortals with a cold, penetrating gaze which is supposed to strike terror into their mean souls. Of course, I had no chance against him. With his tall, spare figure draped in scarlet robes and old lace, he looked the very picture of a proud prince of the Church, and seemed born to exact obedience, if not respect; whereas I, I am sorry to say, am a rather fat old man, and though I may have had my share of good looks once upon a time, I have never heard that my appearance was of an awe-inspiring kind. However, I am not afraid of Cardinal Paolini, nor, for that matter, of the whole Sacred College put together; so I favoured him with a Briton's stony, stolid stare, before which he presently dropped his eyelids, while the faintest possible smile flickered for an instant about his thin lips.

I suppose the Princess must have noticed the rigidity which had

suddenly overspread my speaking countenance, and have guessed at its cause; for she glanced over her shoulder at the Cardinal, and remarked, in a very clear and distinct voice, and in the Italian tongue (which I observed she had learnt to speak with remarkable purity), "Your Eminence need feel no alarm. Mr. Clifford was at school with my father, and, what is better still, he is married already."

At this speech there was a general smile, and I saw several of the bystanders nudge their neighbours; for of course everybody knew that the Paolinis were not going to let their fair relative take a second husband if they could help it, and the Cardinal's distrust of Englishmen was, as I afterwards learnt, a matter of notoriety.

I passed on into the picture-gallery, feeling rather sorry that the Princess should have thought it worth while to make something like a scene out of so small a matter. It was sufficiently obvious that the Cardinal must wish and intend to get her under his thumb; and I have always observed that, when a clever and strong-willed man has such designs with regard to a woman, the only safe opposition she can bring to bear against him is that of a wall of passive resistance. He has already taken a long step towards victory when she tries to sting him with sharp speeches.

I never have any lack of acquaintances in Rome, where I am in the habit of spending two or three months out of every year, and I soon found myself surrounded by a knot of old friends in whose society an hour slipped away pleasantly enough. I was just thinking that it was about time for me to be going back to my hotel to bed when I ran up against young Dick Seaton, the sculptor, who grasped my hand with more than his usual cordiality.

"My dear Mr. Clifford," he cried, "you are the very man of all others whom I wanted to see! You knew the Princess Paolini before she was married, didn't you? Who was she? What made her marry that drivelling old man? Tell me about her."

"Why all this eagerness?" I enquired. "What are Princesses and Paolinis to you, my poor Dick? Have you fallen in love with her, you foolish boy? And do you suppose she is ever likely so much as to notice your existence? Oh, vanity of youth!"

Dick burst out laughing. "Fallen in love with that beautiful statue? —not exactly!" he answered. "I could as easily fall in love with the Capitoline Venus. Besides, I hope I know my place, and have a proper reverence for my betters. Moreover, I can tell you, if you don't know it already, that the Princess Paolini will never marry again. His Eminence yonder would have a hundred suitors poisoned sooner than let it come to that."

"Well, well!" I said. "I daresay she will be none the less happy if she does have to remain single. What do people want to get married for? Is matrimonial bliss so common a thing that all you young folks should be in such a hurry to surrender your freedom?"

Dick laughed again, and asked whether Mrs. Clifford was with me. Dick is sometimes inclined to be a little bit impertinent.

"You know very well that the climate of Rome does not suit my wife," I answered. "She is in England, paying a round of visits. So you want to hear all about the beautiful Princess, do you? Well; walk home with me, and I will tell you what I know."

We made our way through the crowded rooms, down the broad staircase, and so out on to the piazza, where we lighted our cigars, and strolled away in the moonlight.

"The Princess Paolini," said I, as we turned into the Corso, "is one of that old cat Lady Augusta Ferrars's daughters. You don't know Lady Augusta, because you live abroad three parts of the year, and when you do go to London you roam about the streets in a velveteen coat and a pot hat, so that even your relations have to look in at a shop window when you pass; but everybody else knows her, and I believe most people rather like her. A select few, of whom I have the honour to be one, hate her like poison. I don't know whether her daughters feel grateful to her, but I suppose they ought, for she has done the best she possibly could for them, according to her ideas. The eldest will be a duchess one of these days, when her husband succeeds to the title; the second is married to old Kreutzerpfenning, the German banker, and will be one of the richest women in Europe when he dies, as he is bound to do before long; the third is the famous Lady Highcliffe, of whom you must have heard. They tell me she leads one of the most exclusive sets in London; but I don't know much about her myself; she soared to a social height which I can never hope to reach. Lady Augusta arranged all these matches, and carried them through, unaided and alone, in the face of considerable difficulties. It was she who took poor Sybil almost out of the nursery, made her change her religion, and handed her over to old Prince Paolini, who might have been her grandfather. I believe the poor child made some objection; but children never know what is good for them; and, after all, now that the man is dead——"

Here Seaton spat upon the ground in an offensive, noisy manner, of which I strongly disapprove.

"Don't do that, Dick," said I: "it is unnecessary and ungentlemanly. Live in Bohemia, if you will, but for Heaven's sake keep clear of its low habits."

"I will back the habits of Bohemia against the habits of Belgravia, any day," he returned. "In Bohemia a woman has at least some natural love for her offspring."

"So she has in Belgravia, only it takes a different form."

"Faugh! don't tell me. Made her change her religion, did they? I am a Catholic myself, as you know, but then I was born one: hang forcible conversions! And you talk of it all as if it wasn't enough to make a man sick!" And here I am sorry to say that, in spite of my

remonstrance, Dick repeated his objectionable act. "But I daresay she was a willing victim," he resumed, after a pause. "No doubt she is as worldly and selfish and mean as the rest of them, and Heaven only gave her those great melancholy brown eyes by some mistake."

"She is nothing of the kind," I answered—"at least she used not to be."

"Then why did she marry that old dotard?"

"My good Dick," I said, "you don't know the stupendous power of a nagging woman. I sincerely trust you never may. Lady Augusta's daughters were all high-spirited girls, but they had to give in to her in the long run; and, for my part, I don't wonder at it."

"H'm! Well, I don't think I shall execute the order, all the same," remarked Dick, musingly.

"What order?" I asked.

"Oh, the Princess Paolini honoured my studio by a visit the other day, and, after criticising my poor productions with a good deal of complimentary condescension, was pleased to say that she was anxious to sit to me for her bust. I told her that I didn't much care about that kind of work as a general thing, but that, as her face interested me, I would see whether I could not make an exception in her case."

"That was rather impertinent of you."

"Yes; but her manner had been rather impertinent to me. Besides, I only spoke the truth. Her face interested me. All things considered, I don't think it interests me any more; and when she comes to my studio to-morrow, as she has appointed to do, I shall tell her I can't find time for her."

"You young goose!" I said, "what have you to do with the private life of your sitters? Do you institute enquiries into the antecedents of all your models, pray? The Princess Paolini, who is no worse than her neighbours, you may be sure, will pay you well for your work, and bring you into notice if you are civil to her. Don't quarrel with your bread and butter."

"I shall do very well without the Princess's patronage," answered Dick, with his nose in the air; "and I am not going to degrade my art into a mere means of grubbing up money. Here is your hotel. Good-night."

And so my young friend marched away in the moonlight, ascended the broad flight of steps that leads from the Piazza di Spagna to the church of the Trinità de' Monti, and was soon out of sight. Dick Seaton's father, as I happened to know, made him, at that time, an allowance of 300*l.* a-year, upon the strength of which I suspect that the young sculptor muddled away more than double that amount annually. I was rather pleased with him for respecting his art, and despising money: I like to see youth generous and careless and free-handed; and as I knocked up the porter at the Hôtel de l'Europe, and stumbled in through the half-open door, I said to myself that Dick was a fine young fellow, though

of course an ass. I daresay, though, that if he had been my son, I should have considered the latter part of the phrase more descriptive of him than the former.

II.

Punctually at twelve o'clock on the following morning I presented myself at the Palazzo Paolini, and, after a short delay, was ushered into the presence of its mistress. She received me in what would, I suppose, have been called her boudoir, had not such a name seemed so absurdly inappropriate as applied to one of the vast lofty chambers of the grim old palace. It was too large a room to be altogether comfortable, and of course its windows fitted badly and let in currents of air, as all Roman windows do; but it had a southern aspect, it was luxuriously furnished in the modern Parisian style, and a mass of flowers and a great cage full of twittering birds gave it a certain cheery, home-like appearance. A wood fire was burning brightly on the hearth, on one side of which the Princess reclined in a low easy-chair, while facing her sat a straight-backed, sandy-haired, middle-aged person, whom I at once perceived to be her lady companion.

A sense of humour, we are often told, is nothing more nor less than a quick perception of the incongruous; but to my own mind I must confess that there is no spectacle at once so ludicrous, so delightful, and so rare, as that of absolute fitness. Every condition in life has its ideal type, yet how seldom is that ideal realised! Portly bishops, weasel-faced attorneys, admirals who talk in a sustained bellow and interlard their conversation with oaths—how few and far between are they, and with what immense satisfaction does one greet a man whose appearance accords in all respects with his calling! Companions should, of course, be tall, angular, and of uncompromising aspect; they should wear mittens, be perpetually knitting grey woollen stockings, and should never speak unless addressed. Everybody has met the ideal companion scores of times in novels and plays; but how many people have come across her in real life? The Princess Paolini's companion fulfilled all the above-enumerated conditions; and when I was introduced to her, and heard that her name was Miss O'Grady, the perfection of the specimen struck me with such force, and tickled me to that extent, that I had much ado to keep myself from bursting into an unseemly guffaw.

Miss O'Grady so completely satisfied my soul that, for the first few minutes, I really could not take my eyes off her, and was only able to lend a half-attentive ear to the conversation of the Princess, who was chatting away about old times in a manner far more characteristic of the Sybil of former years than of the *grande dame* whom I had seen patronising ambassadors on the previous evening. It was the sound of Seaton's name that roused me from my state of contented contemplation.

"I suppose Mr. Seaton is an old friend of yours," the Princess was

saying. "I saw you go away together arm-in-arm last night. Do you know, I have taken rather a fancy to that young man. He was so very rude to me the other day."

"And do you like people who are rude to you?"

"Sometimes. It makes a change you know. Now-a-days I find that nearly everybody crouches down at my feet; and I think those who hate me most are the most polite to me."

"I can't believe that anyone can hate you," said I.

She shrugged her shoulders, but made no reply: and Miss O'Grady, without lifting her eyes from her knitting, delivered herself of a short sharp "Hem!" which I took to mean, "Well, you *are* an old fool!"

"Would you believe," the Princess resumed, "that Mr. Seaton makes difficulties about producing a bust of me? As if the greatest sculptor in Rome would not be only too glad to have such an order! I don't in the least want a bust of myself, and certainly, in the first instance, had not the slightest anxiety to sit to your friend; but when he seemed inclined to refuse my offer, I determined at once that he should accept it, whether he pleased or not; and, in fact, I am going to give him my first sitting this morning. Will you come with me, and relieve Miss O'Grady? You don't care to come, do you?" she added, turning to her companion; and that lady, looking up for a moment, answered in a deep solemn voice, "I'd be glad to be excused."

Mindful of the foolish determination which Dick had announced to me, I thought I might manage to do the young fellow a good turn, in spite of himself, if I acceded to the Princess's request, so I said I should like very much to accompany her, and shortly afterwards found myself comfortably settled on the soft cushions of the Victoria of which mention has already been made, and progressing at a round pace up the steep streets which lead to the Via di San Nicolo da Tolentino, where Dick's studio was situated.

As we pulled up before the door with a jerk, a little incident occurred which half amused and half distressed me. An elderly man, dressed in a suit of threadbare black, who had been sauntering along the pavement on the opposite side of the way smoking a cigarette, halted as the clattering equipage dashed past him, and, with pardonable curiosity, stood still for a moment to scrutinise the beautiful lady enveloped in furs who was preparing to descend from it. The Princess caught sight of him while her foot was on the step, and, turning instantly to the footman who was holding out his arm to assist her to alight, she said, in her quick imperious way, "Tell that man to come here."

In a moment the stranger, hat in hand, was standing before her and bowing obsequiously, polite interrogation expressed in all his features.

"Cardinal Paolini sent you to watch for me," said the Princess, looking over the man's head as she spoke. "You can tell him that you saw me enter Signor Seaton's studio, and that I shall probably remain

there an hour or more. You may add that I had no one with me except an English gentleman." And with that she swept into the house.

The stranger opened enormous eyes of astonishment, dropped his head beneath his shoulders, exhibited the palms of a dingy pair of hands, and volubly assured me that the lady had made some mistake. He had never seen her before in his life, and had not so much as heard the name of Cardinal Paolini. But I was too much ashamed and annoyed to answer him, and hurried into the studio without daring to glance at either of the servants.

I followed the Princess into the bare, scantily-furnished ante-room in which Dick was accustomed to keep his visitors waiting for him, and then, using the privilege of an old friend, I ventured upon a mild expostulation. "After all," I concluded, "the man was very likely not put on to watch you."

She had turned her back to me in order to examine some bas-reliefs which hung against the wall, and had not, I am afraid, paid much attention to my harangue.

"Oh, yes, he was," she said, quietly. "I know his face perfectly well; and he knows that I know him."

"But why speak to him before your servants? Surely it would be more dignified——"

"That is of no importance whatever," she interrupted. "It is an open secret that the Cardinal surrounds me with spies, and, for anything I know, those very servants may be in his pay. Of course I might disregard his emissaries as beneath notice, if I chose; but it makes him angry to know that he is detected and laughed at; and so, from time to time, I send him a message which I am sure will be delivered, because all his creatures hate him so. Ah, here is Mr. Seaton."

Mr. Seaton now made his appearance. He was clad in a complete suit of brown velveteen, with knickerbockers; his fair hair, which in moments of excitement was apt to stand on end, was parted in the middle and carefully brushed; his beard had evidently been trimmed that morning, and a faint odour of Eau de Cologne entered the room with him. In short, I perceived at once that the young jackanapes had come in prepared to ride the high horse, and his first words convinced me of the correctness of my judgment.

After bowing low to the Princess—I only got a nod—he expressed his regret that she should have been put to the trouble of revisiting his studio. He had given the subject full consideration, he said, and he had arrived at the conclusion that he must decline the honour of executing her bust. In point of fact, he did not go in for that kind of work. Of course a beautiful face was always worth studying; and that (if he might be permitted to say so) was the reason why he had hesitated a little in the present instance; but, after thinking it over, he had decided that it would be wiser for him not to depart from his general rule. He must therefore beg to be excused.

The Princess was sitting with her back towards me, so that I could not see how this announcement affected her. She did not, however, appear to be offended.

"Of course, if you won't do it, you won't, and there is no more to be said," she answered; "but I confess I am disappointed. I want to have a good bust of myself, and I fancied, somehow or other, that you would succeed better with me than one of the others, to whom I shall now have to apply. I don't know what your reasons may be; but if it were only loss of time that you dreaded——"

"You would pay me at a rate that would over-rule that objection. I don't doubt it; and I am infinitely obliged. But—forgive me, Princess—there are some few things in the world that money will not buy. My productions, which are very far from being first-rate, are worth a certain price; and that price I expect, and receive, for them. I don't want more, and would not take more."

At this juncture I could not refrain from calling out, "That's bosh, you know;" but I doubt whether either of the young people heard the interruption.

"I beg your pardon," said the Princess, quite meekly; "I ought not to have tried to bribe you; and, indeed, I did not exactly mean to do that; but I thought perhaps your time might be valuable, and—and—but it does not signify. You don't pursue art as a profession then?" she resumed, after a momentary pause.

"Oh, yes, I do," answered Dick, laughing, and showing a fine double-row of white teeth; "and very glad I am to get an order too. But I love my art for its own sake, not for what it may bring me, and I would not undertake any work that went against the grain with me, if I were offered five thousand pounds for it."

Here again I felt constrained to exclaim, "Dick, Dick, don't be such a prig!" And I am bound to say that my second observation met with as little recognition as my first.

"Oh, if it goes against the grain," said the Princess softly.

An ingenuous blush suffused the cheeks of the young sculptor. "I did not mean that," he cried, quite confused and altogether forgetful of his dignity. "You cannot suppose that—good heavens, how stupid and awkward I am! All I meant was——"

"Well?" said the Princess calmly.

I suppose Dick did not quite know what he had meant; for he did not finish his sentence, but frowned and rumbled up his hair, and began to walk up and down the room.

"If you really think——" he began, at length; "if you think—though, upon my word, I don't know why you should—there are so many sculptors who are my superiors in every way—but if you really wish——"

Need I add that, a few minutes later, the Princess was seated in the

one easy-chair that Dick's studio possessed, that I myself was accommodated with a hard, comfortless stool, and that the incorruptible Seaton had changed his velveteen coat for a brown holland one, and was already hard at work?

"What is there in this world that all pretty women, and most plain ones, cannot get a man to do if they will only take the trouble?" I asked of the Princess when the sitting was at an end, and I was once more seated beside her in her carriage.

She laughed, and said that there were a great many things which no power of hers had ever been able to effect. "Do you think, for instance, that I could induce the Cardinal to leave me in peace?"

"The Cardinal," I answered, "is a priest and an old man: my poor Dick is young and impetuous. I should take it as a favour if you would not make a greater fool of him than you can help."

"What do you mean?" she asked, turning her great serious eyes full upon me.

And then I remembered that she was a princess and that Dick was only a struggling sculptor, and I had not the courage to caution her against flirting with one so far beneath her in rank.

After this the Princess's visits to Dick's studio became matters of daily occurrence. Miss O'Grady went with her as representative of the *convenances*, and took her knitting. I did not offer to replace that lady a second time, having a dislike to hard wooden chairs, but I often dropped in, in the course of the morning, and found the trio always in the same postures—the Princess mounted upon her daïs, Dick working away at his clay, and the grim-visaged companion nodding a little over her interminable stocking. Entering, one day, without knocking, as my habit was, I was arrested upon the threshold by a warning "Hush!" and presently became aware of Miss O'Grady slumbering peacefully upon her high chair, her head thrown back; and her lower jaw dropped, while Dick was hastily drawing a caricature of this sleeping beauty, and the Princess, peeping over his shoulder, was stuffing her pocket handkerchief into her mouth to control her laughter. When I saw Dick's sketch, which I must say was not devoid of humour, I exploded, and awoke the unconscious sitter, who glanced suspiciously first at us, then at her knitting, and finally remarked, gravely, "I believe I've dropped a stitch."

At this there was a general outburst of merriment; for indeed the poor lady had solemnly drawn out her knitting-needles, one by one, in the course of her nap, and her long grey stocking lay, a hopeless ruin, on her knees.

I was not sorry to see that poor Sybil had still so strong a leaven of childishness left in her nature. No one who had encountered her, night after night, as I had lately done, in the salons of the Roman aristocracy, would have supposed that the pale, stately Princess was capable of giggling over a caricature like any schoolgirl; and, in truth, if rumour

were correct, her life among her relations was not of a kind to encourage mirth.

“Will you drive with us to the Doria-Pamfili gardens this afternoon?” she asked, as she put on her hat and gloves. “We are going there to gather flowers, Miss O’Grady and I; and perhaps Mr. Seaton may be able to meet us.”

It was a delicious warm day in the early spring; I had no special engagement for that afternoon; so I said I would go; and we went. We left the carriage at the Villa, and wandered among those shady glades, which are now almost as well known to Englishmen as Richmond Park; and there, sure enough, we found Mr. Dick waiting for us. Then we all went down upon all fours, and gathered the many tinted anemones with which the park was carpeted, till two of us were reminded by the aching of our backs that we were no longer so young as we had once been, and, assuming a more convenient attitude, left the self-imposed task to those whose limbs were still lithe and whose bones were unracked by rheumatism. Out came Miss O’Grady’s grey stocking; I obtained permission to light a cigarette; and as we sat on the dry grass, exchanging a word every now and then, but making no effort at sustained conversation, the laughter of the young folks rose from the dell whither they had wandered, and gladdened the soft, warm air.

Human nature is human nature all the world over. Throw an obscure, but appreciative youth constantly into the society of a lovely empress; leave them alone together; let them grow intimate, and—audacious, senseless, discreditable as it may be—it is as likely as not that that youth will become enamoured of that empress. So much I readily admit. I have indeed repeatedly done so in the course of conversation with Mrs. Clifford, who is pleased to blame me because Dick Seaton chose to fall over head and ears in love with the Princess Paolini, and who, with that terse vigour which characterises all her utterances, has more than once observed that nothing but senile imbecility or pure wickedness can explain my conduct in not “nipping the thing in the bud.” But, although, from considerations which it is needless here to particularise, I have for many years made it a rule never to contradict Mrs. Clifford, I must still take leave to doubt whether, even if I had been possessed of the blighting influence attributed to me by my wife, I should have done wisely or well to exercise it. For whose sake, pray, was I to interfere? For Sybil’s? Was I to deprive her of the honest devotion of an honest heart, and of a few brief hours of enjoyment and oblivion out of a life predestined to chill splendour? For Dick’s, then? Why, what better thing can happen to a young man than that he should fall in love? What is more certain to bring out the good side of his nature, to subdue the earthly, to lead him to do the very best that he can to achieve name and fame? I am fat, but I am romantic. I have my own reminiscences, and have had my own experiences; and it is my deliberate opinion that no mortal has ever been otherwise than benefited

by having truly loved another. I watched, then, the progress of Dick's attachment, with the serene conviction that no harm could come of it. If there had been a question of ultimate marriage, I grant you—but I was perfectly aware of the utter impossibility of any such issue.

After that visit to the Pamfili gardens we four commonly spent our afternoons together. We explored the Palace of the Cæsars, we roamed over the Coliseum, we wandered among the ruins of Caracalla's baths. One pair of us developed an immense interest in ancient architecture—an interest only to be satiated by clamberings over giddy heights of masonry, where apparently no two people could safely post themselves, except hand in hand. The remaining couple, being of riper years, were content to pitch their camp-stools upon the green sward below, where the violets grew, and to gaze up at the figures of their adventurous friends standing out sharp and black overhead against a deep blue sky.

Dick was crazily in love, and showed the state of his feelings so openly, that the most indifferent of lookers-on could scarcely ignore it. Even Miss O'Grady, a singularly cautious and reticent person, honoured me with an occasional meaning smile, when the young man made himself more than usually ridiculous, though she never alluded to the subject in words. As for the Princess, I was a little puzzled to arrive at a comprehension of her sentiments with regard to her adorer. She was wayward and capricious with him, treating him sometimes kindly, sometimes coldly, and occasionally favouring him with a very direct and unequivocal snub. She seemed to be really fond of the lad, and yet anxious to keep him at a certain distance. I often wondered whether she sought his company for his own sake, or merely with the amiable object of annoying her relative, the Cardinal.

I happened to meet that distinguished prelate, one morning, on the staircase of the Palazzo Paolini, whither I had betaken myself upon I forget what errand. Dick had trumped up some frivolous excuse to accompany me. The Cardinal came stepping down the marble stairs, an erect, stately, scarlet figure, with his two footmen in their queer, old-world liveries behind him, and I stood aside to let him pass, taking off my hat, as in duty bound. Dick, on the other hand, never so much as lifted a finger to his wideawake, and frowned aggressively.

"What do you bow to that fellow for?" he asked, rather before his Eminence was out of hearing distance.

"Honour to whom honour is due," I answered.

"Hang it all! you're a heretic; and you oughtn't to think any honour is due to the Scarlet Woman, as you call the Holy Church."

"I took off my hat to the scarlet man," says I. "I have nothing to do with his religious opinions; I simply acknowledge his social position."

"Social position!" echoed Dick, with tremendous scorn. "Yes, that is all you fellows who pride yourselves upon being 'men of the

world' think of. You don't care two straws whether a man be honest or not; but if he can write 'Duke,' or 'Cardinal,' before his name, off go your hats instinctively. What a set of poor toadies you all are! I, who am only a poor, unfashionable sculptor, don't choose to abase myself before an infamous scoundrel, such as your friend there, whatever his rank may be. However, I confess that I hate Cardinal Paolini personally—and he hates me."

"You conceited young donkey!" I returned—for I must say I didn't like being called a toady—"pigmies may hate giants; but giants don't trouble themselves much about pigmies. I have a very strong suspicion that Cardinal Paolini has not yet realised the circumstance of your existence."

"Very well," said Dick composedly; "have it your own way; I don't want to dispute your theories. As a matter of fact, however, the Cardinal is not only aware of my existence, but has had a good try to put an end to it. I was within an ace of being stabbed on my own staircase the night before last."

"By the Cardinal?"

"No; but by a fellow whom he had put on to do it. I was groping my way up the stairs when it occurred to me, I really don't know why, that I might as well strike a light. I did so; and immediately found myself almost touching a ruffian with a naked dagger, whom I clutched, and who promptly made a bolt for it, leaving a piece of his coat-collar in my hand. I let him go; it wouldn't have been any use to me to capture him; but I recognised him at once as one of the spies whose business it is to watch us."

"What spies? And whom do you mean by 'us?'" I enquired, rather startled.

"Why the Princess, you know, and—and myself," replied Dick, looking extremely self-conscious.

The worst of it was that it was true. Half an hour later, the Princess made some pretext to lead me away into the picture-gallery, and there poured into my ears an indignant complaint of the insolence, the wickedness, the cruelty of her cousin, the Cardinal. Her interview with him that morning had been, it appeared, of a somewhat stormy nature. In the double character of senior member of the family and spiritual adviser of his young kinswoman, he had taken upon himself to denounce certain features of her conduct in no measured terms. He had admonished, he had scolded, he had threatened. Last of all, he had actually pushed audacity to the point of accusing the Princess of unbecoming familiarity with—whom did I suppose?—with Mr. Seaton.

Monstrous charge! I expressed myself at once astonished and shocked.

"I told him that he would never have dared to insult me so, if he had not been a priest, and I alone and defenceless," continued the poor Princess, with tears in her eyes; "but the truth is that he is so blinded

by his terror of my marrying again, and taking the Paolini estates out of the family, that he will not believe that I can have any pride or self-respect of my own. I shall never marry again, as it happens; but if I did, I am hardly the person to make a *mésalliance*."

"Certainly not," I acquiesced; "and anything so preposterous as a marriage with Dick Seaton——"

"Preposterous is hardly the word," interrupted the Princess, rather inconsistently. "Mr. Seaton's family is quite as old as our own, I believe, for that matter; but of course I understand the duties of my position; and I need hardly tell you that I have never thought of Mr. Seaton except as of a friend. I have so few friends," she added, with a sigh; "indeed I have none except you, and my good faithful O'Grady, and Mr. Seaton. I don't choose to give any of you up at the Cardinal's bidding."

"Quite so; but don't you think it might be prudent——"

"To drop Mr. Seaton? I daresay it might; but, fortunately or unfortunately, neither he nor I happen to be cowards. Do you know that he was very nearly murdered a night or two ago?"

"Well, I did hear something of the kind. But who told you?"

"Mr. Seaton himself," she answered, looking me calmly and a little defiantly in the face. "Why should he not? I spoke to the Cardinal about it this morning, and told him I knew of his unsuccessful attempt."

"And what did he say to that?"

"Oh, he only laughed, and assured me that, if he wanted to get rid of anybody, he should use some less clumsy means to effect his purpose. And then he said that Rome was full of robbers, and that my friend ought to keep a lamp on his staircase. After which he declared that he forgave me my suspicions, and went smiling away. It is not always easy to make him angry. There is a cool determination about him that frightens me. Sometimes I think I will give up all my money to these Paolinis, as they tried to make me do when I first got it; but then I don't like the idea of being beaten by the Cardinal; and besides," she added, with a sigh, "you know what sort of a welcome I should meet with at home if I returned to my mother penniless."

Indeed I did. With Lady Augusta on one side and Cardinal Paolini on the other, I could foresee little but troublous times for my poor Princess.

Presently she rose from the low tapestried chair upon which she had been seated, and shook her lovely shoulders, as if to free them from some physical load. "Come," she said, "let us forget our troubles for a day or two at least. Have you ever seen my villa at Frascati? Miss O'Grady and I are going out there for a little change: will you join us? I have asked Mr. Seaton to give himself a holiday too, and come and examine my frescoes, which he says he is very anxious to see."

I accepted willingly enough, but I confess that I should have been

just as well pleased if Dick had been left out of the party. I was beginning to feel really uncomfortable when I thought of that unscrupulous old Cardinal. There was a mediævalism about his course of procedure which I did not like. Romance is all very well, but it is hard that one should have to submit to the dull monotony of the nineteenth century and incur the perils of the sixteenth at the same time; and I reflected, with a shudder, that our enemy was quite capable of undermining the Frascati villa, and blowing us all up, à la Darnley.

However, my soul soon ceased to be disquieted within me. When I was sitting, after dinner, in the great cool dining-room of the Villa Paolini, sipping my Montefiascone, I was able to take a calmer and more philosophical view of the situation. The Princess had at that time a *chef*, in whose praise I cannot speak too warmly; the Montefiascone was excellent; the view which I indolently contemplated through the open windows left nothing to be desired. Beyond the gardens of the villa—the marble terraces, the statues, the fountains, and the dark cypress and ilex groves—stretched the billowy Campagna, spanned by ruined aqueducts which lessened into the distance; far away against the horizon rose the dome of St. Peter's, a shadowy blue cupola, and the snows of remote Soracte were flushed with the afterglow of sunset.

“One can but die once,” thinks I, being perhaps a trifle pot-valiant; “and if anybody wants to assassinate me, now is his time. We are all of us tolerably contented and happy at the present moment, and how do we know what bad times the future may have in store for us?” I added aloud, “This is better than Rome.”

“Is it not?” cried the Princess, who was in high spirits. “Heaven be praised! we have put twelve good miles between ourselves and the Cardinal.”

And Miss O'Grady, looking down at her plate, muttered *sotto voce*, “Bad luck to um!”

As for Dick, he said nothing; but I daresay that, like the parrot, he thought the more.

Ah, well, we had a very pleasant and happy week, we four, at the Villa Paolini. The young people had the best of the fun no doubt; but that was only right and proper. After a certain age one ceases to expect any special happiness on one's own score; but if a man be only sentimental enough, his grey hairs need not debar him from enjoying a good deal of vicarious bliss. We galloped over the brown, windy Campagna (Miss O'Grady in a short grey habit and a voluminous blue gauze veil was indeed a joy for ever); we drove to Albano and Rocca di Papa; we climbed Monte Cavo, and picnicked among the ruins of ancient Tusculum; and at night, when the sun had set, and the heavy southern dew had fallen, we wandered among the terraces and avenues of the Paolini gardens, or sat in arm-chairs on the verandah, and watched the stars. That is to say, that two of the party wandered, while the other two sat still. I had, and have, a great respect for Miss O'Grady; but I

like to remain quiescent for a time after dinner, and my intercourse with her was not of that kind which demands solitude and picturesque accessories. Yes; it was a quiet, happy time; and like all times, happy and otherwise, it came to an end. I well remember our last evening. The stars were glittering in a cloudless sky, the air was as soft and warm as on a June night in England, and all the good folks of Frascati had gone to bed to save their candles. There was profound silence in the garden, whither, as usual, we had betaken ourselves after dinner. I was peacefully puffing at my nocturnal cigar; Miss O'Grady, who was unable to knit in the dark, was sitting in a low chair a few paces from my own, her head supported by her long, lean hand; and Dick and the Princess had strolled away together, as they pretty generally did at that hour. From time to time we caught glimpses of their dark figures flitting from shadow to light and from light to shadow among the scented orange-trees and the myrtles and tamarisks, and every now and then, the sound of their voices was borne to us and died away again as the fitful night breeze rose and fell. Once they paused by a marble balustrade some fifty yards away from us, and I could see that that rascal Dick was gazing with all his might and main into the great brown eyes of his beautiful companion.

O zarte Sehnsucht, süßes Hoffen!
Der ersten Liebe goldne Zeit!

As I have, I think, said before, I am old, but I am romantic; and while my eyes were resting upon the Princess and the sculptor, my mind had skipped nimbly back to the year 1830, and to the days when I too lingered out of doors in the falling dews and forgot this weary world and all its dull necessities in looking into just such another pair of brown orbs. I do not speak of Mrs. Clifford's eyes, which, indeed, are not of that colour, but of a bluish-green or greenish-blue, I think. I have not the advantage of her presence beside me as I write, and can't be positive as to a shade or so. Poor homely O'Grady, too, must have had some recollections of happy bygone days, I fancy; for she moved uneasily in her chair, and heaved a prodigious sigh from time to time, and the bones of the formidable stays in which she was encased creaked as if in sympathy.

We all re-entered the house together at length; and upon the hall-table we found a little pile of letters which some officious person had forwarded to us from Rome.

Five minutes afterwards two, at least, of our number had stepped back with dismal haste from the domain of romance to that of reality.

III.

One of my letters was from Mrs. Clifford, and contained the rather startling intelligence that she proposed to join me very shortly. The east winds, she wrote, had been most piercing of late; she felt that she

required a change; and, in short, she had been persuaded to try the effect of a journey to Rome by dear Lady Augusta Ferrars, who was just about to start for that city on a visit to her daughter, the Princess Paolini. Would I see about rooms at the Hôtel de l'Europe, and secure tickets for the Easter ceremonies at once? In a postscript I was asked whether I had happened to meet young Lord Chelsfield yet. Because Mrs. Clifford rather imagined that Lady Augusta expected to find him at Rome.

I took in the situation at a glance. "Dear Lady Augusta" intended to marry her daughter to Lord Chelsfield. The match would be a good one; and, moreover, it would save the Paolini wealth from ever reverting to the family of the late Prince. Indeed, realising, as I then did for the first time, how important it was, from Lady Augusta's point of view, that the Princess should make a second marriage, I was at a loss to comprehend why that devoted mother had ever allowed her dear child to return to Italy. But when I remembered the antagonistic designs of Lady Augusta and the Cardinal; when I recollected that these two determined persons would shortly be brought face to face; and when I further reflected upon the complications which might arise out of Dick's intimacy with the Princess, and upon the measure of condemnation which was only too likely to fall upon my own head on account thereof, I could contain myself no longer, and exclaimed involuntarily, "Here's a row!"

The Princess looked up, with a rather pale and weary face, from the perusal of her own correspondence, and said, "I beg your pardon?" But I did not repeat my vulgar ejaculation.

"I must return to Rome," she continued, in a tone of some depression. "Mamma is coming to see me."

"So must I," I remarked, not less dolorously. "Mrs. Clifford is coming to see me."

At which we had a brief, dreary laugh.

And so next day we all jogged back along the Via Appia to face our troubles, and left Frascati and its foolish fancies behind us.

Upon the events of the few following weeks I prefer not to dwell. I am unable to look back upon that time with any sort of gratification or comfort. Everything turned out exactly as I had anticipated. Lord Chelsfield—a feeble, dissipated youth, with a head like a kite—made his appearance simultaneously with Lady Augusta, and I was given to understand by my wife that he was destined to become the husband of my beautiful Princess. I observed carelessly that the lady would probably have something to say to that arrangement, and received a somewhat acrimonious reply to the effect that she had already signified her disapproval of it pretty plainly.

"She refused him last summer," Mrs. Clifford said. "In fact, I believe that she left her mother in that abrupt way and returned to Rome simply in order to get away from him. She is obstinate and headstrong like all her father's people; but dear Lady Augusta has

always been able to manage her girls so wonderfully that I have no doubt she will succeed in the present case. I am sure I hope she will; for really poor Sybil would be so very much happier as the wife of an English nobleman than she can be among these horrid, garlic-eating Italians! And then of course there is the money to be thought of."

"Just so," I replied. "I daresay Lady Augusta will carry her point; I know she has a convincing way with her."

Of the tremendous power possessed by that ugly, fat, commonplace-looking woman I had good reason to be aware; for poor Ferrars was one of my oldest friends, and I had seen him literally worried into his grave by her. As a tiny fly can goad a creature thousands of times its size to the verge of madness, so Lady Augusta, whom I cannot but regard as equivalent to a whole swarm of flies, would tease and torment and sting any person who happened to oppose her wishes till the wretched victim was fain to shriek for mercy. I never knew her fail to get her own way. She was utterly pitiless; she had a moral hide thicker than the material one of any hippopotamus, and she was thoroughly proof against discouragement and fatigue. Her management of her children—not, as a general rule, easy people to drive—was, as my wife truly said, wonderful. They resisted her, it is true, but she always conquered them in the end, and never forgot to make them smart for their mutiny into the bargain.

I went, as in duty bound, to pay my respects to this amiable creature shortly after her arrival, but she received me so rudely, and said such unpleasant things about certain private affairs of my own with which I had never had any reason to suppose her acquainted, that I picked up my hat, after five minutes of her company, and fled.

As ill luck would have it, at the door of the hotel I met Mrs. Clifford just starting for her afternoon drive, and was immediately ordered to accompany her. Then I soon learnt the cause of my rough reception by Lady Augusta. It was I, it appeared, who had introduced my low friends into the Princess Paolini's house, and had filled her head with the most shocking and revolutionary notions. It was I who had striven to make mischief between mother and daughter. It was I who had encouraged a monstrous flirtation between Sybil and some vulgar, designing artist, and had made her the laughing-stock—positively the laughing-stock!—of all Rome. Dear, dear! what an afternoon I did have of it! Round and round that weary Pincian—which I declare is not much larger than an ordinary soup-plate—round and round, with the record of my delinquencies, past and present, dinned into my ears in a steady, ceaseless monotone—round and round at a slow jog-trot, till my head grew confused, and my ears began to sing.

"I can't stand this any longer!" I gasped at length. "Let me go; I am getting giddy."

"Nonsense!" returned Mrs. Clifford; "what can there be to make you giddy?"

"I tell you I *am*," I reiterated, outraged Nature asserting herself; "and what's more, if you don't let me out of this carriage at once, I believe I shall be sick!"

Then I was allowed to go.

After that I thought I might as well keep away from the Palazzo Paolini. My going there would have done nobody any good; and, if you will have the whole truth, I suppose I was a little afraid of that dreadful old Lady Augusta, as well as of someone else nearer home. I declare, upon my honour and conscience, that I would have braved any number of old women, if, by so doing, I could have rescued my poor Princess from the destiny which I saw looming before her; but Sybil, when I met her in public, avoided me in a rather marked manner, and indeed it was not easy to see in what way my visits could be of service to her, whereas they would assuredly have the effect of exasperating her dear mother.

Nor did I, at this time, see much of Dick Seaton. Several times, when I went to his studio, I found the outer door locked, and upon one occasion, when I did happen to catch him in the act of entering, he behaved in so unreasonable a manner that I very nearly lost my temper with him. I must say I was sorry for the poor lad when I saw his pale face, the dark circles under his eyes, and his dishevelled hair; nor did my pity suffer any diminution after he had taken me into the studio, and had begun prancing about the room, beating his breast, striking his forehead, and cursing the day of his birth, after the time-honoured fashion of disappointed lovers. But that he should proceed to abuse me, as the chief cause of all his woe, was really rather more than I could patiently submit to.

"Upon my word, Dick," I exclaimed, "this is a great deal too bad! I make every allowance for your abnormal state of mind, but, when all is said and done, you are a man—and from a man one does expect some rough kind of justice. If you had been an old woman, you know, one would of course have had to bear your absurd accusations in silence. Now do please try to recall the true facts. Did I ever lead you to suppose that you could marry the Princess Paolini? Didn't I, on the contrary, strive, on every possible occasion, to convince you that such an alliance was, and always must be, entirely out of the question? Didn't I warn you, the very first night I was in Rome, against falling in love with her? And didn't you reply that there was no danger of such a catastrophe—or words to that effect?"

"I don't remember anything of the kind," answered that shameless young man. "I know you might have saved me a great deal of wretchedness, if you had chosen to speak a little more plainly when you saw how things were going. Why couldn't you have told me that it was arranged that she should marry that rascal Chelsfield? I suppose you must have known it. As for differences of rank, and that kind of thing, I did not think so much of that as you do: I haven't your immense

reverence for a title, you know"—this was meant to be very cutting—"and I confess I have sometimes thought that, one day, when I had made a name for myself—however, that does not signify now. She won't see me; and the hall-porter at the Palazzo, whom I bribed with a couple of scudi, told me that Lady Augusta had given orders that I was never to be admitted. I think I will go and drown myself in the Tiber."

"I wouldn't do that," said I. "I know you won't believe me, but it is nevertheless true, that you will get over this sooner than you think."

"Get over it!" shouts Dick, beginning to rampage about the room again. "My good sir, you don't know what you are talking about. Because you have 'got over' half-a-dozen flirtations, you imagine that love is nothing but a passing fancy, which resolves itself very soon into a rather pleasant memory. Well, you are wrong. I believe that love, when it has once existed between two people whose tastes and habits and ideas are the same, is eternal." He added, in a lachrymose tone, which would have been pathetic if it had not been a trifle ludicrous, "She and I thought alike upon all subjects."

I stuck my hands in my pockets, stared up at the ceiling, and murmured:—

Oh, how hard it is to find
The one just suited to our mind!
And if that one should be
False, unkind, or found too late,
What can we do but sigh at Fate,
And sing, "Woe's me, woe's me!"

I trotted out this quotation from the lumber-room of my memory, where I keep many such odds and ends, intending it as an expression of sympathy; but I think it was lost upon Dick, who only seemed to have caught one word of it.

"She is *not* false!" he cried.

"Did I say she was? To whom should she be false? Hardly to you, I imagine; for I happen to have heard from her own lips that she never harboured any such absurd notion as that of becoming your wife."

Well, I meant it for the best. What kindness would there have been in encouraging the poor fellow to foster illusions? But no sooner had I made the above veracious statement than Dick turned upon me with the utmost fury and rudeness, and requested me to take myself off.

"Confound you!" he bawled, stamping his foot, "why do you sit grinning there, and driving me mad? I wish you would get out, and leave me alone with my misery!"

Now, as I said before, I can make every allowance for the mentally afflicted, but I do think that some amount of respect is due to grey hairs. I resolved, therefore, as I made my way down the Via di San Nicolo da Tolentino, that I would leave my young friend to himself until such time as he should have recovered his senses. So for the next fortnight or so

I mooned about Rome alone, seldom seeing either Dick or the Princess, and, to tell the truth, feeling very dull and lonely without them.

Now it came to pass that, as I was sitting in a sequestered avenue of the French Academy gardens one morning, lost in melancholy meditation, I was roused by a smart tap on the shoulder, which almost made me jump out of my skin. Wheeling round, with a wrathful ejaculation—for I hate to be startled—what should I see before me but the long, lank figure of Miss O'Grady, who saluted me with a short stern nod.

"I saw you come in here," said she, in her deep voice, "and I followed you."

"My dear Miss O'Grady," I cried, making room for her on the stone bench beside me, "I am delighted to see you! How is the Princess?"

"It's much you care how she is!" retorted Miss O'Grady, with a toss of her head and a snort.

It was really astonishing how, at this time, everybody turned against me, who, as all readers of this narrative must admit, had given no sort of cause for such animosity. I shrugged my shoulders in meek silence.

"Do you know," resumed Miss O'Grady indignantly, "that they are going to marry her to this half-witted English lord?"

I took off my hat, and scratched my head irritably. "My dear madam," I answered, "really I can't help it."

Miss O'Grady positively snapped her finger and thumb within an inch of my nose. "Poh!" she exclaimed, with a suddenness which made me start back to my corner of the bench. "And you call yourself a man! If I was a man I'd let 'em see!"

"Well, my dear Miss O'Grady," said I, "and suppose you were a man, what would you do?"

"Sure I'd stand by me friends," cried the intrepid lady, her brogue developing in equal measure with her excitement. "I'd not see a poor child hunted and driven into consenting to marry a man who's not fit to black her shoes!"

"Oh, she *has* consented then? I think you forget that the Princess is a free agent, and that no one can force her to marry against her will. How do I know that she may not like Lord Chelsfield well enough?"

This was rather disingenuous of me, I admit; but Miss O'Grady's violence had so taken me by surprise that I wanted time to collect my ideas.

"Indade and indade there's nothing of the kind," she returned, with much warmth, "and it's you that should be ashamed to say so. See now," she continued, lowering her voice to a whisper; "you can save her yet, if you'll do what I tell you. Her mother's gone to Naples for three days. Now here's what you have to do. Be off to England, the first thing in the morning, and take the poor child with you. She's half dazed with fright and distress, and she'll go with you if you tell her she must. And there's one we know of who won't be long in following. If you

make the most of your time, I wouldn't say but you might get her safely married before ever my Lady Augusta caught you up."

"Gracious Heavens!" I exclaimed, aghast, "you cannot have realised the meaning of what you propose. I kidnap the Princess Paolini! Why, my dear lady, if there were no other objection to the plan, you must see that, old as I am, it would be in the highest degree scandalous and improper—"

"Sure, haven't you got your wife with you?" broke in Miss O'Grady composedly.

"My wife! And you really imagine that my wife would join in such an adventure? No, no, Miss O'Grady; I am very, very sorry for poor Sybil, and goodness knows I would help her if I could; but your plan is hopelessly impracticable—it is indeed. The fact is that Mrs. Clifford's views with regard to this question are by no means identical with my own, and—and in short I could not even think of making such a suggestion to her as you speak of."

"So you're afraid of your wife!" sneered Miss O'Grady, rising, and shaking out her grey skirts with a gesture of infinite scorn. "Very well. But remember now, whatever comes of this, it will be your fault. Good morning to you."

And with that she strode majestically away, and left me. I felt a little ashamed of myself, though I did not see then, and don't see now, how I could have answered Miss O'Grady differently, nor in what way I could have impeded a marriage to which the Princess had herself consented.

Later in the day, I came across Dick in the Piazza di Spagna, and, thinking it as well that he should know the worst, I caught him by the arm, and briefly informed him that the Princess was engaged to marry Lord Chelsfield.

"I am perfectly well aware of the fact," he answered coldly, and turned on his heel.

So that was all the thanks I got for voluntarily undertaking a disagreeable task. Truly it is an ungrateful world.

IV.

That same evening I was taken by Mrs. Clifford, rather against my will, to a great ball given by the French ambassador. It was a very grand affair; there was a larger display of uniforms than usual; the stairs were lined by servants in gala liveries, and the Roman princesses had got their famous diamonds out from the bank for the occasion, and were all ablaze with them. Rather to my surprise, the first person whom I met, on entering, was Dick Seaton, who did not seem particularly pleased to see me. He was standing close to the door, and I rather gathered from his attitude and expectant look that he was waiting for somebody. My suspicions were confirmed when I returned, in the course of half an hour or so, after having made the complete circuit of

the rooms, and found him in the precise spot where I had left him. I had some doubts as to the probability of Somebody's arrival, and I had none whatever as to the inexpediency of a meeting between her and Dick, so I ventured, at length, to approach the latter, and to remonstrate with him upon the folly of stationing himself at the elbow of a powdered footman, who might sneeze at any moment, and cover him with flour from head to foot; but he shook me off impatiently, alleging, with obvious absurdity, that he was standing near the doorway for the sake of fresh air.

I sauntered away again, thinking to myself that, at that advanced hour, my young friend was not likely to receive any reward for his long vigil, and that, after his conduct to me, he deserved to meet with disappointment; but just as the clock was striking half-past twelve my ear caught the sound of a distant flunkey's voice bawling out, "La Principessa Paolini," and presently in sailed Sybil, magnificent in sapphires and diamonds, and shook hands with the ambassadress. Dick followed in her wake. I never saw the beautiful Princess looking so well. Her usually pale cheeks had a faint pink flush; her eyes were sparkling; she conversed, in a far more animated manner than was habitual with her, with the circle of admirers by whom she was immediately surrounded. She was evidently excited; and, strange as it appeared to me, I could not help thinking that she was happy.

What did it all mean? I was completely puzzled, and my wonderment was increased when I saw the Princess take Dick's arm, and move away towards the ball-room, whither I followed the pair in time to see them join in the waltz which was just then being played. Now I knew that the Princess had never honoured Dick in this way before, and I knew, too, that of late she had not even spoken to him in public: therefore I was more perplexed than ever. One of the French attachés offered me an explanation of the phenomenon.

"*La belle princesse s'amuse,*" said he. "They are going to make her marry the milor, but they tell me she has sworn to lead him a stormy life. That will be the more easy for her, as I believe he is the incarnation of jealousy."

Following the direction of my informant's glance, I caught sight of Lord Chelsfield, whose goggle eyes were fixed upon his betrothed, while he struggled to screw up an intractable set of features into the semblance of a scowl.

"Oh, that's it, is it?" said I. And then, having seen enough, I went home to bed.

I was a little disappointed, I confess. In my young days, people who were crossed in love, or forced to marry against their wishes, took their affliction in a different, and I venture to think a more healthy spirit, from that which obtains in modern society; and I must say that I would rather have seen Sybil pale and despairing than reckless. "*Autres temps, autres mœurs,*" thought I to myself, as I blew out my

candle. "Perhaps, after all, it comes to much the same thing in the long run."

Mrs. Clifford has long held a theory, built upon I know not what foundation, that it is good for her health to breakfast in her own room. I myself, when I am abroad, adopt the foreign hours, and take a solitary *déjeuner à la fourchette* at midday, or thereabouts. I had just made an end of this repast, on the morning after the ball at the French Embassy, when a huge square envelope was brought to me, which I found to enclose a politely-worded request from Cardinal Paolini that I would do him the great favour to call upon him at his residence in the course of the day. He would be ready to receive me, he said, at any hour that might suit me.

My acquaintance with the Cardinal being of the most formal character, I felt some curiosity as to his motive for desiring an interview with me, though it was easy to divine that it must have some connection with the Princess and her affairs. That her intended alliance with the English lord must have thrown the good man into a state of furious indignation I well knew; and it occurred to me that he might possibly have formed some scheme for using me as a means of persuading or intimidating her into renouncing the project. I was resolved that, should this surmise prove well founded, I would show a bold front to the enemy. I daresay it was a consciousness of having been conspicuously worsted in several recent encounters with members of the opposite sex that made me say to myself with so much determination, as I prepared to obey the Cardinal's summons, that I would stand no bullying from him or any other living man. I marched down the shady side of the Via Condotti, and so, across the Corso, to the Cardinal's residence in the Via della Scrofa, and rang his door-bell as bold as a lion.

I was at once shown into a small, rather scantily furnished study, where I found the great man in conference with his secretary. He dismissed that functionary as I made my entrance, and rose to receive me, looking dignified and handsome, as he always did, and far more amiable than usual. He took my hand in his well-shaped white fingers, on one of which sparkled a huge archiepiscopal ring, and favoured me with that gentle pressure which is the Italian equivalent for a hand-shake, and which somehow is always rather disagreeable to me.

"I thank you infinitely, sir," he said, in his own language, "for your kindness in granting me an interview. I should not have ventured to put you to so much trouble had I not known how sincere an interest you take in all that concerns my cousin, the Princess Paolini."

I grunted, not choosing to make civil speeches till I should have heard what was wanted of me; and the Cardinal, begging me to take a chair, resumed his own seat, and continued:

"I have a piece of intelligence to communicate to you, with which you will, I think, be surprised, and I hope pleased. You can hardly have failed to notice that your friend Signor Seaton (a most agreeable

and talented young man, with whom I regret that I am but slightly acquainted) has for some time past been attached—very deeply attached—to my cousin.”

I smiled, and shrugged my shoulders. It might be so, I said, or it might not. Who could answer for the foolish notions that will get into young men’s heads? For you see I was not going to commit myself.

The Cardinal leant back in his chair, rested his elbows on the arms, and, folding his hands, peered at me over them with a sidelong, benevolent gaze. “It has been so,” he said; “and I may add that the attachment has been mutual.”

He paused again; but I was getting bewildered, and judged it best to hold my peace.

“Yes,” he repeated, “the attachment has been mutual; and I am happy to announce to you that Signor Seaton and the Princess were married at eight o’clock this morning.”

I started to my feet with a cry of amazement, called forth not more by the news itself than by the fact that Cardinal Paolini should be the person to communicate it to me. For a moment I really thought that this grave ecclesiastic was making me the subject of a hoax.

“Surely you cannot mean—” I stammered. “Is it possible that this can be true?”

“I have the best reason for knowing it to be so,” replied the Cardinal, smiling, “since I had myself the honour of performing the ceremony.”

After that I felt that nothing could ever astonish me again. I was quite prepared now to hear that Lady Augusta had been present at the wedding, and that Lord Chelsfield had given away the bride. I suppose I must have involuntarily uttered the name of that ill-used nobleman; for the Cardinal remarked drily, as if in answer to some observation from me,

“Ah, Lord Chelsfield—I fear this will be a disappointment to him, and also to Lady Augusta Ferrars. In truth, one of my reasons for seeking an interview with you, sir, was to request you to kindly convey the news to that lady—she having thought fit to use expressions to me, shortly after her arrival in Rome, which have rendered all further intercourse between us impossible. The young couple left by train this morning, and, for reasons the force of which you will easily appreciate, desire their destination to remain a secret for the present.”

“But you yourself, *Eminenza*,” I could not help saying, “surely this marriage cannot be agreeable to you. I should have thought that the loss of the Paolini estates——”

“It certainly would not have been agreeable to me that the Paolini estates should pass out of the family,” he replied calmly. “Happily no such misfortune has occurred. The Princess has made a formal and legal transfer of all the landed property and a large portion of the personal estate of her late husband to her cousin, the present Prince. I

pressed upon her the propriety of some such course in the early days of her widowhood, but she did not at that time see fit to listen to my counsels. The present transfer was made at her own instance, and is therefore the more creditable to her."

I saw it all now. The priest had outwitted the lady after all. The Church was triumphant, and Lady Augusta was nowhere. I picked up my hat and umbrella, and prepared to depart.

"I congratulate your Eminence," I said, "upon the excellent bargain that you have made. I regret that I am unable to carry the good news to Lady Augusta Ferrars, as you so obligingly desire me to do; but circumstances compel me to quit Rome immediately. I have the honour to wish you a very good morning."

I hurried back to the hotel, packed up my clothes, left a note for Mrs. Clifford, drove to the station, and never paused again till I was safely on the other side of the Alps. There I ensconced myself in an hotel at Geneva, drew a long breath, and awaited events.

Denunciations of an epistolary kind I did receive in due course; but at these I could afford to smile. The London season was drawing to a close before I again joined Mrs. Clifford; and by that time the Paolini-Seaton scandal was already an old story.

Dick Seaton is now a famous sculptor, and makes a handsome income, I am told, by his art. Miss O'Grady often visits him and his wife, and I see her from time to time; but she has a poor opinion of me. A little energy on my part, she says, might have saved the Paolini property, and defeated the Cardinal and Lady Augusta at one blow. She has never been able to pardon me for the failure of this pretty design; but I don't know that anybody would have been much the happier had it succeeded.

Mrs. Seaton—she dropped her title when she married again—is one of the most agreeable and popular women in London. Everybody unites in singing her praises; but, for my own part, handsome as she is, and charming as she is, I shall never be able to feel quite the same interest in her, in these days of her prosperity, that I did in the beautiful, unfortunate Princess Paolini.

Betsinda and her Bun.

IF we divide the inhabitants of London into those who live above and those who live below the ground, we shall take in two great divisions of human beings; those who serve, and those who receive such service. It is true that in many cases those who serve take life very easily, and those who are served work very hard, but these are exceptions to the general rule; and I could imagine a Darwin belonging to some future age and race describing the habits of the different occupants of our ant-heap, and telling us how the smaller and more shabby ants wait upon the large white race, who allow themselves to be fed and tended by the inferior creatures, and are utterly at a loss without them. The large white ants live in airy chambers, with terraces, and balconies, and flower-pots, where they receive the homage of their companions; the smaller working ants having finished their daily tasks contentedly descend into dark and gloomy dungeons and passages underneath the airy chambers. The light reaches them through iron bars—in many houses the gas has to be burning all the afternoon; their windows look into dirty areas, where pipes trickle, and dust-holes are heaped, and gratings steam with ominous vapours. Our Englishman's stronghold is not without its feudal adjuncts of keep, and moat, and dungeon.

We have peeped down these gratings and seen the faces looking up at the passers-by. In the smaller streets we all know the look of the tangled hair, of the smudges of coal on the grimy apron, of the feckless sleepy little creature who shuffles out into the open area when you ring the bell. She does not quite seem to know what you want, nor where she is, nor who it is you are asking for. And yet, as we have seen, these little dazed Betsindas revive and brighten up most reassuringly to the sound of a kind voice or two, at the prospect of a few of Angelica's crumbs, or at the thought of something natural and happy, and belonging to them all, coming to break the round of pail, pan, and dust-bin.

Philanthropic entertainments are now, I am glad to say, looked upon as a recognised form of charity. As far as outward signs go, they might not always be distinguished from any other manner of dissipation.

The guests arrive, disrobe, look round to see who they can recognise in the crowd, shake hands with their friends, crowd into the refreshment rooms; perhaps, indeed, Buns play a more important part in these festivities than they do upon more frivolous occasions. In zoology they have long been looked upon as a powerful engine for bringing human beings and bears into amicable relations, and so in philanthropy buns may be considered as a valuable link between the different classes.

The philanthropic bun is often a halfpenny one. It is generally presented by some well-meaning Princess Angelica to little Betsinda, straggling in in her rags. "Here, take it, little girl," says Angelica in the fairy tale, "I'm not hungry;" and, as in that fairy land where Bulbo's magic roses bloomed, the Betsindas of to-day utter their grateful little grace, and eat up their buns, and sing: "Oh, nice plum bun, nice plum bun, how I wis it never was done," or words very much to that effect, which are in use in all our Sunday-schools.

A dozen of these little Sunday scholars came to tea the other day at the house of a good-natured gentleman, who does not object to provide the buns so long as he is not expected to distribute them himself. The page-boy, after a moment's hesitation, announced them as "the young ladies;" and the door opened, and a file of little shabby pale-faced grinning stunted creatures walked in. They were grown-up girls for the most part, but they looked like school children of eleven and twelve years old. It was like a little company of dwarfs. One said she was twenty, another was eighteen, others were seventeen. Most of them wore short frocks and tight plaits, one or two of them had earrings and combs, and some pretensions to feminine adornment, one alone out of all the dozen had a fresh and pretty face. The rest were melancholy little specimens of girlhood, wasted, wanting, nervous—it was a dismal sight, though they were all happy enough just at that moment.

Five ladies were present, whom we will call Mesdames A, E, I, O, and U. They did their best to entertain their company. Miss A handed the plates of comestibles. Miss E, who had just come from hearing Mr. Gladstone make a great speech, put politics aside for the moment, and threw herself heartily into the present teacupful of interest; she knew all about the girls and the home they came from, and the lady who has set it going; she had been interested for years in the problem of dividing Angelica's superfluity with the little wandering Betsindas round about the palace gates. Miss I poured out tea with a kind solicitude, and Miss O sat at the head of the table with her beautiful tranquil face, and made the little creatures sing a hymn; and when the meal was over, Miss U, and a friendly musician, who had come in by chance, sat down to the piano, and made music for the company. It was really surprising to see how quickly the girls responded to this language, which they seemed to understand quite instinctively. Schumann cast his spell, and brought a lovely picture before their eyes; Handel told them a village story to the clanking of the blacksmith's forge; Beethoven gave them a tender benediction. They seemed to take it all in note by note. They were all listening and nodding in time, and holding each other's hands.

"Have you ever heard any music before?" Miss U asked a little being with one eye, who was absorbed and listening with all her might.

"Oh, yes, m'm," says the little girl, breathless; "my missis had a peany, and used to sing beautiful up in the droring-room."

The little girl next her chimed in proudly: "And my master, he played th' accorgium; I do like to hear them play." Then rather shyly: "Could the lady play 'Ome, sweet 'ome!'"

Miss U could play "Home, sweet home," very charmingly; and the girls all brightened and beat time, and then they asked for "God save the Queen" and the "Last Rose of Summer," and a "Scotch Reel." While some of the little Betsindas were shuffling their toes to this measure, others were forgetting their shyness and beginning to chatter to one another; one poor little thing suddenly burst out crying, and told a little girl who was present that her brother had been drowned the week before—the music had made her cry. She had a tearing cough, poor little creature, and seemed altogether forlorn. I think she was one of a poor little deserted family. The mother had put the four children into a cab, and walked away and left them. Each one of the girls that day had a story to tell, at the end of which, in the case of these girls more fortunate than others, the invariable visiting lady happily walked in and carried the little improvisatore off to "the Home."

Miss E pointed out one of the girls to Miss A. "Look at those tortoiseshell earrings," said she; "they tell a story at once. In our class we always found that the appearance of earrings meant a falling off in the girls' attendance."

Miss A, an amateur in the science of Sunday-schools, looked with some interest at the girl with the earrings. She had a pale sharp face, two startled eyes, and an eager, suspicious manner. She was walking, hand-in-hand, with a friend even paler and more startled than herself. Their collars were smart and their hairs were dressed, but their faces were shabby enough, poor things, worn and haggard with dark lines under their eyes, and seams, and faded cheeks, though they were such young faces of eighteen or nineteen years only. One of the two, the girl without the earrings, had been a servant in a lodging-house in Euston Crescent. She was a pauper girl, without any friends outside the district school, and after coming and going she had finally got a place as maid-of-all-work in a lodging-house in Euston Crescent. The wages promised were good—14*l.* a year, and everything found. She had to do the whole work of the house. There were six gentlemen lodgers for her to attend to; she was up at six in the morning, and she had to sit up till past one o'clock at night to let the gentlemen in. The lady wouldn't allow no keys; she herself went out too, and left the little maid alone all day to see to everything. She might have done the work better, she said, but she had scarcely any food to eat, for the lady locked it all up. "She would give me a loaf and say, 'There that must last for two days;'" and I used to be that hungry," said the girl, "I couldn't help eating it all up at once; and then when I told my mistress, she wouldn't listen; she said she couldn't help it. She gave me no money," the girl continued, in answer to a question, "and before my month was up I was that ill I couldn't stand, and I told her I must go; and she says, 'You can't have

no wages then ;' and I was that bad I went out of the house, and I met a woman who took me in : she had a family, and we all slep' in one room, and there the visitor found me, and she sent me, oh ! to such a beautiful place—the Colavescent Orspital, at Walton, and they are a keeping of me now, till I'm fit for another setuation."

The superintendent of the Home, who had brought the girls, showed one of the vowels present a list of their "cases," barely stated :—

Let us take "No. 2," "*educated in the Anerly District School ; sent by guardians to service ; had left two situations in six months, when she was received into the Home ; was there trained, and has now been able to remain in her present place, where she is giving satisfaction.*"

"No. 2" was standing by, a bright-looking girl, with a nice honest face, and when asked about her situations, says confidently, "You see they wanted a *general*, and I warn't a *general*, and I didn't give satisfaction ; I am a *general* now, but I warn't fit for one then, only to be a nurse. But the lady, she says, 'You stop on, Rebecca, till I'm suited, and mind the child.' He was such a dear little fellow" (brightening up) ; "he always call me his *Boccabee*. My name is Rebecca, but he says *Boccabee* so pretty, and I used to walk out with him every day. I *was* fond of that child ; and when I was a going he cried. Oh, how he cried ! and I says, 'Don't you cry, dear ; *Boccabee* won't forget yer ; and she's a coming back to see you, with a pretty little quack quack, if you don't cry.' So then I left, and went to my other place ; but I didn't give satisfaction, and so I had to leave ; and then I went straeful off back again to see Charlie ; and I tried to get a quack quack, but I couldn't get one, so I bought a little hen and chickens ; and when he see me he says, 'Here's *Boccabee* ! Got Charlie's quack quack !' So I says, 'No, dear ; here's a chuck chuck.' Oh, he was pleased !" This was little *Boccabee's* story, and all the other girls listened sympathetically.

"No. 3, *A. R.*, brought to the Home by one of the society's agents. Both parents addicted to intemperance, the report says ; girl has become a nice little servant ; mother at present in the workhouse."

"Yes," said little *A. R.*, "we went into the house the day after my little baby brother's birthday. The 14th of March is his birthday, and we went in on the 15th. I haven't seen him since."

This Arabian Nights' entertainment was continued by the little one-eyed girl, who seemed to have a decided turn for romancing, as well as for music. She first thrilled us all by the account she gave of the way in which she had been beaten as a baby by the mistress of the workhouse—this alas ! was no romance—she then went on to describe the situation she was fortunate enough to find subsequently, where the mistress took such a fancy to her that she kept her in the drawing-room while she sang and played the piano, till she died, regretting that she could not leave her all her fortune, and recommending her children to treat her favourite as more than sister.

"And did they?" says Rebecca, standing by.

"They said I was too short," said little one eye mysteriously. "They sent me off next day."

"What a shame!" cried the other little girls.

Whatever the rights of the case may have been, here is the little creature registered, docketted, befriended, having happily found a more permanent though less romantic refuge.

Miss E interrupted the story-telling by bringing up a very short bashful little girl, who had saved up money enough to buy her own frock. She was a little mite of a housemaid about three feet in length, who came up hanging her head and blushing. She had a nice little face, round cheeks, two little tails of hair. She was sixteen; she looked about ten years old. "Yes, m'm," she said, "I bought it out of my savings. It took such a long time to save up the money, for it's real good stuff, it's one and two-pence halfpenny a yard. Me and Mrs. M—— went out to choose it. I had to get six yards, and E——, she saved up too, and she had to get seven."

The superintendent told me that one rainy day she heard a girl sobbing to a policeman, and stopped to ask what was the matter. The matter was a rainy street and a poor little creature standing in it without a home or a friend to turn to. The lodging-house keeper she served had turned her off without a character for refusing to tamper with the lodgers' letters. The girl was a Scotch girl with ideas of right and wrong, and she had refused to fall in with the landlady's practices. Happily, the right person—by some wonderful chance—had been passing at the very moment when she was wanted; and the poor little victim was carried safely off to a Home for the night. Next day, with a visitor to back her and the serviceable policeman, she went to the lodging-house and demanded her clothes and her wages, which the woman no longer dared withhold; and she is now comfortably placed in a more desirable situation. Poor little Betsinda alone could never have obtained justice, but with the whole of the Ladies' Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants to back her righteous demands, even the gorgon landlady was obliged to succumb. One has heard of this and of other fortunate chances such as this one, but there are hopeless stories of which one never hears the end.

How many of these children have a friend to count upon in a strait, or a home to go to if their place fail them? If they are driven out by the Gruffanuffs of life, these poor little creatures wander out into the streets from whence they came, aimless, and in danger of every kind.

When Mrs. Senior was obliged, from failing health, to give up the post she had accepted under Government as Lady Inspector of Workhouse Schools for Girls, she sent in a memorandum to Mr. Stansfeld recommending that some organisation should be established for the befriending young pauper girls who had left the schools, and who were starting in life upon their own account. This little article has been written to

the text supplied by the report of the Metropolitan Society for Befriending Young Servants. At her instigation and that of certain ladies interested in the subject, an Association was formed in the spring of 1875, with a twofold object, as we read in the report:—

“1. To secure the help and co-operation of Guardians and Managers of District Pauper Schools.

“2. To obtain the assistance of ladies as Visitors.”

“The proposal to watch over the girls placed out in service was generally approved by the Boards of Guardians. Eight of these Boards entered into close co-operation with the Association; by their direction the names of the girls and the addresses of their mistresses are now regularly furnished to the Committee, and every assistance in the power of the authorities to give is most readily afforded.

“Ladies living in London and the suburbs were so impressed by the want to which the Association directed their notice, that 120 have already agreed to undertake the charge of girls placed out in their respective neighbourhoods, and to send reports of them from time to time to the Committee.

“Between three and four hundred girls from the Metropolitan Pauper Schools are now under the care of the Association. The Committee have from time to time been called upon to provide for the immediate shelter of many of these young servants, since after the age of sixteen, when thrown out of place, they cannot return to the schools, and often have no home to go to. There have been cases, too, of serious failure in service, when a girl could not be recommended to another place without some period of probation and apparent improvement. Both these needs have been hitherto met by means of a Home, which was opened about a year ago at Hammersmith by a lady in connection with the Association.”

This lady does not grudge the expense to which she is put, and bestows with a liberal hand, but elsewhere the enterprise has languished for want of funds, and it is now in danger of having to close one of its offices unless help should come from some kind source or other. The chief office is No. 7 Great College Street, Westminster, but it has five or six smaller registries in different parts of London, to which the girls come for help, advice, to buy clothes, to put away their savings.

The children were just finishing their dinners when we drove up to little Miss S.'s Home in Hammersmith, round about which we had been circling for some time past. The place is rather out of the way; and though it is called “101 The Grove,” it consists chiefly of railway arches, coal-yards, and other unlikely combinations. The coalheavers seemed to be picnicing among their stores, and goodnaturedly looked up from their grimy meal to direct us to the Home of the maidservants—one of the many narrow brick houses in a long row of doors and windows, leading from the baker's to the broker's cemetery for household gods at the other end of the row.

While we were still ringing at the bell a girl from the tea-party passed by with a nod and a friendly grin, and then the door was opened by a lilac

pinafore and curtsey, as the matron came up from down below and took us into the office. How well one knows the look of these little parlours, the bare walls, the table, the wooden inkstand, the philanthropic fern-case in the window : and yet no dim religious light, no solemn symbols and devisings, ever seem to appeal more to the imagination than do these bare and scanty parlours, so well furnished with goodwill, and decorated by the grateful looks of the children who come there, of the sick and the sorry who have found help in them ! These clients come back when they are happy as when they are in trouble, the matron says, and I can imagine no better test than this, either for a friend or a friendly society. Though everything was plain, everything was orderly and clean, upstairs and downstairs. In one room the scrubbed basins stood in a row upon the floor, in a sort of competition for the matron's approval.

The matron was in the counting-house talking business to the visitors. The garments were flapping outside in the garden ; the girls themselves were in the kitchen eating currant pudding, which they fortunately finished off just as we walked in. My little niece opened her eyes to hear children smaller than herself calmly talking of cooks' places, house- and parlour-maids' situations. One little person, who looked about eleven, had had an offer of a general servant's situation, but she missed it after all, she said—her hands were too small to do the family's washing. As a rule, the matron told me, the girls don't spare themselves, but go patiently on with their drudgery as long as they can hold out. She had herself given warning the day before for one of the Betsindas upon her list : the place was too hard for her, and she told her she really must not stay in it. " I always see to that," said the kind woman. " They come here for a day or two in between, and we soon get them fresh places."

She also told us that for her own part for first places she preferred a tradesman's family, for the mistress took part herself in the daily work and kept the girls to it, otherwise they lose their heads, and can't manage it all alone. Very often Miss S—— liked them to stay for several weeks at a time in the Home to get trained, and to attend the classes, which they could also do after they left. The clergyman's sister came regularly, so did other ladies, and held working classes and readings. All this is slight enough, but it is all practical. Such simple combinations as those do seem in their very nature to be more permanent than others. A weekly visit to the little schoolroom may be a nothing in itself, but if it is part of a whole plan and network of friendly interest, it becomes really and truly an important link in a great undertaking such as this might be were it to become better known and supported.

The report says that during the last two years the cases of 1,320 girls have been investigated, and the needs of each met as far as possible ; but this can only be a very small proportion of the actual numbers now at work rubbing, scrubbing, boiling, baking, in the service of others, and at their mercy for good or for evil, as the case may be.

This society is of the greatest service to us, writes a workhouse master, "in preventing the return of our girls to the workhouse. I believe I am right in assuming that it owes its origin to Mrs. Nassau Senior, to whom many and many of our girls will be grateful for happier lives; and not only as children still in school, but as young women out in the world, they will have good cause to remember her name with gratitude and affection."

I do not know whether loving good or hating evil is the best incentive to progress; some people—not very many—combine both qualities. They have the courage to feel the hate of hate as well as the love of love; to attack wrong things as well as to understand and admire good ones. Mrs. Senior's generous nature taught her to do both; her charity of heart and singleness of mind led her instinctively to speak the truth with a trust in others which was not betrayed. It is cowards who offend, not brave tender souls, such as she was, and as I write of her I think of one other, who also spoke the truth, all her life, who also worked for little children.

Mrs. Senior was one of those vivid natural people who impress those with whom they come in contact. Her truth after all was a very simple doctrine: good hope, fresh air, charity, kindness, thought for others. It was she who helped to obtain the abolition of corporal punishment for girls in workhouses; she who asked to have the windows opened, who gained toys and playtime for the children.

G. F. Watts, the Academician, once painted a picture which many of us know and admire. It is the portrait of a very beautiful young lady, with golden hair and a wistful yet happy face. She is represented, a full-length figure, kneeling against a chair, and pouring water from a glass upon a pot of shooting lilies. There is some feeling of intenseness, something beyond the actual present in the picture; as I look at it now it seems to contain some unconscious prophecy and allegory of a life not yet fulfilled. The picture hangs in a country-house at Freshwater, in the Isle of Wight; from the window of the room you can see the Solent, and the forts, the beacon against the sky, the Downs, the storm of molten blossom heaving along the common. She loved the place, whose sweet image is there enshrined. She came there to her mother's house for rest after years of hard work for others, of good things accomplished, or begun for others to complete, years during which those kind sweet hands have never failed, tending a living garden, where not only lilies were growing, but thistles and tangling weeds. I know few dearer images than that of this kind presence, beautiful, helpful, with its stream of song, coming and going through the town, delighting those she lived among; seeking out the poor, the dull; endowed with a natural sunshine and sweet respect for all that was sad, shabby, and in want. That deference and tenderness for sorrow and weakness must always seem to us one of the most sacred of gifts. It may be some compensation for trouble and misery, and failure, that it is thereby the noblest hearts are won.

Lucian.

THE merit which Phædrus found in Æsop's fables—

*Duplex libelli dos est : quod risum movet,
Et quod prudentis vitam consilio monet —*

the double dowry of counsel and delight, the full satisfaction of the precept of Horace, is perhaps nowhere more remarkable than in the writings of Lucian. By an open and level pathway of knowledge made by himself after no model, and adorned on both sides with the various flowers of his own humour, he has sought to lead exorbitant humanity to the habitations of Truth and Virtue. His work, to use one of his own comparisons, is like a house, the walls of which are covered with fair pictures, rich in colour, perfect in form, admirable in execution, moral in design. Or rather, considering the natural fertility and freshness of his genius, it is like a garden full of the countless gifts of abundant Spring, with this only difference, that these in a little while lose their beauty, fade, fall, and decay, while in Lucian's garden Spring laughs eternal, and each plant pleases for ever, uninjured by the hand of Time.

But notwithstanding Lucian's excellence, perhaps of all ancient writers of any degree of celebrity he is the least generally known. And yet no writer is so likely to be appreciated at the present day, in which chicanery and superstition of very much the same description as the evils which he sought to expose, are unhappily so rampant. Some of his dialogues, notably that entitled "The Lover of Lies," in which he satirizes the petty, useless, and absurd perversions of truth which obtained in his time, might have been written, with but few alterations, at this very hour. Miraculous cures, peripatetic statues of stone or brass, old houses infested by ghostly tenants, who will accept no notice to quit, however formal, and against whom every action of ejection is brought in vain, magic rings, oracular instances of fortune-telling, spiritual communions between the living and the dead, and other diseases of intellectual emptiness, or alas ! repletion, all are represented here. Here Demænete, the blessed wife of Eucrates, returns from that undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveller returns, on the seventh day after her funeral, while her husband happens to be reading Plato on the Immortality of the Soul. And for what does she return ? For nought but an odd slipper, which had fallen behind a chest ! Is not this on a par with the present conjuring, by the pious and honest people who call themselves Spiritualists, of the spirits of our fathers from their quiet graves, to tell us nothing more important than the Christian name of our grandmother, which these poor

ghosts, no doubt owing to some Lethæan drink, have in nine cases out of ten forgotten? And is not this concluding sentence of Lucian's dialogue as wholesome and serviceable now as it was when it was written, seventeen hundred years ago? "Be of good heart, O my friend! Against all these follies, we have one fair antidote and safeguard, which is Truth and Right Reason in all things: so long as we make use of this, we shall never be one whit alarmed by any amount of idle and empty lies."

Lucian seems to have lived as many kinds of lives as he has had biographers. Those of his period are strangely taciturn about him. Even Philostratus, in his "Lives of the Sophists," passes him over, perhaps from jealousy, in silence, and his own works afford but little information concerning his personal history. From these, however, the following round unvarnished tale is delivered, not perhaps wholly destitute of biographical value, though unadorned by the sedulous fancy of panegyric.

He was born about A.D. 120, of a poor and obscure Greek family, which emigrated from Patras in Achaia to Samosata, the capital, situated on the west bank of the Euphrates, of Commagene, a country north of what is now known as the Holy Land. The diet which he recommends to Lexiphanes nourished himself. Lexiphanes, as he says, told him a story, in obscure and Sibylline words of some thousand years old. Lucian calls Sopolis, a medical man, whom he chanced to meet, and begs him to cure his friend. Sopolis administers a potion which he had by him ready for an atrabilious patient, and anon Lexiphanes vomits the majority of his uncouth and musty phrases. Now, says Lucian to him, if you wish to be truly praised, avoid in future all this farrago of fine words, and beginning with the best poets, pass when you have read these to the orators, and then, nourished by their voices, lay hold in happy hour on the works of Thucydides and Plato. Such books Lucian himself read, when he could borrow them, in his leisure moments. At a family meeting, convened for the purpose of deciding his future profession, it was determined to put him apprentice to his maternal uncle, a stone-carver. Socrates, by the way, underwent a similar initiation. The fracture—lucky or unlucky, who can tell?—of a marble slab he was bid to polish, suddenly determined his apprenticeship with tears. In a dream, he sees the tutelary goddesses of Statuary and Education, a dream probably imitated from Prodicus' myth of the choice of Hercules, in Xenophon's *Memorabilia*—and after listening to their arguments in turn, addicts himself to the latter, determining to leave the fashioning of men's bodies for that of their minds, and not to scatter chips of stone about a narrow workshop, but, like Triptolemus, seeds of erudition over all the world. So packing up his little property, he wanders abroad and becomes a lawyer. Of this profession he soon grew tired. He describes it in no flattering terms, as a mixture of crooked abuse and unconscientious fraud. He found by experience that deceit, lies, impudence, and a thousand other odious qualities, are its inseparable companions.

In the Double Indictment, the case of "Drunkenness *v.* the Academy "

is tried before a heavenly tribunal. In this case the defendant is accused of seducing Polemon, who all Athens is ready to swear was at one time never seen sober, and of compelling him to drink water, to forget his songs, and to cast away his chaplets. A slight difficulty arises at the commencement of the sitting from the serene silence of the plaintiff. She is observed to move her head slowly from side to side. Mercury explains that she is too drunk to speak, and Justice, the presiding judge, advises the assistance of an attorney. "Plenty of those rascals," says she, "are ready to burst their bowels out for a threepenny bit!" Such was Lucian's opinion of the noble disinterestedness of the law.

But Lucian no doubt profited by the gymnastics of the Roman bar, in increase of dialectic vigour. The fruit of his experience of forensic study nourished him in his next trade of rhetorician. Accusations of tyrants and praises of brave men by no means formed the whole staple of his stock. On these subjects and many others he used to declaim, wandering from city to city, and perhaps advertising himself beforehand, like acrobats, teachers of memory, music-hall singers, and other professional artists of the present day. Nay, he offered to teach rhetoric. Men, by paying a little money, might learn the art of Theodorus. But whether he was really of opinion with Lord Chesterfield that every man might be an orator if he chose, is open to considerable doubt. In his "Rhetorician's Teacher," he as severely as righteously lashes those who pretend to teach rhetoric in a day, even to one who knows not his alphabet. The confident audacity and clamorous impudence of such teachers as these is most happily imitated. For a piece of critical irony professing to point out a royal road to oratory, the "Rhetorician's Teacher" is perhaps unrivalled. It seems certain that he sought to obtain the *summula qua vilis tessera venit frumenti* in Syria, Greece, Italy and Gaul, that nursery, as Juvenal calls it, of British lawyers. In his travels, he tarried for a time at Antioch, where perhaps he may have learnt those principles which have induced some of his commentators to honour him with the appellation of a Christian.

Lucian was, however, *nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri*. He had most sympathy with Epicurus, whose book of maxims he represents his enemy Alexander the magician burning with logs of fig-wood, and casting their ashes into the ocean, not without an oracle, "for the execrable fellow was ignorant how great good that book caused in those who read it; what peace, tranquillity, and freedom it made in men's minds, releasing them alike from fear of spirit and miracle, as from idle hopes and superfluous longings, grafting their intelligences with the wisdom of realities, and purging their passions, with no syrup of squills, or shine of torches, or other kickshaws and puerilities, but with right reason, and liberty, and truth." All this, notwithstanding, Lucian cannot help laughing at the object of his laudation, in the "Auction of Lives," where he shows us the exoteric side of the Epicurean existence.

Lucian was indeed an eclectic philosopher. For Christianity, he re-

garded it as one of the many sects of his day, and probably despised it too deeply to abuse it. He does not, like Pliny, speak of it as an evil and monstrous superstition; he does not regard it as a pestilence like Suetonius, nor rave against it like Celsus, Lucian's own amiable friend. It was to him less of a stumbling-block than foolishness. He seems to have considered the early Christians as good-natured idiots, with whom the unintelligible did duty for the sublime, and whose whole wisdom was credulity. The poor wretches, he writes, in his relation of the death of Peregrinus—the poor wretches persuade themselves they will be immortal, and live for ever. Any impostor who knows how to use his opportunity, makes his fortune among them in a very short time. But over the ruin of Paganism, against which Lucian was as active a worker and as virulent as Pascal against the Jesuits or Ulric von Hutten against monks and miracle-mongers, was paved the way for the progress of Christianity.

Midway in the journey of this life he grew tired of Rhetoric, his old protectress, and charged her with changing the decent dress in which Demosthenes had draped her, and tricking herself out like a harlot, with plastered face, and painted cheeks, and admirably adjusted hair. Still he owed much to the mistress whom he was now so lightly about to leave. For she had assisted him in his adolescence, when he most needed assistance, and later, during his long sojourn in Gaul, had given him both fame and fortune. It is to be hoped that the base and interested suitors who surrounded her in her latter days, loading her real lovers with disgrace and obloquy, were the true cause of Lucian's divorce. After this, he lived at Athens with his family, allotting all his leisure time to literature. Here the uncouth *patois* of Samosata, the barbarous Syrian speech, as he calls it, suffered a rare sea change, during the winter of Greek literary composition, in the days of Plutarch, Dion and Appian, into pure and rich Attic. Here probably were composed his Aristophanic dialogues. Here he conciliated the attachment of Demonax of Cyprus, a philosopher whose mild, joyous, and benevolent eclecticism combined the moderation of Diogenes with the wisdom of Plato. Some of his acute and witty sayings Lucian has preserved in a kind of collection, probably one of the most ancient, of conversational ana. When asked if man's soul was immortal, he answered, "Immortal, but as all things are so!" When one said, "Come, Demonax, let us to the temple of Asclepius, to pray for your son," "Surely," quoth he, "you must suppose Asclepius to be deaf, if he cannot hear us at our prayers just as well where we are." Evidently Demonax sympathised with Lucian on religious subjects. Gratitude he carried as far perhaps as human nature will allow. Going aboard at winter time, one inquired of him if he feared not shipwreck, and being devoured by fishes. "Should not I," answered Demonax, "be altogether an ungrateful fellow if, having fed on so many fishes, I refused to feed them in my turn?" His reply, when asked if he ate honey-cakes, "Do you think bees work for fools only?" will remind the reader of

Wesley's indignant remonstrance about the devil's possession of all the best tunes. "If," said a boasting sophist, "Aristotle summons me to the Lyceum, I will follow him; if Plato to the Academy, I will come; if Zeno to the Pœcile, I shall not linger; and if Pythagoras calls me, I can be silent." Demonax, suddenly rising, said, "Pythagoras calls you." In the ear of one who gloried in a gorgeous woollen garment, he whispered, lightly touching his coat, and calling his attention to it, "This truly before you a sheep bore, and was yet a sheep." To one who cavilled at him as a coward for not entering an overheated bath, "What," said he, "am I about to suffer for the sake of my country?" Of such a festive humour was this philosopher, whose seat of stone on which he habitually sat was crowned by the Athenians, and even adored under the idea that it was sacred.

Lucian was not so attached to Athens as never to leave it, but his experience of Rome filled him with more profound love for his adopted land. In one of his expeditions from the violet-crowned city, he paid a visit to the oracle of Alexander—a man to be torn by apes and foxes, an Alexander the Great in evil—at Abonoteichos, in Paphlagonia. His account of this religious impostor, whom the avowed enemy of superstition and hypocrisy, those epidemic distempers of the human understanding, appears to have hated as heartily as Peregrinus, the Protean fanatic and cynic, who was fool enough to burn himself, and cause a stench which not all the frankincense of Arabia could drive away from the nose of Zeus, affords a pleasing contrast to that of Demonax and of Nigrinus the Platonic philosopher, whom Lucian called upon, and found with a book in his hand, surrounded by the images of the wise; making his visit an occasion for a fine moral picture of the pompous insolence of affected Rome on the one side, with its rings, its curled hair, its baths, its banquets, its litters, and its hippodromes, and the pure simplicity of sober Athens on the other. But an indiscreet attempt to denounce the fanatic Alexander nearly cost Lucian his life. The infidel bit the holy hand which he should have kissed with reverence. The mob, of course, with one accord, cried "Crucify him!" But the false prophet, fearing to punish Lucian publicly, gave private orders to the captain to throw him overboard on his return. The tender-hearted Asiatic mariner contented himself with exposing him at Ægialos, whence he soon after escaped. Alexander had his reward. He died bald, and eaten of worms.

He seems, from Lucian's relation, who saw him in the stubble of his good looks, to have been a handsome, clever, unscrupulous blackguard; one whom men approached, conversed with, and left, considering him the best of beings, but perhaps a shade too simple and ignorant of the world. His master was of the school of Apollonius, of Tyana, a dealer in magic arts and incantations, love-philters, treasure-findings, raisings of the dead, evocations of the gods, and other absurdities, so eagerly swallowed by public credulity. The divine Apollonius, Lucian the foe of Morosophs,

strong in faith but sterile in intellect, whose trade was to be a hater of pride, and priestly roguery, and lies, and empty boasting, has not hesitated to call an actor. Well, this Alexander having purchased for a few pence, at Pella, a serpent which sucked milk like a babe, began the war. He set his house among the fat Paphlagonians, men holding ridiculous persuasions about the gods, ready to adore a greasy stone, suffering in fact from a religious disease, and charged a shilling a visit. There he answered questions, through the mouth of his serpent, from dewy morn to dusky eve. Here is a sample. Question, What is Epicurus now doing in hell? Answer (in verse), He is sitting, with leaden gyves, in the mud. "It is needless," says Lucian, "to add that an implacable enmity, admitting of no herald, raged in the heart of this rogue against Epicurus; and with reason, for Epicurus had ridiculed him." Alexander honoured the Christians by classing them with the Epicureans and atheists.

Poverty seems to have visited him, in a season when she is least welcome—in old age. But with one foot already in Charon's boat, he was made an overseer at Alexandria. There for no small salary he gave judgments, wrote commentaries, and preserved the Emperor's decrees with faith and accuracy, as public records for all future time. His apology for accepting this post appeared to him to be called for by a prior essay on the evils of dependence, and the miseries of hired companions, written to dissuade a Greek philosopher from accepting a situation in a Roman household, but which might now give his enemies occasion to gird at and lift up their heels against him. It is a looking-glass which reflects, to the life, the wretched lot of learning in the receipt of hire from riches, a representation—as lively as a picture by Apelles or Parrhasius—of any poor governess of the present day, who has been beguiled into accepting for her services a small salary, but with the comforts of a Christian home. Obligated to dress more expensively than her lean purse will allow, and to submit to the consequential insolence of the butler and the lady's-maid, stigmatised as ill-tempered if serious, and shuddered at as "fast" if lively, she learns to measure her conversation, where the young ladies are nubile, with any bachelor friend of the family as she learns to measure her dinner, not by her appetite, but by her mistress's eye. Far, far better is the salt and the onion, with permission to eat it when and how she pleases.

The apology is, of course, grounded on the difference between a public and a private situation; but, after all, it is the old story of Dr. Johnson, and Lucian's formal defence is but "Sir, it is a mighty foolish noise that they make. I wish my pension were twice as large, that they might make twice as much clamour. I think the pleasure of cursing the house of Hanover and drinking King James's health, amply overbalanced by 300*l.* per annum."

Lucian is said to have lived ninety years, but nothing is really known about the date or manner of his death. It is true, the gout appears as

protagonist in two of his pieces, melodramatic poems, where that birth of hell is stated to be the real cause of the everlasting $\tilde{\alpha} \tilde{\alpha}$, $\tilde{\alpha} \tilde{\alpha}$, $\pi\alpha\tilde{\alpha}$, $\pi\alpha\tilde{\alpha}$, of Philoctetes, with which the reader of the tearful tragedy of Sophocles bearing that name is too, too familiar; and not any bite of venomous serpent or barb of poisoned arrow, as historians had hitherto supposed, and to her and to the spine of no sea-urchin is due, according to Lucian, the last exit of the hero of the *Odyssey*. Yet, not for this was he necessarily murdered, as some of his biographers have thought fit to assert, by the lady whose return, ungrateful under such an hypothesis, for his raising her or rather lowering her to the gods, must have filled him with repentance and disgust. Nor can much more confidence be placed in the account given by Suidas, not the only writer who has invented a horrid death for the objects of his dislike, that he was torn to bits by dogs because he raged against the truth. "This wholly accursed fellow," yelps the good Suidas, "attacks Christianity in his life of Peregrinus, and blasphemes Christ himself; wherefore he was justly punished for his madness in this present life, and will be a co-heir with Satan of everlasting fire in the life to come!" This story, by the way, of Peregrinus, the muddle-pated martyr, of his passion in a very dirty shirt, a circumstance in which he is said to have resembled Cyprian, and of the vulture flying out of his ashes, parodied from the ascent of the pigeon from the funeral pile of Polycarp, highly displeased the defenders of the Catholic faith, and Peregrinus, with a little dialogue named "Philopatris," were proscribed as not fit to be read by Christians, in the Romish *Index Expurgatorius*, under the pontificate of the Seventh Alexander.

Lucian's compositions are of all kinds—rhetorical, critical, biographical, romantic, besides comic dialogue, mock tragedy, and epigram. His rhetorical pieces are remarkable for grace of style and expression, but not equal to those of Libanius, the tutor of Chrysostom, or Isocrates, whose school Cicero compared to the wooden horse at Troy. Perhaps his most regular declamation is the *Tyrannicide*.

Action's picture of the marriage of Roxana and Alexander, of which Lucian's description is another sample of the same *genre*, is said to have assisted Raphael in the composition of one of his frescoes, as much as "The Ass," another of Lucian's pieces, assisted Le Sage, in his well-known scene of the robbers in the cave. Lucian was as fecund as original. Not contented with the usual subjects of declamation, he has not disdained to speak at some length of a bath and a house, of singing swans and Libyan serpents, of a piece of amber and a fly.

Of romances Lucian has bequeathed us two exceedingly lively. One, entitled "Lucius or the Ass," relates the adventures of Lucius in Hypata, where it was his ill luck to lodge with a lady who was a magician, and whose servant he persuaded to allow him to watch her mistress transforming herself into a crow. His temerity ultimately leads to his own transformation into an ass. By night thieves break through and steal,

and the unlucky Lucius serves to bear away their booty. His misfortunes among these robbers, his subsequent miseries at the hands of a malicious mule driver, a very immodest priest, and a merry market gardener, are fully related, together with his final restoration to his own human shape by devouring a dish of roses.

In his "True History," Lucian excels Munchausen. Written in ridicule of the marvellous tales told by travellers and others, he honestly warns us that the only truth we are to expect is that the whole composition is lies. They abound here more even than in his famous piece above alluded to, of the "Lover of Lies," where he tells us of a little bronze figure of Hippocrates revenging himself for any neglect of sacrifice, as soon as the lamp is extinguished, by upsetting the bottles and pill-boxes of the physician who owns him, of a serpent-bitten vine-dresser cured by Chaldean spells and a piece of stone fallen from the sepulchral column of a dead maiden, of a piece of clay formed into a Cupid, and carrying love messages, of Mormo and Lamia, the bugbears who made little children hide their heads in their mother's lap two thousand years ago, and of the now well-known piece of wood which did the duty of a servant, aye, and in silence. Who remembers not how this novel and model domestic, upon the utterance of a magic word, brought buckets of water to Pancrates, and would not stop when entreated and adjured to do so, owing to Pancrates' ignorance of the proper expression to ensure obedience? How, the whole room being inundated, at last Pancrates in anger takes up an axe, and cuts his courier in two, whereon each half takes a bucket and runs for more water, and in lieu of one attendant the unhappy Pancrates is the lord of two? But the "True History" is full of larger lies than these. As the model of much in Quevedo, C. de Bergerac and Rabelais, of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, of the satire of absurdities which never die, in Voltaire's "Scarmentado" and the "Princess of Babylon," it deserves some detail of description. The subject is an imaginary voyage written, as has been said, after the manner of those travellers, a numerous body in every age, who revere rather the marvellous than the true. Over many of the allusions the envious fingers of Time have drawn their misty veil, as may be well supposed by those who dispute about the objects of the hits in the Duke of Buckingham's *Rehearsal*, and are even occasionally puzzled by the political pictures in an old paper of *Punch*.

Lucian tells us he set sail with some fifty companions from the columns of Herakles, and went due west for ninety days. Had he really done so, by the way, he would probably have discovered America. Then a storm arises, and the ship is cast on an isle, of which the rivers run wine, and the very fish make mariners drunken. Then a mighty wind carries the ship through the air for seven days and seven nights—not the least charm in the history is its exactitude of chronology—and finally deposits it in the moon. Here, or a little way from here, they witness a fight between the Moon's inhabitants and those of the Sun, which arises in

a dispute about the colonization of the Morning Star. Then, voyaging through the Zodiac, they arrive at the City of Lanterns, the City of Nephelococcygia, or Cloud Cuckoo Town, and being again set down on the ocean, are swallowed by a certain sea monster to which Jonas' whale was a mere minnow. Many and marvellous are the adventures which are then theirs: amongst others, they are surprised to see an old man and his son, who had resided in the whale for eighteen years. At last, touched by that love of their Fatherland which is never utterly extinct even in the coldest hearts, they set fire to a forest in the beast's belly. Then the beast dies of internal inflammation, and Lucian, with the majority of his comrades, escapes. Next we read of the Frozen Deep, the Ocean of Milk, which reminds us of the mythology of the Hindoos, with its Island of Cheese, in which there is a temple to Galatea (milk), and of which the tyrant is Tyro (cheese), two samples of pure Greek puns; and after this of the Phello-podes, or cork-footed, who are able to walk upon the waves. A description follows of the Island of the Blest, to which Lucian and his fellows are led captive, bound by fetters of roses. Truly a blessed island, in which walls of emerald, with seven gates of cinnamon, surround a city of gold; in which the ground is ivory, the temples beryl, and their altars amethyst; in which, amidst fountains of delight and laughter, souls, which appear and act like bodies, and yet are no bodies, wearing weeds woven out of the purple webs of spiders, walk about in everlasting twilight and a perpetual spring. To this picture of mirth we have a corresponding picture of melancholy, in the mansion of the damned, full of foul odours of asphalte, and pitch, and sulphur, and singed men, the greatest sufferers being those who, like Ctesias and Herodotus, have told lies in this life; and so, says Lucian, when I saw these, I formed the fairest hopes of the future for myself, since I was conscious that I, for my part, had never uttered aught that was untrue. After this, they arrive at the Isle of Dreams. These are of all kinds—tall and short, hard and soft, beautiful and hideous, and some come up and salute them as old friends. Then they meet with the Colocynthopiratae, men with mighty heads of cucumbers, some thirty yards long, out of the inside of which, when dry, they manufacture boats, but the pips they use as missiles. Escaping from these monsters, they came to a chasm in the ocean, like that in the Red Sea. With craning necks they behold dry land at the bottom, some six thousand feet below. But this chasm is fortunately connected by a bridge of water, over which, having uttered proper prayers and performed suitable sacrifices, they pass successfully. Lastly, they come to the land of the donkey-legged ladies, who devour men. One of these, when caught, dissolves into water, but a sword being passed through it, the water is immediately converted into blood.

The history is unfinished, like that of Belianis in *Don Quixote*, and, like that, the last lines contain a promise of conclusion, which was never performed.

But of all our author's multifarious memorials, and many of his manu-

scripts are no doubt lost—Suidas says he wrote an infinity—the most known, and perhaps the most worthy to be known, are his Dialogues. Lucian may indeed be called the inventor of comic dialogue. Mingling Plato with Aristophanes, from whom he differs rather in form than spirit, he stripped dialogue of its tragic mask, and composed a popular work nearly resembling such modern comedy as that of Congreve, and Wycherly, and Vanbrugh. Concealing moral gravity under the semblance of mirth, leading men to marry wisdom after a lively wooing of wit, Lucian has, in his Dialogues especially, won every point by mixing the useful with the sweet. In his “Divine Dialogues,” this “scoffer at gods and men,” as he is called by the Spaniard, Lewis Vives, ridicules the received religion, and all the sacred subjects of his æra, with the most refined and caustic satire. Lucian was not a man to believe in a god who went to sup with Æthiopians, however blameless. Accepting the public creed as his starting-point, and running over lines laid down by the priests themselves, he passes far beyond the station at which the pagan sheep-shearers and their sheep were well content to alight and end their journey. It was in vain that sacerdotal jealousy and alarm cried, like the courtiers about the chair of King Canute to the ocean, “Thus far shalt thou go and no farther;” the salt waves of Lucian’s laughter leapt over and confounded all religious limitation and control. Happy was it for him that he lived in a sceptical age. What was dangerous for Protagoras in the time of Socrates, was safe for Lucian in that of the Antonines. When an advowson to the vacant seats in Olympus was claimed for such men as Tiberius and Caligula, the expression of Voltaire’s *Cædipus* became generally understood—

*Nos prêtres ne sont pas ce qu'un vain peuple pense,
Notre crédulité fait toute leur science.*

In one of the earliest dialogues the relation between God and man is established; in another, Zeus is shown to be himself subject to Fate: it is therefore useless to pray to him, and unwise to believe in the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, since good or bad actions alike are as much the results of necessity as the shackles of Saturn and the lameness of Hephæstus. “You are a shameless sophistical fellow,” concludes Zeus to his opponent, “and I shall listen to you no longer.” In the lighter “Divine Dialogues,” as in that between Zeus and Eros, we learn that even a god must condescend to be a fool, in order to become an accepted lover; and in that between Juno and Latona, something omitted by Lempriere, that the daughter of the latter set her dogs at Actæon, not for the sake of outraged feminine delicacy, but in order that the youth should not declare her ugliness to the world. Here, we find Zeus lamenting the loss of two of his best bolts which he had broken by launching them at the head of Anaxagoras, the master of Pericles, who showed his majesty to be an utter impossibility in nature; and there, much puzzled with prayers preferred with equal gifts for rain and for sunshine, he says with Pyrrho, “*Le roi s’avisera.*” In the dialogue

entitled "Zeus and Prometheus," the representative of the emancipation of reason from the bonds of traditional belief, and therefore the greatest enemy of the gods, Zeus complains bitterly of the Titan's manufacture of women, which is surprising in a god who at times took such interest in this tawdry class of goods, and of a deceit as to the due distribution of fat and lean, of flesh and bone, in a divine sacrifice. In this dialogue the author renders Zeus ridiculous; in another, in which Ganymede is represented as in Titian's picture, his rosy thigh half buried in the eagle's down, shooting through the sky above the pillared city, sole as a flying star, and complaining in that condition of his fear of his father's beating him for leaving his flock, and that there will be none to play with him in the mansion of the gods, he declares him subject to a passion of mortality. We have a pretty description of a matrimonial pet, in which Here speaks of Eros as "leading her lord by the nose;" of a wordy and abusive battle between Herakles and Asclepius; and of a delicate conversation between Poseidon and Hermes, in which the latter, with much diffidence, tells the former, who has called to see Zeus, that the father of gods and men is not just then at home, is much engaged, is in fact in childbed with Bacchus just born, and that Hermes himself is acting as wet nurse. There is, indeed, as the preacher tells us, a time to keep silence, and a time to speak. Socrates drank hemlock for saying a tithe of what was said by this cynical citizen of Samosata.

In the "Dialogues of the Dead," who, according to Fontenelle, ought to speak wisely from long experience and leisure—probably they think beforehand a little longer than the living—he satirizes the social superiorities of the second century. This Greek Voltaire had but a poor estimate of the excellence of his æra. He assessed the *soi-disant* philosophers of his time at their exact value. He speaks of them in Homeric phrase, as an useless burden upon earth, idle, extravagant, wordy, long-bearded wolves in sheep's clothing, general utility folk, ready to take any part—stoic, academic, peripatetic—for a crown a piece. In his paintings of the underworld, the dark, dismal ultimate abode of all might, majesty, and glory; of youth, hope, beauty, wealth, and even wisdom, few, if any, have surpassed him. The subject is trite, hackneyed, most familiar; but Lucian's treatment of it possesses a fascination, an allurements apart and of its own. "Where are your purple pride and your sovereign subjects?" asks Diogenes of Alexander. "Where, Achilles, are your long lance and your still longer grandiloquence?" O death! how better is the remembrance of thee to a man that liveth at rest in his possessions, unto the man that hath nothing to vex him; but, O Death! acceptable is thy sentence to the needy, and unto him whose strength faileth, that is now in the last age, and is vexed with all things.

This sentence of the son of Sirach is the theme of the heathen moralist in his "Dialogues of the Dead." There, the beggar Menippus laughs at Cræsus lamenting the loss of his gold, sings while Sardapanalus weeps for his luxury that is over and gone, and accompanies the

sighs of both sovereigns, cuckoo-like, with one single sentence, "Know thyself." In the same fashion as Menippus crows over Cræsus on the banks of Cocytus, so in the *Cataplus* or *Sail Downwards* the melancholy of the tyrant Megapenthes is contrasted with the mirth of the cobbler Micyllus, who helps Hermes to catch him when he is for running away, is ready to swim after Charon's ferrugineous boat, fearing to be left behind, threatens that hoary-chinned official with Rhadamanthus, and is with difficulty persuaded by the messenger of the gods to bewail something, if only for fashion's sake, and to shed unwillingly a tear or two for the lasts he left behind him. In this piece the punishment of the tyrant Megapenthes is worth notice. After an examination of his body, which is found to be livid all over with the marks which his sins during life had left in it—an idea, by the way, taken from the *Gorgias* of Plato—he is condemned to depart without first drinking, like the rest, of the waters of Lethe; hence he can never forget what he was, and is tortured continually by the ever-recurring recollection of the riches and luxuries which he enjoyed in a time which will never return. Here we have the moral hell of Lucretius and of Milton. Of Milton, who puts into the mouth of his lost archangel the words "myself am hell," and of Lucretius, who tells us the large stone hanging in empty space over the head of Tantalus was his own silly superstition, and that love and care are the real vultures, which hover continually over the carcass of Tityus, in *Acheron*.

A homily, which departs widely in one respect from the text in *Ecclesiasticus*, is preached to us in a dialogue between an old man and Diogenes. That cynic seeing all but infants in tears in the dark kingdom of the dead, asks, in extreme surprise, whether life can exercise some spell or charm over mankind, so as to induce even the aged to deplore its loss. "What can be the cause of your sorrow?" says he to the old man. "You were, perhaps, once a sovereign?" "No."—"At least a satrap?" "No."—"A man of great wealth, then?" "No; nothing of the kind; only a beggar, of fourscore and ten years, scarcely supporting life with a rod and line, childless, lame, and blind."—"And having been such, you yet desire to live as such again?" "Yea, verily," replies the beggar, "for life is sweet, and death is dire and detestable." This Diogenes, who knows not whether he has a tomb, and does not care, appears very frequently in these Dialogues. The ghosts of beauties he mocks, like Hamlet, holding up a skull, "Go, get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come!" He ridicules the ghost of Alexander, now known to be no son of Ammon, and spares not even the ghost of a god. "Is it, then, possible," he enquires of Herakles, "to be half a god, and to die by halves?"

Besides the well-known reflections of Fontenelle, Lyttelton and Erasmus, the style of Lucian is excellently imitated by Landor. Timotheus, a leader of the early Christians, proposes to his cousin Lucian to lay their heads together, and make a merry dialogue on the

priests of Isis. Unfortunately, the priests of Isis had been beforehand with Timotheus, in proposing to Lucian, on their side, a merry dialogue on the priests of the Christians. In Landor's admirable satire we find almost the same clearness, freshness, wit, and grace as in the original. Here, for instance, is a sentence put into Lucian's mouth by his imitator, not indeed penned with Lucian's originality of conception, but certainly after Lucian's own heart: "They, O Timotheus, who survive the wreck of ages, are by no means as a body the worthiest of our admiration. It is in these wrecks as in those at sea—the best things are not always saved. Hen-coops and empty barrels bob upon the surface, under a serene and smiling sky; when the graven or depicted images of the gods are scattered on invisible rocks, and when those who most resembled them in knowledge and beneficence are devoured by cold monsters below."

Erasmus found in Lucian the nearest mental relationship. Both had the same tendency to promote the victory of truth over ignorance, of common-sense over superstition; both longed to purify their respective epochs from the filth of sacerdotal imposture and corruption. The same terrible weapon of ridicule served them both to chastise folly with fierce and fair words. Neither, like Persius, would have bartered his joke, however idle, for a whole Iliad. Both hated all kinds of deception, and both laughed to most utter scorn the face of roguery and shamelessness under the mask of religion and virtue. Both, accordingly, were much reviled, but chiefly by those who knew themselves to be deservedly the objects of their satire—men who went about demurely with holy leers in their downcast eyes, and with prayer-books in their hands, and venerated with sanctimonious theory a life of practical unchastity and fraud.

The author of *Utopia*, again, did much to make Lucian popular in England. Warburton, indeed, goes so far as to assert that Lucian was one of Shakespeare's favourite authors, and that this fact may be collected from several places of his works. But the several places being considered are reduced to one, which, indeed, affords no convincing testimony that Shakespeare had so much as seen Lucian. In the *Winter's Tale*, Autolycus says, "My father named me Autolycus; who, being as I am, littered under Mercury, was likewise a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles." Lucian, in his tract on Astrology, says Autolycus was called the son of Mercury, because he was born under that planet, just as Æneas was called the son of Venus, and Minos the son of Jove. Keeping in mind the prevalence of judicial astrology in the time of Shakespeare, and the well-known relationship of the parties concerned, the author of the *Winter's Tale* might, it seems, well have said so much about Autolycus without any knowledge of Lucian.

Lucian has too frequently been censured for want of charity and benevolence. It seems that a certain amount of hypocrisy or dulness of mental vision is necessary to please the majority of mankind. The weaknesses and vices of humanity, which a Plutarch or a Fénelon loved

to transform or hide, it was the delight of a Lucian and a Rochefoucauld to reveal in all their hideous deformity. It may be, the latter, from a keener observation of their fellow-creatures, discovered many a blemish which the former saw but indistinctly, or were unable to discern at all. Lucian described the condition of the Roman empire at a somewhat later period than Plutarch, but probably there was little diversity in the objects which presented themselves to their eyes. And yet we find the latter writing about the defect of oracles, and the divine force and purity of the Pythian priestess, and the latter laughing to scorn sacerdotal lechery and deceit. Probably Plutarch's charity and benevolence, however shortsighted, would have described as a grave hero and constant martyr that same Peregrinus whom Lucian considers as a cross between an impudent impostor and a half-mad merry-andrew.

Of all the writers of antiquity, this Lucian, who calls himself "no painter by Zeus," was the first judge of artistic matter. In a period of wild and degraded æsthetic taste, when the delicate Greek feeling for art had almost died out, Lucian still preserved a deep love and intelligence both of sculpture and of painting. No one, not a professed artist, has so often and so ably availed himself of the assistance of artistic illustration. A few have gone so far as to assert that Lucian was himself an artist. Perhaps some natural hereditary predilection of art,—we know that he belonged to a family of carvers of Hermæ,—rested in him, in spite of his unhappy apprenticeship in his uncle's studio. The most cursory reader cannot help remarking the excellence of his description, though touching neither form nor colour, of the picture of the marriage of Alexander and Roxana by Aetion. In a fair bridal chamber sits Roxana, a beautiful thing in maidens, with eyes downcast, before Alexander, standing by her side. About her laughing Loves, one of which, hovering behind, draws back the veil from her head, showing her to her husband; another takes off her sandal like a servant preparing her mistress for repose; another, with all his little might, drags Alexander forward by his cloak, who offers a crown to the girl. In another part of the painting, other Loves are playing with Alexander's arms; a pair of them carry his spear, like porters curved by the burden of some ponderous beam; another pair drag along the hero's shield by its handles, as a triumphal car, in which lies one of their little comrades himself for the nonce a king; while another, having crept into the breastplate, plays the party in ambush ready to leap out, and to frighten them as they pass by.

More than once Cebes is quoted in Lucian, whose tablet or panel, painted by Hans Holbein, became a popular frontispiece to Dictionary and Bible. On a high hill stands the Castle of Happiness, surrounded with fences, in three concentric circles. Outside the outermost wander the uninstructed, children in intellect in Cebes, but in Holbein, who was a successful baby painter, children also in age. In a renaissance gate is placed the bearded old man Genius, ready to instruct all who enter. Close to him, but inside the gate, sits the magnificent lady Seduction,

holding the goblet of the wine of error, and surrounded by wanton women. On the other side stands Fortune on a rolling ball, worshipped by the well-to-do, but reproached by the wretched. At the entrance to the second circle, the traveller in life's path is received by Excess, Intemperance, and Insatiability; but behind the gate lurk Pain and Sorrow, ragged wights with whips, who drive him to Repentance. In the last circle is False Discipline, surrounded by such folk as Lucian loved to satirize, and then a straight, steep, stony way, wherein the traveller is assisted by Energy and Courage, leads to a lovely meadow, wherein True Discipline, with a halo of glory glimmering about her head, stands, not like Fortune, on a rolling ball, but securely on a square stone, with Truth and Persuasion by her side. She it is who receives the weary pilgrim at the portals of the castle, where he finds all the virtues, and where their Mother Happiness places the crown of victory on his head.

Lucian's "Dialogues of the Dead" recall over and over again the dramatic *Imagines Mortis* of Holbein, usually known as the Dance of Death. We find the same continual repetition of the old refrain, "In the midst of life we are in death," the same disregard on the part of the great democrat, of riches and poverty, of wisdom and ignorance, of happiness and sorrow, of good and evil. The *grande indifférence pour les choses* of the universal leveller, with which we are familiar in the irony of Lucian, finds its faithful photograph in the ingenious pictures of the artist of Augsburg. There we behold the bald, grinning ghastly skulls in close juxtaposition with each other, skulls padded round with flesh and fat; and here we read the diatribe of Diogenes, directed against the miserable Mausolus: "O, fair Mausolus! your strength and loveliness is no longer the same. Nay! if we now disputed before any court on the matter of beauty, forsooth I cannot say why your skull should be preferred to mine, for both alike are bald and hairless, both alike we show our teeth, both alike are barren of eyes, and both alike have flattened noses." Lucian, like Holbein, represents whole figures of the dead as perfectly fleshless skeletons. "There," says Hermes to Menippus, "are Hyacinthus, and Narcissus, and Achilles, and Leda, and Helen, the face that fired a thousand ships and burnt the topmost towers of Ilium." "But," objects Menippus, "I see only a collection of bones and skulls." "These," answers Hermes, "which you seem to despise, are those whom all the poets praised." In one sense it had been happy for Holbein had he been less graphic in his description of the dead. The foolish prejudices of the middle ages went far to prevent dissection, and Holbein's anatomical knowledge is therefore of a very subordinate kind. Generally, the lower part of the arm exhibits only one bone, while *en revanche* the upper part and the thigh are sometimes allowed the luxury of two. On the whole, his sketches of skeletons are not devoid of considerable poetic fancy and much osteological freedom of treatment. Ambrose, the elder brother of Hans Holbein, was indebted to Lucian for his representation of Calumny, which the latter describes as painted

by Apelles, in a treatise about not easily giving faith to evil report, the moral value of which this world of evil speaking, lying, and slandering, is little likely ever to allow to grow less. It suits the complexion of every place containing a Thersites, and where is the least country village without him? Setting out with some of the many harms of false witness, he seeks to curtail our eager credulity by a description of the malign, unjust, cowardly, and wholly reprobate nature of calumny, of its origin in the love of novelty, and its results, slaying men in sleep as in a city surprised by night. Apelles, the Ephesian artist, was accused by one of his vassals, Antiphilus, before Ptolemy, as an abettor in the revolt of Tyre; on which Ptolemy, filling his palace with outcries, calling Apelles an ungrateful and crafty conspirator, was for cutting off his head at once. The truth of the matter, however, being determined, Ptolemy presented the unjustly accused artist with one hundred talents, who, on his part, revenged himself with the following picture:—On the right a man is seated with large ears, almost like those of Midas, stretching out his hand towards Calumny, seen advancing in the distance. About him are two women, probably Ignorance and Suspicion. Calumny is painted also as a woman, passing fair, but worn and agitated as it were with madness and anger, bearing in her left hand a lighted torch, and with the right dragging along a youth by the hair, who stretches out his hands to heaven, and calls the gods to witness. Before her is a man, pale and deformed, as one dried up by long disease, but with bright, clear-sighted eyes. He, of course, is Envy. Two other women accompany Calumny, adorning and encouraging her. And the name of the one of these is Treachery, and of the other Deceit. But behind comes a woman clad in the weeds of sorrow, dark and torn. This is Repentance, ever with tears looking backwards, and anon with shamefacedness and downcast eyes regarding the approach of Truth.

The poetic taste of Lucian is perhaps more distinctly perceived in the numerous comparisons with which he has adorned his labours than in those poetic pieces which bear his name. There is his famous comparison of cities to hives of bees, in which each bee is furnished with his little sting; of men of business to a swarm of ants, running for ever round and round, and in and out of their burgh, one turning over a bit of dung, another seizing a bean shell, or half a grain of wheat, and bearing it away in triumph as a prize. This seems to be the germ of Bacon's comparison of human life to an ant-hill, in which some ants carry children, some food, and some go empty; but all travel to and fro a little heap of dust. Of human life Lucian has illustrations galore; now it is like a child at play, handling its toys for a while, soon growing weary of them, and changing them with every caprice. Now it is like a company of singers, each singing his own song at the top of his voice, not for the sake of harmony, but to render unheard the song of his neighbour. Now it is like bubbles on stormy water, a comparison which may compete with Homer's Leaves and Burns' Snow Flakes on the river—a moment

bright, then gone for ever; small bubbles which soon burst and disappear, big bubbles which, by attracting others, become still bigger, only to burst in their turn also, and vanish into nothing.

Lucian himself may be not unfitly compared with that Ogmius or Hercules who, he tells us, is the Celtic representative of the Greek god of eloquence, Mercury. In the full maturity of his age, this honey-tongued Nestor resembled that Ogmius, very old and bald but for a few white hairs, with skin wrinkled and tanned like that of a weather-beaten tar, yet leading a crowd of people, bound by their ears, with thin chains of gold and amber, to the tongue of the god, fragile chains, which some of them seek to break by leaning in a contrary direction, but all following delightedly their divine leader, who looks back upon them with laughter.

If any fault is to be found with the eloquence of Lucian it is that of over-luxuriance. His hobby-horse carried him too often over the same ground, and, like Ovid, *nescit bene tractata relinquere*. But this being subtracted, there still remain on the credit side of this "impious author and execrable buffoon," as he has always been, and will always be, to the charlatans of philosophy, the sound common-sense of Vanini and Montaigne, the knowledge of human nature of Swift and Rabelais, the inventive humour of De Bergerac and Voltaire, and the love of plain-speaking of Catullus and Martial. Few authors will be found to surpass him in grace of speech or facility of instruction, in playful wit or pungent irony. "Everywhere," to use the words of Erasmus, "abounding in fair suggestions, he mixes earnest with jest, and jest with earnest; truth with trifles, and trifles with truth; sketching to the life with his pencil the passions, pursuits, and manners of mankind. Thus are his writings rather to be seen than read, nor can any comedy or satire be compared to them, whether regard be had to pleasure or to profit."

The Poetry of September.

WE suppose that every month in the year has its own peculiar physiognomy, by which the true lover of nature would at once recognise it were he dropped from the clouds in a balloon after a prolonged absence in some other planet. Months melt into one another imperceptibly, of course; but such a one would know that the middle of July was not the middle of June, or the middle of August the middle of July. And this not by the weather, or the temperature, or by any agricultural operation which might betray the truth, but by the peculiar expression which Nature wears at different seasons of the year. In July she is still young, still soft and fresh, with cooling showers and fickle skies, and clouds and sunshine rapidly chasing each other away. And for the full and perfect beauty of ordinary English scenery there is no period of the year to compare with the six weeks which separate the end of June from the middle of August. In August comes a slight change, we know not what, something to be felt rather than described. Perhaps it is that the face of Nature begins then to wear rather a more set look, to show the first signs of middle age, and that lines of thought become visible in her still lovely countenance. But with the ensuing month the change is very apparent, and it is on the manner in which the expression of nature during an English September affects both the heart and the imagination that it is proposed to dwell in this article.

A September landscape is familiar to the majority of Englishmen; but still there is a numerous class of men, comprising many among us who are the best qualified to appreciate it, who rarely see their native country at all during that particular month. The crowd of tourists which flies across the Channel, bound for Alps, or Pyrenees, or Carpathians, or what not, the moment they are free from the claims of business, or politics, or fashion, rarely return till September has passed gently away. Of those others who spend September in the country many, perhaps, are too much absorbed in field-sports to notice the beauty which encircles them; and many more, perhaps, if they did notice it, would never get beyond observing that it was a very fine day. We hope, however, still to find a few readers who have been touched by the same feelings as ourselves under the influence of this particular month, and with their sympathy, if there be such, we shall be satisfied. The actual physical beauty of a September day, though not so luxuriant, it may be, as July or August, stirs us, perhaps, with a deeper

emotion. The corn should not be all carried, for the wheat, standing in shocks upon the hillside has a very pretty effect in the distance. There should be meadows within view, in which the rich green aftermath, still ankle deep, has not yet been fed off. There should be the fine stately hedgerow timber of the midland counties, or the hanging copses and long woods of the west and south. There should be the cool dark green of the turnips, contrasting with the pale yellow stubble, looking sheeny and silky in the sun. There should be a farmhouse or two, and a village spire in the hazy distance; and the foliage may be flecked here and there with two or three rust spots as a foil to the surrounding verdure. Here is an ordinary view enough. But lie lazily on your back, where the eye can take in all these varied contrasts, and you will allow that the same scene at an earlier period of the year would have wanted many of the charms which it exhibits now. If by the poetry of September we meant principally its suitability for descriptive poetry we might enlarge on these charms in some detail. As it is, I shall merely observe on the singularity of the fact that descriptive poets should have turned to so little account the peculiar beauties of this season of the year. It is not so with painters. September has sat for her portrait to many eminent hands, and we would call particular attention to a picture in last year's (1876) Academy, by Mr. Vicat Cole, called "The Day's Decline," which is evidently intended for September, and which, though it does not give the variety which I have just described, brings out many of the special characteristics of the month with marvellous fidelity. But Thomson is our classic on such subjects; and, though he could not fail to catch the dominant characteristic of the month, he hardly seems to have drunk in the full beauty of it. The following lines, however, show that he was not without appreciation:

A serener blue,
 With golden light enlivened, wide invests
 The happy world. Attempered suns arise,
 Sweet beamed, and shedding off through lucid clouds
 A pleasing calm; while broad and brown below
 Extensive harvests hang the heavy head.
 Rich, silent, deep they stand; for not a gale
 Rolls its light billows o'er the bending plain—
 A calm of plenty.

This is truly fine. The epithets applied to the ripe cornfields, "rich, silent, deep," are most felicitous. But the primary idea of Autumn with Thomson was what its name denotes, that of a season of abundance and rejoicing.

Crowned with the sickle and the wheaten sheaf,
 While Autumn, nodding o'er the yellow plain,
 Comes jovial on, the Doric reed once more
 Well pleased I tune.

And we do not remember at the present moment either in Wordsworth, Tennyson, or Keats, the meed of even one melodious verse to the sweetest "daughter of the year," which dwells on her pathetic beauty.

For it is not the mere beauty of feature which characterises September, great as that is, on which we are about to dwell ; in this it is surpassed by other months. It is the expression which is worn by this one—all that it suggests, all the spell which it seems to lay upon us—which we hope to be able to describe, so that some few readers, as we have said, may recognise the likeness. We are presupposing, of course, that we have a seasonable September, the mild, warm, sunny month which it is four years out of five, and neither parched by drought nor yet drenched with constant rain : September, in fact, in her normal and natural condition. Then let the sky be perfectly blue, the air perfectly hushed, and the whole landscape bathed in a flood of pensive sunshine, and “on such a day” the mind becomes conscious of a mixture of melancholy and sweetness which is wholly peculiar to this season. The sweetness of September is, indeed, one of its most prominent attributes. No month in the year seems literally to smile upon one like September. It is so gentle, so soft, so mellow.

It seems to look at one out of mild hazel eyes with an almost human love and tenderness, and an equable serenity which gives assurance of unchanged affection. And this it is which leads us by degrees to become conscious of the melancholy of September. The contrast between the sense of repose, tranquillity, and permanence which is inspired by her aspect, and the sense of the approaching termination of all summer weather which we feel at the same time, naturally gives rise to this sentiment. We feel in gazing on September what we might feel in looking upon a beautiful and sweet-tempered woman, in perfect health and strength, whom we knew had but a short time to live. It is, however, difficult to separate the elements which constitute the sweetness from those which constitute the melancholy of this beautiful season. The profound brooding stillness of a September day, when you may even hear the beetles dropping from the bean shocks in the adjoining field, must have struck many of our readers, and one can barely say whether it contributes more to the sadness or the joy with which we are inspired at such moments.

Hark how the sacred calm which breathes around
 Bids every fierce tumultuous passion cease,
 In still small accents whispering from the ground,
 A grateful earnest of eternal peace.

How frequently have we experienced the exact sensations here described by Gray, on a soft hazy September afternoon, when, if the harvest is completed, there is often not a sound to be heard, while the soft warm glow of all around prevents the silence from being gloomy. That is a time at which to lie on the grass and “dream and dream ;” when, without the help of any stimulant, you may kiss the lips you once have kissed, and recall your college friendship from the grave : gliding by degrees into a kind of dreamy feeling, which you care not to analyse too closely, that

this ineffable peace of nature, which passes all description, may be a type, perhaps, of that peace of God which passes all understanding.

It is curious that September should be the one month in which we feel the strongest assurance of settled calm; have more reason to believe that to-morrow will be like to-day than at any other season of the year; and yet that it should be the last month of summer with which all the really green, warm, pleasant days practically depart. The poetry of decay is brought before us in October and November, but not in the month we are speaking of. In three seasons out of four September is green to the last, or sufficiently so to prevent one from noting much change. And it is this contrast, no doubt, a contrast we have already spoken of, which constitutes one of its chief charms: the deep stillness before the equinoctial tempest. But the same contrast may be regarded from another point of view. If there is one idea more than another which the aspect of September awakes in us, it is one of mellowness and maturity. It seems to speak of the strength and fullness of ripe and sunny middle age, the warmth of youth without its fever, the sobriety of age without its frost. The ideas of plenty and abundance, moreover, with which we associate this month come in to corroborate the impression which its outward aspect is calculated to produce; and a momentary fancy will sometimes flit across the mind that September cannot really be passing away, or that its life will be prolonged like Hezekiah's. It seems so difficult to suppose that the warm, genial, yet calm withal and tranquil weather, so redolent of life, health, and permanence, is so soon to leave us. But then come up the words of George Herbert, "But thou must die,"—and with thee all the lasting beauty of our brief English summer. October has its fine days, but the days are short and the nights are cold. It is as much an indoor month as an outdoor month. With September come to an end all the *molles sub arbore somni* in the happy afternoons, the moonlight stroll in the shrubbery, or the lounge by the garden gate, with perhaps some fair companion whom the softness of the scene makes doubly soft herself. After September these become pleasures of the past; and though of course they are as appropriate to any other summer month as they are to September, yet September is the month in which people in the country see more of each other than they do in June and July, and when, consequently, there are more opportunities for the poetry of moonlight flirtation.

And this leads us away to some lighter considerations than those which we have hitherto indulged in. Hitherto we have been trying to depict, however feebly, what may be called the moral beauty of this season of the year. We have dwelt on the particular emotions which the aspect of nature at such a time awakens in us; on the contrast between the sensations of sweetness and of sadness, of repose and of transitoriness, of maturity and of decay, which it suggests to us. But there is an artificial and social poetry also about the month of September at which we have just glanced in the last paragraph, and of which a

little more has still to be said. September, in fact, has, owing to a gradual change of habits, appropriated to itself many of the associations which formerly belonged to May, and which are still assigned to her in the conventional language of poetry. But in the last quarter of the nineteenth century September is the lover's month. We are now, of course, speaking only of rural love-making. One month is the same as another in the life of cities, but in country life, and especially in the life of country houses, September bears away the palm. Whether any change has really taken place in our English seasons since the days of Milton, Dryden, and Addison, we cannot say, but the Laureate contends that "those old Mays had thrice the life of ours;" and most certain it is that Dryden's well-known description of that month, if applied to any May we have had for the last twenty years, would seem simply ridiculous. We mean the lines beginning :

For thee, sweet month, the groves green liveries wear,
If not the first, the fairest, of the year.

Winter in the lap of May is now the rule and not the exception, and "Society" does well, in our opinion, to spend it in the capital. Fashion, it may be, after all, has been only unconsciously adapting herself to nature and following in the footsteps of the seasons. When May was a warm and melting month, when the "groves" were full of leaf overhead, and when every bank was "a bed of flowers" on which a lady might throw herself without any fear of the rheumatism, the upper ten thousand did right to end their season in April. There has been, however, a change of dynasty since those days. May is no longer the Queen of love and beauty, and the crown is for the present in commission. But the period of the year which now corresponds more closely than any other to what May was formerly is certainly to be found in the latter end of August and September. Then are croquet and archery in all their glory. Then it is that we get our only spell of settled fine weather; the woods are dry, the nights are warm, and long rides and walks furnishing innumerable opportunities for courtship under the most favourable circumstances are of daily occurrence. Then again there is that old-fashioned amusement of nutting, so admirably described in *Tom Brown*, and which contains a world of poetry in itself. What a vision of glades and dingles, and steep woodland paths, and high mossy banks, and cool dank depths of impenetrable shade, it conjures up before us. What a sense of seclusion, of complete isolation from the world, of security and irresponsibility creeps over us in the centre of a thick wood, surrounded on all sides by the tall hazel bushes whose tangled branches form an arch over our heads, through which we just discern the great spreading limbs of the oak and the beech up above! Then if you, and the lady of the hour, can only lose your way and wander into some deep leafy hollow, where a half-seen brooklet just trickles over the pebbles, and where no other sound is heard but the flight of the ring-dove, or its soft appealing note from the

neighbouring elm, you will own the dangerous fascination, the melting influence of the season, nor would give a fig for all your merry months of May. Then the ground would be wet and the trees bare, and very probably an east wind lying in wait for you round the corner. Now all is soft and warm and sheltered. A thick leafy girdle shuts you in; here and there, through the openings, gleam the mossy trunks of ancient trees and gnarled old thorns and hollies; while beyond again all is green darkness—the very home of the fauns and the nymphs, and of the god Silvanus. And is not this a scene more fitting for the whispers of love, for the arm stealing softly round the waist, for the lips at last venturing to the glowing half-expectant cheek, than all the village greens or May bespangled meads in the world? Our friend Thomson understood this feature of September at all events:

The clustering nuts for you
The lover finds amid the secret shade;
A glossy shower, and of an ardent brown,
As are the ringlets of Melinda's hair,
Melinda formed with every grace complete.

Of course! But seriously, the poetry of nutting is a large part of that second form of the poetry of September with which we are now engaged. At such a moment your wish is assuredly for what Dryden has painted better than Virgil, for the simple reason that Virgil never painted it at all:

A country cottage near a crystal flood,
A winding valley and a lofty wood.

Then, if ever, you experience that absolute indifference to affairs which Virgil *has* painted:

Illum non populi fascēs, non purpura regum
Flexit et infidos agitans discordia fratres,
Aut conjurato descendens Dacus ab Istro:
Non res Romanæ, perituraque regna.

Let them rave! the peace of September is upon you. Melinda sits beside you, with every grace complete. What can the raw, half-clad, chilly month of May, with all her frost-bitten flowers, give you in exchange for this?

We were wrong, perhaps, in saying that in the depth of that cool green wood you would hear no sound but the loving coo or the noisy pinion of the wood-pigeon. You may hear at intervals the distant gun of the partridge-shooter; and little as such a sport may seem at first sight to have to do with "the soul-subduing sentiment harshly styled flirtation,"¹ the reader of Whyte Melville's charming novel *All Down Hill* will know better, if he has not known it at first hand. In partridge-shooting there is such a thing as luncheon, which it needs little feminine dexterity to convert into a picnic of an exceptionally free and easy character. What more natural than for the daughters of the house to bring out

¹ *Coningsby*.

their papa's luncheon in the pony carriage, who meets them with his two young friends in such and such a lane, or under such and such a big hedge? Paterfamilias himself is not unlikely to go to sleep when he has finished his share of pigeon-pie and smoked his allotted pipe. But whether he does or not, he will certainly not get up to help the young ladies gather blackberries; and as that is one of the fruits of the earth of which they happen at this moment to be particularly fond, and as it grows too high on these hedges to be reached without assistance, they pair off easily and naturally in quest of this delicacy: coming back—strange to say—with neither lips nor fingers showing any traces of the coveted refreshment, though what other fruit may have been tasted in the meantime it would perhaps be impertinent to inquire. Oh, yes! partridge-shooting—the sport *par excellencs* of September—has a great deal of poetry in it. It is answerable for numerous love affairs of all kinds—serious or trifling, innocent or otherwise. And while we are on the poetry of September we must never forget that it is of all months in the year the month of honeymoons. We might expatiate on this topic to any extent: on the raptures which September has beheld by lake or mountain, by the blue sea, or in the green retreats of some patrician home. There is some evidence in the context to show that it may have been September when the Lady of Shalott began to grow sick of shadows. The long fields of barley, the reapers reaping early, the sheaves through which Sir Launcelot rode, all point to this conclusion:

Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed;
I am half sick of shadow, said
The Lady of Shalott.

It must have been so. Hence, vain deluding May! We will none of thee. If the Italian Venus loves best the “ivory moonlight of April,” our English goddess is clearly most gracious in September.

If the transition from grave to gay in the above pages has been somewhat of the suddenest, I can only say that it reflects to some extent the character of the month I have been describing. The still, deep, eloquent calm of a September day speaking to us in a language which cannot be written down—at once so sweet, so soft, and so sad—may be exchanged in a moment for all the jocund activity of a harvest field, the rough pleasantries of the mowers, and the merry tones of girls and children. Thus there are two aspects of September which present themselves to us alternately, contrasting very strongly with each other, and not shaded off by any very gentle gradations. From one point of view September is merrier than May, from another it is sadder than December. Nothing can be gayer than the human life of the month, with all the bustle and license of the harvest: nothing more calculated to inspire us with serious emotions than the face of nature. Melancholy and gladness share the month between them; and whichever mood we may be in, September can always sympathise with us.

Meditations of a Hindu, Prince and Sceptic.

I

ALL the world over, I wonder, in lands that I never have trod,
Are the people eternally seeking for the signs and steps of a God ?
Westward across the ocean, and Northward ayont the snow,
Do they all stand gazing, as ever, and what do the wisest know ?

II

Here, in this mystical India, the deities hover and swarm
Like the wild bees heard in the tree-tops, or the gusts of a gathering
storm ;
In the air men hear their voices, their feet on the rocks are seen,
Yet we all say, " Whence is the message, and what may the wonders
mean ? "

III

A million shrines stand open, and ever the censer swings,
As they bow to a mystic symbol, or the figures of ancient kings ;
And the incense rises ever, and rises the endless cry
Of those who are heavy laden, and of cowards, loth to die.

IV

For the Destiny drives us together, like deer in a pass of the hills.
Above is the sky, and around us, the sound and the shot that kills ;
Pushed by a Power we see not, and struck by a hand unknown,
We pray to the trees for shelter, and press our lips to a stone.

V

The trees wave a shadowy answer, and the rock frowns hollow and grim,
And the form and the nod of the demon are caught in the twilight
dim ;
And we look to the sunlight falling afar on the mountain crest,
Is there never a path runs upward to a refuge there and a rest ?

VI

The path, ah ! who has shown it, and which is the faithful guide ?
The haven, ah ! who has known it ? for steep is the mountain side.
For ever the shot strikes surely, and ever the wasted breath
Of the praying multitude rises, whose answer is only death.

VII

Here are the tombs of my kinsfolk, the first of an ancient name,
 Chiefs who were slain on the war-field, and women who died in flame;
 They are gods, these kings of the foretime, they are spirits who guard
 our race—

Ever I watch and worship; they sit with a marble face.

VIII

And the myriad idols around me, and the legion of muttering priests,
 The revels and rites unholy, the dark unspeakable feasts!
 What have they wrung from the Silence? Hath even a whisper come
 Of the secret—Whence and Whither? Alas! for the gods are dumb.

IX

Shall I list to the word of the English, who come from the uttermost
 sea?

“The Secret, hath it been told you, and what is your message to me?”
 It is nought but the wide-world story how the earth and the heavens
 began,

How the gods are glad and angry, and a Deity once was man.

X

I had thought, “Perchance in the cities where the rulers of India
 dwell,

Whose orders flash from the far land, who girdle the earth with a spell,
 They have fathomed the depths we float on, or measured the unknown
 main—”

Sadly they turn from the venture, and say that the quest is vain.

XI

Is life, then, a dream and delusion, and where shall the dreamer awake?
 Is the world seen like shadows on water, and what if the mirror break?
 Shall it pass, as a camp that is struck, as a tent that is gathered and
 gone

From the sands that were lamp-lit at eve, and at morning are level and
 lone?

XII

Is there nought in the heaven above, whence the hail and the levin are
 hurled,

But the wind that is swept around us by the rush of the rolling world?
 The wind that shall scatter my ashes, and bear me to silence and sleep
 With the dirge, and the sounds of lamenting, and voices of women who
 weep.



HE STEPT FORWARD WITH A SMILE.

"For Perveral."

CHAPTER I.

THORNS AND ROSES.



IT was a long, narrow, and rather low room, with four windows looking out on a terrace. Jasmine and roses clustered round them, and flowers lifted their heads to the broad sills. Within, the lighted candles showed furniture that was, perhaps, a little faded and dim, though it had a slender, old-fashioned grace which more than made amends for any beauty it had lost. There was much old china; and on the walls were a few family portraits, of which their owner was justly proud; and in the air there lingered a faint fragrance of dried rose-leaves, delicate yet unconquerable. Even the full tide of midsummer sweet-

ness, which flowed through the open windows, could not altogether overcome that subtle memory of summers long gone by.

The master of the house, with a face like a wrinkled waxen mask, sat in his easy-chair, reading the *Saturday Review*; and a lady, very like him, only with a little more colour and fulness, was knitting close by. The light shone on the old man's pale face and white hair, on the old lady's silver-grey dress and flashing rings; the knitting pins clicked, working up the crimson wool, and the pages of the paper rustled with a pleasant crispness as they were turned. By the window, where the candlelight faded into the soft shadows, stood a young man, apparently lost in thought. His face, which was turned a little towards the garden, was a noteworthy one, with its straight forehead and clearly marked, level brows. His features were good, and his clear olive complexion gave him something of a foreign air. He had no beard, and his moustache was only a dark shadow on his upper lip, so that his mouth stood revealed as one which indicated reserve, though it was neither stern nor thin-lipped. Altogether it was a pleasant face.

A light step sauntering along the terrace, a low voice softly singing

"Drink to Me only with thine Eyes," roused him from his reverie. He did not move, but his mouth and eyes relaxed into a smile as a white figure came out of the dusk exactly opposite his window, and singer and song stopped together.

"O Percival! I didn't know you had come out of the dining-room."

"Twenty minutes ago. What have you been doing?"

"Wandering about the garden. What could I do on such a perfect night, but what I have been doing all this perfect day?"

She stood looking up at him as she spoke. She had an arch, beautiful face, the sort of face which would look well with patches and powder. Only it would have been a sin to powder the hair, which, though deep brown, had rich touches of gold, as if a happy sunbeam were imprisoned in its waves. Her eyes were dark, her lips were softly red; everything about Sissy Langton's face was delicate and fine. She lifted her hand to reach a spray of jasmine just above her head, and the lace sleeve fell back from her pretty, slender wrist.

"Give it to me—Percival, do you hear? Oh, what a tease you are!" For he drew it back when she would have gathered it. Mrs. Middleton was heard making a remark inside.

"You don't deserve it," said Percival. "Here is my aunt saying that the hot weather makes you scandalously idle."

"Scandalously idle! Aunt Harriet!" Sissy repeated it in incredulous amusement, and the old lady's indignant disclaimer was heard, "Percival! Most unusually idle, I said."

"Oh, most unusually idle? I beg your pardon. But doesn't that imply a considerable amount of idleness to be got through by one person?"

"Yes—but you helped me," said Sissy. "Aunt Harriet, listen. He stood on my thimble ever so long, while he was talking this afternoon. How can I work without a thimble?"

"Impossible!" said Percival. "And I don't think I can get you another to-morrow—I am going out. On Thursday I shall come back and bring you one that won't fit. Friday you must go with me to change it. Yes, we shall manage three days' holiday very nicely."

"Nonsense. But it *is* your fault if I am idle."

"Why, yes. Having no thimble you are naturally unable to finish your book, for instance."

"Oh, I shan't finish that! I don't like it. The heroine is so dreadfully strong-minded, I don't believe in her. She never does anything wrong; and though she suffers tortures—absolute agony, you know—she always rises to the occasion—nasty thing!"

"A wonderful woman," said Percival, idly picking sprays of jasmine as he spoke.

Sissy's voice sank lower. "Do you think there are really any women like that?"

"Oh, yes, I suppose so."

She took the flowers which he held out, and looked doubtfully into his face, “But—do you *like* them, Percival?”

“Make the question a little clearer,” he said. “I don’t like your ranting, pushing, unwomanly women who can talk of nothing but their rights. They are very terrible. But heroic women——” He stopped short. The pause was more eloquent than speech.

“Ah!” said Sissy. “Well—a woman like Jael? or Judith?”

He repeated the name “Judith.” “Or Charlotte Corday?” he suggested after a moment.

It was Sissy’s turn to hesitate, and she compressed her pretty lips doubtfully. Being in the Old Testament, Jael must of course come out all right, even if one finds it difficult to like her. Judith’s position is less clear. Still it is a great thing to be in the Apocrypha, and their living so long ago and so far away makes a difference. But Charlotte Corday—a young Frenchwoman, not a century dead, who murdered a man, and was guillotined in those horrible revolutionary times—would Percival say *that* was the type of woman he liked?

“Well—Charlotte Corday, then?”

“Yes, I admire her,” he said slowly. “Though I would rather the heroism did not show itself in bloodshed. Still she was noble—I honour her. I dare say the others were too, but I don’t know so much about them.”

“What a poor little thing you must think me!” said Sissy. “I could never do anything heroic.”

“Why not?”

“I should be frightened. I can’t bear people to be angry with me. I should run away, or do something silly.”

“Then I hope you won’t be tried,” said Percival.

She shook her pretty head. “People always talk about casting gold into the furnace, and its coming out only the brighter and better. Things are not good for much if you would rather they were not tried.”

Her hand was on the window frame as she spoke, and the young man touched a ring she wore. “Gold is tried in the furnace—yes, but not your pearls. Besides, I’m not so sure that you would fail, if you were put to the test.”

She smiled, well-pleased, yet unconvinced.

“You think,” he went on, “that people who did great deeds did them without an effort—were always ready like a bow always strung? No, no, Sissy, they felt very weak sometimes. Isn’t there anything in the world you think you could die for? Even if you say ‘No’ now, there may be something one of these days.”

The twilight hid the soft glow which overspread her face. “Anything in the world you could die for?” Anything? Anybody? Her blood flowed in a strong, courageous current, as her heart made answer, “Yes—for one.” But she did not speak, and after a moment her companion changed the subject. “That’s a pretty ring,” he said.

Sissy started from her reverie. "Horace gave it me. Adieu, Mr. Percival Thorne; I'm going to look at my roses."

"Thank you; yes, I shall be delighted to come." And Percival jumped out. "Don't look at me as if I'd said something foolish. Isn't that the right way to answer your kind invitation?"

"Invitation! What next?" demanded Sissy, with pretty scorn. And the pair went off together along the terrace, and into the fragrant dusk.

A minute later it occurred to Mrs. Middleton to fear that Sissy might take cold, and she went to the window to look after her. But, as no one was to be seen, she turned away, and encountered her brother, who had been watching them too. "Do they care for each other?" he asked abruptly.

"How can I tell?" Mrs. Middleton replied. "Of course she is fond of him in a way; but I can't help fancying sometimes that Horace——"

"Horace!" Mr. Thorne's smile was singularly bland. "Oh, indeed! Horace—a charming arrangement. Pray how many more times is Mr. Horace to supplant that poor boy?" His soft voice changed suddenly, as one might draw a sword from its sheath. "Horace had better not cross Percival's path, or he will have to deal with me. Is he not content? What next must he have?"

Mrs. Middleton paused. She could have answered him. There was an obvious reply, but it was too crushing to be used, and Mr. Thorne braved it accordingly.

"Better leave your grandsons alone, Godfrey," she said at last; "if you'll take my advice—which I don't think you ever did yet. You'll only make mischief. And there is Sissy to be considered. Let the child choose for herself."

"And you think she can choose——*Horace*?"

"Why not?"

"Choose Horace rather than Percival?"

"I should," said the old lady with smiling audacity. "And I would rather she did. Horace's position is better."

Mr. Thorne uttered something akin to a grunt, which might, by courtesy, be taken for a groan. "Oh, how mercenary you women are! Well, if you marry a man for his money, Horace has the best of it—he behaves himself. Yes, I admit that—*if he behaves himself.*"

"And Horace is handsomer," said Mrs. Middleton, with a smile.

"Pink-and-white prettiness!" scoffed Mr. Thorne.

"Nonsense!" The colour mounted to the old lady's forehead, and she spoke sharply. "We didn't hear anything about that when he was a lad, and we were afraid of something amiss with his lungs—it would have been high treason to say a syllable against him then. And now, though I suppose he will always be a little delicate (you'd be sorry if you lost him, Godfrey), it's a shame to talk as if the boys were not to be compared. They are just of a height, not half an inch difference, and

the one as brave and manly as the other. Horace is fair, and Percival is dark ; and you know, as well as I do, that Horace is the handsomer.”

Mr. Thorne shifted his ground. “If I were Sissy I would choose my husband for qualities that are rather more than skin deep.”

“By all means. And still I would choose Horace !”

“What is amiss with Percival ?”

“He is not so frank and open. I don't want to say anything against him ; I like Percival, but I wish he were not quite so reserved.”

“What next ?” said Mr. Thorne, with a short laugh. “Why, only this morning you said he talked more than Horace !”

“Talked ? Oh, yes, Percival can talk, and about himself too,” said Mrs. Middleton, with a smile. “But he can keep his secrets all the time. I don't want to say anything against him ; I like him very much——”

“No doubt,” said Mr. Thorne.

“But I don't feel quite sure that I know him. He isn't like Horace. You know Horace's friends——”

“Trust me for that.”

“But what do you know of Percival's ? I heard him tell Sissy he would be out to-morrow. Will you ever know where he went ?”

“I shan't ask him.”

“No,” she retorted, “you dare not ! Isn't it a rule that no one is ever to question Percival ?”

“And while I'm master here it shall be obeyed. It's the least I can do. The boy shall come and go, speak or hold his tongue as he pleases. No one shall cross him—Horace least of all—while I'm master here, Harriet ; but that won't be very long.”

“I don't want you to think any harm of Percival's silence,” she answered gently. “I don't for one moment suppose he has any secrets to be ashamed of. I myself like people to be open, that is all.”

“If I wanted to know anything, Percival would tell me,” said Mr. Thorne.

Mrs. Middleton's charity was great. She hid the smile she could not repress. “Well,” she said, “perhaps I am not fair to Percival ; but, Godfrey, you are not quite just to Horace.”

He turned upon her. “Unjust to Horace ? I ?”

She knew what he meant. He had shown Horace signal favour, far above his cousin, yet what she had said was true. Perhaps some of the injustice had been in this very favour. “Here are our truants !” she exclaimed. She and her brother had not talked so confidentially for years ; but the moment her eyes fell on Sissy her thoughts went back to the point at which Mr. Thorne had disturbed them. “My dearest Sissy, I am so afraid you will catch cold.”

“It can't be done to-night,” said Percival. “Won't you come and try ?” But the old lady shook her head.

“All right, auntie, we won't stop out,” said Sissy ; and a moment

later she made her appearance in the drawing-room with her hands full of roses, which she tossed carelessly on the table. Mr. Thorne had picked up his paper, and stood, turning the pages and pretending to read; but she pushed it aside to put a rosebud in his coat. "Roses are more fit for you young people than for an old fellow like me," he said. "Why don't you give one to Percival?"

She looked over her shoulder at young Thorne. "Do you want one?" she said.

He smiled, with a slight movement of his head, and his dark eyes fixed on hers.

"Then why didn't you pick one when we were out? Now weren't you foolish? Well, never mind. What colour?"

"Choose for him," said Mr. Thorne.

Sissy hesitated, looking from Percival's face to a bud of deepest crimson. Then, throwing it down, "No, you shall have yellow," she exclaimed; "Laura Falconer's complexion is something like yours, and she always wears yellow. As soon as one yellow dress is worn out she gets another."

"She is a most remarkable young woman if she waits till the first one is worn out," said Percival.

"Am I to put your rose in or not?" Sissy demanded.

He stepped forward with a smile, and looked darkly handsome as he stood there, with Sissy putting the yellow rose in his coat, and glancing archly up at him. Mr. Thorne, from behind his *Saturday Review*, watched the girl who might, perhaps, hold his favourite's future in her hands. "Does he care for her?" he wondered. If he did, the old man felt that he would gladly have knelt to entreat her, "Be good to my poor Percival!" But did Percival want her to be good to him? Godfrey Thorne was altogether in the dark about his grandson's wishes in the matter. He tried hard not to think that he was in the dark about every wish or hope of Percival's, and he looked up eagerly when the latter said something about going out the next day. He remembered which horse Percival liked, he assented to everything, but he watched him all the time with a wistful curiosity. He did not really care where Percival went; but he would have given much for such a word about his plans as would have proved to Harriet, and to himself too, that his boy *did* confide in him sometimes. It was not to be, however. Young Thorne had taken up the local paper, and the subject dropped. Mr. Thorne may have guessed later, but he never knew where his roan horse went the next day.

CHAPTER II.

"THOSE EYES OF YOURS."

NOT five miles away, that same evening, a conversation was going on which would have interested Mrs. Middleton.

The scene was an upstairs room in a pleasant house near the county town. Mrs. Blake, a woman of seven or eight and forty, handsome and well preserved, but of a high-coloured type, leant back in an easy-chair, lazily unfastening her bracelets, by way of signifying that she had begun to prepare for the night. Her two daughters were with her. Addie, the elder, was at the looking-glass brushing her hair, and half enveloped in its silky blackness. She was a tall, graceful girl, a refined likeness of her mother. On the rug lay Lottie, three years younger, hardly more than a growing girl, long limbed, slight, a little abrupt and angular by her sister's side, her features not quite so regular, her face paler in its cloud of dark hair. Yet there was a look of determination and power which was wanting in Addie; and at times, when Lottie was roused, her eyes had a dark splendour which made her sister's beauty seem comparatively commonplace and tame.

Stretched at full length, she propped her chin on her hands and looked up at her mother. "I don't suppose you care," she said, in a clear, almost boyish voice.

"Not much," Mrs. Blake replied, with a smile. "Especially as I rather doubt it."

Addie paused, brush in hand. "I really think you've made a mistake, Lottie."

"Do you really? I haven't, though," said that young lady decidedly.

"It can't be—surely," Addie hesitated, with a little shadow on her face.

"Of course not. Is it likely?" said Mrs. Blake, as if the discussion were closed.

"I tell you," said Lottie stubbornly, "Godfrey Hammond told me that Percival's father was the eldest son."

"But it is Horace who has always lived at Brackenhill. Percival only goes on a visit now and then. Everyone knows," said Addie, in almost an injured tone, "that Horace is the heir."

Lottie raised her head a little and eyed her sister intently, with amusement, wonder, and a little scorn in her glance. Addie, blissfully unconscious, went on brushing her hair, still with that look of anxious perplexity.

"This is how it was," Lottie exclaimed suddenly. "Percival was just gone, and you were talking to Horace. Up comes Godfrey Hammond, sits down by me, and says some rubbish about consoling me. I think I laughed. Then he looked at me out of his little, light eyes, and

said that you and I seemed to get on well with his young friends. So I said, 'Oh, yes; middling.'

"Upon my word," smiled Mrs. Blake, "you appear to have distinguished yourself in the conversation."

"Didn't I?" said Lottie, untroubled and unabashed; "I know it struck me so at the time. Then he said something—I forget how he put it—about our being just the right number, and pairing off charmingly. So I said, 'Oh, of course! the elder ones went together, that was only right.'"

"And what did he say?"

"Oh, he pinched his lips together and smiled, and said, 'Don't you know that Percival is the elder?'"

"But, Lottie, that proves nothing as to his father."

"Who supposed it did? I said 'Fiddlededee, I didn't mean that; I supposed they were much about the same age, or if Percy were a month or two older it made no difference. I meant that Horace was the eldest son's son, so of course he was A 1.'"

"Well?" said Addie.

"Well! then he looked twice as pleased with himself as he did before, and said, 'I don't think Horace told you that. It so happens that Percival is not only the elder by a month or two, as you say, but he is the son of the eldest son.' Then I said 'Oh!' and mamma called me for something, and I went."

Mrs. Blake and Addie exchanged glances.

"Now, could I have made a mistake?" demanded Lottie.

"It seems plain enough, certainly," her mother allowed.

"Then, could Godfrey Hammond have made a mistake? Hasn't he known the Thornes all their lives, and didn't he say once that he was named Godfrey after their old grandfather?"

Mrs. Blake assented.

"Then," said the girl, relapsing into her recumbent position, "perhaps you'll believe me another time."

"Perhaps," said Mrs. Blake; "we'll see when the other time comes. If it is as you say, it is curious." She rose as she spoke, and went to the farther end of the room. As she stood by an open drawer putting away the ornaments which she had taken off, the candlelight revealed a shadow of perplexity on her face which increased the likeness between herself and Addie. Apparently Lottie was right as to her facts. The estate was **not** entailed, then, and despotic power seemed to be rather capriciously exercised by the head of the house. If Horace should displease his grandfather—if, for instance, he chose a wife of whom old Mr. Thorne did not approve—would his position be very secure? Mrs. Blake was uneasy, and felt that it was very wrong of people to play tricks with the succession to an estate like Brackenhill.

Meanwhile Lottie watched her sister, who was thoughtfully drawing her fingers through her long hair. "Addie," she said, after a pause, "what will you do if Horace isn't the heir after all?"

"What a silly question! I shan't do anything—there's nothing for me to do."

"But shall you mind very much? You are very fond of Horace, aren't you?"

"Fond of him!" Addie repeated; "he is very pleasant to talk to, if you mean that."

"Oh, you can't deceive me so! I believe that you are in love with him," said Lottie solemnly.

The colour rushed to Addie's face when her vaguely tender sentiments, indefinite as Horace's attentions, were described in this startling fashion. "Indeed, I'm nothing of the kind," she said hurriedly. "Pray don't talk such utter nonsense, Lottie. If you have nothing more sensible to say, you had better hold your tongue."

"But why are you ashamed of it?" Lottie persisted; "I wouldn't be." She had an unsuspected secret herself, but she would have owned it proudly enough had she been challenged.

"I'm not ashamed," said Addie; "and you know nothing about being in love, so you had better not talk about it."

"Oh, yes, I do!" was the reply, uttered with Lottie's calm simplicity of manner; "I know how to tell whether you are in love or not, Addie. What would you do if a girl were to win Horace Thorne away from you?"

Pride, and a sense of propriety, dictated Addie's answer and gave sharpness to her voice: "I should say she was perfectly welcome to him!"

Lottie considered for a moment. "Yes, I suppose one might *say* so to her; but what would you do? Wouldn't you want to kill her? And wouldn't you die of a broken heart?"

Addie was horrified. "I don't want to kill anybody, and I'm not going to die for Mr. Horace Thorne. Please don't say such things, Lottie—people never do. You forget he is only an acquaintance."

"No; I don't think you are in love with him, certainly." Lottie pronounced this decision with the air of one who has solved a difficult problem.

"What are you talking about?" Mrs. Blake inquired, coming back, and glancing from Addie's flushed and troubled face to Lottie's thoughtful eyes.

"I was asking Addie if she didn't want Horace to be the heir. I know you do, mamma—oh! just for his own sake, because you think he's the nicest, don't you? I heard you tell him one day"—here Lottie looked up with a candid gaze and audaciously imitated Mrs. Blake's manner—"that though we knew his cousin *first*, he—Horace, you know—seemed to drop *so* naturally into *all* our ways that it was quite *delightful* to feel that we needn't stand on *any* ceremony with him."

"Good gracious, Lottie! what do you mean by listening to every word I say?"

"I didn't listen—I heard," said Lottie. "I always do hear when you say your words as if they had little dashes under them."

"Well, Horace Thorne *is* easier to get on with than his cousin," said Mrs. Blake, taking no notice of Lottie's mimicry.

"There, I said so; mamma would like it to be Horace. Nobody asks what I should like; nobody thinks about me and Percival."

"Oh, indeed! I wasn't aware," said Mrs. Blake; "when is that to come off? I daresay you will look very well in orange blossoms and a pinafore!"

"Oh! you think I'm too young, do you? But a little while ago you were always saying that I was grown up, and oughtn't to want any more childish games. What was I to do?"

"Upon my word!" exclaimed Mrs. Blake; "I'll buy you a doll for a birthday present, to keep you out of mischief."

"Too late," said Lottie, from the rug. She burst into sudden laughter, loud but not unmelodious. "What rubbish we are talking! seventeen to-morrow, and Addie is nearly twenty; and sometimes I think I must be a hundred!"

"Well, you are talking nonsense now!" Mrs. Blake exclaimed. "Why, you baby! only last November you would go into that wet meadow by the Rectory to play trap-and-ball with Robin and Jack. And such a fuss as there was if one wanted to make you the least tidy and respectable."

"Was that last November?" Lottie stared thoughtfully into space. "Queer that last November should be so many years ago, isn't it? Poor little Cock Robin! I met him in the lane the day before he went away. They will keep him in jackets, and he hates them so! I laughed at him, and told him to be a good little boy and mind his book. He didn't seem to like it, somehow."

"I dare say he didn't," said Addie, who had been silently recovering herself; "there's no mistake about it when you laugh at anyone."

"There shall be no mistake about anything I do," Lottie asserted. "I'm going to bed now." She sprang to her feet, and stood looking at her sister: "What jolly hair you've got, Addie!"

"Yours is just as thick, or thicker," said Addie.

"Each individual hair is a good deal thicker, if you mean that. 'Blue-black, lustrous, thick like horse-hairs!' That's what Percy quoted to me one day when I was grumbling, and I said I wasn't sure he wasn't rude. Addie, are Horace and Percival fond of each other?"

"How can I tell? I suppose so."

"I have my doubts," said Lottie, sagely. "Why should they be? There must be something queer, you know, or why doesn't that stupid old man at Brackenhill treat Percival as the eldest? Well, good night." And Lottie went off, half-saying, half-singing, "Who killed Cock Robin? I, said the Sparrow—with my bow and arrow." And with a triumphant outburst of "*I* killed Cock Robin!" she banged the door after her.

There was a pause. Then Addie said, "Seventeen to-morrow! Mamma, Lottie really is grown up now."

"Is she?" Mrs. Blake replied doubtfully. "Time she should be, I'm sure!"

Lottie had been a sore trial to her mother. Addie was pretty as a child, tolerably presentable even at her most awkward age, glided gradually into girlhood and beauty, and finally "came out" completely to Mrs. Blake's satisfaction. But Lottie at fifteen or sixteen was her despair—"exactly like a great unruly boy," she lamented. She dashed through her lessons fairly well, but the moment she was released she was unendurable. She whistled, she sang at the top of her voice, and plunged about the house in her thick boots, till she could be off to join the two boys at the Rectory, her dear friends and comrades. Robin Wingfield, the elder, was her junior by rather more than a year; and this advantage, especially as she was tall and strong for her age, enabled her fully to hold her own with them. Nor could Mrs. Blake hinder this friendship, as she would gladly have done, for her husband was on Lottie's side.

"Let the girl alone," he said. "Too big for this sort of thing? Rubbish! The milliner's bills will come in quite soon enough. And what's amiss with Robin and Jack? Good boys as boys go, and she's another, and if they like to scramble over hedges and ditches together—let them. For heaven's sake, Caroline, don't attempt to keep her at home—she'll certainly drive me crazy if you do. No one ever banged doors as Lottie does—she ought to patent the process. Slams them with a crash which jars the whole house, and yet manages not to latch them, and the moment she is gone they are swinging backwards and forwards till I'm almost out of my senses. Here she comes downstairs, like a thunderbolt. Lottie, my dear girl, I'm sure it's going to be fine; better run out and look up those Wingfield boys, I think."

So the trio spent long half-holidays rambling in the fields; and on these occasions Lottie might be met, an immense distance from home, in the shabbiest clothes, and wearing a red cap of Robin's tossed carelessly on her dark hair. Percival once encountered them on one of these expeditions. Lottie's beauty was still pale and unripe, like those sheathed buds which will come suddenly to their glory of blossom, not like rose-buds which have a loveliness of their own; but the young man was struck by the boyish mixture of shyness and bluntness with which she greeted him, and attracted by the great eyes which gazed at him from under Robin's shabby cap. When he and Horace went to the Blakes' he amused himself idly enough with the schoolgirl, while his cousin flirted with Addie. He laughed one day when Mrs. Blake was unusually troubled about Lottie's apparel, and said something about "a sweet neglect." But the soul of Lottie's mamma was not to be comforted with scraps of poetry. How could it be, when she had just arraigned her daughter on the charge of having her pockets bulging hideously, and had

discovered that those receptacles overflowed with a miscellaneous assortment of odds and ends, the accumulations of weeks, tending to show that Lottie and Cock Robin, as she called him, had all things in common? How could it be, when Lottie was always outgrowing her garments in the most ungainly manner, so that her sleeves seemed to retreat in horror from her wrists and from her long hands, tanned by sun and wind, seamed with bramble-scratches, and smeared with schoolroom ink? Once Lottie came home with an unmistakeable black eye, for which Robin's cricket-ball was accountable. Then, indeed, Mrs. Blake felt that her cup of bitterness was full to overflowing, though Lottie did assure her, "You should have seen Jack's eye last April; his was much more swollen, and all sorts of colours, than mine." It was impossible to avoid the conclusion that Jack must have been, to say the least of it, unpleasant to look at. Percival happened to come to the house just then, and was tranquilly amused at the good lady's despair. It was before the Blakes knew much of Horace, and she had not yet discovered that Percival's cousin was so much more friendly than Percival himself, so she made the latter her confidant. He recommended a raw beefsteak with a gravity worthy of a Spanish grandee. He was not allowed to see Lottie, who was kept in seclusion as being half-culprit, half-invalid, and wholly unrepresentable; but as he was going away the servant gave him a little note in Lottie's boyish scrawl:—

"Dear Percival—Mamma was cross with Robin and sent him away do tell him I'm all right, and he is not to mind he will sure to be about somewhere It is very stupid being shut up here Addie says she can't go running about giving messages to boys and Papa said if he saw him he should certainly punch his head so please tell him he is not to bother himself about me I shall soon be all right."

Percival went away, smiling a little at his letter, and at Lottie herself. Just as he reached the first of the fields which were the short cut from the house, he spied Robin lurking on the other side of the hedge, with Jack at his heels. He halted, and called "Robin! Robin Wingfield! I want to speak to you."

The boy hesitated. "There's a gate farther on."

Coming to the gate, Percival rested his arms on it, and looked at Robin. The boy was not big for his age, but there was a good deal of cleverness in his upturned freckled face.

"I've a message for you," said the young man.

"From her?" Robin indicated the Blakes' house with a jerk of his head.

"Yes. She asked me to tell you that she is all right, though, of course, she can't come out at present. She made sure I should find you somewhere about."

Robin nodded. "I did try to hear how she was; but that old dragon——"

"Meaning my friend Mrs. Blake?" said young Thorne. "Ah! Hardly civil, perhaps—but forcible."

"Well—Mrs. Blake then—caught me in the shrubbery, and pitched into me. Said I ought to be ashamed of myself. Supposed I should be satisfied when I'd broken Lottie's neck. Told me I'd better not show my face there again."

"Well," said Percival, "you couldn't expect Mrs. Blake to be particularly delighted with your afternoon's work. And, Wingfield, though I was especially to tell you that you were not to vex yourself about it, you really ought to be more careful. Knocking a young lady's eye half out——"

"Young lady!" in a tone of intense scorn. "Lottie isn't a *young lady*."

"Oh! isn't she?" said Percival.

"I should think not, indeed!" And Robin eyed the big young man who was laughing at him, as if he meditated wiping out the insult to Lottie then and there. But even with Jack, his sturdy satellite, to help, it was not to be thought of. "She's a brick!" said Cock Robin, half to himself.

"No doubt," said Percival. "But, as I was saying, it isn't exactly the way to treat her. At least—I don't know; upon my word, I don't know," he soliloquised. "Judging by most women's novels, from *Jane Eyre* downwards, the taste for muscular bullies prevails. Robin may be the coming hero—who knows?—and courtship commencing with a black eye the future fashion. Well, Robin, any answer?"

"Tell her I hope she'll soon be all right. Shall you see her?"

"I can see that she gets any message you want to send."

Robin groped among his treasures. "Look here; I brought away her knife that afternoon. She lent it me. She'd better have it; it's got four blades; she may want it, perhaps."

Percival dropped the formidable instrument carelessly into his pocket. "She shall have it. And, Robin, you'd better not be hanging about here—Lottie says so. You'll only vex Mrs. Blake."

"All right," said the boy; and went off, with Jack after him.

Percival, who was staying in the neighbourhood, went straight home, tied up a parcel of books he thought might amuse Lottie in her imprisonment, and wrote a note to go with them. He was whistling softly to himself as he wrote, and, if the truth be told, had a fair vision floating before his eyes—a girl of whom Lottie had reminded him by sheer force of contrast. Still he liked Lottie in her way. He was young enough to enjoy the easy sense of patronage and superiority which made the words flow so pleasantly from his pen. Never had Lottie seemed to him so utterly a child as immediately after his talk with her boy friend.

"Here are some books," said the hurrying pen, "which I think you will like, if your eye is not so bad as to prevent your reading. Robin

was keeping his disconsolate watch close by, as you foretold, and asked anxiously after you, so I gave him your message and dismissed him. He especially charged me to send you the enclosed—knife I believe he called it; it looks to me like a whole armoury of deadly weapons—which he seemed to think would be a comfort to you in your affliction. I sincerely hope it may prove so. I was very civil to him, remembering that I was your ambassador; but if he isn't a little less rough with you in future, I shall be tempted to adopt Mr. Blake's plan if I happen to meet your friend again. You really mustn't let him damage those eyes of yours in this reckless fashion. Mrs. Blake was nearly heart-broken this morning."

He sent his parcel off, and speedily ceased to think of it. And Lottie herself might have done the same, not caring much for his books, but for four little words—"those eyes of yours." Had Percival written "your eyes," it would have meant nothing; but "those eyes of yours" implied notice, nay, admiration. Again and again she looked at the thick paper, with the crest at the top, and the vigorous lines of writing below; and again and again the four words, "those eyes of yours," seemed to spring into ever clearer prominence. She hid the letter away with a sudden comprehension of the roughness of her pencil scrawl which it answered, and began to take pride in her looks when they least deserved it. Only a day or two before she had envied Robin the possession of sight a little keener than her own; but now she smiled to think that Percival Thorne would never have regretted injury to "those eyes of yours," had she owned Robin's light grey orbs.

Her transformation had begun. The knife was still a treasure, but she was ashamed of her delight in it. She breathed on the shining blades, and rubbed them to brightness again; but she did it stealthily, with a glance over her shoulder first. She went rambling with Robin and Jack, but not when she knew that Percival Thorne was in the neighbourhood. She was very sure of his absence on the November day, to which her mother had alluded, when she had insisted on playing trap-and-ball, in the Rectory meadows. Mrs. Blake did not realize it, but it was almost the last day of Lottie's old life. At Christmas time they were asked to stay for a few days at a friend's house. There was to be a dance; and the hostess, being Lottie's godmother, pointedly included her in the invitation, so Mrs. Blake and Addie did what they could to improve their black sheep's appearance.

Lottie, dressed for the eventful evening, was left alone for a moment before the three went down. She felt shy, dispirited, and sullen. Her ball dress encumbered and constrained her. "I hate it all," she said to herself, beating impatiently with her foot upon the ground. Something moving caught her eye; it was her reflection in a mirror. She paused and gazed in wonder. Was this slender girl, arrayed in a cloud of semi-transparent white, really herself—the Lottie who only a few days before had raced Robin Wingfield home across the fields, had been the first

over the gap and through the ditch into the Rectory meadow, and had rushed away with the November rain-drops driving in her face? She gazed on; the transformation had its charms after all. But the shadow came back.

"It's no use—Addie's prettier than I ever shall be—I must be second all my life. Second! If I can't be A 1, I'd as soon be Z 1,000! I won't go about to be a foil to her. I'd ten times rather race with Robin; and I will, too! They shan't coop me up, and make a young lady of me!"

She caught the flash of her indignant glance in the glass, and paused.

"*Those eyes of yours!*"

Must she be second all her life? Had she not a power and witchery of her own? Might she not even distance Addie in the race? "I've more brains than she has," mused Lottie.

Her heart was beating fast as they came downstairs. They had only arrived by a late train, which gave them just time to dress; and Mrs. Blake had rather exceeded the allowance, so that most of the guests had arrived, and the first quadrille was nearly ended as they came in. Lottie followed her mother and Addie as they glided through the crowd; and when they paused she stood, shy and fierce, casting lowering glances around. She heard their hostess say to some one—

"Do let me find you a partner."

A well-known voice replied, "Not this time, thank you, I'm going to try to find one for myself;" and Percival stood before her, looking, to her girlish fancy, more of a hero than ever in the evening dress which became him well. The perfectly-fitting gloves, the flower in his coat, a dozen little things which she could not define, made her feel uncouth and anxious, fascinated and frightened, all at once. Had he greeted her in the patronising way in which he had talked to her of old, she would have been deeply wounded; but he asked her for the next dance more ceremoniously, she knew, than Horace would have asked Addie. Still she trembled as they moved off. They had scarcely met since her note to him. Suppose he alluded to it, asked after her black eye, and inquired whether she had derived any benefit from the beefsteak! Nothing more natural, and yet if he did Lottie felt that she should *hate* him. "I know I should do something dreadful," she thought; "scratch his face, and then burst out crying most likely. Oh, what would become of me! I should be ruined for life! I should have to shut myself up, never see anyone again, and emigrate with Robin directly he was old enough."

Percival did not know his danger, but he escaped it. The fatal thoughts were in his mind while Lottie was planning her disgrace and exile; but he merely remarked that he liked the first waltz, and should they start at once, or wait a moment till a couple or two dropped out?

"I don't know whether I *can* waltz," said Lottie doubtfully.

"Weren't you ever tortured with dancing lessons?"

"Oh, yes! But I've never tried at a party. Suppose we go bump-

ing up against everybody, like that fat man and the little lady in pink—the two who are just stopping."

"I assure you," said Percival gravely, "that I do not dance at all like that fat man. And if you dance like the lady in pink, I shall be more surprised than I have words to say. Now?"

They were off. Percival knew that he waltzed well, and had an idea that Lottie would prove a good partner. Nor was he mistaken. She had been fairly taught, much against her will, had a good ear for time, and, thanks to many a race with Robin Wingfield, her energy was almost terrible. They spun swiftly and silently round, unwearied while other couples dropped out of the ranks to rest and talk. Percival was well pleased. It is true that he had memories of waltzes with Sissy Langton, of more utter harmony, of sweeter grace, of delight more perfect, though far more fleeting. But Lottie, with her steady swiftness and her strong young life, had a charm of her own which he was not slow to recognise. She would hardly have thanked him for accurately classifying it, for, as she danced, she felt that she had discovered a new joy. Her old life slipped from her like a husk. Friendship with Cock Robin was an evident absurdity. It is true she was angry with herself, that, after fighting so passionately for freedom, she should voluntarily bend her proud neck beneath the yoke. She foresaw that her mother and Addie would triumph, she felt that her bondage to Mrs. Grundy would often be irksome; but here was the first instalment of her wages in this long waltz with Percival. She fancied that the secret of her pleasure lay in the two words, "with Percival." In her ignorance she thought that she was tasting the honeyed fire of love, when, in truth, it was the sweetness of conscious success. Before the last notes of that enchanted music died away, she had cast her girlish devotion, "half in a rapture and half in a rage," at her partner's feet, while he stood beside her calm and self-possessed. He would have been astounded, and perhaps almost disgusted, had he known what was passing through her mind.

Love at sixteen is generally only a desire to be in love, and seeks not so much a fit as a possible object. Probably Lottie's passion offered as many assurances of domestic bliss as could be desired at her age.

Percival was dark, foreign-looking, and handsome; he had an interesting air of reserve, and no apparent need to practise small economies. His clothes fitted him extremely well; and at times he had a way of standing proudly aloof, which was worthy of any hero of romance. No settled occupation would interfere with picnics and balls; and, to crown all, had he not said to her, "Those eyes of yours"? Were not these ample foundations for the happiness of thirty or forty years of marriage?

Percival, meanwhile, wanted to be kind to the childish half-tamed Lottie, who had attracted his notice in the fields, and trusted him with her generous message to Robin Wingfield. The girl fancied herself

immensely improved by her white dress but, had Thorne been a painter, he would have sketched her as a pale vision of Liberty, with loosely-knotted hair, and dark eyes glowing under Robin's red cap. He was able coolly to determine the precise nature of his pleasure in her society, but he knew that it was a pleasure. And Lottie, when she fell asleep that night, clasped a card which was rendered priceless by the frequent recurrence of his initials.

Her passion transformed her. Her vehement spirit remained, but everything else was changed. Her old dreams and longings were cast out by the new. She laughed with Mrs. Blake and Addie; but under the laughter she hid her love, and cherished it in fierce and solitary silence. Yet even to herself the transformation seemed so wonderful that she could hardly believe in it, and acted the rough girl now and then with the idea that otherwise they *must* think her a consummate actress, morning, noon, and night. For some months no great event marked the record of her unsuspected passion. It might, perhaps, have run its course, and died out harmlessly in due time, but for an unlucky afternoon, about a week before her birthday, when Percival uttered some thoughtless words which woke a tempest of doubt and fear in Lottie's heart. She did not question his love; but she caught a glimpse of his pride, and felt as if a gulf had opened between her and her dream of happiness.

Percival was calling at the house on the eventful day which was destined to influence Lottie's fate and his own. He was in a happy mood, well pleased with things in general, and, after his own fashion, inclined to be talkative. When visitors arrived, and Addie exclaimed "Mrs. Pickering and that boy of hers—Oh, bother!" she spoke the feelings of the whole party; and Percival, from his place by the window, looked across at Lottie and shrugged his shoulders expressively. Had there been time he would have tried to escape into the garden with his girl friend; but, as that was impossible, he resigned himself to his fate and listened while Mrs. Pickering poured forth her rapture, concerning her son's prospects, to Mrs. Blake. An uncle, who was the head of a great London firm, had offered the young man a situation, with an implied promise of a share in the business later. "Such a subject for congratulation!" the good lady exclaimed, beaming on her son, who sat silently turning his hat in his hands, and looking very pink. "Such an opening for William! Better than having a fortune left him, I call it, for it is such a thing to have an occupation. Every young man should be brought up to something, in my opinion."

Mrs. Blake, with a half-glance at Addie and a thought of Horace, suggested that heirs to landed estates——

"Well, yes." Mrs. Pickering agreed with her. Country gentlemen often found so much to do in looking after their tenants, and making improvements, that she would not say anything about them. But young men with small incomes and no profession—she should be sorry if a son of hers——

"Like me, for instance," said Percival, looking up. "I've a small income, and no profession."

Mrs. Pickering, somewhat confused, hastened to explain that she meant nothing personal.

"Of course not," he said; "I know that. I only mentioned it because I think an illustration stamps a thing on people's memories."

"But, Percival," Mrs. Blake interposed, "I must say that in this I agree with Mrs. Pickering. I do think it would be better if you had something to do—I do indeed." She looked at him with an air of affectionate severity. "I speak as your friend, you know." (Percival bowed his gratitude.) "I really think young people are happier when they have a settled occupation."

"I dare say that is true, as a rule," he said.

"But you don't think you would be?" questioned Lottie.

He turned to her with a smile. "Well, I doubt it. Of course I don't know how happy I might be if I had been brought up to a profession." He glanced through the open window at the warm loveliness of June. "At this moment, for instance, I might have been writing a sermon, or cutting off a man's leg. But, somehow, I am very well satisfied as I am."

"Oh! if you mean to make fun of it——" Mrs. Blake began.

"But I don't," Percival said quickly. "I may laugh, but I'm in earnest too. I have plenty to eat and drink—I can pay my tailor, and still have a little money in my pocket—I am my own master. Sometimes I ride—another man's horse—if not I walk, and am just as well content. I don't smoke—I don't bet—I have no expensive tastes. What could money do for me that I should spend the best years of my life in slaving for it?"

"That may be all very well for the present," said Mrs. Blake.

"Why not for the future too? Oh, I have my dream for the future too."

"And, pray, may one ask what it is?" said Mrs. Pickering, looking down on him from the height of William's prosperity.

"Certainly," he said. "Some day I shall leave England, and travel leisurely about the Continent. I shall have a sky over my head, compared with which this blue is misty and pale. I shall gain new ideas. I shall get grapes, and figs, and melons very cheap. There will be a little too much garlic in my daily life—even such a destiny as mine must have its drawbacks—but think of the wonderful scenery I shall see, and the queer, beautiful out-of-the-way holes and corners I shall discover! And in years to come I shall rejoice, without envy, to hear that Mr. Blake has bought a large estate, and gains prizes for fat cattle, while my friend here has been knighted on the occasion of some City demonstration."

Young Pickering, who had been listening open-mouthed to the other's fluent and tranquil speech, reddened at the allusion to himself, and dropped his hat.

"At that rate you must never marry," said Mrs. Blake.

Percival thoughtfully stroked his lip. "You think I should not find a wife to share my enjoyment of a small income?"

"Marry a girl with lots of money, Mr. Thorne," said the future Sir William, feeling it incumbent on him to take part in the conversation.

"Not I!" Percival's glance made the lad's hot face yet hotter. "That's the last thing I will do. If a man means to work he may marry whom he will. But if he has made up his mind to be idle he is a contemptible cur if he will let his wife keep him in his idleness." He spoke very quietly in his soft voice, and leaned back in his chair.

"Well, then, you must never fall in love with an heiress," said Mrs. Blake.

"Or you must work and win her," Lottie suggested almost in a whisper.

He smiled, but slightly shook his head, with a look which she fancied meant "Too late." Mrs. Pickering began to tell the latest Fordborough scandal, and the talk drifted into another channel.

Lottie had listened as she always listened when Percival spoke, but she had not attached any peculiar meaning to his words. But an hour or so later, when he was gone, and she was loitering in the garden just outside the window, Addie, who was within, made some remark in a laughing tone. Lottie did not catch the words, but Mrs. Blake's reply was distinct and not to be mistaken, "William Pickering indeed! No, with your looks and your expectations you girls ought to marry really well." Lottie stood aghast. They would have money, then? She had never thought about money. She would be an heiress? And Percival would never marry an heiress—he could not—had he not said so? How gladly would she have given him every farthing she possessed! And was her fortune to be a barrier between them for ever? Every syllable that he had spoken was made clear by this revelation, and rose up before her eyes as a terrible word of doom. But she was not one to be easily dismayed, and her first cry was, "What shall I do?" Lottie's thoughts turned always to action, not to endurance, and she was resolved to break down the barrier, let the cost be what it might. Her talk with Godfrey Hammond gave a new interest to her romance, and new strength to her determination. Since her hero was disinherited and poor, and she, though rich, would be poor in all she cared to have if she were parted from him, might she not tell him so, when she saw him on her birthday? She thought it would be easier to speak on the one day when in girlish fashion she would be queen. She would not think of her own pride because his pride was dear to her. She could not tell what she would say or do—she only knew that her birthday should decide her fate. And her heart was beating fast in hope and fear the night before, when she banged the door after her, and went off to bed, sublimely ready to renounce the world for Percival.

CHAPTER III.

DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES—ALFRED THORNE'S IS TOLD BY THE WRITER.

MR. THORNE, of Brackenhill, was a miserable man, who went through the world with a morbidly sensitive spot in his nature. A touch on it was torture, and unfortunately the circumstances of his daily life continually chafed it.

It was only a common form of selfishness carried to excess. "I don't want much," he would have said, truly enough, for Godfrey Thorne had never been grasping, "but let it be my own." He could not enjoy anything, unless he knew that he might waste it if he liked. The highest good, fettered by any condition, was in his eyes no good at all. Brackenhill was dear to him because he could leave it to whom he would. He was seventy-six, and had spent his life in improving his estate; but he prized nothing about it so much as his right to give the result of his life's work to the first beggar he might chance to meet. It would have made him still happier if he could have had the power of destroying Brackenhill utterly, of wiping it off the face of the earth, in case he could not find an heir who pleased him, for it troubled him to think that some man *must* have the land after him, whether he wished it or not.

Godfrey Hammond had declared that no one could conceive the exquisite torments Mr. Thorne would endure if he owned an estate with a magnificent ruin on it, some unique and priceless relic of bygone days. "He should be able to see it from his window," said Hammond, "and it should be his, as far as law could make it, while he should be continually conscious that in the eyes of all cultivated men he was merely its guardian. People should write to the newspapers, asserting boldly that the public had a right of free access to it, and old gentlemen with antiquarian tastes should find a little gap in a fence, and pen indignant appeals to the editor, demanding to be immediately informed whether a monument of national, nay, of world-wide interest, ought not, for the sake of the public, to be more carefully protected from injury. Local archæological societies should come and read papers in it. Clergymen, wishing to combine a little instruction with the pleasures of a school-feast, should arrive with van-loads of cheering boys and girls, a troop of ardent teachers, many calico flags, and a brass band. Artists, keen-eyed and picturesque, each with his good-humoured air of possessing the place so much more truly than any mere country gentleman ever could, should come to gaze and sketch. Meanwhile Thorne should remark about twice a week, that of course he could pull the whole thing down if he liked; to which everyone should smile assent, recognising an evident but utterly unimportant fact. And then," said Hammond solemnly, "when all the archæologists were eating and drinking, enjoying their own theories, and picking holes in their neighbours' discoveries, the bolt should fall in the

shape of an announcement that Mr. Thorne had sold the stones as building materials, and that the workmen had already removed the most ancient and interesting part. After which he would go slowly to his grave, dying of his triumph and a broken heart."

It was all quite true, though Godfrey Hammond might have added that all the execrations of the antiquarians would hardly have added to the burden of shame and remorse of which Mr. Thorne would have felt the weight before the last cart carried away its load from the trampled sward; that he would have regretted his decision every hour of his life; and if by a miracle he could have found himself once more with the fatal deed undone, he would have rejoiced for a moment, suffered his old torment for a little while, and then proceeded to do it again.

For a great part of Mr. Thorne's life, the boast of his power over Brackenhill had been on his lips more frequently than the twice a week of which Hammond talked. Of late years it had not been so. He had used his power to assure himself that he possessed it, and gradually awoke to the consciousness that he had lost it by thus using it.

He had had three sons—Maurice, a fine, high-spirited young fellow; Alfred, good-looking and good-tempered, but indolent; James, a slim, sickly lad, who inherited from his mother a fatal tendency to decline. She died while he was a baby, and he was petted from that time forward. Godfrey Thorne was well satisfied with Maurice; but was always at war with his second son, who would not take orders and hold the family living. They argued the matter till it was too late for Alfred to go into the army, the only career for which he had expressed any desire; and then Mr. Thorne found himself face to face with a gentle and lazy resistance, which threatened to be a match for his own hard obstinacy. Alfred didn't mind being a farmer. But his father was troubled about the necessary capital, and doubted his son's success. "You will go on after a fashion for a few years, and then all the money will have slipped through your fingers. You know nothing of farming." "That's true," said Alfred. "And you are much too lazy to learn." "That's very likely," said the young man. So Mr. Thorne looked about him for some more eligible opening for his troublesome son; and Alfred meanwhile, with his handsome face and honest smile, was busy making love to Sarah Percival, the Rector's daughter.

The little idyll was the talk of the villagers before it came to the Squire's ears. When he questioned Alfred, the young man confessed it readily enough. He loved Miss Percival, and she didn't mind waiting. Mr. Thorne was not altogether displeased; for, though his intercourse with the Rector was rather stormy and uncertain, they happened to be on tolerable terms just then. Sarah was an only child, and would have a little money at Mr. Percival's death, and Alfred was much more submissive and anxious to please his father under these altered circumstances. The young people were not to consider themselves engaged, Miss Percival being only eighteen and Alfred one-and-twenty. But if they were of the

same mind later, when the latter should be in a position to marry, it was understood that neither his father nor Mr. Percival would oppose it.

Unluckily a parochial question arose near Christmas time, and the Squire and the clergyman took different views of it. Mr. Thorne went about the house with brows like a thunder-cloud, and never opened his lips to Alfred except to abuse the Rector. "You'll have to choose between old Percival and me one of these days," he said more than once. "You'd better be making up your mind—it will save time." Alfred was silent. When the strife was at its height, Maurice was drowned while skating.

The poor fellow was hardly in his grave before the storm burst on Alfred's head. If Mr. Thorne had barely tolerated the idea of his son's marriage before, he found it utterly intolerable now; and the decree went forth that this boyish folly about Miss Percival must be forgotten. "I can do as I like with Brackenhill," said Mr. Thorne; "remember that!" Alfred did remember it. He had heard it often enough, and his father's angry eyes gave it an added emphasis. "I can make an eldest son of James if I like, and I will if you defy me." But nothing could shake Alfred. He had given his word to Miss Percival, and they loved each other, and he meant to keep to it. "You don't believe me!" his father thundered; "you think I may talk, but that I shan't do it. Take care!" There was no trace of any conflict on Alfred's face; he looked a little dull and heavy under the bitter storm, but that was all. "I can't help it, sir," he said, tracing the pattern of the carpet with the toe of his boot as he stood; "you will do as you please, I suppose." "I suppose I shall," said Mr. Thorne.

So Alfred was disinherited. "As well for this as anything else," he said; "we couldn't have got on long." He had an allowance from his father, who declined to take any further interest in his plans. He went abroad for a couple of years—a test which Mr. Percival imposed upon him that nothing might be done in haste; and came back, faithful as he went, to ask for the consent which could no longer be denied. Mr. Percival had been presented to a living at some distance from Brackenhill, and, as there was a good deal of glebe land attached to it, Alfred was able to try his hand at farming. He did so, with little loss if no gain, and they made one household at the Rectory.

He never seemed to regret Brackenhill. Sarah—dark, ardent, intense—a strange contrast to his own fair, handsome face and placid indolence—absorbed all his love. Her eager nature could not rouse him to battle with the world, but it woke a passionate devotion in his heart; they were everything to each other, and were content. When their boy was born the Rector would have named him Godfrey; at any rate he urged them to call him by one of the old family names which had been borne by bygone generations of Thornes. But the young husband was resolved that the child should be Percival, and Percival only. "Why prejudice his grandfather against him for a mere name?" the Rector persisted. But Alfred shook his head; "Percival means all the happiness

of my life," he said. So the child received his name, and the fact was announced to Mr. Thorne in a letter, brief and to the point like a challenge.

Communications with Brackenhill were few and far between. From the local papers Alfred heard of the rejoicings when James came of age, quickly followed by the announcement that he had gone abroad for the winter. Then he was at home again, and going to marry Miss Harriet Benham; whereat Alfred smiled a little. "The governor must have put his pride in his pocket; old Benham made his money out of composite candles, then retired, and has gas all over the house for fear they should be mentioned. Harry, as we used to call her, is the youngest of them—she must be eight or nine-and-twenty; fine girl, hunts,—tried it on with poor Maurice ages ago. I should think she was about half as big again as Jim—well, yes! perhaps I am exaggerating a little. How charmed my father must be!—only, of course, anything to please Jim, and it's a fine thing to have him married and settled."

Alfred read his father's feelings correctly enough; but Mr. Thorne was almost repaid for all he had endured when, in his turn, he was able to write and announce the birth of a boy for whom the bells had been set ringing as the heir of Brackenhill. Jim, with his sick fancies and querulous conceit; Mrs. James Thorne, with her coarsely-coloured splendour and imperious ways, faded into the background now that Horace's little star had risen.

The rest may be briefly told. Horace had a little sister who died, and he himself could hardly remember his father. His time was divided between his mother's house at Brighton and Brackenhill. He grew slim, and tall, and handsome—a Thorne and not a Benham, as his grandfather did not fail to note. He was delicate. "But he will outgrow that," said Mrs. Middleton, and loved him the better for the care she had to take of him. It was principally for his sake that she was there. She was a widow and had no children of her own; but when, at her brother's request, she came to Brackenhill to make more of a home for the school-boy, she brought with her a tiny girl—little Sissy Langton—a great-niece of her husband's.

Meanwhile, the other boy grew up in his quiet home; but death came there as well as to Brackenhill, and seemed to take the mainspring of the household in taking Sarah Thorne. Her father pined for her, and had no pleasure in life except in her child. Even when the old man was growing feeble, and it was manifest to all but the boy that he would not long be parted from his daughter, it was a sombre but not an unhappy home for the child. Something in the shadow which overhung it, in his grandfather's weakness and his father's silence, made him grave and reserved; but he always felt that he was loved. No playful home name was ever bestowed on the little lad; but it did not matter, for, when spoken by Alfred Thorne, no name could be so tender as Percival.

The Rector's death, when the boy was fifteen, broke up the only real

home he was destined to know ; for Alfred was unable to settle down in any place for any length of time. While his wife and her father were alive, their influence over him was supreme : he was like the needle drawn aside by a powerful attraction. But now that they were gone, his thoughts oscillated awhile, and then reverted to Brackenhill. For himself he was content ; he had made his choice long ago ; but little by little the idea grew up in his mind that Percival was wronged, for he, at least, was guiltless. He secretly regretted the defiant fashion in which his boy had been christened, and made a feeble attempt to prove that, after all, Percy was an old family name. He succeeded in establishing that a " P. Thorne " had once existed, who, of course, might have been Percy as he might have been Peter or Paul ; and he tried to call his son Percy, in memory of this doubtful namesake. But the three syllables were as dear to the boy as the White Flag to a Bourbon. They identified him with the mother he dimly remembered, and proclaimed to all the world (that is, to his grandfather) that for her sake he counted Brackenhill well lost. He triumphed, and his father was proud to be defeated. To this day he invariably writes himself " Percival Thorne."

Alfred, however, had his way on a more important point, and educated his son for no profession, because the head of the house needed none. Percival acquiesced willingly enough, without a thought of the implied protest. He was indolent, and had little or no ambition. Since daily bread—and, luckily, rather more than daily bread, for he was no ascetic—was secured to him, since books were many, and the world was wide, he asked nothing better than to study them. He grew up grave, dreamy, and somewhat solitary in his ways. He seemed to have inherited something of the Rector's self-possessed and rather formal courtesy, and at twenty he looked older than his age, though his face was as smooth as a girl's.

He was not twenty-one when his father died suddenly of fever. When the news reached Brackenhill, the old Squire was singularly affected by it. He had been accustomed to contrast Alfred's vigorous prime with his own advanced age, Percival's unbroken health with Horace's ailing boyhood, and to think mournfully of the probability that the old manor-house must go to a stranger unless he could humble himself to the son who had defied him. But, old as he was, he had outlived his son, and he was dismayed at his isolation. A whole generation was dead and gone ; and the two lads, who were all that remained of the Thornes of Brackenhill, stood far away, as though he stretched his trembling hands to them across their fathers' graves. He expressly requested that Percival should come and see him, and the young man presented himself in his deep mourning. Sissy, just sixteen, looked upon him as a sombre hero of romance, and, within two days of his coming, Mrs. Middleton announced that her brother was " perfectly infatuated about that boy."

The evening of his arrival he stood with his grandfather on the terrace, looking at the wide prospect which lay at their feet—ample fields

and meadows, and the silvery flash of water through the willows. Then he turned, folded his arms, and coolly surveyed Brackenhill itself from end to end. Mr. Thorne watched him, expecting some word; but when none came, and Percival's eyes wandered upwards to the soft evening sky, where a glimmering star hung like a lamp above the old grey manor-house, he said, with some amusement—

"Well, and what is your opinion?"

Percival came down to earth with the greatest promptitude.

"It's a beautiful place. I'm glad to see it. I like looking over old houses."

"Like looking over old houses? As if it were merely a show! Isn't Brackenhill more to you than any other old house?" demanded Mr. Thorne.

"Oh! well, perhaps," Percival allowed; "I have heard my father talk of it, of course."

"Come, come! You are not such an outsider as all that," said his grandfather.

The young man smiled a little, but did not speak.

"You don't forget you are a Thorne, I hope," the other went on. "There are none too many of us."

"No," said Percival. "I like the old house, and I can assure you, sir, that I am proud of both my names."

"Well, well; very good names. But shouldn't you call a man a lucky fellow if he owned a place like this?"

"My opinion wouldn't be half as well worth having as yours," was the reply. "What do you call yourself, sir?"

"Do you think I own this place?" Mr. Thorne inquired.

"Why, yes; I always supposed so. Don't you?"

"No, I don't!" The answer was almost a snarl. "I'm bailiff, overlooker, anything you like to call it. My master is at Oxford, at Christ Church. He won't read, and he can't row, so he is devoting his time to learning how to get rid of the money I am to save up for him. I own Brackenhill?" He faced abruptly round. "All that timber is mine, they say. And if I cut down a stick your Aunt Middleton is at me—'think of Horace.' The place was mortgaged when I came into it. I pinched and saved—I freed it—for Horace. Why shouldn't I mortgage it again if I please; raise money and live royally till my time comes, eh? They'd all be at me, dinning 'Horace, Horace,' and my duty to those who come after me, into my ears. Look at the drawing-room furniture!"

"The prettiest old room I ever saw," said Percival.

"Ah! you're right there. But my sister doesn't think so. It's shabby, she would tell you. But does she ask me to furnish it for her? No, no, it isn't worth while; mine is such a short lease. When Horace marries and comes into his inheritance of course it must be done up. It would be a pity to waste money about it now, especially as there's a bit

of land lies between two farms of mine, and if I don't go spending a lot in follies, I can buy it—think of that! I can buy it—for *Horace!*"

Percival was guarded in his replies to this and similar outbursts; and Mrs. Middleton, seeing that he showed no disposition to toady his grandfather, or to depreciate Horace, told Godfrey Hammond that, though her brother was so absurd about him, she thought he seemed a good sort of young man after all. "Time will show," was the answer. Now this was depressing, for Godfrey had established a reputation for great sagacity.



W. H. W. S.

FOR THE SPACE OF A LIGHTNING FLASH THEIR EYES MET.

THE

CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

OCTOBER, 1877.

"For Percival."

CHAPTER IV.

WISHING WELL AND ILL.



LOTTIE'S birthday had dawned, the fresh morning hours had slipped away, the sun had declined from his mid-day splendour into golden afternoon, and yet to Lottie herself the day seemed scarcely yet begun. Its crowning delight was to be a dance given in her honour, and she awaited that dance with feverish anxiety.

It was nearly three o'clock when the dog-cart from Brackenhill came swiftly along the dusty road. It was nearing its destination; already there were distant glimpses of Fordborough with its white suburban villas. Percival Thorne thoroughly enjoyed the bright June weather, the cloudless blue, the clear singing of the birds, the whisper of the leaves, the universal sweetness from far-off fields and blossoms near at hand. He gazed at the landscape with eyes that seemed to be looking at something far away, and yet they were observant enough to note a figure crossing a neighbouring field. It was but a momentary vision, and the expression of his face did not vary in the slightest degree, but he turned to the man at his side, and spoke in his leisurely fashion. "I'll get down

here, and walk the rest of the way. You may take my things to Mr Hardwicke's."

The man took the reins, but he looked round in some wonder, as if seeking the cause of the order. His curiosity was unsatisfied. The slim girlish figure had vanished behind a clump of trees, and nothing was visible that could in any way account for so sudden a change of purpose. Glancing back as he drove off, he saw only Mr. Percival Thorne, darkly conspicuous on the glaring road, standing where he had alighted, and apparently lost in thought. The roan horse turned a corner, the sound of wheels died away in the distance, and Percival walked a few steps in the direction of Brackenhill, reached a stile, leaned against it and waited.

"Many happy returns of the day to you!" he said, as the girl, whom he had seen, came along the field-path. Light leafy shadows wavered on her as she walked, and, all unconscious of his presence, she was softly whistling an old tune.

The colour rushed to her face, and she stopped short. "Percival! You here?" she said.

"Yes—did I startle you? I was driving into the town, and saw you in the distance. I could not do less—could I?—than stop then and there to pay my respects to the queen of the day. And what a glorious day it is!"

Lottie sprang over the stile, and looked up and down the road. "Oh, you are going to walk?" she said.

"I'm going to walk—yes. But what brings you here, wandering about the fields to-day?"

She had recovered her composure, and looked up at him with laughing eyes. "It is wretched indoors. They are so busy fussing over things for to-night, you know."

"Exactly what I thought you would be doing too."

"I? Oh, mamma said I wasn't a bit of use, and Addie said that I was more than enough to drive Job out of his mind. The fact was I upset one of her flower vases. And afterwards—well, afterwards—I broke a big china bowl."

"I begin to understand," said Percival thoughtfully, "that they might feel able to get on without your help."

"Yes, perhaps they might. But they needn't have made such a noise about the thing—as if nobody could enjoy the dance to-night because a china bowl was smashed! Such rubbish! What could it matter?"

"Was it something unique?"

"Oh, it was worse than that," she answered frankly. "It was one of a set. But I don't see why one can't be just as happy without a complete set of everything."

"There I agree with you," he replied. "I certainly can't say that my happiness is bound up with crockery of any kind. And, do you know, Lottie, I'm rather glad it was one of a set. Otherwise your

mother might have known that there was something magical about it, but one of a set is prosaic—isn't it? Suppose it had been a case of

“If this glass doth fall
Farewell then, O Luck of Edenhall!”

“Well, the luck would have been in uncommonly little bits,” she replied. “I smashed it on a stone step, and they were so cross that I was crosser, so I said I would come out for a walk.”

“And do you feel any better?” he asked in an anxious voice.

“Yes, thank you. Being in the open air has done me good.”

“Then may I go with you? Or will nothing short of solitude effect a complete cure?”

“You may come,” she said, gravely. “That is if you are not afraid of the remains of my ill-temper.”

“No—I'm not afraid. I don't make light of your anger, but I believe I'm naturally very brave. Where are we going?”

She hesitated a moment, then looked up at him. “Percival, isn't this the way to the wishing-well? Ever since we came to Fordborough, three months ago, I've wanted to go there. Do you know where it is?”

“Oh yes, I know it. It is about a mile from here, or perhaps a little more. That won't be too far for you, will it?”

“Too far!” She laughed outright. “Why, I could walk ten times as far, and dance all night afterwards!”

“Then we'll go,” said Percival. And, crossing the road, they passed into the fields on the opposite side. A pathway, too narrow for two to walk abreast, led them through a wide sea of corn, where the flying breezes were betrayed by delicate tremulous waves. Lottie led the way, putting out her hand, from time to time, as she went, and brushing the bloom from the softly swaying wheat. She was silent. Fate had befriended her strangely in this walk. The loneliness of the sunlit fields was far better for her purpose than the crowd and laughter of the evening, but her heart almost failed her, and, with childish superstition, she resolved that she would not speak the words which trembled on her lips, until she and Percival should have drunk together of the wishing-well. He followed her, silent too. He was well satisfied to be with his beautiful school-girl friend, free to speak or hold his peace as he chose. Freedom was the great charm of his friendship with Lottie, freedom from restraint and responsibility. For if Percival was serenely happy and assured on any single point, he was so with regard to his perfect comprehension of the Blakes in general, and Lottie in particular. He had some idea of giving his cousin Horace a word of warning on the subject of Mrs. Blake's designs. He quite understood that good lady's feelings concerning himself. “I'm nobody,” he thought. “I'm not to be thrown over because I introduced Horace to them; besides, I'm an additional link between Fordborough and Brackenhill, and Mrs. Blake would give her ears to know Aunt Middleton. And I am no trouble so long as I am

satisfied to amuse myself with Lottie. In fact, I am rather useful. I keep the child out of mischief, and I don't give her black eyes as that Wingfield boy did." And from this point Percival would glide into vague speculation as to Lottie's future. He was inclined to think that the girl would do something, and be something—when she grew up. She was vehement, resolute, ambitious. He wondered idly, and a little sentimentally, whether hereafter, when their paths had diverged for ever, she would look back kindly to these tranquil days, and her old friend Percival. He rather thought not. She would have enough to occupy her without that.

It was true, after a fashion, that Lottie was ambitious in her dreams of love. Her lover must be heroic, handsome, a gentleman by birth, with something of romance about his story. A noble poverty might be more fascinating than wealth. There was but one thing absolutely needful—he must not be commonplace. It was the towering yet unsubstantial ambition of her age, a vision of impossible splendour and happiness. Most girls have such dreams; most women find at six or seven and twenty that their enchanted castles in the air have shrunk to brick and mortar houses. Tastes change, and they might even be somewhat embarrassed were they called on to play their parts in the passionate love-poems which they dreamed at seventeen. But the world was just opening before Lottie's eyes, and she was ready to be a heroine of romance.

"This way," said Percival, and they turned into a narrow lane, deep and cool, with green banks overgrown with ferns, and arching boughs above. As they strolled along he gathered pale honeysuckle blossoms from the hedge, and gave them to Lottie. "How pretty it is!" said the girl, looking round.

"Wait till you see the well," he replied. "We shall be there directly—it is prettier there."

"But this is pretty too—why should I wait?" said Lottie.

"You are right. I don't know why you should. Admire both; you are wiser than I, Lottie."

As he spoke the lane widened into a grassy glade, and Lottie quickened her steps, uttering a cry of pleasure. Percival followed her, with a smile on his lips. "Here is your wishing-well," he said. "Do you like it now that you have found it out?"

She might well have been satisfied, even if she had been harder to please. It was a spring of the fairest water, bubbling into a tiny hollow. The little pool was like a brimming cup, with coloured pebbles, and dancing sand at the bottom, and delicate leaf-sprays clustered lightly round its rim. And this gem of sparkling water was set in a space of mossy sward, with trees which leant and whispered overhead, their quivering canopy pierced here and there by golden shafts of sunlight, and glimpses of far-off blue.

"It is like fairy-land," said Lottie.

"Or like something in Keats' poems," Percival suggested.

"I never read a line of them, so I can't say," she answered with defiant candour, while she inwardly resolved to get the book.

He smiled. "You don't read much poetry yet, do you? Ah, well, you have time enough. How about wishing, now we are here?" he went on, stooping to look into the well. "Your wishes ought to have a double virtue on your birthday."

"I only hope they may."

"What—have you decided on something very important? Seventeen to-day! Lottie, don't wish to be eighteen—that will come much too soon without wishing."

"I don't want to be eighteen. I think seventeen is old enough," she answered dreamily.

"So do I." He was thinking, as he spoke, what a charming childish age it was, and how, before he knew Lottie, he had fancied, from books, that girls were grown-up at seventeen.

"Now I am going to wish," she said, seriously, "and you must wish after me." Bending over the pool, she looked earnestly into it, took water in the hollow of her hand, and drank. Then, standing back she made a sign to her companion. He stepped forward, and saying, with a bright glance, "My wishes must be for you to-day, Queen Lottie," he followed her example. But when he looked up, shaking the cold drops from his hand, he was struck by the intense expression on her downward-bent face. "What has the child been wishing?" he wondered, and an idea flashed suddenly into his mind which almost made him smile. "By Jove!" he said to himself, "there will be a fiery passion one of these fine days—when Lottie falls in love!" But even as he thought this the look which had startled him was gone. "We needn't go back directly, need we?" she said. "Let us rest a little while."

"By all means," Percival replied. "I'm quite ready to rest as long as you like—I consider resting my strong point. What do you say to this bank? Or there is a fallen tree just across there——"

"No—Percival, listen! There are some horrid people coming—let us go on a little further, out of their way."

He listened. "Yes, there are some people coming. Very likely they are horrid—though we have no fact to go upon, except their desire to find the wishing-well—at any rate, we don't want them. Lottie, you are right—let us fly!"

They escaped from the glade at the further end, passed through a gate into a field, and found themselves once more in the broad sunlight.

They paused for a moment, dazzled, and uncertain which way to go. "Why did those people come and turn us out?" said Thorne, regretfully.

A shrill scream of laughter rang through the shade which they had just left. "What shall we do now?"

"I don't mind, I like this sunshine," said Lottie. "Percival, don't you think there would be a view up there?"

"Up there" was a grassy little eminence which rose rather abruptly in the midst of the neighbouring fields. It was parted from the place where they stood by a couple of meadows.

"I should think there might be."

"Then let us go there. When I see a hill I always feel as if I must get to the top of it."

"I've no objection to that feeling in the present case, as the hill happens to be a very little one," Percival replied. "And the shepherds and shepherdesses in our Arcadia are unpleasantly noisy. But I don't see any gate into the next field."

"Who wants a gate? There's a gap by that old stump."

"And you don't mind this ditch? It isn't very wide," he said, as he stood on the bank.

"No, I don't mind it." He held out his hand, she laid hers on it, and sprang lightly across, with a word of thanks. A few months earlier she would have scorned Cock Robin's assistance, had the ditch been twice as wide, as that day she would have scorned any assistance but Percival's. It was well that she did not need help, for his outstretched hand, firm as it was, gave her little. It rather sent a tremulous thrill through her as she touched it, that was more likely to make her falter than succeed. She was not vexed that he relapsed into silence as they went on their way. In her eyes his aspect was darkly thoughtful and heroic. As she walked by his side the low grass fields became enchanted meads, and the poor little flowers bloomed like poets' asphodel. A lark sang overhead as never bird sang before, and the breeze was sweet with memories of blossom. When they stood on the summit of the little hill, the view was fair as Paradise. A big grey stone lay among the tufts of bracken, as if a giant hand had tossed it there in sport. Lottie sat down, leaning against it, and Percival threw himself on the grass at her feet.

She was nerving herself to overcome an unwonted feeling of timidity. She had dreamed of this birthday with childish eagerness. Her fancy had made it the portal of a world of unknown delights. She grew sick with fear, lest through her weakness, or any mischance, the golden hours should glide by, and no golden joy be secured before the night came on. Golden hours—were they not rather golden moments on the hillside with Percival? He loved her, she was sure of that, but he was poor, and would never speak. What could she say to him? She bent forward a little that she might see him better, as he lay stretched on the warm turf, unconscious of her eyes. Through his half-closed lids he watched the little grey-blue butterflies which flickered round him in the sunny air, emerging from, or melting into, the eternal vault of blue.

"Percival!"

She had spoken, and ended the long silence. She almost fancied that her voice shook and sounded strange, but he did not seem to notice it. "Yes?" he said, and turned his face to her, the face that was the whole world to Lottie.

"Percival, is it true that your father was the eldest son, and that you ought to be the heir?"

He opened his eyes a little at the breathless question. Then he laughed. "I might have known that you could not live three months in Fordborough without hearing something of that."

"It is true, then? Mayn't I know?"

"Certainly." He raised himself on his elbow. "But there is no injustice in the matter, Lottie. The eldest son died, and my father was the second. He wanted to have his own way, as we most of us do, and he gave up his expectations and had it. He did it with his eyes open, and it was a fair bargain."

"He sold his birthright, like Esau? Well, that might be quite right for him, but isn't it rather hard on you?"

"Not at all," he answered promptly. "I never counted on it, and therefore I am not disappointed. Why should I complain of not having what I did not expect to have? Shall I feel very hardly used, when the Archbishopric of Canterbury falls vacant, and they pass me over?"

"But your father shouldn't have given up your rights," the girl persisted.

"Why, Lottie," he said with a smile; "it was before I was born. And I'm not so sure about my rights. I don't know that I have any particular rights or wrongs." There was a pause, and then he looked up. "Suppose the birthright had been Jacob's, and he had thrown it away for Rachel's sake—would you have blamed him?"

"No!" said Lottie, with kindling eyes.

"Then Jacob and Rachel's son is not hardly used, and has no cause to complain of his lot," Percival concluded, sinking back lazily.

Lottie was silent for a moment. Then she apparently changed the subject.

"Do you remember that day Mrs. Pickering called, and talked about William?"

"Oh yes—I remember. I scandalized the old lady, didn't I? Lottie, I'm half afraid I scandalized your mother into the bargain."

"I've been thinking about what you said," Lottie went on very seriously, "about being idle all your life."

"Ah!" said Percival, drawing a long breath. "You are going to lecture me? Well, I don't know why I should be surprised. Everyone lectures me—they don't like it, but feel it to be their duty. I daresay Addie will begin this evening." He was amused at the idea of a reproof from Lottie, and settled his smooth cheek comfortably on his sleeve that he might listen at his ease. "Go on," he said; "it's very kind of you, and I'm quite ready."

"Suppose I'm not going to lecture you," said Lottie.

"Why, that's still kinder. What then?"

"Suppose I think you are right."

"Do you?"

"Yes," she answered simply. "William Pickering may spend his life scraping pounds and pence together. Men who can't do anything else may as well do that, for it *is* nice to be rich. But if you have enough, why should you spend your time over it—the best years of your life which will never come back?"

"Never!" said Percival. "You are right."

There was a long pause. Lottie pulled a bit of fern, and looked at him again. There was a line between his dark brows, as if he were pursuing some thought which her words had suggested, but he held his head down, and was silent. She threw the fern away, and pressed her hands together.

"But, Percival, you do care for money, after all. You set it above everything else, as they all do, only in a different way. You are right in what you say, but they are more honest, for they say and do alike."

"Do I care for money? Lottie, it's the first time I have ever been charged with that!"

"Because you talk as if you didn't. But you do. Why did you say you would never marry an heiress! The colour went right up to the roots of your hair when they talked about it, and you said it would be contemptible—that was the word—contemptible. Then I suppose if you cared for her, and she loved you with all her heart and soul, you would go away, and leave her to hate the world, and herself, and you, just because she happened to have a little money! And you say you don't care about it!"

"Lottie, you don't know what you are talking about." His eyes were fixed on the turf. She had called up a vision in which she had no part. "You don't understand," he began——

"It is you who don't understand," she answered desperately. "You men judge girls—I don't know how you judge them, not by themselves, by their worldly-wise mammas, perhaps. Do you fancy we are always counting what money men have, or what we have? It's you who think so much about it. O Percival!" the strong voice softened to sudden tenderness, "do you think I care a straw about what I shall have one day?"

"Good God!" Percival looked up, and for the space of a lightning flash their eyes met. In hers he read enough to show him how blind he had been. In his she read astonishment, horror, repulsion.

Repulsion—she read it, but it was not there. To her dying day, Lottie will believe that she saw it in his eyes. Did she not feel an icy stab of pain when she recognised it? Never was she more sure of her own existence than she was sure of this. And yet it was not there. She had suddenly roused him from a dream, and he was bewildered, shocked—sorry for his girl-friend, and bitterly remorseful for himself.

Lottie knew that she had made a terrible mistake, and that Percival did not love her. There was a rushing, as of water, in her ears, a black mist swaying before her eyes. But in a moment all that was over, and

she could look round again. The sunlit world glared horribly, as if it understood, and pressed round her with a million eyes to mock her burning shame.

"No—I never thought you cared for money," said Percival, trying to seem unconscious of that lightning glance with all its revelations. He had not the restless fingers so many men have, and could sit contentedly without moving a muscle. But now he was plucking nervously at the turf as he spoke.

"What does it matter?" said Lottie. "I shall come to care for it one of these days, I daresay."

He did not answer. What could he say? He was cursing his blind folly. Poor child! Why, she *was* only a child, after all—a beautiful, headstrong, wilful child, and it was not a year since he met her in the woods, with torn frock and tangled hair, her long hands bleeding from bramble scratches, and her lips stained with autumn berries. How fiercely and shyly she looked at him with her shining eyes! He remembered how she stopped abruptly in her talk and answered him in monosyllables, and how, when he left the trio, the clear, boyish voice broke instantly into a flood of happy speech. As he lay there now, staring at the turf, he could see his red-capped vision of Liberty as plainly as if he stood on the woodland walk again with the September leaves above him. He felt a rush of tender, brotherly pity for the poor mistaken child—"brotherly" in default of a better word. Probably a brother would have been more keenly alive to the forward folly of Lottie's conduct. Percival would have liked to hold out his hand to the girl, to close it round hers in a tight grasp of fellowship and sympathy, and convey to her, in some better way than the clumsy utterance of words, that he asked her pardon for the wrong he had unconsciously done her, and besought her to be his friend and comrade for ever. But he could not do anything of the kind; he dared not even look up, lest a glance should scorch her as she quivered in her humiliation. He ended as he began, by cursing the serene certainty that all was so harmless and so perfectly understood, which had blinded his eyes, and brought him to this!

And Lottie? She hardly knew what she thought. A wild dream of a desert island in tropic seas, with palms towering in the hot air, and snow-white surf dashing on the coral shore, and herself and Cock Robin parted from all the world by endless leagues of ocean, flitted before her eyes. But that was impossible, absurd.

He was laughing at her, no doubt; scorning her in his heart. Oh, why had she been so mad? Suppose a thunderbolt were to fall from the blue sky and crush him into eternal silence, as he lay at her feet, pulling his little blades of grass. No! Lottie did not wish that—the thought was hideous. Yet had not such a wish had a momentary life as she stared at the hot blue sky? Was it written there, or wandering in the air, or uttered in the busy humming of the flies, so that as she gazed and listened she became conscious of its purport? Surely she never

wished it. Why could not the grey rock, against which she leaned, totter and fall and bury her for ever, hiding her body from sight while her spirit fled from Percival? Yet even that was not enough—they might meet in some hereafter. Lottie longed for annihilation in that moment of despair.

This could not last. It passed, as the first faintness had done, and with an aching sense of shame and soreness (almost worse to bear because there was no exaltation in it) she came back to everyday life. She pushed her hair from her forehead, and got up. "I suppose you are not going to stay here all day," she said.

Percival stretched himself with an air of indolent carelessness. "No, I suppose not. Do you think duty calls us to go back at once?"

"It is getting late," was her curt reply, and he rose without another word.

She was grave and quiet, if anything she was more self-possessed than he was, only she never looked at him. Perhaps if he could have made her understand what was in his heart, when first he realized the meaning of her hasty words, she might have grasped the friendly hand he longed to hold out to her. But not now. Her face had hardened strangely as if it were cut in stone. They went down the hill in silence; Percival appearing greatly interested in the landscape. As they crossed the level meadows Lottie looked round with a queer fancy that she might meet the other Lottie there, the girl who had crossed them an hour before. At the ditch Thorne held out his hand again. She half turned, looked straight into his eyes with a passionate glance of hatred, and sprang across, leaving him to follow.

He rejoined her as she reached the glade. While they had been on the hill the sun had sunk below the arching boughs, and half the beauty of the scene was gone. The noisy picnic party had unpacked their hampers, the turf was littered with paper and straw, and a driver stood in a central position, with his head thrown back, drinking beer from a bottle. Lottie went straight to the well, and took another draught.

"Two wishes in one day?" said Percival.

"Second thoughts are best," she answered, turning coldly away. "Is there no other way home? I hate walking the same way twice."

"There is the road; I'm afraid it may be hot, but it would be a change."

"I should prefer the road," she said.

That walk seemed interminable to Percival Thorne. He was ready to believe that the road lengthened itself, in sheer spite, to leagues of arid dust, and that every familiar landmark fled before him. At last, however, they approached a point where two ways diverged—the one leading straight into the old town, while the other, wide and trimly kept, passed between many bright new villas and gardens. At that corner they might part. But before they reached it a slim, grey-clad figure appeared from the suburban road, and strolled leisurely towards them,

Percival looked, looked again, shaded his eyes and looked: "Why, it's Horace!" he exclaimed.

Lottie made no reply, but she awoke from her sullen musing, a light flashed into her eyes, and she quickened her pace towards the man who should deliver her from her *tête-à-tête* with Percival.

CHAPTER V.

WHY NOT LOTTIE?

PERCIVAL advanced to meet his cousin. "You here, Horace?" he said.

"So it seems," the other replied, in a voice which sounded exactly as if Percival had answered his own question.

The two young men were wonderfully alike, though hardly one person in a hundred could see it. They were exactly the same height, their features were similar, they walked across the room in precisely the same way, and unconsciously reproduced each other's tricks of manner with singular fidelity. Yet any remark on this resemblance would almost certainly encounter a wondering stare, and "Oh, do you think so? Well, I must confess I can't see much likeness myself;" the fact being that the similarity was in form and gait, while both colour and expression differed greatly. Horace's hair had the same strong waves as Percival's, but it was chestnut brown, his eyes were a clear light grey, his complexion showed a fatal delicacy of white and red. His expression was more varying, his smile was readier, and his glance more restless.

He had once taken a college friend, whose hobby was photography, to Brackenhill. Young Felton arrived with all his apparatus, and photographed the whole household with such inordinate demands on their time, and such atrocious results, that everyone fled from him in horror. Horace was the most patient of his victims, and Felton declared that he *would* have a good one of Thorne. But even Horace was tired out at last, and said, very mildly, that he didn't particularly care for the smell of the stuff, and he was afraid his portraits wouldn't help him to a situation if ever he wanted one—apply, stating terms and enclosing carte. That he thought it uncommonly kind of Felton to take so much trouble, but if ever he let him try again, he'd be——Sissy was there, and the sentence which had been said over his shoulder, as he leaned out of the window, ended in a puff of smoke up into the blue. Felton begged for one more, and persuaded Sissy to be his advocate. "I've an idea that something will come of it," said the hapless photographer. Horace yielded at last, and sat down, grimly resolute that he would yield no more. Something *did* come of it. Felton got it very much too dark, and the result was a tolerable photograph and a startling likeness of Percival.

The incident caused some little amusement at Brackenhill, and visitors

were duly puzzled with the portrait. But it was not long remembered, and people dropped into their former habit of thinking that there was but a slight resemblance between the cousins. Only Percival carried off the photograph, and was interested for a week or two in questions of doubtful identity, looking up a few old cases of mysterious claimants, and speculating as to the value of the testimony for and against them.

Horace shook hands with Lottie, and uttered his neatly-worded birthday wishes. Her answer was indistinctly murmured, but she looked up at him, and he paused, struck as by something novel and splendid, when he encountered the dark fire of her eyes. "I left them wondering what had become of you," he said. "They thought you were wandering about alone somewhere, and had lost yourself."

"Instead of which we met on the road, didn't we?" said Percival.

"Yes," she answered, indifferently. "And you came to look for me?"

"Of course. I was on my way to hunt up the town crier, and to make our loss known to the police. In half an hour's time we should have been dragging all the ponds."

"I think I'd better go and set mamma's anxious mind at rest," said Lottie, with a short laugh, "Good-bye for the present." She was gone in a moment, leaving the young men standing in the middle of the road. Horace made a movement as if to follow her, then checked himself, and looked at his cousin.

Percival made haste to speak. "So you have come down for the birthday party, too? Where are you staying?"

"Oh, the Blakes find me a bed. I'm off again to-morrow morning."

"You are now at Scarborough with my aunt. I have it on Sissy's authority."

"There's no occasion to disturb that faith," said Horace, lightly. "Are you going into the town? I'll walk a little way with you."

"You are not going to see them at Brackenhill before you leave?"

Horace shook his head. "Say nothing about me. Did you tell them where you were going?"

"No. I don't suppose they know of the Blakes' existence."

"So much the better. I'm not going to enlighten them."

They strolled on side by side, and for a minute neither spoke. Horace was chafing because it had occurred to him that afternoon that Mrs. Blake seemed rather to take his devotion to Addie for granted. His path was made too smooth and obvious, and it was evident that the prize might be had for the asking. Consequently, Master Horace, who was not at all sure that he wanted it, was irritable and inclined to swerve aside.

"Are not you playing a dangerous game?" said Percival. "Sooner or later someone will mention the fact of these visits to the squire, and there'll be a row."

"Well, then, there *must* be a row. It's uncommonly hard if I'm

never to speak to anyone without going to Brackenhill first to ask leave," said Horace, discontentedly. "How should you like it yourself?"

"Not at all."

"No more do I. I'm tired of being in leading-strings, and the long and short of it is that I mean to have my own way in this, at any rate."

"In *this*? Is this a matter of great importance, then? Horace, mind what you are after with the Blakes."

"You're a nice consistent sort of fellow," said Horace.

"Oh, you may call me what you like," Percival replied.

"Who introduced me to these people before they came to Fordborough? Who comes down to Brackenhill—the dullest hole now there's no shooting—because it's Lottie Blake's birthday? Whose name is a sort of household word here—Percival this, and Percival that?—Percival without any Thorne to it, mind."

"I plead guilty. What then?"

"What then? Why, I wish you to remark that *this* is your example, while your precept is——"

"Take care what you are about with the Blakes. Yes, old fellow, you'd better leave my example alone, and stick to the precept. My wisdom takes that form, I admit." He spoke with more meaning than Horace perceived.

"Well, thanks for your advice," said the young man, with a laugh. "Though I can't see any particular harm in my coming down to-day."

"No harm. Only remember that there is such a place as Brackenhill."

"The governor oughtn't to find fault with me since you're in the same boat. He never thinks you can do wrong."

"Never."

"You're a lucky fellow, to have only yourself to please."

"Very lucky," said Percival, drily. "Will you change places with me?"

"Change places? What do you mean?"

The other looked fixedly at him, and said in a pointed manner, "I fancy it might easily be managed—with Addie Blake's help."

The suggestion was unpleasant. Horace winced, and vented his displeasure in a random attack. "And why Addie, I should like to know? How can you tell it is Addie at all?"

"Who then?"

"Why not Lottie?" The words were uttered without a moment's thought, and might have been forgotten as soon as said. But Percival was taken by surprise, and a look of utter incredulity flashed across his face. Horace caught it and was piqued.

"Unless you understand her so well that you are sure that no one else has a chance. Of course, if that is the case——"

"Not at all!" Percival exclaimed. "It's not for me to pretend to understand Lottie—I'm not such a fool as that!"

"All the same," Horace said to himself, "you think you understand her better than I do, and you don't believe I should have a chance if I tried to cut you out. Well, Mr. Percy, you may be right; but, on the other hand, you *may* be mistaken." And, as he walked back to the Blakes, Horace hurriedly resolved to teach his cousin that he was not to consider Lottie his exclusive property. He knew the folly of such a proceeding, but who was ever hindered from obeying the dictates of wounded vanity by the certainty that he had much better not?

Percival sincerely wished the evening over. He dared not stay away, lest his absence should provoke comments, but he feared some childish outbreak of petulance on Lottie's part. When he saw her he was startled by her beauty. Her cheeks were flushed, and her eyes were full of brilliant meaning. She cast a defiant glance at him as she went by. She was burning with shame, and maddened by the cruel injustice of her fate. A white light seemed to have poured in upon her, and she found it incredible that she could ever have felt, or acted, as she had felt and acted that afternoon. She said to herself that she might as well have been punished for her conduct in a dream.

Percival plucked up courage enough to go and ask her to dance. He was distressed and pitiful, and longing to "make amends, and stood before her like the humblest of suitors. She assented coolly enough. No one saw that there was anything amiss, though he was quick to remark that she gave him only square dances. No more waltzes with Lottie for him. But Horace had one, and, when it was over, he leaned almost exhausted against the wall, while Lottie stood by his side and fanned herself. The fan seemed to throb in unison with her strong pulses, quickened by the dance, and slackening as she rested.

"That was splendid," said Horace, with breathless brevity. "Best waltz I ever had."

"Ah?" said Lottie, turning towards him. "Suppose Addie heard that, Mr. Thorne?"

They looked straight into each other's eyes, and Horace felt a strange thrill run through him. He evaded her question with a laugh. "Why do you call me Mr. Thorne?" he asked. "If you call that fellow by his Christian name, why not me? Mine isn't such a mouthful as Percival—try it."

"We knew him first, you see," Lottie replied, with much innocence.

"As if that had anything to do with it! If you had known my grandfather first, I suppose you would have called him Godfrey?"

"Perhaps he wouldn't have asked me," said Lottie.

Horace smiled. "Well, perhaps he wouldn't. He isn't much given to making such requests, certainly. But I do ask you. Look!" he exclaimed, with sudden animation, "there's Mrs. Blake taking that dried-up little woman—what's her name?—to the piano. I may have the next dance, I hope?"

"How many more things are you going to ask for all at once?" The

bright fan kept up its regular come and go, and Lottie's eyes were very arch above it. "I'm sure you don't take after your grandfather."

"Believe me," said Horace, "you would be awfully bored if I did. But you haven't given me an answer. This dance?"

"I've promised it to Mr. Hardwicke. Adieu, *Horace!*" And before he could utter a syllable she was across the room, standing by the little spinster who was going to play, and helping her to undo a clashing bracelet of malachite and silver, which hung on her bony wrist. Horace, gazing after her, felt a hand on his shoulder, and looked round.

"I'm off when this dance is over," said Percival, who seemed weary and depressed. "You still wish me not to say that I have seen you?"

Horace nodded. "I shall be at Scarborough again to-morrow night. There's no occasion to say anything."

"All right. You know best."

"Who can tell what may happen?" said Horace. "Why should one be in a hurry to do anything unpleasant? Put it off, and you may escape it altogether. For instance, the governor may change all at once, as people do in tracts and Christmas books. I don't say it's likely, but I feel that I ought to give him the chance."

"Very good," said Percival, and he strolled away. Horace noted his preoccupied look with a half-smile, but after a moment his thoughts and eyes went back to Lottie Blake, and he forgot all about his cousin and Brackenhill.

CHAPTER VI.

H E R N A M E.

Most country towns have some great event which marks the year, or some peculiarity which distinguishes them from their neighbours. This one has its annual ball, that its races, another its volunteer reviews. One seems to relish no amusement which has not a semi-religious flavour, and excels in school feasts, choir festivals, and bazaars. Some places only wake up on the fifth of November, and some are devoted to amateur theatricals. Fordborough had its agricultural show.

Crowds flocked to it, not because they cared for fat cattle, steam ploughs, and big vegetables, but because everybody was to be seen there. You stared at the prize pig side by side with the head of one of the great county families, who had a faint idea that he had been introduced to you somewhere (was it at the last election?), and politely entered into conversation with you on the chance. You might perhaps suspect that his remembrance of you was not very clear, when you reflected afterwards that he

asked after my wife, who is dead, and my children who never were born;

but at any rate he meant to be civil, and people who saw you talking together would not know what he said. Or you might find the old friend

you had not seen for years, gold eye-glass in hand, peering at a plate of potatoes. Or you were young, and there was a girl—no, *the* girl—the one girl in all the world—bewitchingly dressed, a miracle of beauty, looking at Jones's patent root-pulper. You lived for months on the remembrance of the words you exchanged by a friendly, though rather deafening, threshing-machine, when her mamma (who never liked you) marched serenely on, unconscious that Edith was lingering behind. Then there was the flower-show, where a band from the nearest garrison town played the last new waltzes, and people walked about and looked at everything except the flowers. Fordborough was decked with flags and garlands, and appropriate sentiments on the subject of agriculture, in evergreen letters stitched on calico, were lavishly displayed. Everyone, who possessed anything beyond a wheel-barrow, got into it and drove about, the bells clashed wildly in the steeple, and everything was exceedingly merry—if it didn't rain.

People in that part of the world always filled their houses with guests when the time for the show came round. Even at Brackenhill, though the squire said he was too old for visitors, he made a point of inviting Godfrey Hammond, while Mrs. Middleton, as soon as the day was fixed, sent off a little note to Horace. It was taken for granted that Horace would come. Aunt Harriet considered his invariable presence with them on that occasion as a public acknowledgment of his position at Brackenhill. But the day was gone by when Mr. Thorne delighted to parade his grandson round the field, showing off the slim handsome lad, and proving to the county that, with his heir by his side, he could defy the son who had defied him. Matters were changed since then. The county had, as it were, accepted Horace. The quarrel was five-and-twenty years old, and had lost its savour. It was tacitly assumed that Alfred had, in some undefined way, behaved very badly, that he had been very properly put on one side, and that in the natural course of things Horace would succeed his grandfather, and was a nice, gentlemanly young fellow. Mr. Thorne had only to stick to what he had done, to ensure the approval of society.

But people did not want, and did not understand, the foreign-looking young man with the olive complexion and sombre eyes, who had begun of late years to come and go about Brackenhill, and who was said to be able to turn old Thorne round his finger. This was not mere rumour. The squire's own sister complained of his infatuation. It is true that she also declared that she believed the new-comer to be a very good young fellow, but the complaint was accepted, and the addition smiled away. "It is easy to see what her good young man wants there," said her friends, and there was a general impression that it was a shame. Opinions concerning the probable result varied, and people offered airily to bet on Horace or Percival as their calculations inclined them. The majority thought that old Thorne could never have the face to veer round again; but there was the possibility on Percival's side that his

grandfather might die intestate, and, with so capricious and unaccountable a man, it did not seem altogether improbable. "Then," as people sagely remarked, "this fellow would inherit—that is, if Alfred's marriage was all right." No one had any fault, except of a negative kind, to find with Percival, yet the majority of Mr. Thorne's old friends were inclined to dislike him. He did not hunt, nor go to races; he cared little for horses and dogs. No one understood him. He was indolent and sweet-tempered, and he was supposed to be satirical and scheming. What could his grandfather see in him to prefer him to Horace? Percival would have answered with a smile, "I am not his heir."

Mr. Thorne was happy this July, his boy having come to Brackenhill for a few days which would include the show.

It was the evening before, and they were all assembled. Horace, coffee-cup in hand, leant in his favourite attitude against the chimney-piece. He was troubled and depressed, repulsed Mrs. Middleton's smiling attempts to draw him out, and added very little to the general conversation. "Sulky" was Mr. Thorne's verdict.

Percival was copying music for Sissy. She stood near him, bending forward to catch the full light of the lamp to aid her in picking up a dropped stitch in her aunt's knitting. Close by them sat Godfrey Hammond in an easy-chair.

He was a man of three or four-and-forty, by no means handsome, but very well satisfied with his good figure, and his keen, refined features. He wanted colour, his closely-cut hair was sandy, his eyes were of the palest grey, and his eyebrows faintly marked. He was slightly underhung, and did not attempt to hide the fact, wearing neither beard nor moustache. His face habitually wore a questioning expression.

Godfrey Hammond never lamented his want of good looks, but he bitterly regretted the youth which he had lost. His regret seemed somewhat premature. His fair complexion showed little trace of age; he had never known what illness was, and men ten or fifteen years younger might have envied him his slight active figure. But in truth the youth which he regretted was a dream. It was that legendary Golden Age which crowns the whole world with far-off flowers, and fills hearts with longings for its phantom loveliness. The present seemed to Hammond hopeless, commonplace, and cold, a dull procession of days tending downwards to the grave. He was thus far justified in his regrets, that if his youth were as full of beauty and enthusiasm as he imagined it, he was very old indeed.

"What band are they going to have to-morrow, Percival?" asked Sissy.

"I did hear, but I forget. Stay, they gave me a programme when I was at the bookseller's this afternoon." He thrust his hand into his pocket, and pulled out a handful of papers and letters. "It was a pink thing—I thought you would like it—what has become of it, I wonder?" As he turned the papers over, a photograph slipped out of its envelope. Sissy saw it.

"Percival, is that someone's carte? May I look?"

"What!" said Godfrey Hammond, sticking a glass in his eye, and peering short-sightedly. "Percy taking to carrying photographs about with him—wonders will never cease! What fair lady may it be? Come, man, let us have a look at her."

Percival coloured very slightly, and then, as it were, contradicted his blush by tossing the envelope and its contents across to Godfrey.

"No fair lady. Ask Sissy what she thinks of him."

"Why, it's young Lisle!" said Hammond. Mr. Thorne looked up with sudden interest.

Percival reclaimed the photograph. "Here, Sissy, what do you say? Should you like him for your album?"

"For my album? A man I never saw! Who is he?" Miss Langton inquired. "Oh! he's very handsome, though, isn't he?"

Percival saw his grandfather was looking. "It's Mr. Lisle's son," he said.

"And very handsome? Doesn't take after his father."

(Mr. Lisle had been Percival's guardian for the few months between his father's death and his majority. It had been a great grief to Mr. Thorne. Something which he said to his grandson when he first came to Brackenhill had been met by the rejoinder, very cool though perfectly respectful in tone, "But, sir, if Mr. Lisle does not disapprove——" The power-loving old man could not pardon Mr. Lisle for having an authority over Percival which should have belonged to him.)

He put on his spectacles to look at the photograph which Sissy brought. It was impossible to deny the beauty of the face, though the style was rather effeminate; the features were almost faultless.

"Is it like him?" said Sissy, looking up at young Thorne.

"Very like," he replied, "it doesn't flatter him at all, if that is what you mean; does it, Hammond?"

"Not at all."

"He used to sing in the choir of their church," Percival went on.

"They photographed him once in his surplice—a sort of ideal chorister. All the old ladies went into raptures, and said he looked like an angel."

"And the young ladies?" said Mrs. Middleton.

"Showed that they thought it."

"H'm!" said Mr. Thorne; "and where may this paragon be?"

"At Oxford."

"Going into the Church?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. Not that I ever heard; I don't fancy his tastes lie that way. He is very musical—probably that was why he joined the choir."

"I should say Lisle had money enough," said Godfrey Hammond; "he lives in very good style—if anything, a little too showy, perhaps. He won't want a profession. Most likely he will spend his life in think-

ing that one of these days he will do something wonderful, and convulse the musical world. Happy fellow!"

"But suppose he doesn't do it?" said Sissy.

"Happier fellow still! He will never have a doubt, and never know what failure is."

"Perhaps," she said, looking at the bright beautiful face, "it would be better if Mr. Lisle were poor."

"I doubt if he would appreciate the kindness which doomed him to poverty," smiled Hammond.

"But perhaps he would not only dream then of something great—he might do it," said Sissy. "That is, do you think he could really do anything great?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. Talent looks very big in a small room."

"Is he the only one?" Mrs. Middleton inquired of Percival.

"The only son; there is a daughter."

"A daughter! Is she as wonderful as her brother?" Sissy exclaimed.

"Have you got her photograph? What is she like?"

"I will tell you," said Godfrey Hammond, speaking very deliberately, in his high-pitched voice. "Miss Lisle is a very charming young lady. She is like her brother, but she is not so good-looking, and she is decidedly more masculine."

"Oh!" in a disdainful tone. Then, turning swiftly round, "But what do you say, Percival?"

He answered her, but he looked at Godfrey:

"Hardly a fair description; not so much a portrait as a caricature. Miss Lisle's features are not so perfect as her brother's; she would not attract the universal admiration which he does. But I think there could be no question that hers is the nobler face."

"She is fortunate in her champion," said Hammond. "It's all right, no doubt, and the fault is mine. I may not have so keen an eye for latent nobility."

"Stick to her brother, then, and let Miss Lisle alone," and Percival stooped over his copying again. Sissy came back to the table; but, as she passed the lonely figure by the chimney-piece, she spoke:

"You are very silent to-night, Horace."

"I don't seem to have much to say for myself, do I?"

She took up her knitting, and, after a moment, he came and stood by her. The light fell on his face. "And you don't look well," she said.

"There's not much amiss with me."

"I shall betray you," said Percival, as he ruled a line; "he coughed in the hall, Sissy; I heard him, three times."

"Oh, my dear boy! you should take more care," exclaimed Aunt Middleton; "I know you have been dreadfully ill."

"I was blissfully unconscious of it, then," said Horace. "It was nothing, and I'm all right, thank you. You are very busy, Sissy; what are you worrying about down there?"

He laid his hand caressingly on her shoulder. Percival and she acted brother and sister, sometimes; but with Horace, whose pet and playfellow she had been as a little child, it was much more like reality.

"Only a stitch gone."

"Well, let it go; you have lots without it."

"You silly boy, it isn't that. Don't you know it would run further and further, and ruin the whole work if it were not picked up at once?"

"You may not be aware of it," said Hammond, "but that sounds remarkably like a tract."

"Then I hope you'll all profit by it. Horace, do you hear? If ever you drop a stitch, be warned." She looked up as she said it, and something in his face made her fancy that he *had* dropped a stitch of some kind.

When she was saying good-night to Percival, Sissy asked abruptly, in a low voice, "What is Miss Lisle's name?"

He answered: "Judith."

CHAPTER VII.

JAEL, OR JUDITH, OR CHARLOTTE CORDAY.

SISSY, when she reached her room that night, drew up the blind, and stood looking out at the park, which was flooded with moonlight.

"It ought to be Percival's," she thought. "I should like Horace to have plenty of money, but the old house ought to be Percival's. He is so good—he screens Horace instead of thinking of himself. I do believe Horace is in some scrape now. And Aunt Middleton is always thinking about him, too; she won't let Uncle Thorne be just to Percival. Oh, it is a shame!

"If he had Brackenhill perhaps he would marry Miss Lisle. I wonder if he is in love with her. He spoke so coolly, not as if he were the least bit angry when Godfrey Hammond laughed at her. But he said she had a noble face.

"What did it remind me of when he said 'Judith?'" Sissy was perplexed for a few moments, and then their talk on the terrace a month before flashed into her mind. "Jael, or Judith, or Charlotte Corday," and she remembered the very intonation with which Percival had repeated "Judith." "Ah!" said the girl half-aloud, with a sudden intuition, "he was thinking of her when he talked of heroic women!

"Why wasn't I born noble and heroic as well as others? Is it my fault if I can't *bear* people to be angry with me, if I always stop and think and hesitate, and then the moment is gone? I couldn't have driven the nail in, like Jael, for fear there should be just time for him to look up at me. I should have thrown the hammer down, and died, I think. I wonder what made her able to do it; how she struck, and how she felt when the nail went crashing in! I wonder whether I *could* have done it if Sisera had hated Percival, if I knew he meant to kill him, if it had been Percival's life or his?"

Sissy proceeded to ponder the Biblical narrative (with this slight variation), but she came to no satisfactory decision. She inclined to the opinion that Sisera would have woken up, somehow. She could not imagine what she could possibly feel like when the deed was done, except that she was certain she should be afraid ever to be alone with herself again for one moment as long as she lived.

So she went back to the original question. "I daresay Miss Lisle is brave and calm, and horribly strong-minded—why wasn't I born the same as she was? Perhaps Percival would have cared for me then. He *did* say even I might find something I could die for; he didn't think I was quite a coward. Ah! if I could only show him I wasn't!"

She stood for a moment looking out.

"He may marry Miss Lisle if he likes, and—and I hope they'll be very happy indeed. But if ever I get a chance I'll do something—for Percival."

With which magnanimous determination Sissy went to bed; and if she did not have a nightmare tumult of Jael and Judith, nails and hammers, and murdered men, about her pillow as she slept, I can but think her fortunate. But her last thought was a happy one.

"Perhaps he doesn't care about her, after all!"

CHAPTER VIII.

"PERHAPS I'M LETTING SECRETS OUT."

FORDBOROUGH had a glorious day for the Agricultural Show. Not a cloud dimmed the brightness of the sky; a breath of warm wind stirred the flags from time to time, and all was going as merrily as possible. The dogs were all barking in their special division, the poultry were all cackling in theirs. People had looked at the animals, as in duty bound, and were now putting their catalogues in their pockets, and crowding into the flower-show.

The Brackenhill party were there. Mr. Thorne, his sister, Godfrey Hammond, and Miss Langton had come over in state behind the sleek chestnut horses, and the young men had arranged to follow in the dog-cart. At present the two divisions had not met—nay, showed no symptom of uniting, but rather of breaking up into three or four. Mrs. Middleton and Sissy had been walking about, encountering a bewildering number of acquaintances, and earnestly endeavouring to disseminate a knowledge of the fact that they considered it a beautiful day. Godfrey Hammond, their squire for some time, after arranging when he would meet them by the tent where the potatoes were, had taken himself off to look up some of the country gentlemen whom he met year after year when he came down to Brackenhill. There happened to be several squires of the old sort in the neighbourhood, and with these Godfrey Hammond

enjoyed a friendship based on mutual contempt. He laughed at them, and they knew it. They laughed at him, and he knew it; and each being convinced that his cause for scorn was the one well founded, they all got on delightfully together. Mr. Thorne, meanwhile, was strolling round the field, halting to talk from time to time, but fettered by no companionship.

He was presently pounced on by Mrs. Rawlinson, a fair, flushed beauty of two-and-forty, with a daughter of fifteen. People with a turn for compliment always supposed that this daughter was Mrs. Rawlinson's sister, and when that assumption was negatived, there had once been a prompt reply, "Oh, your *step*-daughter you mean!" (The man who invented that last refinement of politeness was welcome to dine at the Rawlinsons' whenever he liked, and, the dinners being good, he was to be met there about twice a week.)

She came down upon Mr. Thorne like a bright blue avalanche. "Ah!" she said, having shaken hands with him, "I saw what you were doing! Now, do you agree with Mr. Horace Thorne in his taste? Oh, it's no use denying it; I saw you were looking at the beautiful Miss Blake."

"It is very possible." Mr. Thorne replied; "only I didn't know of her existence."

"Oh, how severe you are! I suppose you mean you don't admire that style? Well, now you mention it, perhaps——"

"I simply mean what I say. I was not aware that there was a Miss Blake on the ground to-day."

"Well, I *am* surprised! You *are* in the dark! Do you see those tall girls in black and white, close by their mother, that fine woman in green?"

"Perfectly. And which is the beautiful Miss Blake?"

"Oh!" with a little giggle. "Fancy! *Which* is the beautiful Miss Blake? Why, the elder one, of course—there! she is just looking round."

Mr. Thorne put up his eyeglass. "In—deed!" he said; "and who may Miss Blake be?"

"They have come to that pretty white house where old Miss Hayward lived. Mr. Blake was a relation of hers, and she left it to him. He has some sort of business in London—very rich, they say, and all the young men are after the daughters."

"Probably the daughters haven't the same opinion of the young men of the present day that I have," said Mr. Thorne; "so I needn't pity them."

"Fancy your not knowing anything about them! I *am* surprised!" Mrs. Rawlinson repeated. "Such friends of Mr. Horace Thorne's, too. Ah, by the way, you must mind what you say about the young men who are after them. He's quite a favourite there, I'm told."

"Perhaps Horace told you," the old gentleman suggested, with a

quiet smile; "the news sounds as if it might come from that authority."

"Oh, no; I think not. Anyone in Fordborough could tell you all about it. I suppose this summer—but dear me, here am I rattling on; perhaps I'm letting secrets out!"

"Not much of a secret if it is Fordborough talk," said Mr. Thorne, blandly. But something in the expression of his eyes made Mrs. Rawlinson feel that she was on dangerous ground, and at any rate she had said enough. She hurried off to greet a friend she saw in the distance.

Mr. Thorne was speedily joined by a neighbouring landowner. "I didn't know I should see you here to-day," he said to the newcomer. "I heard you were laid up."

Mr. Garnett cursed his gout, but declared himself better.

"Look here," said Thorne, laying his hand on the other's sleeve; "you know everyone. Who and what are these Blakes?"

"Bless me! you don't mean you don't know? Why, the name's up in every railway station in the United Kingdom. 'Patent British Corn-Flour'—that's the man. 'Delicious Pudding in Five Minutes'—you know the sort of thing. I don't know that he does much in it now. I suppose he has a share. Very rich, they say."

Mr. Thorne had withdrawn his hand, and was listening with the utmost composure. "Ah!" he said; "very rich. And so all these good Fordborough people are paying court to him."

"No," Garnett grinned, "they don't get the chance; don't see much of him. No loss. They pay court to the daughters; it does just as well, and it's a great deal pleasanter. Dear, dear! what a money-loving age it is! Nothing but trade, trade, trade. We shall see a duke behind the counter before long, if we go on at this rate. Gentlemen used to be more particular in our young days—eh, Thorne?"

Having said this he remembered that Thorne's son married the candle-maker's daughter. For a moment he was confounded, and then had to repress an inclination to laugh.

"Ah, it was a different world altogether," said Thorne, gliding dexterously away from the corn-flour and candles too. "There was a young fellow staying with us a little while ago who was wild about photography. If he didn't get just the right focus, the thing came out all wrong; he always made a mess of his groups. The focus was right for us in our young days, eh? Now we have to stand on one side, and come out all awry. No fault in the sun, you know."

"I don't care much about photographs," said Garnett. "All very well for the young folks, I dare say, but I shan't make a pretty picture on this side of doomsday!" And indeed it did not seem likely that he would. So he departed, grinning, to say to the next man he met: "What do you think I've been doing? Laughing about Blake's patent corn-flour to old Thorne—forgot the composite candles—did, upon my word! Said 'Gentlemen used to be more particular in our young days,'"

and the minute it was out of my mouth I remembered Jim and the candles! Fine girl she was, certainly. Poor old Thorne, he was terribly cut up at the time. It was grand to see the two old fellows meet, as good as a play. Thorne held out just the tips of his fingers—I believe he thought if he shook hands with old Benham he should smell of tallow for ever. Ever see Benham's monument? They ordered it down from town—man knew nothing of course, how should he? So he went and put some angels weeping, and an inverted torch, just like a bundle of candles—fact, by Jove! I went to have a look at it myself one day. Some of the Benhams were very sore about it. Dear, dear! I shouldn't think the old fellow can ever have had a quiet night there with that over him. Only, as he was covered up snugly first, perhaps he doesn't know," and Garnett, chuckling to himself at the idea, marched off to have a look at the prize pig.

Meanwhile the young Thornes had arrived, and came strolling round the field, a noticeable pair enough, tall, handsome, and well-dressed, walking side by side in all faith and friendliness, as they were not often to walk again. When people talked of them afterwards, a good many remembered how they looked on that day. Apparently Horace had resolved to throw off his trouble of the night before, and had succeeded. There was something almost defiant in the very brightness of his aspect, and the heat had flushed him a little, so that no one would have echoed Sissy's exclamation of "You don't look well." On the contrary, he was congratulated on his looks by many of his old friends, and seemed full of life and energy.

Turning the corner of one of the tents they came suddenly on the Blakes. There was not one of the four who was utterly unconcerned at that meeting, though the interests and motives which produced the little thrill of excitement were curiously mingled and opposed. Two pairs of eyes flashed bright signals of mutual understanding, the others made no sign of what might be hidden in their depths. Delicately-gloved hands were held out, Mrs. Blake came forward fluent and friendly, and the two groups melted into one.

Horace and Addie led the way round the tent. Percival followed with Lottie and her mother, feeling that he had never rightly appreciated the latter's conversational powers before. When they emerged into the sunlight again they encountered Mrs. Pickering and her girls, and in the talk which ensued, our hero found himself standing by Addie.

"Percival," she said in a low quick voice, "don't be surprised. I want to say a word to you. Look as if it were nothing."

Though he was startled, he contrived not to betray it. After the first moment there is small danger of failing to appear indifferent—very great danger of seeming preternaturally indifferent. Percival had tact enough to avoid this. He listened, and replied with the polite attention which was natural to him, but his manner was tinged—any words I can find seem too coarse to describe it—with just the faintest shade of languor, just the

(Uranus), several new moons attending on Uranus and Saturn, and, as he thought, a pair of new rings attending on Uranus. But that any of the primary planets should be attended by a moon so small as not to admit of being fairly classed with the other known moons of the solar system would have seemed to most of the astronomers of the last century an idea as inadmissible as that an orbital region of the solar system should be occupied by a number of very small planets instead of a single primary planet. In recent times, however, men have become accustomed to recognise how small is our right to assert definitely the characteristics of suns, planets, moons, rings, and other such orders of bodies in the universe. We have found that, besides such suns as our own, there are some so much larger that they must be regarded as forming a distinct class of giant suns; while others, again, are separated in kind, not merely in degree, from such suns as ours, because of their relative minuteness. We have learned in like manner to distinguish the planets into classes, recognising in the giant planets Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune a family altogether distinct from that of the terrestrial planets, the earth and Venus, Mars and Mercury; while among the minor planets which throng in hundreds, perhaps in thousands, the orbit region between Mars and Jupiter we find another family separated from the terrestrial planets as definitely by their extreme minuteness as are the giant planets by their enormous dimensions. Among ring-systems, again, we had learned to recognise many varieties. In the rings of Saturn we have a system formed of multitudes of tiny moons travelling so closely together as to appear from our distant station as continuous rings. In the ring of minor planets we have multitudes of tiny planets; but they are so widely strewn that each must be separately sought for with the telescope, and no signs of the ring as a whole can be seen in the heavens. Then we have the rings of meteors, oval for the most part in figure and often curiously eccentric as well as extended; sometimes complete rings, or nearly so, like those which produce the August displays of shooting-stars; sometimes incomplete, and at others known only by "the gem of the ring," one rich region in the entire circuit.

But even with our actual knowledge of the diversity existing among the orders of bodies constituting the material universe, we were scarcely prepared to hear of moons like those of Mars. It is not the smallness of these bodies which is so surprising. There would have been nothing very remarkable in the existence of even smaller moons attending on any of the minor planets. Nor is it merely the enormous difference of dimensions between the planet and its moons; for in the case of Jupiter we have a planet whose moons bear a very much smaller proportion to the mass of their primary than our moon bears to the earth; and, though the disproportion is nothing nearly so great as that between Mars and his moons, it would still prepare us for recognising any degree almost of disproportion between a planet and its satellite. The strange circumstance in the actual case lies in the fact that Mars belongs to a known family

of planets, viz. the terrestrial family of which our earth is a leading member; and hitherto it had appeared as if all moons attending on the planets of one and the same class belonged themselves to one and the same class. The range of diversity of magnitude among the moons, for instance, attending on the giant planets, though considerable, is not such as to prevent us from regarding these moons as all of one class. Then, too, it seemed from the fact that our own moon is of the same class as those others, that, speaking generally, diversity of size is not to be looked for to the same degree among moons even attending on planets of different classes, as among planets or among suns. Certainly there was nothing in the past experience of astronomers to suggest that a planet like Mars, belonging to the same class as our earth, might have a moon or moons belonging to an altogether inferior class.

It was, then, with a sense of astonishment, which would have been mingled with doubt but for the altogether unexceptionable source whence the information came, that astronomers heard of the discovery of two Martian satellites with the great telescope of the Washington Observatory.

The discoverer of the satellites, and the telescope with which they were discovered, both promised well for the truth of what some regarded at first as a mere report.

Professor Asaph Hall, who has long been known as one of that band of skilful and original observers of which American astronomy has just reason to be proud, had during the last few years made many observations showing that, besides scientific skill, he possesses a keen eye. Some of his observations were such as must have taxed even the power of the noble instrument which has lately been erected at Washington. For instance, the faintest of Saturn's satellites, the coy Hyperion, though discovered nearly thirty years ago, had been very little observed, inasmuch that the true path of this small moon (a perfect giant, however, compared with the Martian satellites) had not been determined. In 1875, Professor Hall undertook the difficult task of closely observing this body; and now, at last, astronomers at least know where, at any hour, on any night, Hyperion is to be looked for, though the search would be to very little purpose with any save two or three of the most powerful telescopes in existence. Again, amongst other of his observations which required keen vision and patient watchfulness, must be cited the re-determination of the period in which the planet Saturn turns on its axis. This he accomplished in the year 1876. But, undoubtedly, the detection of the Martian satellites must be regarded as a far more noteworthy achievement than either of these.

The telescope which Professor Hall has been privileged to use may fairly be described as the finest refractor yet mounted. Newall, in England, has a telescope 25 inches in aperture, which, until the Washington telescope had been made, was the largest refractor in existence. The Washington instrument has an aperture of 26 inches, making its

illuminating power between one-twelfth and one-thirteenth greater. But this telescope is also remarkable for the skill with which it has been made by Messrs. Alvan Clark & Sons, of Cambridgeport, Mass. We know few more interesting histories in scientific biography than that which records the progress of Alvan Clark's labours in the construction of object-glasses—from the first small one which he made (which fell from his hands and was destroyed within a few moments of its completion) to the noble telescope which was mounted at Washington five years ago, after meeting satisfactorily all the tests applied to it by Mr. Clark and his two sons, who inherit his energy and skill. But in this place we must be content with noting that all who have ever used object-glasses constructed by the Clarks have found their optical performance all but perfect; in fact, as nearly perfect as can be obtained from lenses made of a substance which cannot possibly be altogether free from defects, however carefully prepared. Those observers at Washington who have used the great telescope systematically, agree in regarding with peculiar favour the performance of the great compound lens which forms what is technically called its object-glass.

When, then, news came that Professor Hall, using this powerful instrument, had discovered two satellites of Mars, even those who at first supposed the news to be a mere report, felt that the observer and the telescope were alike worthy of being credited with a success of the kind.

But in reality there was no room for doubt from the beginning. The news had been telegraphed to Leverrier by the Smithsonian Institution of Washington, and by Leverrier announced to English and Continental observers. It was known that an arrangement had been made by the oceanic telegraph companies to forward such intelligence, and that the news must of necessity have come from the source indicated. So that several days or so before details of the discovery reached Europe, the present writer communicated it to the *Times* (in a letter which appeared on Saturday, August 25), or less than a week after the second moon had been detected, as a discovery not open to doubt or question.

Within two days from this, or on August 27, the brothers Henry were able to recognise the outer satellite with the fine telescope of the Paris Observatory; but it was very faint, and could only be seen when the planet was screened from view. In the meantime, however, two other telescopes in America had been used to bring these tiny bodies into view. One of these was the fine 15-inch Merz refractor* of the Harvard Observatory, Cambridge, Mass., celebrated in the history of astronomy as that wherewith Saturn's satellite Hyperion had been detected in 1848. The other was an instrument as large, and doubtless

* We use the technical term "refractor" as the only convenient way of describing a telescope with an object-glass, as distinguished from a telescope with a mirror or speculum, which is called a "reflector."

as powerful, as the Washington telescope itself. It will have been noticed, perhaps, that, in speaking of the latter above, we said that it is the finest refractor yet mounted, not the finest yet made. Messrs. Alvan Clark have made a companion instrument for the observatory of Mr. M'Cormick, of Chicago, one of those munificent patrons of science of whom (of late, in particular) America has just reason to be proud. The instrument has not yet left Messrs. Clark's factory, and cannot be said to have been yet (properly speaking) mounted. But the Clarks managed to get it turned upon Mars, and were able to see the Martian satellites. There is another very fine telescope, by the way, also made by Messrs. Clark & Sons, which is now erected at Chicago, where one of the most eminent observers of double stars, Mr. S. W. Burnham, has long pursued his labours. Its object-glass is 18 inches in aperture; and we should have expected that, with this aperture and Mr. Burnham's keen vision, the Martian satellites would have been brought into view. We do not hear, however, of their being seen at Chicago. Perhaps unfavourable weather prevented any observations being made there.

The first news was expressed in telegraph-language, and was imperfect. It ran thus: "Two satellites of Mars discovered by Hall at Washington. First elongation west August 18, eleven hours, Washington time. Distance eighty seconds. Period, thirty hours. Distance of second, fifty seconds." This being interpreted (or, rather, the latter part being interpreted), means that the outermost, in its circuit around Mars, had reached its greatest apparent westerly range at 11 p.m., Washington time, August 18, or about 4 a.m., August 19, Greenwich time (which astronomers would call August 18, sixteen hours Greenwich time), and that at this time its seeming distance from the centre of Mars was about one twenty-fourth part of the apparent diameter of the moon. As to the other satellite the news did not convey much information. It implied that the distance was five-eighths that of the outer moon; but whether that was the greatest distance, or the distance at the hour named, there was nothing to show. As it turned out, there was a mistake about this moon, for the greatest range of the moon, east and west of Mars, amounted only to about three-fifths of the distance named.

In the circular issued by the Secretary of the United States Navy (the Hon. R. W. Thompson), dated August 21, 1877, a copy of which reached the present writer on September 3, fuller and more correct details are given, in a form, however, which would be quite unsuited to these pages. We will endeavour to present their meaning correctly, but without technical expressions.

The outer satellite travels at a distance from Mars's centre, such that, when the planet is at its nearest, the extreme apparent span of the satellite's path would be about one-eleventh part of the moon's apparent diameter. In actual length this range is about 28,600 miles, half of which represents the distance from the centre of the planet—about 14,300 miles. As Mars has a diameter of about 4,600 miles, the distance of the satellite from

slightest possible show of scorn and weariness of the great agricultural show itself. It was not enough to attract notice, it was quite enough to preclude any idea of excited interest.

"I am in a little difficulty," said Addie. "You could help me if you would."

"You may command me."

"You will not mind a little trouble? And you would keep my secret? I have no right to ask, but there is no one—I think you are my friend."

"Suppose me a brother for this occasion, Addie. Waste no more time in apologies."

"A brother—be it so. Then, my brother, I have to go through Langley Wood to-morrow evening, and I am afraid to go alone."

"I will gladly be your escort. Where shall I meet you?"

"There is a milestone about a quarter of a mile on the road to our house, after you have passed the gate into the wood. Don't come any further. Somewhere between the gate and that."

"I know it. At what time?"

"Half-past eight, or a few minutes earlier. Will that suit you?"

"Perfectly. I will be there."

"If you don't see me before nine don't wait for me. I shall have failed somehow."

"I understand," said Percival.

"I will explain to-morrow. You must trust me till then."

"You shall do as you please. I don't ask for any explanations, remember. Have you been having much croquet lately?"

"Oh, much as usual. Lottie has been beating me, also as usual. We have joined the Fordborough Croquet Club."

"Then I suspect the former members feel small."

"One or two of the best players feel ill-tempered, I think, unless they make-believe very much. Lottie means to win the ivory mallet, she says, and I think she will. Mrs. Rawlinson's sister always considered herself the champion, and I am sure Lottie," &c., &c.

In short, by the time it occurred to anybody that Percival and Addie were talking together, their conversation, carried smoothly on, was precisely what anybody might hear.

The Pickerings went off in one direction, the Blakes in another, and the young men resumed their walk.

"That's over, and the governor not by," said Horace.

"Don't be too secure," was Percival's reply. "Everybody talks about everybody else at Fordborough."

"Well," said Horace, who apparently would not be discouraged, "it's something not to have been standing between the old gentleman and Aunt Middleton, and then to have seen Mrs. Blake sailing straight at one, her face illuminated with a smile visible to the naked eye a quarter of a mile off—eh, Percy?"

"You are a lucky fellow, no doubt," said Percival.

"And, after all, it is quite possible——"

"That you may be a very lucky fellow indeed? Yes, it is quite possible. But I don't quite see what you are after, Horace."

("Nor I," thought Horace to himself, "and that's the charm of it, somehow.")^(L)

"Surely it isn't worth while getting into trouble with my grandfather for a mere flirtation."

"If you always stop to think whether a thing is worth while or not, Percy, I wouldn't be you for all the money that ever was coined."

"And if it is more," said the other, not heeding the remark—"I like fair play, but if it is more——"

"What then?" For Percival hesitated.

"We'll talk of that another time," said the latter. "Not now. Only don't be rash. Look, there's Sissy."

"How pretty she is," thought Percival, as they went towards her. "What can Horace see in Addie Blake, that he should prefer her? She is a fine girl, handsome—magnificent, if you like—but Sissy is like a beautiful old picture, sweet and delicate and innocent. I can't fancy her with secrets like Addie with this Langley Wood mystery of hers. If it had not been for that ideal of mine——"

They had reached the two ladies.

Meanwhile Mr. Thorne had listened to more odds and ends of gossip, and had gone on his way, warily searching among the shifting, many-coloured groups. He was curious, and in due time his curiosity was gratified. The Blake girls passed him so closely that he could have touched them. They knew perfectly well who he was, and Lottie looked at him, but Addie passed on, in her queenly fashion, with her head high, apparently not aware of his existence.

"So," said the old gentleman to himself, "that is Horace's taste. Well, she is very superb and disdainful, and I should think Patent Corn-Flour paid pretty well. She might have bestowed a glance on me, as I suppose she destines me the honour of being her grandpapa-in-law, but no doubt she knows what she is about, and it may be wiser to seem utterly unconscious, as Horace has not introduced us yet. Perhaps he will defer that ceremony a little while longer still.

"As for the other, she looked me straight in the face, as if she didn't care a rap for any man living. I shouldn't think that girl was afraid of anything on earth—or under it—or above it, for that matter. A temper of her own, plainly enough. The beautiful Miss Blake is Horace's taste, of course (I could have sworn to that without a word from him), and ninety-nine out of a hundred would agree with him. But if I were five-and-twenty, and had to choose between them, I'd take that fierce-eyed girl—and tame her!"

Of which process it may fairly be conjectured that it would have ended in total defeat for Mr. Thorne, or in mutual and inextinguishable

hatred, or, it might be, for he was hard as well as capricious, in a Lottie like a broken bow. In neither case a very desirable result.

Godfrey Hammond, looking at his watch, and going in the direction of the tent where the potatoes were, perceived Mrs. Rawlinson, and endeavoured to elude her. He loathed the woman, as he candidly owned to himself, because he had once very nearly approached the other extreme. It was a horrible thought. What had come over him and her? Either she was strangely and hideously transformed—and how could he tell that as fearful a change might not have come to him—or else his youth was a time of illusion and bad taste. That perfect time, that golden dawn of manhood, when the world lay before him steeped in rosy light, when every pleasure had its bloom upon it, and every day was crowned with joy—Good heavens! was it *then* that he cared to dance the polka in Fordborough drawing-rooms with Mrs. Rawlinson—Lydia Lloyd as she was of old? Little did that fascinating lady think what disgust at the remembrance of his incredible folly was in his soul as he met her.

For she caught him, and shook hands with him, and would not let him go till she had reminded him of old times as if they might have been yesterday, and might be again to-morrow. He smiled, and blandly made answer as if they two were a pair of antediluvian polka-dancers left in a waltzing age to see another generation spinning gaily round. (He could dance quite as well as Horace when he chose.) Mrs. Rawlinson did not like his style of conversation, and said abruptly—

“I had a talk with Mr. Thorne about half-an-hour ago. I *was* surprised! Mr. Horace Thorne seems to keep the old man quite in the dark.”

“Mr. Horace Thorne is a clever fellow, then,” said Hammond drily.

“Oh, you know all about it, I dare say. But really I *did* think it was too bad! He didn’t seem ever to have heard Miss Blake’s name. He certainly didn’t know her when he saw her.”

“Unfortunate man! For Miss Blake so decidedly eclipses the Fordborough young ladies, that such ignorance is deplorable. No doubt you did what you could to remove it?”

“Well!”—Mrs. Rawlinson tossed her blue bonnet—“I really thought I ought to give him a hint—it seemed to me that it was quite a charity.”

“A charity—ah yes, of course. Charity never faileth, does it?” And Hammond raised his hat, and bowed himself off.

The Moons of Mars.

ONLY a few months ago we took occasion to consider the planet Mars, with special reference to the question whether it is at present, like our earth, the abode of living creatures, and, in particular, of intelligent beings. The circumstance that Mars was about to make a nearer approach to our earth than he has made for fifteen years, or will again make for forty-seven, seemed to render the occasion a fitting one for discussing questions of interest relating to the planet. Apart, indeed, from the interest with which intelligent persons regard the other worlds of our solar system, it has always seemed to us that exact science, nay, even what may be called professional science, gains, when attention is specially directed to approaching celestial phenomena. For it affords no small encouragement to the systematic observer of the heavens to know that any discoveries he may make during some favourable presentation of a celestial body, will attract the attention they deserve. The experience of the last few years has shown that observations far more interesting and even valuable may be expected under such circumstances, than when the observer has reason to believe that only the routine work of the observatory—work bearing no closer relation to the true science of astronomy than land-surveying bears to geology—need be attended to. Certainly we may congratulate science that on this special occasion, for the first time in the history of astronomy, a great public observatory has obtained results such as heretofore only so-called amateur astronomers—the Herschels, for example, Lassell, Rosse, and so forth—have achieved. Taking advantage of the near approach of the Planet of War, and of the exceptionally favourable conditions under which it could be observed in their latitude, the observers who have under their especial charge the great telescope of the Washington Observatory have scrutinised with special care the neighbourhood of the planet which till lately was called "moonless Mars;" and their skill and watchfulness have been rewarded by the discovery of two moons attending on that planet.

There are several circumstances which render the discovery of these moons in the first place, and in the second the existence of such bodies as attendants on the small planet Mars, exceedingly interesting. These we propose briefly to indicate.

Galileo, after he had completed his largest telescope late in 1609, had to wait for nearly a year before he had a favourable opportunity for studying Mars. Thus he had already discovered the moons of Jupiter and the varying phases of Venus before he could study a planet from which

he must have expected even more interesting results. For on the one hand Mars is seen under much more favourable conditions than Venus, and on the other it approaches us much more closely than Jupiter. In the meantime, Kepler had hazarded the prediction that Mars has two moons—a suggestion which, in the light of the recent discovery, may be called, like “the Pogram statter in marble,” “a prediction, cruel smart.” Galileo saw no Martian moons, however, and could, indeed, barely recognise the gibbosity of Mars. From what is now known, indeed, we perceive that one might as hopefully try to read a newspaper at the Faulhorn from the slopes of the Jungfrau, as attempt with such a telescope as Galileo’s to detect the minute companions of the War Planet.

Telescope after telescope was thereafter turned on Mars, until the great four-foot mirrors of Sir W. Herschel and Mr. Lassell, and even the mightier six-foot mirror of Parsonstown, had taken part in the survey of the planet and its neighbourhood. But no satellites were discovered; insomuch that when Tennyson (in the first edition only of his poems) sang of “the snowy poles of moonless Mars,” few astronomers would have hesitated to admit that the description was a tolerably safe one.

There were, however, some who still adhered to the view which Kepler had propounded in 1610. Thus the late Admiral Smyth, after describing the appearance which our earth and her companion moon must present to the inhabitants of Mars (if inhabitants he has), says: “This appearance is not reciprocated; for though it is not at all improbable that Mars may have a satellite revolving around him, it is probably very small, and close to his disc, so that it has hitherto escaped our best telescopes; yet, being farther from the sun than the earth is, Mars—if at all habitable—would seem to stand even more in need of a luminous auxiliary.”

This idea, in fact, that planets require more moons the farther they lie from the sun, and not only so, but that their requirements in this respect have been attended to, and each planet carefully fitted out with a suitable number of attendants, is one which has found special favour with many believers in other worlds than ours. Whewell, for instance, who, although in his anonymously-written “Plurality of Worlds” he appeared as an opponent of the theory of other worlds, had earlier, in his less known “Bridgewater Treatise,” expressed opinions strongly favouring that theory, reasons as follows for the belief that satellites were specially made to bless the planets with their useful light: “Turning our attention to the satellites of the other planets of our system, there is one fact which immediately arrests our attention—the number of such attendant bodies appears to increase as we proceed to planets farther and farther from the sun. Such at least is the general rule. Mercury and Venus, the planets nearest the sun, have no such attendants. The earth has one. Mars, indeed, who is still farther removed, has none; nor have the minor planets, Juno, Vesta, Ceres, and Pallas” (when he wrote these only were known); “so that the rule is only approximately verified. But Jupiter, who is at five times the earth’s distance, has four satellites; and Saturn,

who is again at a distance nearly twice as great, has seven, besides that most extraordinary phenomenon, his ring (which for purposes of illumination is equivalent to many thousand satellites). Of Uranus it is difficult to speak, for his great distance renders it almost impossible to observe the smaller circumstances of his condition. It does not appear at all probable that he has a ring like Saturn; but he has at least five satellites which are visible to us" (four only are now recognised) "at the enormous distance of 900 millions of miles; and we believe that the astronomer will hardly deny that he" (Uranus, not the astronomer) "may possibly have thousands of smaller ones circulating about him. But leaving conjecture, and taking only the ascertained cases of Venus, the earth, Jupiter, and Saturn, we conceive that a person of common understanding will be strongly impressed with the persuasion that the satellites are placed in the system with a view to compensate for the diminished light of the sun at greater distances," whence we may infer that in subsequently rejecting this opinion, in his 'Plurality of Worlds,' Whewell showed himself a person of uncommon understanding.

According to Whewell's earlier way of viewing the satellites, however, the fact that Mars seemed to have no satellites was to some degree a difficulty, but not an insuperable one. "The smaller planets, Juno, Vesta, Ceres, and Pallas," he said, "differ from the rest in so many ways, and suggest so many conjectures of reasons for such differences, that we should almost expect to find them exceptions to such a rule. Mars is a more obvious exception. Some persons might conjecture from this case, that the arrangement itself, like other useful arrangements, has been brought about by some wider law, which we have not yet detected. But whether or not we entertain such a guess (it can be nothing more), we see in other parts of creation so many examples of apparent exceptions to rules, which are afterwards found to be capable of explanation, or to be provided for by particular contrivances, that no one, familiar with such contemplations, will by one anomaly be driven from the persuasion that the end which the arrangements of the satellites seem suited to answer is really one of the ends of their creation."

According to the method of viewing such matters which is now generally in favour among men of science, the considerations urged by Whewell will not be regarded as of any weight. They would not be so regarded even if the satellites of Jupiter, Saturn, and Uranus, or the rings which surround Saturn, really subserved the purpose which Whewell, Brewster, Chalmers, Dick, Lardner, and others have so complacently dwelt upon. But in reality, apart from the evidence tending to show that none of these planets can at present be inhabited, it is absolutely certain that moonlight on Jupiter and Saturn must be far inferior to moonlight on our earth despite the greater number of moons, while that received by Uranus from his four moons must be scarce superior to the light we receive from Venus, Jupiter, Mars, and Saturn, so faintly are the Uranian satellites illuminated by a sun nineteen times more remote

than the sun we see. As for the rings of Saturn, they act far more effectively to deprive the planet of sunlight than to illuminate the Saturnian nights. Despite the efforts made by Lardner to defend these appendages from the reflections cast upon them in this respect by Sir J. Herschel, it may be mathematically demonstrated (and has been by the present writer) that the rings cast wide zones of the planet—zones many times exceeding the whole surface of our earth—into total eclipse lasting several years in succession. Even were it otherwise, however, no one, familiar with the evidence which nature multiplies around us, would have been disposed to argue, from the presumed fitness of the Jovian and Saturnian arrangements as to satellites, that Mars has moons. If there is a meaning in the arrangements actually observed which should have led astronomers to believe in the existence of Martian satellites—a view which certainly the discovery of such satellites goes far to confirm—the meaning is one which the laws of physics alone can be expected to interpret.

That Mars should have definitely come to be regarded by nearly all astronomers as without satellites will readily be understood if we consider the nature of the evidence which had been obtained. When Jupiter is at his farthest from us, but in opposition* (that is, on the side remote from the sun), all four of his satellites, the least of which is rather less than our own moon, are quite easily seen in the smallest telescopes ever used in astronomical observation. Certainly they can then be all seen with a good telescope *one inch* in aperture. At such times Jupiter lies at a distance of about 410 millions of miles from us. Now Mars, when he makes his nearest opposition approaches (as for instance in the present autumn), lies at a distance from us of about 35 millions of miles, or less than Jupiter's in the proportion of about seven to eighty-two, or at not much more than one-twelfth of Jupiter's distance. This would cause a self-luminous body to appear about 140 times brighter at Mars's distance than at Jupiter's. But satellites are not self-luminous. Their brightness depends on sunlight, and the nearer they are to the sun the more brightly they necessarily shine. Mars is illuminated, when nearest to the sun, with an amount of sunlight exceeding that which illumines Jupiter when farthest from the sun (these being the cases we are dealing with) in a proportion of more than fifteen to one. So that a satellite near Mars, as large as the least satellite of Jupiter, would shine fifteen times 140 times more brightly, or, in round numbers, fully 2,000 times more brightly, than one of those bodies which the observer can readily see with a telescope only one inch in aperture. But most certainly it is not assuming too much to claim for the most powerful telescopes with which Mars's neighbourhood had been searched for satellites

* The reader must not understand us here to mean that it is when in opposition that Jupiter is farthest from us, for the reverse is the case. It is at his successive opposition that he makes his nearest approach to the earth; but he is nearer at some oppositions than at others, and we are speaking above of those oppositions when his distance is greatest.

an illuminating power exceeding that of so minute a telescope 400 times. This would have made such a moon as we have imagined appear at least 800,000 times brighter than the least of Jupiter's moons actually appears in a telescope one inch in aperture. If, then, instead of being so large as this—that is, 2,000 miles or so in diameter—a moon of Mars had a diameter so much less that the disc were reduced to one-800,000th part of such a moon's disc, it would be as readily visible with one of the very powerful telescopes above mentioned as is Jupiter's least moon with a one-inch telescope. This would be the case if the diameter were reduced to one-895th part (for 895 times 895 is very nearly equal to 800,000). So that, were it not for one consideration now to be mentioned, it would have seemed that astronomers might safely have assumed that Mars has not a moon exceeding $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles in diameter. The consideration in question is this: a satellite might travel very near to Mars, so that it would always be more or less involved in the luminosity surrounding his disc. The best telescope cannot get rid of this luminosity; for, in fact, it is not an optical but a real light. It is, in fact, our own air, which is lit up by the planet's rays for some distance all round. Now a small satellite amidst this light, even though the planet itself might be kept out of view, would be much less readily viewed than a satellite seen like one of Jupiter's at a great distance from its primary. Yet, as it is known that Jupiter's satellites can be traced right up to the edge of the planet, we do not think so much importance should be attributed to this circumstance as is sometimes done. It should certainly be possible to see a Martian satellite two diameters of the planet, let us say, from the edge, if it shine with twice as much light as would make it visible on a perfectly dark sky. Let us, however, say that the satellite ought to be four times instead of twice as bright. Then the diameter, instead of being $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles in order that a satellite close to Mars should just be visible in a very powerful telescope, should be $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Certainly we should expect that a satellite five miles in diameter would have been long since revealed under the searching scrutiny to which the neighbourhood of Mars has again and again been subjected.

Now it could not but be admitted that a moon five miles or even ten miles in diameter would differ so much from any known moon that the difference must be regarded as rather one of kind than one of degree. No such body had as yet been heard of—at least no such body travelling as an independent moon. A hundred years ago, indeed, men would hardly have been prepared to admit the possibility of a body whose existence, if demonstrated, would have overthrown all their ideas as to the structure of the solar system. They knew of suns, of planets attending on one sun, and of moons attending on several planets, and they knew also of a ring-system accompanying one planet in its course round the sun. Thus they were prepared to recognise new suns, new planets, new moons, and new rings. Sir W. Herschel was nightly engaged in observing hundreds of before unknown suns. He discovered one new planet

The moons of Mars have proved as communicative respecting their primary as our own moon has shown herself respecting our earth. As Newcomb well remarks, Leverrier's determination of the mass of Mars (at about one-118th part of our earth's mass) was the product of a century of observations and several years of laborious calculation by a corps of computers; whereas from the measures of the satellite on four nights only, ten minutes' computation gave a value of the planet's mass in striking agreement with Leverrier's—viz., one-113th of the earth's mass. Moreover, this value, though obtained in so short a time, is more trustworthy than Leverrier's. It amounts to a reduction of the planet's mass by one-200th part of the earth's, or by a trifle of about thirty millions of millions of millions of tons.

We may add, in conclusion, two curious anticipations of the late discovery. One is well known—Swift's account (probably corrected in this place by Arbuthnot, for Swift was no arithmetician) of the discoveries made by the Laputan astronomers. "They have likewise discovered two lesser stars," he says, "or satellites, which revolve about Mars, whereof the innermost is distant from the centre of the primary planet exactly three of his diameters and the outermost five; the former revolves in the space of ten hours and the latter in $21\frac{1}{2}$, so that the squares of their periodical times are very nearly in the same proportion with the cubes of their distance from the centre of Mars, which evidently shows them to be governed by the same law of gravitation that influences the other heavenly bodies." The other is from Voltaire's *Micromégas, Histoire Philosophique*. The Sirian giant, with a Saturnian friend, visited the neighbourhood of Mars: "Ils côtoyèrent la planète de Mars, qui, comme on sait, est cinq fois plus petite que notre petit globe; ils virent deux lunes qui servent à cette planète, et qui ont échappé aux regards de nos astronomes. Je sais bien que le père Castel écrira, et même assez plaisamment, contre l'existence de ces deux lunes; mais je m'en rapporte à ceux qui raisonnent par analogie. Ces bons philosophes-là savent combien il serait difficile que Mars, qui est si loin du soleil, se passât à moins de deux lunes." Beyond all doubt both these pleasantries had their origin in the idea thrown out by Kepler in 1610, when Galileo announced to him the discovery of the four moons of Jupiter.*

* Since the above was written Mr. Wentworth Erck, of Sherrington, Bray, has announced that the outer satellite has been seen three times with his seven-inch Alvan Clark telescope. In one of these observations a small star was certainly seen; the others seem to have been real observations of the satellite. Either Newcomb must have underestimated the satellite's brightness, or else its surface is of such a nature that it varies in lustre.

A Swiss Bath in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.

SOME description has been given in a former paper of the humours of this ancient watering-place in the olden time. Besides the accounts of the Florentine Poggio Bracciolini, and of Montaigne, there exists a very voluminous history of the town and baths of Baden in Aargau, published in 1578, by the learned Doctor Heinrich Pantaleon, of Bâle, which contains some curious particulars of manners, but is on the whole too wordy and tedious to be acceptable reading now-a-days.

During the hundred and sixty years which intervened between Bracciolini's Latin epistle and the publication of Pantaleon's history, some changes had of course taken place in Baden; but the main features of the life there seem to have been but little altered. There were the public baths for the poor, the private ones in the inns, the promenades by the Limmat, and the general tone of feasting and junketing, much as the Florentine describes them. Only it is fair to remark that Dr. Pantaleon expresses great indignation against the light-minded and scandalous utterances of Bracciolini respecting certain phases of Baden life, and says, with a blunt disregard of circumlocutions, "Here may one well discern what manner of minds the Italians had in those days, and how given to lewdness. For there was really no wickedness among those simple and pious German bath-guests, men and women; but, on the contrary, only blameless and cheerful enjoyment after the custom of their country."

Fourteen hundred and seventeen was, perhaps, scarcely so blameless in its jollity as worthy Dr. Pantaleon, writing in 1578, assumes it to have been. Still there is little doubt but that Bracciolini's picture was rendered inaccurate as a portrait by its rich Italian tone of colouring! It is curious to observe the modifications gradually brought about by the course of time, not only in external manners and customs, but in the whole tone of social sentiment. Each century presents some marked points of contrast with its predecessor, and all differ singularly from our own in various particulars.

The Zurichers appear always to have been disposed towards gaiety and enjoyment. Such is the character given them by their countryman David Hess, in his book about Baden, and such, indeed, is the impression produced by all the accounts concerning their relations with Baden. So great was their passion for visiting the baths, and making holiday there,

that their governors endeavoured on several occasions to check it by legal enactments ! * But the motives for making these enactments were very different at different periods. For example, in 1483 the Cantons, or "states" as they were then called, of Lucerne, Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden, Zug, and Glarus, called in all the current pieces of five *hellers*, popularly known as *Fünfer*. Zurich alone refused to adhere to this measure ; but the innkeepers and dealers in Baden would only accept the *Fünfer* for four hellers instead of five, whilst the Zurichers insisted on the coin being taken at its full value ; and hence arose so much bickering, quarrelling, and even violence, as to threaten to give rise to serious hostilities. Baden began to make warlike preparations, and to appeal to the other States for support and assistance, and the Government of Zurich, in order to put an end to these dangerous dissensions, forbade its subjects to visit the baths altogether. This state of things did not last very long however. By the mediation of Burgomaster Waldmann, † who was himself a devoted frequenter of Baden, the quarrel was appeased by the Badeners making submission. The mayor and twelve citizens of Baden went as a deputation from the town to the Great Council of Zurich, and there begged for reconciliation in these precise words : " If we have angered your Wisdoms, we pray you earnestly for God's sake to forgive us." So then the embargo was taken off again, and Zurich once more danced merrily to the piping of the Baden innkeepers.

Very different was the motive for a similar prohibition decreed less than fifty years later. The Reformation had taken deep root in Zurich, —and indeed it is curious to remark how firm a hold Protestantism has had from the beginning amongst a population so much the reverse of ascetic or sober-minded by nature—whereas Baden remained, and remains to this day, staunchly Catholic. In 1529, soon after the acceptance of the reformed doctrines in Zurich, the citizens of that town were exposed to very uncivil usage at the hands of the zealously orthodox Badeners ; and, in some instances, to treatment very much worse than uncivil. Unfair means were taken to constrain dying persons to confess and take the sacrament ; burial was denied to the corpses of heretics ; sick people were plagued, sound ones disturbed, in the performance of their religious worship ; and all exposed to such constant insults and contumely from the populace, that the Zurich Government once more interdicted all intercourse with Baden to its subjects, on pain of a fine of four silver marks. But by degrees these unpleasant feelings became softened, and the edict was withdrawn or

* There is a tradition that at one time every Zurich lady insisted on having it inserted in her marriage contract that she was to be allowed to visit Baden at least once every year.

† Mention has been made of him, and of his tragical end, in the paper entitled " A Fashionable Bath in the Olden Time."

forgotten. Indeed, by the year 1646, Zurich was as numerously represented as ever in its favourite playground, as appears by the following circumstances.

Such was the zeal and paternal care with which the lay and ecclesiastical authorities took to heart the spiritual welfare of their flock, that the reverend body of prebendaries of Zurich was solemnly entrusted by the Government with the task of watching over public morality. Now to these grave gentlemen come one day the terrible tidings from Baden that Zurich wives and maidens are not only giving occasion for scandal there by the wanton luxury of their apparel, and by handling playing cards, but that they have actually been seen in sundry open and public places to—play at skittles! One is tempted to wonder why the game of skittles should have been deemed so especially damnable in its nature by these worthy Puritans, but that it was so deemed there can be no manner of doubt; for Prebendary Suter, President Rahn, and Governor Hirzel were forthwith charged to take measures for having the matter discussed at a general Evangelical Conference, and for putting an end to such abominable improprieties! Moreover, in the innumerable decrees and regulations concerning public morals which followed each other in quick succession about this time, there constantly recurs a clause prohibiting the Zurichers from visiting Baden on Sundays and days set apart by the Church for special devotion. But, alas! let the prebendaries and the preachers strive as they would, the jolly Zurichers continued to divert themselves at the baths. And not seldom it was the members of the Government themselves, or their wives and daughters, who set the example of disregarding these paternal regulations.

There did, however, come a time when the prohibition to visit Baden was not only solemnly proclaimed, but generally approved, and strictly observed for the space of fully six years. It came to pass as follows: Zurich and Berne had been carrying on a war against the five old Catholic Cantons—viz. Schwyz, Unterwalden, Uri, Zug, and Glarus. During these hostilities Baden had shown herself, as usual, strongly favourable to the five Cantons, had harboured their garrisons, and, even after the conclusion of peace, and despite the repeated remonstrances of Berne and Zurich, had strengthened and renewed the fortifications of the ancient castle, or *Stein von Baden*, recommenced the old insults and persecutions against “heretics,” and had altogether conducted herself with marked and open enmity and contempt towards Zurich. So great was the indignation, and so bitter the public feeling in Zurich, that when the Government was at length induced to make a stringent law forbidding its subjects to hold any intercourse with Baden on any pretence whatever, under pain of severe punishment, the decree was received with loud and general approbation. It was conscientiously observed, too, with but few and trifling exceptions. And thus a rich source of gain was shut to Baden. This was in 1659. The Badeners soon began to discover the mistake they had made, and to repent their unfair and impru-

dent partisanship. But they could not immediately resolve to perform that unpleasant ceremony vulgarly known as eating humble pie; whilst the Zurichers, for their part, were firmly resolved that they should partake copiously of that bitter dish, before being readmitted into favour. Thus matters went on until the month of February, 1665. In the following March the prohibition would expire, having been originally framed to extend over only six years; and on February 1, the question was proposed in the General Assembly of Councillors and Burghers of Zurich, whether or not the prohibition, then about to run out, should be renewed? Notwithstanding that by this time large numbers of Zurichers were heartily longing to return to their diversions, and that many sick persons were really in need of the healing waters, yet it was resolved, by a majority of one hundred and six votes, to renew the prohibition for six more years, "seeing that the Badeners refused to make due submission."

Then, indeed, arose much lamentation and disquietude of spirit in the baths. Already during the previous year the Hinterhof (one of the most ancient and important inns in the place) had been put up to public auction by reason of the total decline of custom, and there were widespread difficulty and distress. Finally, after long deliberation, the "Lesser Council" of Baden, together with eight of the oldest members of the "Great Council," came to a resolution on June 8, 1665. They drew up an address to ask leave of the Government of Zurich to send a deputation thither, which request was graciously granted. It is worth noting, as a trait of manners, and an indication that Swiss liberty by no means involved an indifference to etiquette and the claims of superiors on the deference of inferiors, that the first address voted by Baden, having been drawn up without due regard to form and the ceremonious observance of titles, was simply sent back unanswered by the haughty burghers who then ruled over the free state of Zurich! A second address was prepared in which all such sins of omission were remedied, and despatched with the apologetic statement on the part of the Badeners that their town clerk, being then new and inexperienced in his office, had inadvertently failed to express himself in terms of befitting ceremony and respect. And now at last the deputation was received, pardon asked for and accorded, and things promised to return to their old friendly footing. The prohibition was cancelled on June 22, and once more Baden was open to the pleasure-loving subjects of Zurich.

One or two of the stipulations which Zurich required to be agreed to before she would rescind the prohibition are worth noting. Flesh meat was to be prepared in the inn kitchens for those of the Reformed Faith, even on fast days. No Protestant was to be disturbed in his Bible-reading, praying, or psalm-singing. The rents of lodgings in Baden were not to be too high. (A somewhat vague provision this!) All abuse and reviling of Zurichers, whether on the part of laymen or ecclesiastics, was to cease *in the pulpit and out of it!* And so on, and so on. Mean-

while a feverish activity reigned at the baths. No sooner was the first submissive overture made by their town council than the Badeners began to speculate on a renewal of the good days when guests thronged their inns and lodging houses, and to prepare every available nook and corner for the expected influx of visitors. Nor were their calculations disappointed. Within three days after the withdrawal of the famous prohibition—that is to say, by about June 25, 1665—every lodging in the baths, and even in the upper town, was crowded, and the inns were overflowing. So enormous was the concourse, and so universal the desire amongst the Zurichers to revisit Baden, that even far on into the autumn of that year there was not a garret unoccupied. And the wife of the worshipful Burgomaster Waser—of whose wonderful “bath-gifts” mention has been made in a preceding paper—was forced to put up with the chamber in the Stadhof, known as “The Paradise;” of which lodging the Burgomaster complains in a manner that leads one to suppose “The Paradise” was named on a *lucus a non lucendo* principle.

From this time forward the Zurichers continued to have free access to Baden, and the present writer can testify that they still frequent it in considerable numbers, although the increased facilities of communication have modified the length of their stay there. Baden is now but half an hour’s railway journey from Zurich, and it is consequently easy for the citizens of the latter place to spend a day at the baths and return home to sleep. One curious commentary on the old prohibitions against visiting Baden on Sundays and solemn religious festivals—which we have seen were vainly promulgated in the seventeenth century—must not be omitted. To begin with, Sunday is still by far the most popular day with the Zurichers for a visit to Baden. But on one special Sunday, during the past autumn (it was September 17), we observed an unusual amount of preparation for guests at the *table-d’hôte* of our inn there. The long tables had stretched themselves almost from wall to wall, and had even been drawn out into an adjoining room, and the rows of rush-bottomed chairs were set thickly together regardless of elbow-room. “What is to happen to-day?” we asked of the landlord, who was, together with all his domestic *aides-de-camp*, male and female, evidently expecting a grand field-day.

“Oh, we shall have a hundred extra people from Zurich to-day. I don’t know where to put them.”

“Really? Your house is highly favoured!”

“No; not my house specially. There isn’t an hotel or an eating-house or a tavern in the place that won’t be crowded this afternoon.”

“Good gracious! Why to-day of all days in the year?”

“Oh, because to-day is a great solemnity in the Reformed Church of Zurich. It is a great fast in Zurich—a *very* strict fast; and so—the Zurichers come to Baden to get a good dinner!”

It struck me that this was a delightful illustration of its not being Sunday “in the back yard,” and at the same time a proof that the good

people of Zurich still retain the irresistible *penchant* towards merry-making and good cheer which seems to have distinguished them centuries ago.

It must, for truth's sake, be admitted that the jollity in Baden sometimes was carried to an excess which led to results anything but jolly. Unfortunately jollity was inseparably connected with drinking, and drinking does not sweeten the temper or soften the manners. However, in the Baden brawls of which we have record the ludicrous far predominates over the ferocious. The archives of the Town Council of Baden are full of queer legal documents relating to such affairs as the following, which is selected as a fair specimen. In the year 1670 a party of young gentlemen, after dining at mid-day with some ladies of condition, and drinking innumerable toasts with more enthusiasm than discretion, went later to pay a visit to their fair hostesses in the bath, according to the custom already described. There, being inspired to doughty deeds by the wine they had drunk—not to mention the bright eyes of the ladies—they began to vie with each other in sundry gymnastic exercises! One of their feats was to jump backwards and forwards across the bath with drawn swords in their hands. But lo, before long one missed his spring, and then another, and finally they all plumped into the warm water, and sat there in their smart laced coats, in rather rueful guise. Soon they grew quarrelsome: first sharp words were exchanged, then injurious epithets, then sundry boxes on the ear, and finally—to the no small terror of the ladies, we are told—several of the party challenged each other to mortal combat. For my part, I think that the extant chronicles deal all too easily and phlegmatically with the alarm and discomfiture of the poor ladies on this occasion. Only try to imagine their feelings on beholding these more than half-drunken beaux leaping and tumbling over their bath with drawn swords, floundering about in the water, shouting, cursing, and cuffing each other, and the scene ending with a challenge to a duel! Perhaps the ladies were used to the sort of thing. The whole story reads like a page out of a comedy by Vanbrugh. My Lady Brute and the heroines of the Charles the Second dramatists had worse things to put up with, and were railed at into the bargain with the fine wit which distinguished the exquisite gallants of that “merry” period. And in the present case there was no blood drawn, and no bones broken. All the party were brought up before the civil tribunal, fined for their insulting language, reprimanded for their intemperate behaviour, and bound over in penalties of one hundred thalers each to keep the peace towards each other, “and to be, and remain thenceforward, good friends together.” So that one may afford to laugh at the absurd picture of these heroes, dragged out of the tepid water, and brought up in their dripping finery, sword in hand, before the grave magistrates of Baden.

We have seen some contemporary descriptions of this Swiss watering-place in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries. There is

extant an account of it, written and published in the eighteenth century, which contains details not less curious than those of the earlier chronicles. The writer is a certain gentleman of Neuchâtel, named David François de Merveilleux, sometime an officer in the service of His Majesty King Louis XV. of France. De Merveilleux has neither literary reputation, like Bracciolini and Montaigne, nor learning and simplicity like Dr. Pantaleon; he is a frivolous, gossiping, swaggering fellow, not wholly truthful, and devoured by vanity. And yet his book, which he entitles "Amusemens des Bains de Bade en Suisse, de Schinznach, et de Pfeffers," is very amusing; and anyone who reads it, with due allowance for the weaknesses of the writer, may gather a great deal of trustworthy information from it as to the manners and customs of that day. The work was published anonymously, in 1739, with the date on its title-page—probably a false one—of "London." The author gives out that he was travelling in company with "an English lord," and some Swiss ladies whose acquaintance they made in Bâle, and that they passed through Schinznach to Baden, from whence he writes a series of letters. In these letters he describes the manners of the society at the baths, and intersperses his text with all manner of anecdotes—some of them by no means of an edifying kind, and smacking greatly of the tone of French garrison talk, from which source, indeed, they were in all likelihood mainly derived. But most of his descriptions of actual circumstances and personages at the baths are evidently genuine. The ladies of the party, whom he speaks of as "nos belles Basloises," were not wandering princesses of doubtful reputation, but belonged to good families in Bâle. Their husbands, and in some cases their fathers, were of the company—a circumstance which slips out by the way in the course of De Merveilleux's narrative, he having begun by ignoring the existence of such troublesome appendages to "nos belles Basloises." Here is his preliminary flourish of trumpets before they set off:—

"We have at length resolved to go to the baths of Baden to see the Swiss Diet, at which it is said the French Ambassador will be present. Some of our young beaux are in a state of extraordinary gaiety, others very dull. I have penetrated the cause of this. It is for want of money to accompany their fair friends. Milord, having learnt this, supplies everything (*il supplée à tout*), and we shall set off all together, with our Bâloises well rigged out after the fashion of their country. Milord has ransacked the shops for silk stockings all alike. They are rose-colour. As for me, I pay for the ribbons of the garters, and provide hair powder for our belles, which they asked me for without ceremony. Their request was acceded to on the spot. I add to this some good wine of Burgundy and champagne, and also some Frontignan. The latter is our ladies' favourite wine, and there will be no stint of it. The husbands will start first, to secure lodgings and send us carriages."

What a delightful, comical, impertinent curious picture! Milord, who supplies everything—poor Milord! 'Tis his traditional rôle when-

his surface is about 12,000 miles, or, roughly, about one-twentieth of the distance which separates the moon from the earth. This other moon travels round Mars in thirty hours fourteen minutes, the possible error in this determination at present being about two minutes. We have seen that it must be a very small moon. The present writer, in an article in the *Spectator* which appeared before the circular above mentioned had reached Europe, had indicated ten miles as the greatest diameter which could possibly be assigned to this body. Let us hear what Professor Newcomb, the eminent mathematician who presides over the astronomical department of the Washington Observatory, who has himself seen the satellite, has to say on this point. Writing to the *New York Tribune* he remarks that "the first question which will naturally arise is, Why have these objects not been seen before? The answer is, that Mars is now nearer to the earth than he has been at any time since 1845, when the great telescopes of the present day had hardly begun to be known. In 1862, when Mars was again pretty near to the earth, we may suppose that they were not looked for with the two or three telescopes which alone would have shown them. In 1875 Mars was too far south of the equator to be advantageously observed in high northern latitudes. The present opportunity of observing the planet is about the best that could possibly occur. At the next opposition, in October 1879, there is hope that the satellites may again be observed with the great telescope at Washington; but Professor Newcomb thinks that during the following ten years, when, owing to the great eccentricity of the orbit of Mars, he will be much farther from the earth at opposition, the satellites may be invisible with all the telescopes of the world. In the present year it is hardly likely that they will be visible after October. The satellites may be considered as by far the smallest heavenly bodies yet known. It is hardly possible to make anything like a numerical estimate of their diameters, because they are seen in the telescope only as faint points of light. But one might safely agree to ride round one of them in a railway car between two successive meals, or to walk round in easy stages during a very brief vacation. In fact, supposing the surface of the outer one to have the same reflecting power as that of Mars, its diameter cannot be much more than ten miles, and may be less. Altogether these objects must be regarded as among the most remarkable members of the solar system."

Assigning to this satellite a diameter of ten miles—which we ourselves, for the reasons above indicated, consider too large—it would appear, at a distance of 12,000 miles, with a diameter equal to about the tenth of our moon's, and therefore with a disc equal to about a hundredth of hers in apparent area. But being less brightly illuminated it would shine with less than the hundredth part of her light. Mars receives from the sun (and therefore his moons receive) between one-half and one-third as much light as our earth and moon receive, about half when Mars is at his nearest to the sun, and about one-third when he is at his farthest

from the sun. Thus the light given by the farther of his two moons varies from one two-hundredth to one three-hundredth part of our moon's. This part, then, of the Martian moonlight is but small in amount, and certainly cannot go far to compensate the Martians (as compared with us Terrestrials) for their greater distance from the sun.

Of course this moon passes through all the phases which we recognise in the case of our own moon. It travels very rapidly among the constellations of the Martian heavens, which are exactly the same in all respects as those we see. In very little over thirty hours it traverses the entire circuit of the heavens; or over what would correspond to one of our zodiacal signs in two and a half hours: whereas our own moon takes more than two and a quarter days traversing one of these signs. Its rate of motion may be best inferred, however, from the statement that, if our moon travelled as fast, she would traverse a distance equal to her own diameter in a little over two and a half minutes, so that her motion among the stars would be quite obvious to ordinary vision. Perhaps the reader may be interested to know which constellations are traversed by this Martian moon in the course of its circuit of the heavens. The zodiac of Mars, or the pathway of the sun and planets, is nearly the same as ours; but her outer moon, instead of travelling, as ours does, within the zodiac, and indeed in a course nearly approaching the sun's, ranges far to the north and south of the solar pathway in each circuit. Its path crosses the ecliptic (passing from the southern to the northern side) at a point between the two stars which mark the tips of the Bull's horns. It runs thence over a rather barren region north of the twin stars Castor and Pollux, over the Lesser Lion, through the Hair of Berenice, where it attains its greatest northerly distance from the sun's track. Thence it passes onwards across the feet of the Herdsman, the body of the Serpent, and the feet of the Serpent-Holder, crossing the sun's track near the right foot of this worthy. On its track, now south of the sun's, it passes over the Bow of the Archer, and thence over his hind feet (the gentleman is of the Centaur persuasion), over the head of the Crane, and along the Southern Fish (not the southernmost of the Tied Fishes belonging to the zodiac, but the single fish into whose mouth the Water-Bearer pours a stream of water); ranging very closely past the bright star Fomalhaut (which it must sometimes hide, just as our own moon sometimes hides the bright Antares and Aldebaran). Thence the Martian moon passes athwart the Sea Monster and the River Eridanus, over the Bull, passing very close indeed to Aldebaran (which it must sometimes hide from view), to its starting-place between the horns of the Bull. The circuit we have just described is very nearly the celestial equator of the Martian heavens. (The north pole of the Martians lies near the Tail of the Swan, and the bright star Arided of this constellation must be their north polar star; the southern pole-star for the Martians is the star Alpha of the Peacock: neither this star, nor any part of the constellation, is visible in our northern latitudes.)

One peculiar effect of this outer moon's rapid motion among the stars is that it moves very slowly in the Martian skies. The whole of the heavenly sphere, as seen from Mars, is of course carried from east to west just as with us, except that, instead of completing a circuit in twenty-four hours, it requires twenty-four hours thirty-seven minutes twenty-two seconds and seven-tenths, that being the length of the Martian day. Their outer moon shares this motion with the stars; but as it is itself travelling all the time from west to east among the stars, going once round in thirty hours fourteen minutes, or travelling nearly as fast *this way* as it is carried *the other*, it appears to move very slowly with reference to the horizon. Suppose it, for instance, rising in the east in company with Fomalhaut. The stellar heavens are carried round, and Fomalhaut passes over to the west in twelve hours nineteen minutes. But the moon has in this time moved away eastwards from the star by nearly two-fifths of a complete circuit, or four-fifths of the range from west to east. Instead, therefore, of being on the western horizon with the star, the moon has passed only one-fifth of the way from the eastern horizon. In another half-day she has travelled two-fifths of the way, and so on. So that, roughly, this moon occupies five half-days, or about sixty hours, in passing from the eastern to the western horizon. She is the same length of time below the horizon. In other words, strange though it may seem, this moon, which travels round Mars, or circuits the stellar heavens, in thirty hours, only completes her circuit of the Martian skies in about 120 hours. She passes through her phases in a little over thirty hours fourteen minutes; for, supposing her to start from the sun's place on her eastward course, she gets round again to the place he had occupied among the stars in thirty hours fourteen minutes, by which time he has travelled only a very slight distance eastwards, over which she, with her rapid motion, very quickly passes. Thus while she is above the horizon, which she is for about sixty hours, she passes twice through all her phases. Imagine her, for instance, rising with the sun. With his swifter diurnal (or apparent) motion westwards he leaves her behind, and when he sets she is, precisely as in the case before considered, only a fifth of the way above the eastern horizon, and already nearly full, being nearly opposite the sun. Very soon after sunset she is full; and when the sun is about to rise in the east again she is far on the wane, being past her third quarter, for she is now but two-fifths of the way from the eastern horizon, where he is. He travels on, her disc waning more and more, till when he overtakes her, in the mid-heavens, she is "new" in the astronomical sense; that is, invisible. He passes to the west; and when he sets she is near her first quarter, being two-fifths of the way from his place on the western horizon. She waxes till near morning time; but when the sun rises in the east she is beginning to wane, for she is now about a fifth of the way from the place opposite to him in the west. He travels on, her disc waning more and more, until about the time of sunset, when it is new moon, the sun and moon setting together.

But even more singular, though simpler, is the behaviour of the second moon. We know less of the inner than of the outer moon, because it is far more difficult to see. The brothers Henry, of the Paris Observatory, who caught the outer moon, failed utterly to see the inner one. But it is known that its distance from the centre of Mars is about 5,800 miles, or from the planet's surface about 3,500 miles. This moon may have a somewhat larger diameter than the other, because its proximity to Mars would naturally make it more difficult to see, and might account for astronomers failing to perceive a moon which, at the distance of the outer, must long since have been detected. If we allow to it a diameter of fifteen miles, or about one-18,000th of our moon's, its disc at the same distance as ours would be only about one-1,100th of the disc of our moon. But that proximity to Mars which makes this moon so faint to our eyes must of course make it much larger to theirs. It so happens that this effect of proximity causes the moon to appear larger to almost one-fourth the degree in which her real surface (or disc seen at equal distance) is less than that of our moon, on the assumption we have made. Thus she has a disc, always on this assumption be it remembered, equal to about a quarter of our moon's; and being illuminated by the sun, like the other moon, with a light varying from one-half to one-third that which he pours on the earth, it follows that the light she reflects to Martians, or would reflect to them if there were any such beings, varies from one-eighth to one-twelfth of that which we receive from the full moon. The two moons together do not, under the most favourable conditions, supply one-seventh of the light which the full moon gives to us.

But it is by her motions that this moon is rendered most remarkable among all the satellites of the solar system. She travels round the planet, or, as seen from the planet, she completes her circuit of the stellar heavens, in about 7 hours $38\frac{1}{2}$ minutes. This is less than a third of the time in which Mars turns on his axis, or in which the stellar heavens are carried round from east to west. So that, as his nearer moon travels more than three times as fast from west to east as the heavens are carried from east to west, it follows that she has an excess of real eastwardly motion equivalent to more than twice the rate of motion of the star-sphere westwards. She moves, then, in appearance, from the western to the eastern horizon, and in less than half the time in which the stars or the sun are carried from the eastern to the western horizon, thus completing her apparent motion across the skies from west to east in about five hours. As she goes through all her phases in about seven hours thirty-nine minutes there are not so many changes in her aspect while she is above the horizon as there are in the case of the outer moon. Her strangest feature is her rapid motion eastwards, causing her to pass from the western to the eastern horizon, instead of the usual way round. Her actual motions among the stars would be very obvious to such vision as ours; for she traverses a distance equal to our moon's apparent diameter in forty seconds!

ever he makes his appearance on the Continental scene!—and ransacks the shops for rose-coloured silk stockings, whilst the gallant officer of Louis le Bien-aimé finds garters and hair-powder, and swaggers a little about his liberality in the matter of Frontignan!

Presently the fathers of "*nos belles*" inform the party that the arrival of the French Ambassador (Dominique Jacques de Barberie, Vicomte de Courteilles) at Baden is put off, by reason of his Excellency's having an inflammation in the foot; and they counsel Milord and company to spend their time at the baths of Schinznach, until the Ambassador is well enough to go to Baden, for that then—and not until then—that town will be magnificent with fine company, it being more than twelve years since a French Ambassador had been present at the Swiss Diet. "Here's a mighty fuss about an ambassador!" exclaims our De Merveilleux, superbly; as though *his* familiarity with such personages had been so great as to breed contempt, according to the proverb. However, the advice of "the fathers of our belles" (those worthy gentlemen are spoken of throughout the letters by this circumlocutory designation, like "Mr. F.'s aunt"!) is followed. The party proceeds to Schinznach *en route* for Baden, and waits at the former place for news of his Excellency's arrival at the Diet.

Schinznach is a little bathing-place only a few miles distant from Baden, and now chiefly interesting to strangers from the fact of the hill above it being crowned by Schloss Habsburg, a ruined castle, which was the original cradle of that historic family. De Merveilleux, however, cares—probably knows—nothing about that. His thoughts are occupied with the fine company at Schinznach, and the fine clothes of the fine company. He greatly admires the "*air noble*" of certain Berne ladies whom he meets there, and the pretty faces and soft manners of some Zurich ladies; and, in short, begins to betray some inconstancy with respect to the Bâle ladies! These latter were probably less distressed by his fickleness than the gallant gentleman flatters himself; particularly as he adds, "All the same, we made no change whatever *in the matter of expenditure.*" This "we" is truly delicious when one remembers that "*Milord supplée à tout.*" Here are a few more traits from the sojourn at Schinznach:—

"These Zurich ladies are the most amiable creatures in the world; sufficiently pretty, but without the refined air of the ladies of Berne and Bâle. They have no conversation, but, to make up for that, are infinitely gentle, and not at all capricious. In their own apartments of an evening they have games of forfeits, and sometimes a lady is condemned to sing a verse of the Psalms (!), just as she might be sentenced to sing a stave of a merry ditty anywhere else. The wine of Zurich is so bad that it cannot inspire any witty sallies; it is more proper to give one the blue devils, or the colic, than to rejoice the heart. The Zurich ladies cannot speak any French, or at all events they will not.

They have very agreeable countenances, but so grave and sober an expression that, when they are out on the promenade, one would think they were going to confession." Whether this sad demeanour were due to puritanism or to the quality of the Zurich wine as described above, may be an open question. At length the Ambassador arrives at Schinznach, on his way to Baden. All is bustle and confusion at the former place, every one getting ready to depart for Baden as quickly as may be. But meanwhile the Swiss personages of distinction who happen to be at Schinznach are presented to his Excellency, who sits in a great chair in the midst of a meadow, being still unable to stand or walk much by reason of his inflamed foot; in fact, it is clear that his Excellency has the gout, although De Merveilleux does not explicitly say so. It must have been a droll scene enough, the Ambassador in his chair, surrounded by secretaries and officers and notabilities of the country, who had gone a certain distance to meet and escort him, and all the ladies, with their fine gowns and powdered heads, marching up one after the other to make their curtsies and be kissed by the great man. De Merveilleux says that the Zurich ladies were especially awkward and ill at ease during the ceremony, and looked as solemn as a parcel of village *dévotés* going up to their curé to kiss the reliquary. "And as they had no experience of such ceremonies, and did not know how gracefully to turn the cheek, some of them, in their simplicity and confusion, kissed his Excellency very heartily," much to the amusement of the bystanders.

On reaching Baden, the writer says, they felt great disappointment at the meagreness and shabbiness of the Ambassador's entertainments, in comparison with what they had been led to expect; and indeed it is abundantly proved, by a great variety of independent and contemporary testimony, that the predecessors of this Vicomte de Courteilles had displayed an almost incredibly lavish magnificence during their presence at the Diet. There were political reasons for this, several of the European monarchs desiring to captivate the good graces of the Swiss, and to win them over to their side; and, as Herr David Hess candidly and regretfully acknowledges, those independent burghers were not slow to profit by any free gifts which came in their way. "All the bath-guests who were persons of condition were welcome to dine at the Ambassador's table; and the fuller the table was, the more the ambassadors were delighted. People still talk" (1739) "of the magnificence of Messieurs Amelot and De Puizieulx, and the Count Du Luc, who surpassed them all. But this present Ambassador is very different from his predecessors. He keeps no pages, whereas the Count Du Luc had six, and as many secretaries and gentlemen in waiting. This one has secretaries who, I am told, have been lackeys, and no gentlemen in waiting at all. His predecessors had a table of fifty covers where they ate, morning and evening, to do honour to the Swiss (!). This one covers *his* board with an Ambigu"—that is to say, a meal at which all the dishes, soup, roast meat, entrées, and dessert, are placed on the table at once—"where the

vians are neither good nor hot, and where for one silver dish you may see six tin ones."

During the time of the Count Du Luc, whose magnificent hospitalities made such an impression in Baden, there occurred an incident which De Merveilleux characterises as "a trait of Swiss probity which is very surprising, but nevertheless very true." But before narrating it, it will be well to say a word or two respecting the circumstances in which it happened. In the year 1714, on the conclusion of the war of the Spanish Succession, there was held in the little town of Baden in Aargau an European Congress for the ratification of a peace, the main points of which had previously been agreed upon at Rastadt. Baden was selected for the representatives of the powers to meet in, as being within neutral territory. And already, in the month of May, the little town was in a state of extreme excitement, making preparation for the reception of the numerous and distinguished guests who were expected. Carpets, pictures, mirrors, tapestry, and all manner of costly furniture was brought in, literally in cartloads, to adorn the houses destined for the ambassadors and plenipotentiaries. Prince Eugene of Savoy represented his Imperial Austrian Majesty, the Duke de Villars the Most Christian King of France. And there were besides the Counts von Goes and von Seilern, on the part of Austria, and the Count du Luc and Monsieur de Barberie de St. Contest on that of France. The sittings of the plenipotentiaries took place in the *Rathhaus*, or Town Hall of Baden; and all those who had to attend them were lodged in the town itself, and not at the baths. Every inn was full to overflowing. The state of Berne, which possessed a fine mansion of its own in Baden, placed it at the disposition of the French Embassy. Prince Eugene of Savoy had a private house with a garden prepared for him. The rest of the high diplomatic company had to fare as best they could; and some mirth was created by some of the lesser magnates being obliged to put up in rather humble hostelries with anything but dignified titles. Some of the Austrians had to go to the "Savage;" the representative of the Duke of Modena was lodged in the "Tower of Babel;" and the plenipotentiary of the Princess de Condé was forced to put up at the "Wild Sow!" Not only the town and the baths were swarming with guests, but all the villages for miles round were crowded with people curious to see the rare spectacle of so many great folks assembled together in little Baden. Outside the gates of the town, and in the meadows bordering the road all the way to the baths, booths and stalls were erected, where pedlars of all sorts vaunted their wares; and tents, in which there was eating, drinking, and dancing all day and almost all night. The different ambassadors vied with each other in the splendour of their suites and entertainments. They drove through the narrow streets in great state coaches drawn by six horses, or were carried about in richly gilt sedan-chairs, sent expressly all the way from Paris! There were banquets, and balls, and *fêtes champêtres*, and illuminations,

and every imaginable kind of festivity. And amongst all the noble through the Count du Luc, Ambassador of France to the Swiss Confederation, particularly distinguished himself by lavish and magnificent hospitality. Now at one of this *grand seigneur's* entertainments occurred the "wonderful trait of Swiss probity" which M. de Merveilleux was so struck by. And it was this :—

The Count du Luc caused a French comedy to be performed in the theatre of Baden, to which admission was free to all who chose to attend it; and, naturally, the house was crowded. So crowded was it that numbers of persons clambered up on to the roof of the playhouse, and absolutely removed a part of the tiles and ceiling, in order to have a peep at the fine show going on below. Of course there were reserved seats for the smart ladies and gentlemen, whilst the profane vulgar scrambled and crammed itself into every vacant corner that could be found. When the comedy was over, M. du Luc offered a superb collation to the more aristocratic portion of the guests, which was served apparently in the theatre itself, and was so abundant that it filled silver plates and dishes to the value of fifty thousand crowns. De Merveilleux shall tell the rest in his own words. "No sooner had the people caught sight of this feast than they expressed a wish to have the leavings on the dishes. Many had partly uncovered the roof in order to witness the comedy, and they were not less curious to taste the collation. When once the lackeys let go a dish out of their hands, there was no getting it again; and a great part of the splendid silver plate made a journey along the roof of the house. At first M. du Luc and the other plenipotentiaries laughed heartily; but some one having remarked to the Ambassador of France that his plate was in danger, he answered—'At first I was inclined to think as you do, but having reflected that during all the time I have been in Switzerland I have never lost anything, *except six plates which were stolen from me by an unfrocked French Capuchin*, I have hopes that it will all come back again.' At ten o'clock at night" (the comedy must have been performed in the daytime) "the larger pieces of plate had not reappeared. On this the steward of Count du Luc began to be alarmed, but observing that the plate which he had already received was all well washed, he understood that these good Swiss people did not design to return the silver dirty. They had carried away the dishes to share them with their families. And sure enough, by nine o'clock the next morning there was not one article missing from his Excellency's plate-chest, and everything was perfectly cleaned. Messieurs the Plenipotentiaries of his Imperial Majesty, and the other representatives of the German courts, were filled with unspeakable surprise at this event, which is worthy of being engraved in letters of gold to the honour of the Helvetic nation."

Our author does not dwell much upon the minutiae of daily life at Baden, being chiefly occupied with narrating his conquests, and giving the reader to understand that he was an irresistible lady-killer to whom

all the *belles*, whether of Bâle, of Berne, or of Zurich, fell victims without a struggle. But he casually narrates a few traits so eminently characteristic of the manners of the time, that they bring the whole scene before us with more vivacity than De Merveilleux could have succeeded in attaining if he had set himself consciously to the task of description. Here are one or two :—

“It is a long way from the town of Baden to the faubourg in which the baths are situated. One may easily tire oneself in walking from the one to the other.” (They are about a quarter of a mile apart! and at the present time it is not uncommon to see aged persons and invalids take their “constitutional” from the baths to the town gate and back again as a matter of course every day.) “We have taken a house all to ourselves, not far from the promenade. It is in quite a solitary place, at the end of the baths, on the borders of the river Limmat. One enjoys a refreshing coolness there. This river is the most rapid I have ever seen. . . . We hardly ever go up to the town, as all the people of distinction come down to the promenade, and we have plenty of diversion. It is useless to try to shine here in the matter of clothes, for the heat of the baths tarnishes one’s gold lace immediately. . . . There are towns in Switzerland whose fashions of dress are quite different from those of France—such as the costumes of the ladies of Bâle, Lucerne, Zurich, and other more distant cantons. And when all the bath-guests are assembled together at a dance, it has the air of a lively masquerade. . . . Each family has its own *ménage*. It is very rare for any one to entertain. When the Ambassador of France is not at Baden keeping open table, there is very little in the way of pleasure there. All persons who were anybody in this country (*les gens de quelque chose en ce pays*) were so accustomed to go and make good cheer at the Ambassador’s in Baden every year, that when they compare the present times with the past, it is always with a great deal of regret. . . . The Minister did us the honour to invite us formally to dine with him. There were several ladies; amongst others, two Demoiselles S. of Schaffhausen, young ladies of quality. One of them had made several conquests among our cavaliers. There was capital diversion that day; we even drew a lottery of silver plate. The Ambassador, who found Mademoiselle S. charming, held her on his knee during nearly the whole time of the ball, notwithstanding that he was still suffering from his foot. The dancing produced an effect on these young ladies which surprised a great many persons.” (I venture to say it will surprise the reader no less; but it is too singular to be omitted.) “After they had danced a good deal, and were heated, certain little insects made their appearance from among the curls of their beautiful hair, which produced a rather disagreeable impression.” (One would be inclined to suppose so!) “But these young ladies had such delicate and fair skins that it was really a pleasure to help them to get rid of this vermin (*sic*) as fast as it appeared. Since the German ladies are in the habit of powdering their hair day after day

without thoroughly combing it, it is not surprising that these little animals multiply very quickly."

It must have been a robust taste for beauty which could survive such an incident. But De Merveilleux was clearly no whit disgusted by it; nor, indeed, does anyone else appear to have been so either. The delicacy of temperament which found the distance between Baden and the baths a fatiguing walk, was proof against an evidence of dirty habits which might revolt a scavenger. *Nous avons changé tout cela!* Now-a-days the finest ladies and gentlemen are perfectly capable of walking a quarter of a mile, and perfectly incapable of leaving their hair uncombed.

"These Demoiselles S. were not the only beauties who appeared at this impromptu ball. There were several other very handsome women, with their husbands and gallants. The Zurich ladies would fain have been of the party, but they were not permitted to frequent the house of the French Ambassador, because their canton would not enter into the proposition of renewing the alliance with the king; it was even considered a crime in a citizen of Zurich to frequent the Hôtel de France. Their wives and daughters were obliged to content themselves with walking about in the Ambassador's gardens. His Excellency sat out there for a time in a great easy chair, because of his lame foot, and all the ladies came up to make their courtesies to him, which gave him the opportunity of saluting these fair bourgeoises with a kiss, as I have described on his arrival at Schinznach."

And here we must take leave of M. De Merveilleux and his fine company, with their rose-coloured silk stockings, hair-powder, and other peculiarities.

Herr David Hess, in his voluminous book upon Baden, gives several curious details of manners during the latter half of the eighteenth century and the earlier years of the present one. There existed down to the period of the great French Revolution a formal tribunal for sumptuary regulations in Zurich, which was known by the name of "The Reformation." Citizens of Zurich, male and female, were forbidden to wear jewellery of any sort or description. The women might not adorn their heads with feathers, flowers, or any ornament whatsoever except a simple silken ribbon. The men's coats were to be neither of silk, satin, nor velvet, nor even to be lined with those costly materials. Lace was forbidden, except a small quantity on the women's caps; gold embroidery was forbidden; blonde, fringe, open-work on silk or linen, gauze, galloon—all were forbidden, and the most puritanical simplicity of dress rigidly enforced. But Baden was beyond the jurisdiction of this tribunal; and in Baden the Zurichers were wont to flaunt the forbidden finery under the very noses of any of their stern censors who might happen to be taking the waters there! Many persons expended considerable sums on rich garments, to be worn merely during the few weeks of their stay in Baden, and then consigned to chests and presses

for the rest of the year. Family jewels were taken out from antique caskets to adorn throat, and ears, and fingers in the gay assemblies at the baths, and then to be consigned again—not without many sighs—to their hiding-places when the fair owners returned to the merciless rule of "The Reformation" in Zurich.

There are other quaint particulars of the time to be gathered from Hess's book ; but, considering the exigencies of time and space, we must content ourselves with the foregoing glimpses of life in a Swiss watering-place, from the time of the Council of Constance in 1414 down to the year 1739.

Loch Carron, Western Highlands.

A BLACK and glassy float, opaque and still,
 The loch, at farthest ebb supine in sleep,
 Reversing, mirrored in its luminous deep,
 The quiet skies ; the solemn spurs of hill,

Brown heather, yellow corn, gray wisps of haze ;
 The white low cots, black windowed, plumed with smoke ;
 The trees beyond. And when the ripple awoke,
 They wavered with the jarred and wavering glaze.

The air was dim and dreamy. Evermore
 A sound of hidden waters whispered near.

A straggler crow cawed high and thin. A bird

Chirped from the birch-leaves. Round the shingled shere,
 Yellow with weed, came wandering, vague and clear,
 Mysterious vowels and gutturals, idly heard.

Hours in a Library.

No. XVI.—MASSINGER.

IN one of the best of his occasional essays, Kingsley held a brief for the plaintiffs in the old case of Puritans *versus* Playwrights. The litigation in which this case represents a minor issue has lasted for a period far exceeding that of the most pertinacious lawsuit, and is not likely to come to an end within any assignable limits of time. When the discussion is pressed home, it is seen to involve fundamentally different conceptions of human life and its purposes; and it can only cease when we have discovered the grounds of a permanent conciliation between the ethical and the æsthetic elements of human nature. The narrower controversy between the stage and the Church has itself a long history. It has left some curious marks upon English literature. The prejudice which uttered itself through the Puritan Prynne was inherited, in a later generation, by the High-Churchmen Collier and William Law. The attack, it is true, may be intentionally directed—as in Kingsley's essay—against the abuse of the stage rather than against the stage itself. Kingsley pays the usual tribute to Shakespeare whilst denouncing the whole literature of which Shakespeare's dramas are the most conspicuous product. But then, everybody always distinguishes in terms between the use and the abuse; and the line of demarcation generally turns out to be singularly fluctuating and uncertain. You can hardly demolish Beaumont and Fletcher without bringing down some of the outlying pinnacles, if not shaking the very foundations, of the temple sacred to Shakespeare.

It would be regrettable, could one stop to regret the one-sided and illogical construction of the human mind, that a fair judgment in such matters seems to require incompatible qualities. Your impartial critic or historian is generally a man who leaves out of account nothing but the essential. His impartiality means sympathy with the commonplace and incapacity for understanding heroic faith and overpowering enthusiasm. He fancies that a man or a book can be judged by balancing a list of virtues and vices as if they were separate entities lying side by side in a box, instead of different aspects of a vital force. On the other hand, the vivid imagination which restores dead bones to life makes its possessor a partisan in extinct quarrels, and as short-sighted and unfair a partisan as the original actors. Roundheads and Cavaliers have been dead these two centuries.

Dumb are those names erewhile in battle loud;
 Dreamfooted as the shadow of a cloud
 They flit across the ear.

Yet few even amongst modern writers are capable of doing justice to both sides without first making both sides colourless. Hallam judges men in the throes of a revolution as though they were parties in a law-suit to be decided by precedents and parchments, and Mr. Carlyle cannot appreciate Cromwell's magnificent force of character without making him all but infallible and impeccable. Critics of the early drama are equally one-sided. The exquisite literary faculty of Charles Lamb revelled in detecting beauties which had been covered with the dust of oblivion during the reign of Pope. His appreciation was intensified by that charm of discovery which finds its typical utterance in Keats's famous sonnet. He was scarcely a more impartial judge of Fletcher or Ford than "Stout Cortes" of the new world revealed by his enterprise. We may willingly defer to his judgment of the relative value of the writers whom he discusses, but we must qualify his judgment of their intrinsic excellence by the recollection that he speaks as a lover. To him and other unqualified admirers of the old drama the Puritanical onslaught upon the stage presented itself as the advent of a gloomy superstition, ruthlessly stamping out all that was beautiful in art and literature. Kingsley, an admirable hater, could perceive only the opposite aspect of the phenomena. To him the Puritan protest appears as the voice of the enlightened conscience; the revolution means the troubling of the turbid waters at the descent of the angel; Prynne's *Histriomastix* is the blast of the trumpet at which the rotten and polluted walls of Jericho are to crumble into dust. The stage, which represented the tone of aristocratic society, rightfully perished with the order which it flattered. Courtiers had learnt to indulge in a cynical mockery of virtue, or found an unholy attraction in the accumulation of extravagant horrors. The English drama, in short, was one of those evil growths which are fostered by deeply-seated social corruption, and are killed off by the breath of a purer air. That such phenomena occur at times is undeniable. Mr. Symonds has recently shown us in his history of the Renaissance, how the Italian literature, to which our English dramatists owed so many suggestions, was the natural fruit of a society poisoned at the roots. Nor, when we have shaken off that spirit of slavish adulation in which modern antiquarians and critics have regarded the so-called Elizabethan dramatists, can we deny that there are symptoms of a similar mischief in their writings. Some of the most authoritative testimonials have a suspicious element. Praise has been lavished upon the most questionable characteristics of the old drama. Apologists have been found, not merely for its daring portrayal of human passion, but for its wanton delight in the grotesque and the horrible for its own sake; and some critics have revenged themselves for the straitlaced censures of Puritan morality by praising work in which the author strives to atone for imaginative weakness by a choice of revolting motives. Such adulation ought to have disappeared with the first fervour of rehabilitation. Much that

has been praised in the old drama is rubbish, and some of it disgusting rubbish.

The question, however, remains, how far we ought to adopt either view of the situation? Are we bound to cast aside the later dramas of the school as simply products of corruption? It may be of interest to consider the light thrown upon this question by the works of Massinger, nearly the last of the writers who can really claim a permanent position in literature. Massinger, born in 1584, died in 1639. His surviving works were composed, with one exception, after 1620. They represent, therefore, the tastes of the play-going classes during the rapid development of the great struggle which culminated in the rebellion. In a literary sense it is the period when the imaginative impulse represented by the great dramatists was running low. It is curious to reflect that, if Shakespeare had lived out his legitimate allowance of threescore years and ten, he might have witnessed the production, not only of the first but nearly all the best works of his school; had his life been prolonged for ten years more, he would have witnessed its final extinction. Within these narrow limits of time the drama had undergone a change corresponding to the change in the national mood. The difference, for example, between Marlowe and Massinger at the opening and the close of the period — though their births were separated by only twenty years — corresponds to the difference between the temper of the generation which repelled the Armada and the temper of the generation which fretted under the rule of the first Stuarts. The misnomer of Elizabethan as applied to the whole school indicates an implicit perception that its greater achievements were due to the same impulse which took for its outward and visible symbol the name of the great Queen. But it has led also to writers being too summarily classed together who really represent very different phases in a remarkable evolution. After making all allowances for personal idiosyncrasies, we can still see how profoundly the work of Massinger is coloured by the predominant sentiment of the later epoch.

As little is known of Massinger's life as of the lives of most of the contemporary dramatists who had the good or ill fortune to be born before the days of the modern biographical mania. It is known that he, like most of his brethren, suffered grievously from impecuniosity; and he records in one of his dedications his obligations to a patron without whose bounty he would for many years have "but faintly subsisted." His father had been employed by Henry, Earl of Pembroke; but Massinger, though acknowledging a certain debt of gratitude to the Herbert family, can hardly have received from them any effective patronage. Whatever their relations may have been, it has been pointed out by Mr. Rawson Gardiner* that Massinger probably sympathised with the political views represented by the two sons of his father's patron who were successively Earls of Pembroke during the reigns of the first James

* *Contemporary Review* for August 1876.

and Charles. On two occasions he got into trouble with the licenser for attacks, real or supposed, upon the policy of the government. More than one of his plays contain, according to Mr. Gardiner, references to the politics of the day as distinct as those conveyed by a cartoon in *Punch*. The general result of his argument is to show that Massinger sympathised with the views of an aristocratic party who looked with suspicion upon the despotic tendencies of Charles's government, and thought that they could manage refractory parliaments by adopting a more spirited foreign policy. Though in reality weak and selfish enough, they affected to protest against the materialising and oppressive policy of the extreme royalists. How far these views represented any genuine convictions, and how far Massinger's adhesion implied a complete sympathy with them, or might indicate that kind of delusion which often leads a mere literary observer to see a lofty intention in the schemes of a selfish politician, are questions which I am incompetent to discuss and which obviously do not admit of a decided answer. They confirm, as far as they go, the general impression as to Massinger's point of view which we should derive from his writings without special interpretation. Shakespeare, says Coleridge, gives "the permanent politics of human nature" (whatever they may be!), "and the only predilection which appears shows itself in his contempt of mobs and the populace. Massinger is a decided Whig; Beaumont and Fletcher high-flying, passive-obedience Tories." The author of *Coriolanus*, one would be disposed to say, showed himself a thoroughgoing aristocrat, though in an age when the popular voice had not yet given utterance to systematic political discontent. He was still a stranger to the sentiments symptomatic of an approaching revolution, and has not explicitly pronounced upon issues hardly revealed even to

The prophetic soul

Of the wide world dreaming of things to come.

The sense of national unity evolved in the great struggle with Spain had not yet been lost in the discord of the rising generation. The other classifications may be accepted with less reserve. The dramatists represented the views of their patrons. The drama reflected in the main the sentiments of an aristocratic class alarmed by the growing vigour of the Puritanical citizens. Fletcher is, as Coleridge says, a thoroughgoing Tory; his sentiments in *Valentinian* are, to follow the same guidance, so "very slavish and reptile" that it is a trial of charity to read them. Nor can we quite share Coleridge's rather odd surprise that they should emanate from the son of a bishop, and that the duty to God should be the supposed basis. A servile bishop in those days was not a contradiction in terms, and still less a servile son of a bishop; and it must surely be admitted that the theory of Divine Right may lead, however illogically, to reptile sentiments. The difference between Fletcher and Massinger, who were occasional collaborators and apparently close friends (Massinger, it is said, was buried in Fletcher's grave), was probably due

to difference of temperament as much as to the character of Massinger's family connection. Massinger's melancholy is as marked as the buoyant gaiety of his friend and ally. He naturally represents the misgivings which must have beset the more thoughtful members of his party, as Fletcher represented the careless vivacity of the Cavalier spirit. Massinger is given to expatiating upon the text that

Subjects' lives

Are not their prince's tennis-balls, to be banded
In sport away.

The high-minded Pulcheria, in the *Emperor of the East*, administers a bitter reproof to a slavish "projector" who

Roars out

All is the King's, his will above the laws ;

who whispers in his ear that nobody should bring a salad from his garden without paying "gabel" or kill a hen without excise ; who suggests that, if a prince wants a sum of money, he may make impossible demands from a city and exact arbitrary fines for its non-performance.

Is this the way

To make our Emperor happy? Can the groans
Of his subjects yield him music? Must his thresholds
Be wash'd with widows' and wrong'd orphans' tears,
Or his power grow contemptible?

Mr. Gardiner tells us that at the time at which these lines were written they need not have been taken as referring to Charles. But the vein of sentiment which often occurs elsewhere is equally significant of Massinger's view of the political situation of the time. We see what were the topics that were beginning to occupy men's minds.

Dryden made the remark, often quoted for purposes of indignant reprobation by modern critics, that Beaumont and Fletcher "understood and imitated the conversation of gentlemen much better" (than Shakespeare); "whose wild debaucheries and quickness of wit in repartees no poet can ever paint as they did." It is, of course, easy enough to reply that in the true sense of the word "gentleman" Shakespeare's heroes are incomparably superior to those of his successors; but then this is just the sense in which Dryden did not use the word. His real meaning indicates a very sound piece of historical criticism. Fletcher describes a new social type; the "King's Young Courtier" who is deserting the good old ways of his father, the "old courtier of the Queen." The change is but one step in that continuous process which has substituted the modern gentleman for the old feudal noble; but the step taken at that period was great and significant. The chivalrous type, represented in Sidney's life and Spenser's poetry, is beginning to be old-fashioned and out of place as the industrial elements of society become more prominent. The aristocrat in the rising generation finds that his occupation is going. He takes to those "wild debaucheries" which Dryden oddly reckons among the attributes of a true gentleman; and learns the art of "quick repartee" in the courtly

society which has time enough on its hands to make a business of amusement. The euphuism and allied affectations of the earlier generation had a certain grace, as the external clothing of a serious chivalrous sentiment; but it is rapidly passing into a silly coxcombry to be crushed by Puritanism or snuffed out by the worldly cynicism of the new generation. Shakespeare's Henry or Romeo may indulge in wild freaks or abandon themselves to the intense passions of vigorous youth; but they will settle down into good statesmen and warriors as they grow older. Their love-making is a phase in their development, not the business of their lives. Fletcher's heroes seem to be not only occupied for the moment, but to make a permanent profession of what with their predecessors was a passing phase of youthful ebullience. It is true that we have still a long step to make before we sink to the mere *roué*, the shameless scape-grace and cynical man about town of the restoration. To make a Wycherley you must distil all the poetry out of a Fletcher. Fletcher is a true poet; and the graceful sentiment, though mixed with a coarse alloy, still repels that unmitigated grossness which, according to Burke's famous aphorism, is responsible for half the evil of vice. He is still alive to generous and tender emotions, though it can scarcely be said that his morality has much substance in it. It is a sentiment, not a conviction, and covers, without quenching many ugly and brutal emotions.

In Fletcher's wild gallants, still adorned by a touch of the chivalrous; reckless, immoral, but scarcely cynical; not sceptical as to the existence of virtue, but only admitting morality by way of parenthesis to the habitual current of their thoughts, we recognise the kind of stuff from which to frame the cavaliers who will follow Rupert and be crushed by Cromwell. A characteristic sentiment which occurs constantly in the drama of the period represents the soldier out of work. We are incessantly treated to lamentations upon the ingratitude of the comfortable citizens who care nothing for the men to whom they owed their security. The political history of the times explains the popularity of such complaints. Englishmen were fretting under their enforced abstinence from the exciting struggles on the Continent. There was no want of Dugald Dalgettys returning from the wars to afford models for the military braggart or the bluff honest soldier, both of whom go swaggering through so many of the plays of the time. Clarendon in his *Life* speaks of the temptations which beset him from mixing with the military society of the time. There was a large and increasing class, no longer finding occupation in fighting Spaniards and searching for Eldorado, and consequently, in the Yankee phrase, "spoiling for a fight." When the time comes, they will be ready enough to fight gallantly and to show an utter incapacity for serious discipline. They will meet the citizens, whom they have mocked so merrily, and find that reckless courage and spasmodic chivalry do not exhaust the qualifications for military success.

Massinger represents a different turn of sentiment which would be

encouraged in their minds by the same social conditions. Instead of abandoning himself frankly to the stream of youthful sentiment, he feels that it has a dangerous aspect. The shadow of coming evils was already dark enough to suggest various forebodings. But he is also a moraliser by temperament. Mr. Ward says that his strength is owing in a great degree to his appreciation of the great moral forces; and the remark is only a confirmation of the judgment of most of his critics. It is, of course, not merely that he is fond of adding little moral tags of questionable applicability to the end of his plays. "We are taught," he says in the *Fatal Dowry*,

By this sad precedent, how just soever
Our reasons are to remedy our wrongs,
We are yet to leave them to their will and power
That to that purpose have authority.

But it is, to say the least, doubtful whether anybody would have that judicious doctrine much impressed upon him by seeing the play itself. Nor can one rely much upon the elaborate and very eloquent defence of his art in the *Roman Actor*. Paris, the actor, sets forth very vigorously that the stage tends to lay bare the snares to which youth is exposed and to inflame a noble ambition by example. If the discharge of such a function deserves reward from the Commonwealth—

Actors may put in for as large a share
As all the sects of the philosophers;—
They with cold precepts—perhaps seldom read—
Deliver what an honourable thing
The active virtue is; but does that fire
The blood, or swell the veins with emulation
To be both good and great, equal to that
Which is presented in our theatres?

Massinger goes on to show, after the fashion of Jaques in *As You Like It*, that the man who chooses to put on the cap is responsible for the application of the satire. He had good reasons, as we have seen, for feeling sensitive as to misunderstandings—or, rather, too thorough understandings—of this kind.

To some dramatists of the time, who should put forward such a plea, one would be inclined to answer in the sensible words of old Fuller. "Two things," he says, "are set forth to us in stage-plays; some grave sentences, prudent counsels, and punishment of vicious examples: and with these desperate oaths, lustful talk, and riotous acts, are so personated to the life, that wantons are tickled with delight, and feed their palates upon them. It seems the goodness is not pourtrayed with equal accents of liveliness as the wicked things are; otherwise men would be deterred from vicious courses, with seeing the woful success which follows them"—a result scarcely to be claimed by the actors of the day. Massinger, however, shows more moral feeling than is expended in providing sentiments to be tacked on as an external appendage, or satisfied by an obedience to the demands of poetic justice. He is not content with

knocking his villains on the head—a practice in which he, like his contemporaries, indulges with only too much complacency. The idea which underlies most of his plays is a struggle of virtue assailed by external or inward temptations. He is interested by the ethical problems introduced in the play of conflicting passions, and never more eloquent than in uttering the emotions of militant or triumphant virtue. His view of life indeed is not only grave, but has a distinct religious colouring. From various indications, it is probable that he was a Roman Catholic. Some of these are grotesque enough. The *Renegado*, for example, not only shows that Massinger was, for dramatic purposes at least, an ardent believer in baptismal regeneration, but includes—what one would scarcely have sought in such a place—a discussion as to the validity of lay-baptism. The first of his surviving plays, the *Virgin Martyr* (in which he was assisted by Dekker) is simply a dramatic version of an ecclesiastical legend. Though it seems to have been popular at the time, the modern reader will probably think that, in this case at least, the religious element is a little out of place. An angel and a devil take an active part in the performance; miracles are worked on the stage; the unbelievers are so shockingly wicked, and the Christians so obtrusively good, that we—the worldly-minded—are sensible of a little recalcitration, unless we are disarmed by the simplicity of the whole performance. Religious tracts of all ages and in all forms are apt to produce this ambiguous effect. Unless we are quite in harmony with their assumptions, we feel that they deal too much in conventional rose colour. The angelic and diabolic elements are not so clearly discriminated in this world, and should show themselves less unequivocally on the stage, which ought to be its mirror. An audience in the state of mind which generates the true miracle-play might justify such an embodiment of its sentiment. But when forcibly transplanted to the Jacobean stage, we feel that the performance has not the simple earnestness by which alone it can be justified. The sentiment has a certain unreality, and the *naïveté* suggests affectation. The implied belief is got up for the moment and has a hollow ring. And therefore, the whole work, in spite of some eloquence, is nothing better than a curiosity, as an attempt at the assimilation of a heterogeneous form of art.

A similar vein of sentiment, though not showing itself in so undiluted a form, runs through most of Massinger's plays. He is throughout a sentimentalist and a rhetorician. He is not, like the greatest men, dominated by thoughts and emotions which force him to give them external embodiment in life-like symbols. He is rather a man of much real feeling and extraordinary facility of utterance, who finds in his stories convenient occasions for indulging in elaborate didactic utterances upon moral topics. It is probably this comparative weakness of the higher imaginative faculty which makes Lamb speak of him rather disparagingly. He is too self-conscious and too anxious to enforce downright moral sentiments to satisfy a critic by whom spontaneous force and direct insight

were rightly regarded as the highest poetic qualities. A single touch in Shakespeare, or even in Webster or Ford, often reveals more depth of feeling than a whole scene of Massinger's facile and often deliberately forensic eloquence. His temperament is indicated by the peculiarities of his style. It is, as Coleridge says, poetry differentiated by the smallest possible degree from prose. The greatest artists of blank verse have so complete a mastery of their language that it is felt as a fibre which runs through and everywhere strengthens the harmony, and is yet in complete subordination to the sentiment. With a writer of the second order, such as Fletcher, the metre becomes more prominent, and at times produces a kind of monotonous sing-song, which begins to remind us unpleasantly of the still more artificial tone characteristic of the rhymed tragedies of the next generation. Massinger diverges in the opposite direction. The metre is felt enough and only just enough to give a more stately step to rather florid prose. It is one of his marks that a line frequently ends by some insignificant "of" or "from," so as to exclude the briefest possible pause in reading. Thus, to take an example pretty much at random, the following instance might be easily read without observing that it was blank verse at all:—

"Your brave achievements in the war, and what you did for me, unspoken, because I would not force the sweetness of your modesty to a blush, are written here; and that there might be nothing wanting to sum up my numerous engagements (never in my hopes to be cancelled), the great duke, our mortal enemy, when my father's country lay open to his fury and the spoil of the victorious army, and I brought into his power, hath shown himself so noble, so full of honour, temperance, and all virtues that can set off a prince; that, though I cannot render him that respect I would, I am bound in thankfulness to admire him."

Such a style is suitable to a man whose moods do not often hurry him into impetuous, or vivacious, or epigrammatic utterance. As the Persian poet says of his country: his warmth is not heat and his coolness is not cold. He flows on in a quiet current, never breaking into foam or fury, but vigorous, and invariably lucid. As a pleader before a law-court—the character in which, as Mr. Ward observes, he has a peculiar fondness for presenting himself—he would carry his audience along with him, but scarcely hold them in spell-bound astonishment or hurry them into fits of excitement. Melancholy resignation, or dignified dissatisfaction will find in him a powerful exponent, but scarcely despair, or love, or hatred, or any social phase of pure unqualified passion.

The natural field for the display of such qualities is the romantic drama, which Massinger took from the hands of Beaumont and Fletcher, and endowed with greater dignity and less poetic fervour. For the vigorous comedy of real life, as Jonson understood it, he has simply no capacity; and in his rare attempts at humour, succeeds only in being at once dull and dirty. His stage is generally occupied with dignified lords and ladies, professing the most chivalrous sentiments,

which are occasionally too highflown and overstrained to be thoroughly effective, but which are yet uttered with sufficient sincerity. They are not mere hollow pretences, consciously adopted to conceal base motives; but one feels the want of an occasional infusion of the bracing air of common sense. It is the voice of a society still inspired with the traditional sentiments of honour and self-respect, but a little afraid of contact with the rough realities of life. Its chivalry is a survival from a past epoch, not a spontaneous outgrowth of the most vital elements of contemporary development. In another generation, such a tone will be adopted by a conscious and deliberate artifice, and be reflected in mere theatrical rant. In the past, it was the natural expression of a high-spirited race, full of self-confidence and pride in its own vigorous audacity. In this transitional period it has a certain hectic flush, symptomatic of approaching decay; anxious to give a wide berth to realities, and most at home in the border-land where dreams are only half dispelled by the light of common day. *Don Quixote* had sounded the knell of the old romance, but something of the old spirit still lingers, and can tinge with an interest, not yet wholly artificial, the lives and passions of beings who are thus hovering on the outskirts of the living world. The situations most characteristic of Massinger's tendency are in harmony with this tone of sentiment. They are romances taken from a considerable variety of sources, developed in a clearly connected series of scenes. They are wanting in the imaginative unity of the great plays, which show that a true poet has been profoundly moved by some profound thought embodied in a typical situation. He does not, like Shakespeare, seize his subject by the heart, because it has first fascinated his imagination; nor, on the other hand, have we that bewildering complexity of motives and intricacy of plot which shows at best a lawless and wandering fancy; and which often fairly puzzles us in many English plays, and enforces frequent reference to the list of personages in order to disentangle the crossing threads of the action. The plays are a gradual unravelling of a series of incidents, each following intelligibly from the preceding situation, and suggestive of many eloquent observations, though not developments of one master-thought. We often feel that, if external circumstances had been propitious, he would have expressed himself more naturally in the form of a prose romance than in a drama. Nor, again, does he often indulge in those exciting and horrible situations which possessed such charms for his contemporaries. There are occasions, it is true, in which this element is not wanting. In the *Unnatural Combat*, for example, we have a father killing his son in a duel, by the end of the second act; and when, after a succession of horrors of the worst kind, we are treated to a ghost, "full of wounds, leading in the shadow of a lady, her face leprous," and the worst criminal is killed by a flash of lightning, we feel that we were fully entitled to such a catastrophe. We can only say, in Massinger's words,—

May we make use of
 This great example, and learn from it that
 There cannot be a want of power above
 To punish murder and unlawful love!

The *Duke of Milan*, again, culminates with a horrible scene, rivaling, though with less power, the grotesque horrors of Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*. Other instances might be given of concessions to that blood-and-thunder style of dramatic writing for which our ancestors had a never-failing appetite. But, as a rule, Massinger inclines, as far as contemporary writers will allow him, to the side of mercy. Instead of using slaughter so freely that a new set of actors has to be introduced to bury the old—a misfortune which sometimes occurs in the plays of the time—he generally tends to a happy solution, and is disposed not only to dismiss his virtuous characters to felicity, but even to make his villains virtuous. We have not been excited to that pitch at which our passions can only be harmonised by an effusion of blood, and a mild solution is sufficient for the calmer feelings which have been aroused.

This tendency illustrates Massinger's conception of life in another sense. Nothing is more striking in the early stage than the vigour of character of most of these heroes. Individual character, as it is said, takes the place in the modern of fate in the ancient drama. Every man is run in a mould of iron, and may break, but cannot bend. The fitting prologue to the whole literature is provided by Marlowe's Tamburlaine, with his superhuman audacity, and vast bombastic rants, the incarnation of a towering ambition which scorns all laws but its own devouring passion. Faustus, braving all penalties, human and divine, is another variety of the same type; and when we have to do with a weak character like Edward II., we feel that it is his natural destination to be confined in a loathsome dungeon, with mouldy bread to eat and ditch-water to drink. The world is for the daring; and though daring may be pushed to excess, weakness is the one unpardonable offence. A thoroughgoing villain is better than a trembling saint. If Shakespeare's instinctive taste revealed the absurdity of the bombastic exaggeration of such tendencies, his characters are equally unbending. His villains die, like Macbeth and Iago, with their teeth set, and scorn even a deathbed repentance. Hamlet exhibits the unfitness for a world of action of the man who is foolish enough to see two sides to every question. So again, Chapman, the writer who in fulness and fire of thought approaches most nearly to Shakespeare, is an ardent worshipper of pure energy of character. His Bussy d'Ambois cannot be turned from his purpose even by the warnings of the ghost of his accomplice, and a mysterious spirit summoned expressly to give advice. An admirably vigorous phrase from one of the many declamations of his hero Byron—another representative of the same haughty strength of will—gives his theory of character:—

Give me a spirit that on this life's rough sea
Loves t' have his sail filled with a lusty wind,
Even till his sailyards tremble, his masts crack,
And his rapt ship run on her side so low
That she drinks water, and her keel plows air.

Pure, undiluted energy, stern force of will, delight in danger for its own sake, contempt for all laws but the self-imposed, those are the cardinal virtues, and challenge our sympathy even when they lead their possessor to destruction. The psychology implied in Jonson's treating of "humour" is another phase of the same sentiment. The side by which energetic characters lend themselves to comedy is the exaggeration of some special trait which determines their course as tyrannically as ambition governs the character suited for tragedy.

When we turn to Massinger, this boundless vigour has disappeared. The blood has grown cool. The tyrant no longer forces us to admiration by the fullness of his vitality, and the magnificence of his contempt for law. Whether for good or bad, he is comparatively a poor creature. He has developed an uneasy conscience, and even whilst affecting to defy the law, trembles at the thought of an approaching retribution. His boasts have a shrill, querulous note in them. His creator does not fully sympathize with his passion. Massinger cannot throw himself into the situation; and is anxious to dwell upon the obvious moral considerations which prove such characters to be decidedly inconvenient members of society for their tamer neighbours. He is of course the more in accordance with a correct code of morality, but fails correspondingly in dramatic force and brilliance of colour. To exhibit a villain truly, even to enable us to realize the true depth of his villainy, one must be able for a moment to share his point of view, and therefore to understand the true law of his being. It is a very sound rule in the conduct of life, that we should not sympathize with scoundrels. But the morality of the poet, as of the scientific psychologist, is founded upon the unflinching veracity which sets forth all motives with absolute impartiality. Some sort of provisional sympathy with the wicked there must be, or they become mere impossible monsters or the conventional scarecrows of improving tracts.

This is Massinger's weakest side. His villains want backbone, and his heroes are deficient in simple overmastering passion, or supplement their motives by some overstrained and unnatural crotchet. Impulsiveness takes the place of vigour, and indicates the want of a vigorous grasp of the situation. Thus, for example, the *Duke of Milan*, which is certainly amongst the more impressive of Massinger's plays, may be described as a variation upon the theme of *Othello*. To measure the work of any other writer by its relation to that masterpiece is, of course, to apply a test of undue severity. Of comparison, properly speaking, there can be no question. The similarity of the situation, however, may bring out Massinger's characteristics. The Duke, who takes the place of *Othello*, is, like his prototype, a brave soldier. The most spirited and

May we make use of
 This great example, and learn from it that
 There cannot be a want of power above
 To punish murder and unlawful love!

The *Duke of Milan*, again, culminates with a horrible scene, rivaling, though with less power, the grotesque horrors of Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*. Other instances might be given of concessions to that blood-and-thunder style of dramatic writing for which our ancestors had a never-failing appetite. But, as a rule, Massinger inclines, as far as contemporary writers will allow him, to the side of mercy. Instead of using slaughter so freely that a new set of actors has to be introduced to bury the old—a misfortune which sometimes occurs in the plays of the time—he generally tends to a happy solution, and is disposed not only to dismiss his virtuous characters to felicity, but even to make his villains virtuous. We have not been excited to that pitch at which our passions can only be harmonised by an effusion of blood, and a mild solution is sufficient for the calmer feelings which have been aroused.

This tendency illustrates Massinger's conception of life in another sense. Nothing is more striking in the early stage than the vigour of character of most of these heroes. Individual character, as it is said, takes the place in the modern of fate in the ancient drama. Every man is run in a mould of iron, and may break, but cannot bend. The fitting prologue to the whole literature is provided by Marlowe's Tamburlaine, with his superhuman audacity, and vast bombastic rants, the incarnation of a towering ambition which scorns all laws but its own devouring passion. Faustus, braving all penalties, human and divine, is another variety of the same type; and when we have to do with a weak character like Edward II., we feel that it is his natural destination to be confined in a loathsome dungeon, with mouldy bread to eat and ditch-water to drink. The world is for the daring; and though daring may be pushed to excess, weakness is the one unpardonable offence. A thoroughgoing villain is better than a trembling saint. If Shakespeare's instinctive taste revealed the absurdity of the bombastic exaggeration of such tendencies, his characters are equally unbending. His villains die, like Macbeth and Iago, with their teeth set, and scorn even a deathbed repentance. Hamlet exhibits the unfitness for a world of action of the man who is foolish enough to see two sides to every question. So again, Chapman, the writer who in fulness and fire of thought approaches most nearly to Shakespeare, is an ardent worshipper of pure energy of character. His Bussy d'Ambois cannot be turned from his purpose even by the warnings of the ghost of his accomplice, and a mysterious spirit summoned expressly to give advice. An admirably vigorous phrase from one of the many declamations of his hero Byron—another representative of the same haughty strength of will—gives his theory of character:—

Give me a spirit that on this life's rough sea
Loves t' have his sail filled with a lusty wind,
Even till his sailyards tremble, his masts crack,
And his rapt ship run on her side so low
That she drinks water, and her keel plows air.

Pure, undiluted energy, stern force of will, delight in danger for its own sake, contempt for all laws but the self-imposed, those are the cardinal virtues, and challenge our sympathy even when they lead their possessor to destruction. The psychology implied in Jonson's treating of "humour" is another phase of the same sentiment. The side by which energetic characters lend themselves to comedy is the exaggeration of some special trait which determines their course as tyrannically as ambition governs the character suited for tragedy.

When we turn to Massinger, this boundless vigour has disappeared. The blood has grown cool. The tyrant no longer forces us to admiration by the fullness of his vitality, and the magnificence of his contempt for law. Whether for good or bad, he is comparatively a poor creature. He has developed an uneasy conscience, and even whilst affecting to defy the law, trembles at the thought of an approaching retribution. His boasts have a shrill, querulous note in them. His creator does not fully sympathize with his passion. Massinger cannot throw himself into the situation; and is anxious to dwell upon the obvious moral considerations which prove such characters to be decidedly inconvenient members of society for their tamer neighbours. He is of course the more in accordance with a correct code of morality, but fails correspondingly in dramatic force and brilliance of colour. To exhibit a villain truly, even to enable us to realize the true depth of his villainy, one must be able for a moment to share his point of view, and therefore to understand the true law of his being. It is a very sound rule in the conduct of life, that we should not sympathize with scoundrels. But the morality of the poet, as of the scientific psychologist, is founded upon the unflinching veracity which sets forth all motives with absolute impartiality. Some sort of provisional sympathy with the wicked there must be, or they become mere impossible monsters or the conventional scarecrows of improving tracts.

This is Massinger's weakest side. His villains want backbone, and his heroes are deficient in simple overmastering passion, or supplement their motives by some overstrained and unnatural crotchet. Impulsiveness takes the place of vigour, and indicates the want of a vigorous grasp of the situation. Thus, for example, the *Duke of Milan*, which is certainly amongst the more impressive of Massinger's plays, may be described as a variation upon the theme of *Othello*. To measure the work of any other writer by its relation to that masterpiece is, of course, to apply a test of undue severity. Of comparison, properly speaking, there can be no question. The similarity of the situation, however, may bring out Massinger's characteristics. The Duke, who takes the place of *Othello*, is, like his prototype, a brave soldier. The most spirited and

kind of audience which would be most flattering to an able preacher, but in which a wise preacher would put little confidence. And, therefore, besides the fanciful incident of the picture, they give us an impression of unreality. They have no rich blood in their veins; and are little better than lay figures taking up positions as it may happen, in order to form an effective tableau illustrative of an unexceptionable moral.

There is, it is true, one remarkable exception to the general weakness of Massinger's characters. The vigour with which Sir Giles Overreach is set forth has made him the one well-known figure in Massinger's gallery, and the *New Way to Pay Old Debts* showed in consequence more vitality than any of his other plays. Much praise has been given, and rightly enough, to the originality and force of the conception. The conventional miser is elevated into a great man by a kind of inverse heroism, and made terrible instead of contemptible. But it is equally plain that here, too, Massinger fails to project himself fairly into his villain. His rants are singularly forcible, but they are clearly what other people would think about him, not what he would really think, still less what he would say, of himself. Take, for example, the very fine speech in which he replies to the question of the virtuous nobleman, whether he is not frightened by the imprecations of his victims:—

Yes, as rocks are

When foaming billows split themselves against

Their flinty sides; or as the moon is moved

When wolves, with hunger pined, howl at her brightness.

I am of a solid temper, and, like these,

Steer on a constant course; with mine own sword,

If called into the field, I can make that right

Which fearful enemies murmur at as wrong.

Now, for those other piddling complaints

Breath'd out in bitterness, as when they call me

Extortioner, tyrant, cormorant, or intruder

On my poor neighbour's rights, or grand incloser

Of what was common to my private use,

Nay when my ears are pierced with widows' cries,

And undone orphans wash with tears my threshold,

I only think what 'tis to have my daughter

Right honourable; and 'tis a powerful charm

Makes me insensible to remorse or pity,

Or the least sting of conscience.

Put this into the third person; read "he" for "I," and "his" for "my," and it is an admirable bit of denunciation of a character probably intended as a copy from life. It is a description of a wicked man from outside; and wickedness seen from outside is generally unreasonable and preposterous. When it is converted, by simple alteration of pronouns, into the villain's own account of himself, the internal logic which serves as a pretext disappears, and he becomes a mere monster. It is for this reason that, as Hazlitt says, Massinger's villains—and he was probably thinking especially of Overreach and Luke in a *City Madam*—appear

like drunkards or madmen. His plays are apt to be a continuous declamation, cut up into fragments, and assigned to the different actors; and the essential unfitness of such a method to dramatic requirements needs no elaborate demonstration. The villains will have to denounce themselves, and will be ready to undergo conversion at a moment's notice in order to spout openly on behalf of virtue as vigorously as they have spouted in transparent disguise on behalf of vice.

There is another consequence of Massinger's romantic tendency, which is more pleasing. The chivalrous ideal of morality involves a reverence for women, which may be exaggerated or affected, but which has at least a genuine element in it. The women on the earlier stage have comparatively a bad time of it amongst their energetic companions. Shakespeare's women are undoubtedly most admirable and lovable creatures; but they are content to take a subordinate part, and their highest virtue generally includes entire submission to the will of their lords and masters. Some, indeed, have an abundant share of the masculine temperament, like Cleopatra or Lady Macbeth; but then they are by no means model characters. Iago's description of the model woman is a cynical version of the true Shakespearian theory. Women's true sphere, according to him, or according to the modern slang, is domestic life; and, if circumstances force a Cordelia, an Imogen, a Rosalind, or a Viola, to take a more active share in life, they take good care to let us know that they have a woman's heart under their male dress. The weaker characters in Massinger give a higher place to women, and justify it by a sentiment of chivalrous devotion. The excess, indeed, of such submissiveness is often satirized. In the *Roman Actor*, the *Emperor of the East*, the *Duke of Milan*, the *Picture*, and elsewhere, we have various phases of uxorious weakness, which suggest possible application to the Court of Charles I. Elsewhere, as in the *Maid of Honour* and the *Bashful Lover*, we are called upon to sympathise with manifestations of a highflown devotion to feminine excellence. Thus, the bashful lover, who is the hero of one of his characteristic dramatic romances, is a gentleman who thinks himself scarcely worthy to touch his mistress's shoestrings. On the sight of her exclaims —

As Moors salute

The rising sun with joyful superstition,
I could fall down and worship.—O my heart!
Like Phebe breaking through an envious cloud,
Or something which no simile can express,
She shows to me; a reverent fear, but blended
With wonder and astonishment, does possess me.

When she condescends to speak to him, the utmost that he dares to ask is liberty to look at her, and he protests that he would never aspire to any higher privilege. It is gratifying to add that he follows her through many startling vicissitudes of fortunes in a spirit worthy of this exordium, and of course is finally persuaded that he may allow himself a nearer

approach to his goddess. The Maid of Honour has two lovers, who accept a rather similar position. One of them is unlucky enough to be always making mischief by well-meant efforts to forward her interest. He, poor man, is rather ignominiously paid off in downright cash at the end of the piece. His more favoured rival listens to the offers of a rival duchess, and ends by falling between two stools. He resigns himself to the career of a Knight of Malta, whilst the Maid of Honour herself retires into a convent. Mr. Gardiner compares this catastrophe unfavourably with that of *Measure for Measure*, and holds that it is better for a lady to marry a duke than to give up the world as, on the whole, a bad business. A discussion of that question would involve some difficult problems. If, however, Isabella is better provided for by Shakespeare than Camiola, "the Maid of Honour," by Massinger, we must surely agree that the Maid of Honour has the advantage of poor Mariana, whose reunion with her hypocritical husband certainly strikes one as a questionable advantage. Her fate seems to intimate that marriage with a hypocritical tyrant ought to be regarded as better than no marriage at all. Massinger's solution is at any rate in harmony with the general tone of chivalrous sentiment. A woman who has been placed upon a pinnacle by overstrained devotion cannot, consistently with her dignity, console herself like an ordinary creature of flesh and blood. When her worshippers turn unfaithful she must not look out for others. She may permit herself for once to return the affection of a worthy lover; but, when he fails, she must not condescend again to love. That would be to admit that love was a necessity of her life, not a special act of favour for some exceptional proofs of worthiness. Given the general tone of sentiment, I confess that, to my taste, Massinger's solution has the merit, not only of originality, but of harmony. It may, of course, be held that a jilted lady should, in a perfect healthy state of society, have some other alternative besides a convent or an unworthy marriage. Some people, for example, may hold that she should be able to take to active life as a lawyer or a professor of medicine; or they may hold that love ought not to hold so prominent a part even in a woman's life, that disappointed passion should involve, as a necessary consequence, the entire abandonment of the world. But, taking the romantic point of view, of which it is the very essence to set an extravagant value upon love, and remembering that Massinger had not heard of modern doctrines of woman's rights, one must admit, I think, that he really shows, by the best means in his power, a strong sense of the dignity of womanhood, and that his catastrophe is more satisfactory than the violent death or the consignment to an inferior lover which would have commended themselves to most Elizabethan dramatists.

The same vein of chivalrous sentiment gives a fine tone to some of Massinger's other plays; to the *Bondman*, for example, and the *Great Duke of Florence*, in both of which the treatment of lover's devotion shows a higher sense of the virtue of feminine dignity and purity than is common

in the contemporary stage. There is, of course, a want of reality, an admission of extravagant motives, and an absence of dramatic concentration, which indicate an absence of high imaginative power. Chivalry, at its best, is not very reconcilable with common sense; and the ideal hero is divided, as Cervantes shows, by very narrow distinctions from the downright madman. What was absurd in the more vigorous manifestations of the spirit does not vanish when its energy is lowered, and the rhetorician takes the place of the poet. But the sentiment is still genuine, and often gives real dignity to Massinger's eloquent speeches. It is true that, in apparent inconsistency with this excellence, passages of Massinger are even more deeply stained than usual with revolting impurities. Not only are his bad men and women apt to be offensive beyond all bearable limits, but places might be pointed out in which even his virtuous women indulge in language of the indescribable variety. The inconsistency of course admits of an easy explanation. Chivalrous sentiment by no means involves perfect purity, nor even a lofty conception of the true meaning of purity. Even a strong religious feeling of a certain kind is quite compatible with considerable laxity in this respect. Charles I. was a virtuous monarch, according to the admission of his enemies; but, as Kingsley remarks, he suggested a plot to Shirley which would certainly not be consistent with the most lax modern notions of decency. The court of which he was the centre certainly included a good many persons who might have at once dictated Massinger's most dignified sentiments and enjoyed his worst ribaldry. Such, for example, if Clarendon's character of him be accurate, would have been the supposed "W. H.," the eldest of the two Earls of Pembroke, with whose family Massinger was so closely connected. But it is only right to add that Massinger's errors in this kind are superficial, and might generally be removed without injury to the structure of his plays.

I have said enough to suggest the general nature of the answer which would have to be made to the problem with which I started. Beyond all doubt, it would be simply preposterous to put down Massinger as a simple product of corruption. He does not mock at generous, lofty instincts, or overlook their influence as great social forces. Mr. Ward quotes him as an instance of the connection between poetic and moral excellence. The dramatic effectiveness of his plays is founded upon the dignity of his moral sentiment; and we may recognise in him "a man who firmly believes in the eternal difference between right and wrong." I subscribe most willingly to the truth of Mr. Ward's general principle, and, with a certain reservation, to the correctness of this special illustration. But the reservation is an important one. After all, can anybody say honestly that he is braced and invigorated by reading Massinger's plays? Does he perceive any touch of what we feel when we have been in company, say, with Sir Walter Scott; a sense that our intellectual atmosphere is clearer than usual, and that we recognise more plainly

than we are apt to do the surpassing value of manliness, honesty, and pure domestic affection? Is there not rather a sense that we have been all the time in an unnatural region, where, it is true, a sense of honour and other good qualities come in for much eloquent praise, but where, above everything, there is a marked absence of downright wholesome common sense? Of course the effect is partly due to the region in which the old dramatists generally sought for their tragic situations. We are never quite at home in this fictitious cloudland, where the springs of action are strange, unaccountable, and altogether different from those with which we have to do in the work-a-day world. A great poet, indeed, weaves a magic mirror out of these dream-like materials, in which he shows us the great passions, love, and jealousy, and ambition, reflected upon a gigantic scale. But, in weaker hands, the characters become eccentric instead of typical: his vision simply distorts instead of magnifying the fundamental truths of human nature. The liberty which could be used by Shakespeare becomes dangerous for his successors. Instead of a legitimate idealisation, we have simply an abandonment of any basis in reality.

The admission that Massinger is moral must therefore be qualified by the statement that he is unnatural; or, in other words, that his morality is morbid. The groundwork of all the virtues, we are sometimes told, is strength and manliness. A strong nature may be wicked, but a weak one cannot attain any high moral level. The correlative doctrine in literature is, that the foundation of all excellence, artistic or moral, is a vivid perception of realities and a masculine grasp of facts. A man who has that essential quality will not blink the truths which we see illustrated every day around us. He will not represent vice as so ugly that it can have no charms, so foolish that it can never be plausible, or so unlucky that it can never be triumphant. The robust moralist admits that vice is often pleasant, and that wicked men flourish like a green bay tree. He cannot be over-anxious to preach, for he feels that the intrinsic charm of high qualities can dispense with any artificial attempts to bolster them up by sham rhetoric, or to slur over the hard facts of life. He will describe Iago as impartially as Desdemona; and, having given us the facts, leave us to make what we please of them. It is the mark of a more sickly type of morality, that it must always be distorting the plain truth. It becomes sentimental, because it wishes to believe that what is pleasant must be true. It makes villains condemn themselves, because such a practice would save so much trouble to judges and moralists. Not appreciating the full force of passions, it allows the existence of grotesque and eccentric motives. It fancies that a little rhetoric will change the heart as well as the passing mood, and represents the claims of virtue as perceptible on the most superficial examination. The morality which requires such concessions becomes necessarily effeminate; it is unconsciously giving up its strongest position by im-

PLICITLY admitting that the world in which virtue is possible is a very different one from our own.

The decline of the great poetic impulse does not yet reveal itself by sheer blindness to moral distinctions, or downright subservience to vice. A lowered vitality does not necessarily imply disease, though it is favourable to the development of vicious germs. The morality which flourishes in an exhausted soil is not a plant of hardy growth and tough fibre, nourished by rough common sense, flourishing amongst the fierce contests of vigorous passions, and delighting in the open air and the broad daylight. It loves the twilight of romance, and creates heroes impulsive, eccentric, extravagant in their resolves, servile in their devotion, and whose very natures are more or less allied to weakness and luxurious self-indulgence. Massinger, indeed, depicts with much sympathy the virtues of the martyr and the penitent; he can illustrate the paradox that strength can be conquered by weakness, and violence by resignation. His good women triumph by softening the hearts of their persecutors. Their purity is more attractive than the passions of their rivals. His deserted King shows himself worthy of more loyalty than his triumphant persecutors. His Roman actor atones for his weakness by voluntarily taking part in his own punishment.

Such passive virtues are undoubtedly most praiseworthy; but they may border upon qualities not quite so praiseworthy. It is a melancholy truth that your martyr is apt to be a little sanctimonious, and that a penitent is sometimes a bit of a sneak. Resignation and self-restraint are admirable qualities, but admirable in proportion to the force of the opposing temptation. The strong man curbing his passions, the weak woman finding strength in patient suffering, are deserving of our deepest admiration; but in Massinger we feel that the triumph of virtue implies rather a want of passion than a power of commanding it, and that resignation is comparatively easy when it connotes an absence of active force. The general lowering of vitality, the want of rigid dramatic colouring, deprive his martyrs of that background of vigorous reality against which their virtues would be forcibly revealed. His pathos is not vivid and penetrating. Truly pathetic power is produced only when we see that it is a sentiment wrung from a powerful intellect by keen sympathy with the wrongs of life. We are affected by the tears of a strong man; but the popular preacher who enjoys weeping produces in us nothing but contempt. Massinger's heroes and heroines have not, we may say, backbone enough in them to make us care very deeply for their sorrows. And they moralise rather too freely. We do not want sermons, but sympathy, when we are in our deepest grief; and we do not feel that anyone feels very keenly who can take his sorrows for a text, and preach in his agony upon the vanity of human wishes or the excellence of resignation.

Massinger's remarkable flow of genuine eloquence, his real dignity of sentiment, his sympathy for virtuous motive, entitle him to respect;

but we cannot be blind to the defect which keeps his work below the level of his greatest contemporaries. It is, in one word, a want of vital force. His writing is pitched in too low a key. He is not invigorating, stimulating, capable of fascinating us by the intensity of his conceptions. His highest range is a dignified melancholy or a certain chivalrous recognition of the noble side of human nature. The art which he represents is still a genuine and spontaneous growth instead of an artificial manufacture. He is not a mere professor of deportment, or maker of fine phrases. The days of mere affectation have not yet arrived; but, on the other hand, there is an absence of that grand vehemence of soul which breathes in the spontaneous, if too lawless, vigour of the older race. There is something hollow under all this stately rhetoric; there are none of those vivid phases which reveal minds moved by strong passions and excited by new aspects of the world. The sails of his verse are not, in Chapman's phrase, "filled with a lusty wind," but moving at best before a steady breath of romantic sentiment, and sometimes flapping rather ominously for want of true impulse. High thinking may still be there, but it is a little self-conscious, and in need of artificial stimulant. The old strenuous line has disappeared, or gone elsewhere—perhaps to excite a Puritan imagination, and create another incarnation of the old type of masculine vigour in the hero of *Paradise Lost*.

Carving a Cocoa-Nut.

THERE is one point upon which all our æsthetic teachers at the present day are agreed, with a marvellous and unwonted unanimity. Professor Ruskin, Mr. Morris, Sir Charles Eastlake, and a score of others, never weary of impressing upon us their conviction that an æsthetic regeneration is especially needed in the implements and surroundings of everyday life. They cry out, not for more fresco paintings and equestrian statues, not for new cathedrals and larger palaces, but for prettier and more graceful jugs and vases, daintier and more artistic chintzes and wall-papers, greater taste in house furniture, domestic architecture, and personal dress. "Art at home" is the watchword of the rising æsthetic school; and we see already the fruits of such wholesome doctrine in the household revolution which is taking place around us. A historical painting may be a far higher artistic product than a basin of brown stoneware; but it will be difficult to educate the masses up to the level of intelligent admiration for the former until they have learned to expect and to appreciate beauty in the latter.

Does not this great change which has come over the spirit of practical and directive æsthetic efforts throw much light upon the proper method of speculative and abstract æsthetic theory? May we not suspect that philosophers and psychologists have begun their investigations a little too high up in the scale, and that better results might have been attained if they had started with the analysis of a flower or of a vase before they tried their hands upon a Laocoon or a Messiah? Is there not a great danger that compound effects may come to be mistaken for simple elements, and that the lower, more sensuous, commoner components of æsthetic feeling may be neglected in favour of its higher, more intellectual, but less universal constituents? We can hardly turn over the pages of any philosophic treatise on the nature of beauty without seeing that this danger is very real and pressing. I propose in the present paper to offer some slight and tentative antidote to the prevailing tendency of thought in this direction, by attempting to sketch the principles which govern the carving of a common cocoa-nut into a savage drinking-cup.

One more word, by way of prelude, before we begin our actual analysis. It must be remembered that under the general name of æsthetics two very different departments of literature are at present incongruously jumbled together. First, there is art-criticism general or special, whose function is purely regulative or directive; and secondly, there is

the philosophy of beauty, or æsthetics properly so called, whose function is purely speculative or theoretical. But these two divisions of the subject have never yet been accurately separated in practice, which evidently shows the infantile state of such studies at the present day. In the earlier stages of every human activity, the science or theoretical department is never clearly distinguished from the art or practical department. But as time goes on, and differentiations are slowly established, we learn at length to separate these various offices, and to leave each to its proper professor. Now the business of art-criticism should be to say, "this is pretty," "that is ugly;" but the business of æsthetics should be to say, "this is why people think one thing pretty," "that is why people call another thing ugly." While the former directs and advises, the latter reasons and explains. The æsthetic philosopher has no right either to praise or condemn; his sole duty is to account for the positive facts which he finds in the data before him. Great harm has heretofore arisen from the confusion of the two fields here discriminated. Every æsthetic writer has imagined himself called upon to lay down rules for guidance, when his true province is merely to explain actual practice. And the confusion thus arising has assisted in bringing to the foreground of æsthetic theory those higher and more complicated elements whose exclusive study has led to such bad results. Each critic has impressed upon the public the peculiarities which his own cultivated taste led him to prefer, as though they were eternal and immutable principles, fixed like the law of Medes and Persians; while he has generally passed by with contempt those simpler manifestations of æsthetic feeling which ought to form the basis of any comprehensive theory of beauty.

The present writer may congratulate himself on running no such risk of over-subtlety. He does not draw or paint, play or sing. The only manual art in which he possesses any skill is the humble craft of wood-carving. But in the practice of that inferior branch of artistic handiwork there are many opportunities for noticing certain elementary æsthetic principles which may easily escape the observation of painters or sculptors. It might prove both interesting and instructive if in the present case we were to take our rough cocoa-nut in its primitive state, and watch together the various processes it must undergo before it attains even that moderate æsthetic level which is its highest possible goal.

Our nut as it comes from the fruiterer is a very unpromising subject indeed. Some faint element of beauty there may be in its rounded shape; but with this exception not much can be said in its favour, even by the most enthusiastic critic. It is a dull brown in colour, destitute of either bright hues or glossy sheen; and it is covered by an untidy mass of rough matted fibres, or, as we oftener call it, hair. Clearly it has no directly beautiful effect, and its sensuous unpleasantness is heightened by the intellectual feeling that no human care or industry has been bestowed upon it in any shape.

Of course our first step must be to strip off the ugly covering of loose fibre, and expose the naked surface of the shell. This we can easily manage by scraping it with broken glass. After a couple of hours spent in patient toil we succeed in clearing away the last remnant of hair. And now our cocoa-nut stands forth in its underlying form, an artificial product already. True, we have done little to it as yet; but the eye recognises at once, even now, that man's hand has been at work upon it; and henceforth we regard it, not as a natural fruit, but as a manufactured artistic object. It has to be tried in future by the canons which we apply to human handicraft; and the nature of the workmanship will become a main feature in the total æsthetic effect it is to produce.

As it stands at present, our nut is an egg-shaped, dusky brown body, presenting a moderately even surface, but rough to the touch, and too dull to reflect any direct rays of light. Clearly our next process must remedy these defects. We must render it smooth enough to yield tactual pleasure, and glossy enough to afford our eyes the agreeable stimulation of lustre. So we go to work again, this time with a penknife, and scrape off the angles or inequalities left by the broken glass. When we have levelled it sufficiently by this method—no easy task, for the shell is hard and the knife quickly blunted—we may proceed to polish the surface by smearing it with beeswax and patiently rubbing it between the palms of the hands. After about a fortnight of such manipulation—for, as we all know, *ars longa*—the whole nut has acquired a much darker colour and a uniform sheeny exterior. We can now handle it with pleasure, and its appearance affords us the visual gratification derived from brilliant and intermittent lustre playing upon a black and non-stimulating background. Besides, we now see in it far clearer evidence of patient toil than before, and we are able to appreciate the conscientious labour which has preferred the genuine and lasting polish obtained by friction to the cheap and temporary gloss that would be given by a coating of varnish.

As yet, however, our nut is whole. It does not give us the idea of a human *utensil*. We must cut it in two if we wish to make a cup of it. And this process, simple as it seems, involves two or three æsthetic considerations of great suggestiveness. Let us take a saw and commence operations, and we shall see at once what these are.

In the first place, we must cut it somewhere at right angles to the axis of the nut. This principle is so obvious that it seems absurd to insist upon it. Nobody would dream of *cutting it crooked*, as we say, that is, at an angle of inclination to the axis. But it is just the very universality and apparent naturalness of such a procedure which gives it a value in the eyes of analytic æstheticians. We demand that the cup shall be cut even, because in that way we get the greatest possible symmetry of which its material is capable. Here we see how instinctive is the intervention of the intellect on such a subject. I don't think a monkey would care much about the line of section, so long as his cup

held enough water for his wants. But man is, above everything, an implement maker. When we find more or less symmetrical implements in drift or caverns, we conclude at once that the animal who made them was something worth calling a *man*. And the longer he goes on making implements, the more does this expectation of symmetry grow upon him. I have some calabashes cut and carved by negroes, in which the sections are far from true, and the lines of the pattern seldom quite straight or regularly carved; I have some others, etched by European ladies, in which every portion is as accurately drawn as if it had been traced by a lathe. The habit of careful finish has so impressed itself upon us by the numerous examples which we see around us, that we are never satisfied now with a degree of rough symmetry which would have seemed perfect to our troglodyte ancestors. It is true, there has come a revulsion—and not an unnatural one—of late years against the excessive mechanical regularity of our manufactured articles; but this is a question which we shall have abundant opportunities of discussing at a later stage of our inquiry, so that it need not detain us for the present.

Again, while we have settled the proper *angle* at which to saw the shell, we have not yet decided the *point* at which we are to saw it. We may cut it either exactly half-way down the nut, or else a little above or below the middle. There are several reasons which, in the average of cases, will incline the workman to cut it about an inch and a half above the line of bisection. In the first place, such a plan will yield us the largest possible vessel which our material can afford, consistently with the possibility of drinking or pouring out the contents in a convenient manner. Of course the original notion of any such cup is that of practical utility; and though our present object may be merely to carve a drawing-room ornament, we shall be governed greatly by the habitual forms handed down to us from our savage ancestors, through barbarous and civilized arts. Now when the savage makes himself a utensil out of a cocoa-nut, a calabash, a gourd, an ostrich or emu egg, a horn, or a skull, he naturally cuts it in the manner which will give him the largest and most convenient vessel into which his raw material can possibly be made. There is good reason for believing that all ceramic ware takes its origin from these original natural forms; indeed, there is evidence that pottery was at first moulded round such native utensils, and only slowly superseded them through its superior powers of resisting fire. At any rate, many jars and bowls are still modelled more or less closely upon the same plan, and we have thus become accustomed to the conventional forms both through savage specimens laid up in museums, or mounted in drawing-rooms, and through artificial patterns indirectly derived from similar sources. Accordingly, we expect the usual form to be followed in this instance, especially as any other section would yield a cup either less graceful or less convenient. Let us see why.

If we were to cut off only a little scalp, a couple of inches in diameter, from the top of the nut, we should get a sort of bottle or goblet, with a

round hole at its summit. Calabashes, or ostrich eggs, cut in this manner, are in common use everywhere for carrying water, a service which they are fairly fitted to perform. But they are very inconvenient to drink out of, as everyone who has tested them practically can bear witness. And as we mean to carve this cocoa-nut ornamentally, it will be better to make it into a cup, for a mere bucket which goes to the well does not demand any high decoration. Besides, such a vessel is ungainly and awkward in the judgment of civilized persons, through the want of a neck and lip, to which modern ewers have accustomed our eyes—or rather, our intellects. On the other hand, if we were to cut it exactly in the middle, not only should we lose a good deal of space, but also, which is more important from the purely æsthetic point of view, we should sacrifice the graceful double curve, and the pretty suggestion of oval form. From these various considerations it results—I do not say that we *ought* to cut a cocoa-nut or an ostrich shell at this particular point—but that the majority of workmen, savage or civilized, *do* actually cut them so, as an inspection of individual cases will soon reveal to the reader. Of course the workman does not explicitly go through the line of analytic reasoning detailed above, but he feels it implicitly, and decides at once that *this* is the proper place to saw it. I put the question in a specific case to half-a-dozen persons, including ladies, servants, and a carpenter, and they all unanimously and severally pointed to an imaginary line on the nut within a quarter of an inch. Such coincidences cannot, of course, be purely accidental.

So, having chosen our line of section, we saw our nut boldly across, and remove the soft matter from the inside. The future destination of this portion being the manufacture of cocoa-nut pudding, it no longer concerns the æsthetic enquirer. But it will be well for us to scrape the rough edges where the saw has passed, first with broken glass as before, and afterwards more carefully with a penknife, so as to remove all roughness, reduce the irregularities of the section, and polish the new surface to the same degree of lustre which we have already given to the exterior. Unless we were thus to round off the edge, there would result a feeling of careless workmanship. Besides, the sharp and jagged section left by the saw would hurt the mouth as we drank; and though this cup is only for ornament, yet we must *make believe*, as the children say, that it might be used for its original purpose. Unless we do so we shall involve ourselves in all kinds of logical contradictions, which when perceived by those capable of appreciating them, yield that discordant result known dogmatically as *false art*.

Another consideration strikes us at this point. We might have cut our nut, not straight through, but with a sinuous curve, so that the drinking-edge would have presented the appearance of a continuous line-of-grace. By so doing we would have secured one more element of sensuous beauty, which would have possessed certain advantages of its own. Yet on the whole I think we have done better in choosing the simple

level mouthpiece. It accords more closely with the notion of a drinking vessel; for had we adopted the undulating outline, we should be in danger of spilling the contents through the sinuous depressions when we raised the cup to our lips. So we see here how, in the case of any utensil like this, fitness for its proper function limits the application of sensuously efficient decorations. But we must not on that account fall into the great error of supposing that fitness is of itself beauty. Only when an object strikes us as beautiful on immediate grounds does the secondary consideration of applicability yield any æsthetic effect. In itself, and when divorced from actual pleasurable stimulation, fitness may rouse utilitarian commendation, but cannot give rise to an æsthetic thrill.

And now that we have reached this breathing-place in our task and its running commentary, let me pause a moment to answer an objection which I feel sure has been rising to the reader's lips half-a-dozen times during the course of the preceding analysis. I began by saying that the business of the æsthetic philosopher was not to lay down rules but to explain practice; and yet it would seem as though I had all along been overstepping my own limitation, by giving directions how a cocoa-nut *ought* to be cut and polished. Perhaps, however, a little consideration will get rid of this seeming contradiction. The steps I am describing, and the advice I am giving, are not derived from introspection of my own consciousness and dicta of my own idiosyncratic taste, but from careful objective comparison of similar works of art, produced by savages, barbarians, and civilized workmen. If any special critic chooses to say to me, "I should prefer the nut not to be polished," or, "I should like it to be sawn in two, sideways," I can only answer, "If that is your own fancy, so be it by all means." I can no more argue with him upon the subject than I can argue upon his taste for olives, caviare, or light wines. But I know how most people like a cocoa-nut polished, and I can verify my facts by constant observation of the actual product, several specimens of which I happen myself to possess. Now the duty of the psychological æsthetician is to account for these observed uniformities of taste, compared with which the diversities of one mind or another are of very minor importance. After this has been successfully accomplished, we may pass on to those special instances noticed above. If a critic seriously tells us that he prefers the nut in the rough, then we may endeavour to fathom the peculiar circumstances of his nervous organization, which make him thus run counter to the average consensus of human likes and dislikes. As a rule, we shall find this an easier task than at first sight would seem probable; for such divergences are mostly due to a recoil from the monotony of ordinary art—they represent the case of fastidiousness as opposed to vulgarity. Sometimes they run into extremes, and then they become ridiculous; while at other times they are based upon a very sensible objection to some hackneyed triviality. But I have purposely chosen the case of a cocoa-nut cup, because we have

here caught art in its embryo stage, and are therefore less likely to suffer from complications of such a sort.

By this time it is probably clear to the reader why we must separate our theory of beauty from the practical guidance of art. The former requires much objective observation and careful notice of even the simplest aesthetic objects; the latter demands rather familiarity with the highest works of art, and delicate discrimination of the most developed and complex feelings. The psychologist must allow that there is beauty—relatively to the mass of men—in products which the art-critic would denounce as wretched daubs or atrocious travesties of music. He must be prepared to explain the tattooing and mutilation of the savage, no less than the exquisite moulding of the Apollo Belvedere. He must frankly grant that red is the most universally pleasing of colours, and that ordinary eyes seem never to have got enough of it. He must look for his examples rather to the street than to the gallery, rather to the wigwam than to the palace, rather to the cheap lithograph than to the walls of the Academy. In short, he must aim more at explaining the general taste than at directing the most elevated taste. Æsthetic philosophy may reverse the apophthegm of Aristotle, and assert that its end is not practice but knowledge.

And here let me guard against a misinterpretation. In saying all this I do not wish to depreciate or underrate the important office of the art-critic. He stands to the æsthetician in the same relation as the preacher stands to the ethical philosopher. His province is that of exhortation, of exegesis, of encouragement, of warning. He often points out to us unobserved beauties, teaches us new and interesting points of view, or shows us how to raise and quicken our own standard of taste and judgment. The strenuous preaching of some such apostles of artistic culture has produced that æsthetic revival which is at this moment reforming the sombre or gaudy aspect of our homes, and making the world brighter, happier, and more elevated for tens of thousands in our midst. Far be it from me to raise my voice for a moment against men who have so enriched and beautified our lives. But the critic and the psychologist have each his proper sphere, and only harm can come from the intrusion of the one upon the domain of the other.

It is time, however, to return from this long digression, and take up once more our neglected cocoa-nut. Let us notice what changes we have already wrought in it. We took it in hand as a rough nut, and by polishing it we made it an artificial object; but now we have done more than this; under our hands it has taken the form of a cup, and has become a utilitarian implement, no longer a mere ornamental body. If we chose, we might lay it aside now, and it would be, in a certain sense, a finished article. Yet I think everybody will allow that if we went no further than we have yet done, our handiwork would not deserve or obtain any very special attention. If we wish to raise it to a decent position in the æsthetic scale, we must next set to work and carve it. Why?

The answer is easily found. At present it is just a plain polished cocoa-nut cup, and nothing more. It is a utensil; it will hold water; and it has been given so much simple æsthetic adornment, in the act of polishing, as even the savage bestows upon the commonest article of domestic use. But this adornment, though of great importance as giving the basis for much of our developed artistic feeling, is in itself not sufficient to make our cup a particularly beautiful or striking object. It is smooth to the touch, it is bright to the eye, but it does not appeal at all strongly to the purely intellectual faculties. If we wish to raise it a step higher, we must add something to it, which will engage the mind for a longer time, and fix the attention by more elaborate details. This end we shall attain by giving it a *pattern*.

If we look into the Ethnological Room in the British Museum we shall see how important a factor in æsthetic development this love for patterns has been. The ordinary calabash for home use in the hut of the subject is merely cut into a rude vessel, and, if adorned at all, is carelessly scraped with a few intersecting curves; but the great chief must have some more worthy drinking cup, and his gourd or cocoa-nut is minutely decorated with grotesque figures and intricate interlacing arabesques. Some of these triumphs of nascent fine art are carved with a precision and delicacy which may well astonish those who know little of savage life. The patient toil of years has often been expended on one of these *chefs d'œuvre*, wrought with very imperfect tools, but finally turned out with an exquisitely finished elaboration, which no European workman would care to imitate. The paddles borne by the Hervey Island chieftains, as a symbol of authority, are deeply chiselled with a network of tracery whose general effect closely resembles that of the finest lace; while the clubs of the Navigator Islanders are studded with embossed patterns, whose singularly graceful convolutions cannot fail to attract the eyes of every spectator. The New Zealand war-canoes are also decorated with the most conscientious and effective workmanship. Indeed, there are few savage products, amongst those which aim at æsthetic impressiveness, that do not succeed in affording us considerable artistic pleasure.* Setting aside for the present all special antiquarian or ethnographical interest, I think we may analyze this pleasure into three main components.

First, there is the gratification of intellectual exercise, already briefly hinted at. If the cup, or the club, or the paddle, merely gives us the idea of its own outline, our curiosity is soon satisfied, and we turn away listlessly to some other and more attractive object. But if it is covered

* Several excellent specimens of savage art may be seen in Mr. Owen Jones's *Grammar of Ornament*, and they almost without exception command the unhesitating approbation of that acute and liberal critic. I mention this fact lest those who have never examined these primitive art-products should imagine that I am carried away by a not unnatural enthusiasm for a subject on which I have bestowed special attention.

with intricate geometrical ornaments, or with quaint representations of the human form, or with conventionalized figures of plants and animals, we get a great variety of visual salient points, and an agreeable field for the exercise of the intellect. Our attention is arrested and pleasurably concentrated for a considerable time. In all æsthetic objects this is a factor of much importance. A plain façade gives us nothing to notice; a cathedral front presents to the eye an infinite variety of arches, doorways, windows, niched statues, and sculptured gargoyles. So, too, a daisy at first sight is a mere little white flower with a yellow centre; looked at through a pocket lens, it shows us a lavish mass of golden bells, fringed with a border of snowy florets. Indeed, æsthetic education consists largely in the simple act of calling the learner's attention to the full complexity of many unobserved details. In architecture, our pleasure is almost entirely relative to the extent of our acquaintance with the art, and our consequent ability to grasp the whole meaning of a vast and complicated organic whole. The trite observation that savages and rustics see little beauty in Nature owes a large part of its truth to the fact that savages and rustics seldom look at more than the outer shell of Nature. A microscope is a short way to discover how much loveliness is to be found in ugly things.

Secondly, there is the pleasure of human workmanship, of careful artistic execution, which we miss in the simple polished nut, or, rather, find only in a very subordinate degree. We like to see evidence of painstaking work, and this it is that most enchains our eyes in those intricate patterns which savages lavish upon all their higher art-products. Furthermore, this pleasure is inextricably mixed up with the complex feeling of costliness. Price is, roughly speaking, a measure of the labour bestowed, and when we see much labour obviously applied to a piece of work we instinctively know that it is costly. Nobody likes those cheap shams which pretend to be lace and are only loom-work, or which try to look like marble statuettes, and are really plaster-of-Paris casts. Especially in this age of cheap imitations do we turn away in disgust from the machine-made ware that floods our homes, to the honest if rude workmanship of the mediæval potter and the savage woodcarver, finding there at least genuine material genuinely employed.

Thirdly, there is the pleasure of symmetry. In the most advanced plastic and ceramic art, it is true, we have got rid of this source of gratification, and replaced it by a higher and better one—that of artistic freedom. Everyone who has studied the finest specimens of Japanese art must have been struck with the admirable results which have been obtained through the systematic rejection of symmetry. But it requires a very developed æsthetic taste fully to appreciate the pure element of freedom, while the merest barbarian is struck at once by the intellectual order and regularity of a symmetrical pattern. Accordingly, savage implements are almost always decorated with a rigid adherence to some fixed design. And the design so sketched, though not absolutely so

beautiful to a cultured eye as the sprawling lizards and straying foliage of Palissy's dishes, has yet a simple prettiness of its own. Any repetition of a given form, arranged radially or concentrically, is in itself pleasing, as the reader may convince himself by folding a piece of paper in eight, and then cutting out of it a circular pattern of any sort whatsoever, merely allowing the scissors to wander where they will.

And now that we have seen why our cocoa-nut will look better if carved than if allowed to remain simply smooth and glossy, let us proceed to the question of what figures we must carve on it. This difficulty has already been met in part while we considered the third form of pleasure given us by the carved shell.

We might, if we liked, sketch upon it a scene of English life, or a classical subject, such as Actæon pursued by the hounds of Artemis, and then render this in *bas-relief*, quite irrespective of the curved surface, and in a modern European style of art. But I think almost everybody would allow that this mode of treatment would have a particularly bad effect. The cocoa-nut is essentially a tropical product, and its manipulation into a cup is essentially a barbaric process. And so our feeling of congruity would be shocked if a European design were wrought upon it in a European fashion. This may be an idiosyncrasy of my own—and I know that I have laboured hard and unsuccessfully to teach many ladies in the tropics that calabashes should not be etched with natural flowers in Indian ink, but painted with grotesque and savage heads (wherein, of course, I was assuming the province of an art critic, on however humble a field, which I expressly disclaim in the present paper). Yet I am inclined to say that most people will agree in condemning the employment of imitative figures and landscape on a material of this sort. Setting aside entirely the higher æsthetic question whether they are *ever* well applied to vases or similar objects, we feel in the present case that they would violate a more elementary fitness of things.

What, then, shall we carve on our nut? Clearly, we shall satisfy the average observer most—which is all that we are endeavouring to do—if we put upon it a pattern such as its savage possessor would have designed. Now, there are two classes of pattern in common use for primitive ornamentation. One is the purely decorative, consisting of graceful symmetrical arrangements of curved and radial lines; the other is the partially imitative, in which the human face and form is introduced, even if mixed up with other meaningless figures. Either of these will do equally well for our purpose; suppose, then, we choose the latter.

So we get to work again, and begin by dividing our nut into six equal wedge-shaped segments, stretching from the apex to the lip, and lightly scratched with a knife. We must do this in order that our figures may all occupy equal spaces, and may "come right" after we have sketched them round the bowl. Then we draw another line right round the nut, parallel with the section, and about a quarter of an inch

from the lip, in which interspace we must hereafter carve a string-course of knobs or beads, with a continuous raised line on either side of it. Unless we did so, our cup would look as if it had no natural termination, and as if the pattern was not divided off from the drinking-lip. A very cursory examination, even of civilised crockery, will show that this is an æsthetic necessity—at least for the lower walks of industrial art. Every vessel must have a margin or edge, which, as it were, marks the fact of its termination at that particular point.

Next, in each of our six segments, we sketch the figure of a man. This man must not be walking, or running, or sitting, or standing: he must be a *man absolute*, a mere outline of humanity apart from any special occupation. He must be full-faced, for savages do not understand profiles or three-quarters, often asking in such a case what has become of his other eye. The head must be immensely and disproportionately large, for both children and savages regard that as the most important part, and quite disregard anatomical considerations. Of course he must have goggle eyes, a flat open nose, strongly marked nostrils, and a mouth that stretches almost from ear to ear. Below, he must have a small body, two arms more or less akimbo, and a pair of hanging bandy legs supported upon nothing. In short, he must be as good a copy as we can make of the grotesque, abstract, misshapen human forms which we have seen on real specimens of primitive art.

It would be both tedious and unnecessary to follow out the details of our pattern in their whole minuteness. All that is needful to the comprehension of our question is this—our little men must be placed evenly, each in the centre of his segment, and must be exact copies of one another. As soon as they are all sketched, we may begin the work of reducing. The deeper we can cut away the interspaces without endangering the solidity of our work, the better will be the final result. Of course this process of reduction is long and toilsome; but then, each fraction of an inch that we can pare away heightens the relief of the remaining portion. So we toil on, emulating the patience of our savage friends, till after a month or two of incessant scraping the whole middle portion of the nut has been cut down an eighth of an inch, and the grotesque figures stand out in shining relief upon a dullish background of uneven shell.

And now, what shall we do with this reduced surface? We might possibly scrape it smooth, and polish it to the same degree as the raised pattern, which of course consists of our original glossy exterior. But this method is not the best, for then our figures would not stand out even as well as they do at present. How about the exactly opposite course, though? Suppose we make the background *duller* instead of glossier? Surely that will give the greatest amount of relief to our figures, for then they will stand out both in virtue of their different level and in virtue of their different colour.

Accordingly we take our knife in hand again, and cover the whole

background surface with an intersecting network of straight lines, which form a minute diapered pattern over the depressed portion of our cup. The diaper is so close and deeply cut that it gives a rich brown tone to the interspaces, against which the glossy black figures show up in strong contrast. Moreover, the dainty workmanship of this background greatly increases the appearance of artistic care; while its comparative roughness renders the adjoining lustre at once more conspicuous and more agreeable. Unmixed brilliancy makes too violent a demand upon the optic nerve, as we often feel amid the tinsel of a theatre or the gilt and polished corridors of a palace; but to get the full pleasurable effects of brightness it should be interspersed with studious patches of duller material, in order that the eye may obtain easy relief from the powerful stimulation of directly-reflected light.

It will add to the general effect if we carve a special pattern of interlacing curves around the apex, and work in a few similar touches wherever the spaces between the figures show wide undecorated patches. All such additions will go to increase the feeling of honest and untiring labour, and consequently heighten the æsthetic pleasure of the spectator. But we may leave any further ornamentation to the fancy of the reader, as no separate psychological principle is involved in their comprehension. Finally, after our cup has received its finishing touch, we may, if we like, bind its lip with silver, and mount it on three slender silver legs. By so doing we shall obtain a striking yet not inharmonious contrast between the savage workmanship of the nut and the civilised craft of the silversmith. And we may set it up at last on our drawing-room what-not, to stand out in bold relief from the exquisite pomegranate wall-paper which forms the opposite pole and most developed outcome of decorative art.

And now that our analysis is completed—or rather, vaguely sketched, for a complete analysis eludes us by its intricacy—what general lesson may we learn from our long labour of carving and commenting? This fundamental æsthetic idea—that beauty consists, not in one or two separate effects, but in a vast mass of qualities, each of which appeals to a distinct faculty of our nature, sensuous, emotional, or intellectual. And of these, the sense-pleasures are the commonest, the simplest, and the most universal, being felt alike by child, and savage, and cultivated man; while the other pleasures rise ever in a sliding scale with the intellectual and emotional development of the individual or the race. Yet so inextricably are all these elements united in our one complex idea of the beautiful, that we can draw no positive line between the baby's admiration for a bunch of red rags and the critic's admiration for a Sistine Madonna or a *Paradise Lost*.

Experiences of an Indian Famine.

RECENT telegrams from India told us that, in addition to large numbers of poor employed on various relief works, there was more than a million of people still receiving charitable relief, and further that the prospects were still bad in Madras.

It is hard to realise the intensity of misery that is condensed into this brief report, or to understand what a terrible state the country must be in before so many thousands have been reduced to that abject stage of suffering, which has compelled them to seek for help at the charitable hands of Government.

Famine is unfortunately of late years no novelty in India, so that many of us, whose lives are spent there, know from hard experience how awful the calamity now impending over India is; and possibly a short account of the personal experience of one official, telling what was done and suffered a few years ago in one district, may be useful in showing how great the difficulties are that have now to be encountered, and what vast efforts to save life are necessary.

It must be remembered that this account only refers to one district: where the famine, as it now does, spreads over large areas, the difficulties of dealing with it satisfactorily are immeasurably increased. Misery is in no degree lessened by being wider spread, and all the various episodes of suffering are multiplied to an unlimited extent.

In 1868-69 many districts of the Central and North-west Provinces suffered severely from long-continued drought and its after-effects. Fortunately, the area thus affected was limited, so that Government was able in great measure to cope with the enemy and ward off many of famine's worst attributes; still, even when Government does its utmost, the areas to be supplied are so vast, and the numbers so unwieldy, that the sufferings of the masses cannot but be terrible. In the years 1866 to 1868 the Jubbulpore district was peculiarly unfortunate. In one year the rainfall was slight, so that but a poor crop was gathered; in the next the rainfall was so heavy that almost all the grain sown in the rainy season was destroyed; in the third year the rains failed altogether. Where as a rule sixty inches of rain fell, in 1868 there were not more than twenty-five. In consequence all the rice and millet crops—the staple food of the bulk of the population—failed entirely: the ground was so hard and dry that the wheat sown in November never came up at all. Prices rose higher than had ever been known since the famine of 1839, and starvation stared the miserable population in the face.

At that time Jubbulpore was much more cut off from the world than at present: now the main line of the Great Indian Peninsular Railway has its terminus in Jubbulpore, where it is met by a branch of the East Indian Railway from Allahabad. In 1868 the first of these lines was in course of construction, and thus not available for the transport of grain. The famine affected the neighbouring districts on both sides, though not as much as Jubbulpore itself; still little assistance could be obtained from them, while in the native states to the North—Rewah, Punnah, Myhere and others—the distress was equally great, and the arrangements for relief not so good. In consequence the difficulties of the officials were very greatly enhanced by the streams of emigrants which poured into our relief camps on the first whisper of Government aid to the distressed being bruited abroad. The East India Railway from Allahabad to Jubbulpore was open, but grain was so scarce in the North-west, and prices ran so high there, that it hardly paid private speculators to import by rail. At first the markets were scantily supplied through the local merchants, but as this was the third year of trial, the existing stock in the hands of the better classes of land-owners was soon exhausted, and grain had to be imported by rail from Patna and other places where fortunately it was procurable at reasonable prices. From the terminus at Murwarra, in the absence of carts, it was conveyed to the various relief centres on pack bullocks, which fortunately were that year available. Inland carriage is always a serious difficulty in these emergencies, for in the rains the roads are quite impracticable for wheeled conveyances of any sort.

The famine was at its worst from March to July 1869; but pressure had begun to be felt as long before as November 1868, when it was seen clearly that all the wet crops had failed through want of rain. The population of this part of India is mainly agricultural, and it relies for its support and food on the crops dependent on the rainfall—that is, rice, Indian corn, and several kinds of millet. On the other hand, the produce of the cold weather crop—such as wheat, grain, and other varieties of pulses—are looked to to enable the cultivator to pay his rent, buy plough cattle, and obtain such luxuries as his means allow. Each village is as a rule a community in itself: it has its head-man, its artificers, village watchman, and herdsman; in the larger villages there is the school, the police post, and the village accountant or Putwarri.

As soon as it was fairly understood how grave the situation was, every effort was made to meet the difficulty. The Chief Commissioner of the Provinces gave the district officials authority to act to the best of their ability to save life; he also authorised suspension of the Government demand for revenue wherever such was found to be desirable. He himself visited the most distressed part of the district, and after inspecting the various measures for relief gave permission to draw on the Government Treasury for such sums as were found to be absolutely necessary to save life and suffering. A commencement was first made by converting police posts into centres of relief. This was done very early in the year.

When the police officer on his tour found that the poorer classes were even then beginning to fail, he supplied his subordinates with funds and directions to succour the distressed wherever it laid in their power. The village watchmen and the proprietors generally were ordered to report at once to the police, or to district head-quarters, the existence of all such distress as the village community could not allay of itself. Schoolmasters and village accountants were employed in the same service; and finally twenty-seven relief camps were opened for such poor people as had nothing. The Government was most liberal: relief works were opened throughout the localities where the distress was most prevalent; and for people who could not work either on account of age, illness, or suffering through their privations, huts were set apart and attendants to minister to their wants.

The relief works generally consisted of lengths of road, intended eventually to act as feeders to the railway. Where there was no room for these the opportunity was taken of all the tanks being dry, to clean them out thoroughly, and repair their embankments. The labourers were paid according to their work—certain tasks being allotted for men, women, and children—and payment was made in grain, or where there was a market in which supplies could be purchased, in money. Supplies of cooked food were kept always ready for such unfortunates as were brought in too far exhausted to help themselves; and these were not a few. It constantly happened that men and women of good family, ashamed to beg, quietly gave themselves up to die, in preference to coming to ask for relief. To find out these cases was, and always will be, a great difficulty in an Indian famine. Nominally, the proprietor or head-man of the village is held responsible, and he is expected to keep the police, or the nearest Government official, informed of any such cases; practically, he is often nearly as badly off himself as the worst cases in his village, and is quite unable to render assistance. Much may be done, and is done, by house to house visitation; but to carry out thoroughly such visitation over the enormous areas that have now to be dealt with, is a work of vast magnitude and cost. European officers are not available in sufficient numbers, to say nothing of the enormous addition to the cost of relief if Europeans are employed so largely, while low paid natives in subordinate positions cannot be trusted to carry out thoroughly a matter of life and death of this sort. Not only are natives apt to work in a perfunctory manner, but even if they were very carefully supervised, they are, I may almost say, physically incapable of looking at the matter in the light that we do. Few of them will have sufficient knowledge of the anatomy of their fellow-men to enable them to judge satisfactorily whether the latter are in a dangerous stage of emaciation; neither will they have kindly feeling towards their fellows in an equal degree to Europeans. Natives look upon an infliction of this terrible nature as a direct visitation from Heaven; and if men die of starvation, they consider that their death has been brought about by the hand of God, consequently no one is to blame; and though it is quite possible that a little

extra care or exertion on the part of lookers-on might have saved some at any rate of the lives. They have never until recently seen a Government accept the responsibility of its position towards its subjects in the matter of famine, after the manner of the English, who enforce the practice of saving life, where such life can be saved by human agency, without counting the cost.

Natives are charitable to a degree : they give with great liberality, but they lack the energy to see that their charity takes the right direction. Instances are not rare of distress in native states. The chief considers he has done his duty liberally if he authorises a remission of land revenue ; he takes no steps to see that the remission reaches the unfortunates for whom it was intended ; in consequence often the only gainer is the farmer of the village, who is probably in collusion with the revenue official ; the tenants are forced to pay up the uttermost farthing, and if after that they die of starvation, their death is set down to the visitation of God, and the liberality of the chief in remitting his revenue is extolled. It is these peculiarities of character that cause some of our many difficulties in India.

With a district short-handed in the way of Europeans, it was no easy task to organise and see carried out all the arrangements requisite for the saving of the many lives that would otherwise assuredly have been lost without these efforts. The country was, however, fortunate in having men who devoted themselves to the work, not only from a sense of duty, but out of sheer kindness of heart. Conspicuous among all was an engineer officer in the employment of the East India Railway. He, from his long residence among the people, was thoroughly acquainted with their wants, and earned their confidence to a wonderful degree. He was thus able to render the most valuable assistance to the district officials, who happened at that time not to have been very long in the district, and consequently were not nearly so conversant of the requirements of the country and people as he was. His was no easy or pleasant work. His house was situated in the midst of the most distressed country. Of his own free-will he took charge of all the relief camps within a radius of some twenty-five miles. In this area there were some fourteen different camps ; and after his own morning's work was over, he used to devote his days to these poor suffering people. At his own head-quarters the relief camp was perhaps the largest in the district. The numbers there varied from 800 to 4000 souls in all stages of emaciation and sickness, for sickness in all its most terrible forms always follows famine. His servants died of cholera or smallpox, and his own employers begged him to leave his famine and plague-stricken residence ; but he refused, and remained calmly at his post until good times came again. His assistance to the district officials was simply invaluable, and it was given out of pure philanthropy.

A short description of the relief camp over which he presided may be interesting. All the camps were more or less alike, and on the same principles, so that the description of one will do for all.

On an open plain somewhat cut up with ravines, which all led down to the bed of a river, were several rows of huts, roughly constructed of boughs of trees and grass : for the sake of order and cleanliness these huts were built in streets in contiguous order, with clear spaces in front and in rear. At one end stood the store for grain, protected from plunder by a strong barricade of wood, and guarded by policemen and chuprassies, who on that occasion were equivalent to special constables. The entrance to this store was through a barrier, carefully guarded, and the recipient of the dole was taken through the grain store to where the fire-wood was deposited. There he received his allotted quantity, and was then passed out at the other end, to make his own arrangements for cooking and eating. At first there was some difficulty in preventing the starving crowds falling on those who went in first and robbing them of the grain, which was immediately devoured raw. The offenders in this way were new-comers who were on the verge of starvation, and did not believe that, if they waited their turn, they too would obtain a supply of food. Gradually, however, the lesson was learnt, and the camp at Murwarra, though the largest, and crowded with the worst sufferers, used to be the most orderly in the district. At the other end of the camp stood the hospitals—one for cholera patients, one for smallpox ; for general ailments, medicine was given out either at the local dispensary, or by a peripatetic dispenser in the open air. About a quarter of a mile or more from the camp was the burial ground, which, alas ! was very full before the famine ended. To this camp a native doctor was attached ; and he used to do his best to attend to the sick in other places as well, but, scattered as the relief camps were over the country some miles apart, but little could be done in the way of real medical attendance to all who required it. The number of medical men available was far too limited to admit of a doctor being attached to each camp. Even if such an arrangement had been feasible, it is doubtful whether the people would have appreciated the boon. They are quite unused to meet medical practitioners, or men who deserve the name, in the daily round of their lives ; so that, in these sad emergencies, they neither expected nor cared particularly for any such a luxury. Most villagers have a certain knowledge of the medical properties of herbs and barks, and in every village there is some wise-man who is supposed to understand the art of charming away diseases : with these the people are quite satisfied. They can always fall back upon police posts, which are supplied with simple medicines and directions for use. Perhaps the greatest difficulties we had to cope with were the carelessness of the people as regards infection, and their utter disregard of all proper sanitary arrangements. Nothing but constant supervision sufficed to keep the camps in anything like a wholesome condition, and to segregate smallpox patients from their relatives. Even now the people do not recognise the necessity of keeping sufferers from smallpox apart. Only last year, in visiting this very part of the district, my duty was to visit the various schools ; and there I constantly found

children covered with confluent smallpox, sitting among their fellows, brought in just to swell the complement of pupils at the examination.

When the first rush of starving poor to these relief centres was over, they were at once drafted to the various relief works in the neighbourhood, and told off to task work, each according to his physical ability. It was necessary to supply all comers with food charitably at first, as many came from long distances, and were quite exhausted by the privations they had suffered on the journey ; but as soon as ever they were fit to move they were given employment. I was much struck by their willingness to work ; all the decent agriculturists preferred working for their bread to receiving it in charity, and many used to work on until they dropped, in preference to begging. Of course there were many idlers and bad characters, who took advantage of the opportunity, and did as little as they well could ; but a percentage of bad characters is a necessity on occasions of this sort. The better classes avoided asking for help until all they possessed was gone, and then resorted to every sort of substance to stave off the pangs of hunger before asking for relief. The fruit of the Mhowa (*Bassia latifolia*) always, when procurable, forms a considerable portion of the food of the poorer population ; the flowers and fruit are collected, dried, and mixed with the millet flour commonly in use, and baked into the unleavened cakes of daily use : in 1869 this crop had almost failed. Another fruit, the Bér or *Zizyphus Jujuba*, is also a favourite addition to the simple food of the people in times of scarcity. This was scarce ; and it was an ordinary sight to see the people scattered throughout the jungles in search of this or any other fruit with which they might stave off the pangs of hunger. The bark of the Indian cotton tree (*Bombax malabaricum*) contains a considerable quantity of starch : these trees were stripped as high as the people could reach ; the bark was boiled down, mixed with a large portion of pipe-clay, and eaten in quantities ; the people being quite careless of the fact of this bark having strong medicinal properties as well. The pipe-clay was said to obviate this effect ; but it was terrible to see a family that had been subsisting on diet of this description : it just sufficed to retain life, but as there was little or no nourishment in the substance eaten, the people were walking skeletons. Their limbs were nothing but skin and bone, while the stomach was enormously distended ; the faces drawn and haggard, marked with this blue pipe-clay, gave them a most ghastly appearance. It was when they were found or brought into the relief camps in this state, that the greatest care was necessary to prevent their over-eating themselves, and dying of repletion.

Many were the instances of real heroism that were seen during that time of terrible distress : parents depriving themselves of their last mouthful to save their children ; sons, hardly able to articulate, begging the relieving officer to send help to their people dying at home, before attending to them ; people with barely enough to support their own families shared that little with the helpless children of their neighbours ; children

left orphans, or perhaps deserted, were taken charge of and cared for by neighbours, or even strangers, who little knew but that theirs would be the next turn. Of course the picture had its reverse side, and terrible it was. Little children unable to walk alone were deserted; aged parents, ill and decrepit, were left to die; wives were left by their husbands to starve; and the strong robbed the weak of even their last morsel of bread. It is a time like this that brings out human nature in both its worst and best forms; yet one striking feature was the fact that there was a far greater inclination among the bulk of the people to lie down and die in despair, than to turn to violence and lawlessness. A grain-dealer's shop was plundered here and there, but there was nothing like grain riots, or grain robbery on any systematic scale. In the relief camps it was necessary to protect the store houses and to put up strong barriers to prevent starving new-comers plundering their weaker brethren of their bread; but once settled down to work, and the receipt of regular food or pay, these poor people were marvellously orderly and obedient.

It is sad to think of the various stages of misery these sufferers had to wade through: the story of one man's life at that time will hold good for hundreds. One man, before this famine and its two previous years of distress, had been fairly well to do, prior to the last settlement. He had farmed a village, had paid the rent due to his landlord regularly, had a few head of milch cattle, in addition to his plough bullocks, and had saved enough to buy his wife some long-wished-for silver bangles. Government had conferred on him the proprietary rights in this village. With years of reasonable prosperity, this boon would have been much valued; for although the Government revenue and cesses came to something more than the farmer had been in the habit of paying to his landlord in kind, still the demand was not more than the land properly worked could well afford to pay. The Government custom is to assess its demand for revenue at half the actual assets of the village, bearing in mind the increase in value of the property that could be effected by simple improvements during the term of a long lease. The demand so fixed is unchangeable, and is payable either in years of prosperity or the reverse. I have no intention of entering here into the *veaxata questio* of the advantages or otherwise of our systems of settlement of the land revenue in India; but I merely wish to show that the fixity of the Government demand, and its novelty, was, perhaps, at this crisis, harder to bear than the old system of payment in kind. Had the famine come later, when the proprietor had reaped the advantages for some years of the Government system of payment of half assets, the fixity of the demand would not, in all probability, have made itself felt so severely. As it was, with the new *régime* came the years of scarcity. Our proprietor found his crops fail, and still the Collector called for his revenue. Formerly his landlord would have had to bear half his loss. The farmer had little or no spare capital, so, to enable him to pay the first year's demand, he sold all his milch cattle. 1867 followed with its extraordinary rainfall, which all but

drowned everything sown : again came the call to pay up the Government demand, and the owner of the village had to have recourse to the money-lender. The latter made a merit of letting him have the requisite funds, on a mortgage of the proprietary rights of the village. This mortgage deed would have done credit to some of our own usurers. It first stipulated that interest was to be paid at twelve per cent. ; that the unpaid interest was to be added to the principal, and interest at the above rate to run on both ; that before payment of the principal a drawback of three per cent. was to be deducted by the lender ; that the loan was to be repaid in certain instalments, failure of payment of any one of which authorised the creditor to demand payment in full, in one lump sum, principal and interest ; and finally, in default of payment, the deed was to be considered a conditional sale, and the village was after a certain term to become the property of the creditor without further proceedings. However, the money was obtained, the Government demand was paid, and the farmer lived in hopes. 1868, with its drought followed on the heels of the excessive rain of the year previous. In the cold weather of 1867-68, the farmer succeeded in raising a field or two of wheat, the sale of which enabled him to pay his first instalment of revenue, and to keep the wolf from his door a short time longer. In July and August, when the heavens should have been black with rain, the sky was like brass, and the earth bound with iron ; there was nothing but heat, and heat the more intense from its being unnatural. The grazing for the cattle had long disappeared, and the plough bullocks were kept alive by being fed on the branches of some of the jungle shrubs, or by being driven away into the highlands of the Satpura, where the numerous rivers and watercourses prevented the total destruction of all fodder. August passed ; and no rain. With September came a few showers, just enough to raise delusive hopes. The little grain there was in the house, that had been kept for seed, was put into the ground ; and the farmer and his family watched the heavens with hopes which quickly turned to despair as they saw the skies clear, and the monsoon end with less than one-third of the usual rainfall, just sufficient to make the crops sown germinate. As they withered away, so disappeared the hopes of the family. Nothing but ruin and starvation stared them in the face. Government, recognising the difficulty, suspended its demand to a more convenient season ; but to procure the mere necessaries of life, recourse had again to be had to the money-lender. The plough cattle were given up to him at a nominal price to meet his demand for the instalments due ; and after much supplication he was induced to renew, raising his rate of interest from twelve to twenty-four per cent., and shortening the term for repayment by a year. In consideration of this he advanced a small sum for the immediate necessities of the family, and so enabled them to tide over the year. With the failure of the Mhowa* crop in February, the last hope of these poor sufferers was gone. Still they held on, starving as

* Mhowa (*Bassia latifolia*).

they were, until April. The mother, ill and exhausted, could not nourish her baby, and it died; the second child, unable to bear the privations, fell another victim in March. At the end of that month the mother died of cholera, induced by the miserable substitutes for nourishment that she had had to put up with; and at last in April the husband and his two other children with difficulty dragged themselves to the nearest relief centre. There their necessities were relieved, and they gradually recovered their strength, and lived. But for what?—to be houseless, homeless, and the bondsmen of the usurer. This was by no means a singular case. And in every famine the results must be much the same—a long struggle against fate, in which the weak in large numbers succumb.

One striking episode in an Indian famine is the readiness with which the afflicted snatch every opportunity to help themselves. This was singularly exemplified in this famine of 1869. Throughout most of the fields in these parts there springs up, in the beginning of the rainy season, a weed known by the local name of Sama (*Panicum miliaceum*). It bears an ear like rice, full of grain. The crop of this in 1869 was peculiarly abundant. It was the first grain to come into ear, and as it ripened our relief camp and works were deserted. The people spread themselves over the surrounding country to collect the Sama, and never returned: in one week's time the numbers fell from (speaking from memory) 8000 to 400.

The rains that year were fortunately very favourable, the crops were everywhere abundant, the poorer classes found plenty of employment in weeding and other agricultural pursuits, and the necessity for relief measures came to an abrupt conclusion. This was the case where the famine only lasted one season. How terrible the sufferings of the people would have been had it continued another year, it is awful to think, even though, most fortunately, the famine was local and confined to certain comparatively small areas, through which in dry weather communication was not difficult. As it was, it taxed the resources of the district very heavily; and its effects are still visible through all that part of the country where its ravages were most felt. There the villages are backward, the people poor—much ground is still waste, and the value of proprietary rights in land fifty per cent. less than similar land in other parts where the famine did not reach, while the burden of debt still weighs heavily. One bright spot in all this misery was the liberality with which members of all creeds and colours came forward to assist. The Government gave freely, Europeans were very charitable; but they are few in number, and their means quite inadequate to meet the heavy demand—some of the wealthy natives behaved splendidly. Jubbulpore is a large city of between 50,000 and 60,000 inhabitants. Among these there are of course many miserably poor, whom the famine had brought to the verge of starvation: added to this there was a continual stream of more than half-starving emigrants constantly pouring through the town on their way southward in search of bread and employment. To look after these poor people was alone no small task—but it was undertaken by four of the

well-to-do native residents, one of them a widow lady. These four charitable people used to see that everyone of the hungry and destitute received a daily meal. For a long time they managed the distribution entirely themselves, but eventually their difficulties became so great through the crowds of beggars that this gratuitous supply of food used to collect, that they asked the district officials to take the matter in hand, they supplying as much food as was required. The distribution was no easy task, for there were many professional and religious mendicants, whose sole endeavour was to obtain more than their proper share either by fair means or foul, often by robbing their weaker brethren. Besides this charity on so large a scale, very large sums were contributed to the general relief fund—people of all creeds and classes, Europeans and natives, all gave, and gave liberally; and nothing but this charity, aided by Government, saved us from a great disaster. The deserted children, where no relations could be traced, or where the relations could not afford to keep them, were made over to the Orphanage of the Church Missionary Society; Government making itself responsible for a monthly payment to cover the cost of their food. At one time the number of these waifs and strays was large, but in spite of all that was done to save them, the mortality among them was great; while of those that survived some few ran away when the famine ceased, and went back to the villages where they originally lived—some perhaps to find their parents returned from exile, others to live on the charity of their neighbours. It would seem as if misfortune had hardly yet done with these poor waifs, for even this last year cholera broke out in the Orphanage among them, and carried off nearly half their number, although they were as well if not better cared for than they would have been with their parents in villages.

It was curious to watch how misfortune after misfortune followed the unfortunate inmates of our relief camps, and not only them, but those villagers who had been able to hold out in their own villages. In 1869 the coming of the monsoon was watched with the most intense anxiety: in Jubbulpore it burst in full force on June 29; in the north of the district, where the worst of the distress was, it held off for some days longer. Though only fifty-six miles to the north, not a drop of rain fell in Murwarra until July 12: the heat was intense, the whole country was covered with a dull yellow haze that hung over it like a pall. To go by rail from Jubbulpore, where everything was refreshed by the welcome showers of rain, to Murwarra, where this intense and oppressive heat still clung to the country, and made the people more depressed than ever, was one of the most painful experiences of my life. At last on July 12, the rain commenced, and before eight A.M. the next morning thirteen inches fell: the whole country was a swamp; our relief camps were flooded. The inmates of the huts, which had not been built for a terrible fall of this description, were drenched; and yet with it all they were cheerful. They had lost the feeling that God had deserted them; and though they suffered from cold and wet, they knew that they were saved

from what they most dreaded—another year's drought. But there was still another calamity to come upon them. The rainfall was so unusually heavy that in one night the roads were turned into sloughs of despond. The cattle, weak from long fasting and an absence of proper food, fell down in numbers, and were suffocated in the mud. The morning after this heavy fall I saw more than forty head of cattle dead in one village. Again the cultivators were in despair, seeing their plough bullocks dying one after another, and knowing they had no means to buy others. They had been kept alive with the greatest difficulty and only by constant care, and now they were being destroyed in hundreds. They had looked to these few remaining cattle to till their fields, and enable them to raise the crops promised by the rain; and now these hopes were blasted. Fortunately, Government again came forward with liberal aid; timely advances to the cultivators enabled them to obtain a fresh supply of plough cattle, and get in their crops in due season; this season was very favourable, and the harvest a heavy one, so that the famine may be said to have ceased with the sowing of the crops.

It was merely through the area of the famine being confined to such comparatively narrow limits, and to the fact of its only lasting a year, that so much could be done both to save life, and to assist the sufferers to recover after the ordeal they had to pass through. What, therefore, must now be the sufferings of the people of the Madras Presidency, where famine has been raging for nearly a year over the larger part of the country, and where it is feared that there is nothing but a second year of famine to look forward to, with all its horrors magnified, owing to a scanty crop being threatened in various other parts of India as well? Up to this most of the other provinces have been able to send of their abundance to Madras and Bombay; if their supply for home consumption runs short, the country will be in terrible straits, and the resources of Government, large as they are, will be taxed to their utmost limit.

For all this past year Government has been helping the people in the famine districts through their difficulties at an enormous expense, and, doubtless, will continue to do so at any cost; but the strain on all concerned must be terrible.

We can only hope that the seasons may yet change, and that thus a part at any rate of this grievous suffering may be averted; it is, however, so late in the year that there seems to be but little room for such hope. In that case India will require not only all the sympathy, but all the help England can give.

The Environs of London.

ROBERT SOUTHEY has pointed out with his accustomed felicity the connection between topography and patriotism; and no doubt the love we feel for places endeared to us by personal and historical memories, by associations that stir the imagination and warm the heart, is one of the strongest feelings of which the mind is capable. It is easy to be a cosmopolitan in theory and to profess a general regard for mankind, but the love of the race finds its first and truest expression in the love of country; and if a man prove his breadth of culture and large-heartedness by an interest in all that concerns humanity, this expansiveness of feeling is generally associated with a strong local affection and warm personal attachments.

It is easier to love a village than a town, a town than a province, and it may be asked whether it is possible to feel enthusiasm for a city so vast as London, with a population greater than that of Scotland, and an area equal to more than a hundred and twenty square miles? The size of London overwhelms us, the statistics that relate to it are difficult to grasp, and the different worlds that compose this great wen, as it was termed by Cobbett, while moving near to each other are yet utterly apart. This diversity of interests, however, is not unfavourable to the local attachment of which we are writing, for in London every man can find a centre and a home; and while it is possible even in London to walk in narrow ways, it is possible also to enjoy, as they can be enjoyed nowhere else, not only the pleasures that belong especially to wealth and rank, but those higher delights which are open to all who can appreciate refinement and culture. Some men of high intellect—Heine and Southey, for example—have appeared to despise London, and it is easy to understand why a poet like Wordsworth preferred Ambleside to Pall Mall; but the verdict of our greatest poets and men of letters, as well as of men engaged in practical affairs, will agree in the main with that of Dr. Johnson, who exclaimed that he who is tired of London is tired of life, since there is in London all that life can afford.

Londoners during the last century had the country lying at their feet: the streets were not far removed from the fields; but if they ventured a few miles only from the common haunts of the citizens, the risk of highway robbery destroyed the charms of travel. In the vicinity of Hyde Park such robberies were frequent. The fields that led from Long Acre to Marylebone were patrolled nightly by gentlemen of the pad. Lincoln's Inn Fields, according to Gay, could not be crossed with-

but peril; on a dark night it was unsafe to travel from Islington to the city; and such rural spots as Blackheath, Hampstead Heath, and Wimbledon were notorious resorts of highwaymen. What Charles Lamb calls the "sweet security of streets" was unknown in those days; and readers of the *Spectator* will remember the fear expressed by Sir Roger de Coverley lest he should fall into the hands of the Mohocks while walking through Fleet Street, and how, on going to the play at four o'clock in the afternoon, he was accompanied by several servants who had provided themselves with "good oaken plants to attend their master upon this occasion."

But what are our London suburbs, and how far do they extend? At the beginning of this century, when the Rev. Daniel Lysons published in five quarto volumes his laborious work entitled the *Environs of London* he confined his topographical rambles within twelve miles of the capital. Mr. Thorne in his admirable *Handbook to the Environs of London*, published last year by Mr. Murray, takes a wider range, and gives an account of every town and village, and of all places of interest within a circle of twenty miles, and of several important places lying a few miles beyond that boundary. Thanks, however, to the railway, the suburbs of London may be said to extend far beyond these limits, and to include every spot that is brought within an easy distance of the metropolis, and which the man whose daily vocation is in London may select as a residence. Brighton, Eastbourne, and Hastings are our sea-side suburbs, and can be reached in a shorter time than is required to pass from the extreme west of London to the extreme east. Tunbridge Wells, which is beyond the range selected by Mr. Thorne, has become the home of city merchants and professional men, who go every day with as much ease, apparently, to their counting-houses and offices as their fathers did when residing at Brixton, Islington, or Hackney. It has been said, and probably with truth, that a long railway journey daily is not conducive to health, and no doubt there is frequently an excitement about it which affects the brain and heart; but happily the loveliest scenery of our London environs, and some of the greatest pleasures of country life, can be enjoyed by city men without this danger; while those whose occupation demands attention three or four times only in the week, may reside at Hayward's Heath, Windsor, or Dorking, and even further still from London, without risk or inconvenience.

The suburban tourist should possess a little of the Bohemian temperament, must have leisure to wander where he pleases, and think it no great hardship if he have to take long and solitary walks and to make his mid-day meal at a wayside inn; for, in spite of enclosures, Acts of Parliament, and the civilisation of railways, there are still—and long may they exist—wide tracts of moorland and heather, of wood and down, that may be traversed by the pedestrian with nothing to remind him that he is still within an easy journey of the great city, until perhaps from some furze-covered height he catches a glimpse of the Westminster towers and of St.

Paul's Cathedral. The tourist's earliest walks, however, should be in the immediate vicinity of London. Suppose, for instance, after reading Mr. Howitt's interesting volume, he assays the Northern Heights. Hampstead and Highgate, although injured, like all the near suburbs of London, by the execrable efforts of builders to erect cheap and pretentious villas, still retain enough points of interest and beauty to attract an intelligent tourist. Hampstead Heath, which has run many risks of ruin and spoliation, is now happily in safe keeping, and under the fostering care or judicious neglect of the Board of Works, "the bare sands"—we quote Mr. Thorne's words—"are becoming clothed with verdure; the banks are purple with heather, the harebell is once more becoming common, the furze and broom have spread vigorously and bloomed abundantly, and the brake is everywhere fresh and flourishing."

The Heath, which is 443 feet above the sea-level, has always been, and deserves to be, the pride of Londoners, for from no other height round the metropolis is there so varied and extensive a view to be obtained. And it abounds with literary and other memories. In the last century a certain Dr. Gibbons, celebrated in Garth's *Dispensary* for despatching his patients instead of curing them, recommended the chalybeate wells on the Heath, and for a time Hampstead became one of the most fashionable watering-places in the kingdom. Fairs, concerts, balls, and races were held there, Fleet marriages were celebrated, and the lovely Heath became a scene of general dissipation. Those who are conversant with the literature of the last century will recall a number of allusions to the Heath and to the wells. The Upper Flask was the summer resort of the Kit-Cat Club, but it will be better remembered as the house at which Clarissa Harlowe alighted when escaping from Lovelace. The novelists of those days were fond of Hampstead, and so were the poets. Gay was sent to the Heath by Arbuthnot, who at a later period went thither to recover his own health; Akenside, a physician as well as poet, tried to gain a practice there; and there in 1748 Johnson wrote *The Vanity of Human Wishes*. But its strongest poetical memories are connected with the early years of this century, when Crabbe rhymed "with a great deal of facility" for many successive springs at the house of Mr. Hoare, the banker, where Coleridge, Wordsworth, Rogers, and Campbell were invited to meet the venerable poet of "The Borough." There too might be seen Joanna Baillie, who with her sister Agnes lived in a pleasant house at Hampstead until the middle of this century. Leigh Hunt lived in the Vale of Health, and he too assembled under his roof a coterie of poets and men of letters whose names are for ever associated with this pleasant neighbourhood. Lord Houghton has told us that the winter spent by Keats at Hampstead, in the society of Hunt, was perhaps the happiest period of his life, and there, as Mr. Howitt reminds us, the finest of his poems were written; but there too, if the poet's judgment may be trusted, the first seeds of his fatal malady were sown. Pleasant must have been the rambles,

and high the discourse, when, with Hunt as companion and host, Shelley and Haydon, Hazlitt and Lamb, Keats and Procter, strolled over the Heath or met together at the cottage, which has now given place to a hideous hotel. Shelley would sometimes stay for days with his friend Hunt. "He delighted," we are told, "in the natural broken ground and in the fresh air of the place, especially when the wind set in from the north-west, which used to give him an intoxication of animal spirits."

Hampstead abounds, like most of our London suburbs, with interesting memories, and it would be easy to fill a page or more with the names of men illustrious in different walks of life who have made it their home. That artists, like poets and men of letters, have been peculiarly fond of the locality will be seen from the following passage which we extract from the Handbook:—

"Blake lodged at the farmhouse at the north end of the Heath, by the field path to Finchley—part of the time we believe as the guest of John Linnell, who had hired the house for the summer, as other landscape painters have done since. Collins lived first in a small house at North End, and afterwards in a larger one on the Heath. Constable, whose tomb records his having been 'many years an inhabitant of this parish,' lived and died at No. 5 (now No. 24) Well Walk, a few doors from the Wells Tavern. Sir William Beechey lived in the Upper Terrace. Wilkie came here by the advice of Dr. Baillie, with great benefit to his health. Stanfield resided many years at Greenhill. His house, on the right in going down the hill towards London, is now named *Stanfield House*."

The rambler about Hampstead will be also frequently reminded of men who have won their reputation as statesmen, orators, and lawyers. Erskine House, adjoining the Spaniards Tavern, will recall the famous memory of Lord Erskine; and it was in the adjoining grounds that Burke exclaimed, while gazing at the distant prospect over Caen Wood: "Ah, Erskine! this is just the place for a reformer; all the beauties are beyond your reach, you cannot destroy them." To Wildwood House at North End, known in former times as North End House, the Earl of Chatham retired at a great political crisis, smitten by an utter prostration of body and mind; and at Caen Wood, which lies between Hampstead and Highgate, lived and died Lord Mansfield, whose library was burnt by the Gordon rioters—a deed that called forth the indignant Muse of Cowper. Highgate, by the way, has fewer memories to boast of than Hampstead, but it is for ever associated with the name of Coleridge, who, after living there for nineteen years, and "looking down on London and its smoke tumult, like a sage escaped from the inanity of life's battle," lies with his wife, daughter, grandson, and other relatives, in the old burial ground.

But we have already lingered too long on these Northern Heights of London, and shall ask our imaginary tourist to spend another day, or

part of one, in rambling over the Commons of Chislehurst, Keston, and Hayes; a neighbourhood which, considering its close vicinity to the metropolis, is perhaps one of the pleasantest that could be selected for a summer day's excursion. Moreover, the walk need not be limited; and if the pedestrian select to take the road from Keston to Westerham—a little town lying “at the foot of the chalk downs near the source of the Darent, where Kent and Surrey meet, and in the midst of scenery which is charmingly characteristic of both counties”—he will be amply repaid for his toil. The “lion” of Chislehurst is Camden Place, where Mrs. Somerville's friends the Bonars were murdered, and which, it is scarcely necessary to say, was the retreat selected for his English home by the ex-Emperor Napoleon. At Hayes Lord Chatham died, and there his son William Pitt was born; and at Holwood Park on Keston Common, which adjoins Hayes Common, the younger Pitt lived until he was forced to leave the lovely spot by pecuniary embarrassments. He took great delight in this residence, and the late Earl Stanhope writes that he has “often seen him working in his woods and gardens with his labourers for whole days together . . . with so much eagerness and assiduity that you would suppose the cultivation of his villa to be the principal occupation of his life.” There is a public way through the Park; and not far from the stile by which it is entered, after passing some noble trees, you reach one of vast size close to which Earl Stanhope has erected a tablet with the following words extracted from Wilberforce's diary:—

“At length, I well remember, after a conversation with Mr. Pitt in the open air at the root of an old tree at Holwood, just above the steep descent into the Vale of Keston, I resolved to give notice on a fit occasion in the House of Commons of my intention to bring forward the Abolition of the Slave Trade.”

And now, taking the privilege of a Rambler, let us pass to the shores of the Thames; not to linger on them—for a long essay would be needed to do justice to the scenery and memorials of the river—but in order to remind the reader and tourist what a wealth of recollections belongs to it, and what lovely rural spots nestle on its banks within a few miles of Westminster. Sir Walter Scott, a good judge of scenery, has expressed his opinion that in the view from Richmond Hill the beauty of English landscape is displayed in its utmost luxuriance. On that hill, as our readers will remember the Duke of Argyle paused for a moment with Jeanie Deans before leading that sonsie Scotchwoman into the presence of Queen Caroline; and they will recollect, too, how, in reply to the Duke's remark, “This is a fine scene, we have nothing like it in Scotland,” Jeanie observed, “It's braw rich feeding for the cows, and they have a fine breed o' cattle here; but I like just as weel to look at the craigs of Arthur's Seat and the sea coming in ayont them, as at a' thae muckle trees.”

Jeanie Deans very naturally made a mistake, which is less excusable

and but too common in persons of far higher culture, the mistake, we mean, of measuring one landscape by another, as if each had not a special beauty of its own. The simplest rural picture possesses a charm and may prove a joy if we look at it and learn to love it for its own sake, without comparing it with something which we conceive to be more beautiful. Nature rejoices her children in a variety of ways, and speaks to them with many voices; but if we refuse her messages of peace because they come to us from the river or meadow instead of from the snow-covered mountain and the roaring torrent, if we despise the wood because it is not a forest, the lake because it is not a sea, and the lovely wild-flowers of England because the tropics can boast larger blossoms and brighter colours,—we miss the lesson we might learn, and reject the delight which belongs to us by birthright. The peculiar charm of the peaceful view from Richmond Hill will delight everyone with an eye for natural beauty, and there is enough of interest in the neighbourhood of Richmond to make it worth the tourist's while to spend more than one day in the neighbourhood. The prospect from the hill, we may observe, is by no means so extensive as when the poet Thomson attempted to describe the "boundless landscape." Houses and trees have alike contributed to limit the prospect; but the river with its willowy shores can never be concealed, and it may be doubted whether the limitation of the landscape has injured its beauty. In the park, too—within which is the home of a venerable statesman—the view is far more circumscribed than in the last century; but views of great extent are still to be obtained from it, and its vast size, its noble trees, and the lovely walks with which it abounds, render this a favourite resort of London citizens, though it has not what one may term the cockney popularity of Greenwich. Sir Joshua Reynolds had a house upon Richmond Hill where he gave dinner parties in summer; but, like Johnson, he preferred London to the country, and was always glad to return to Leicester Square. With one or two great exceptions neither artists nor poets seem to have loved this spot as they love Hampstead. No great painter, we believe, has made it a permanent home, and few poets have lived or sung here. Thomson's house, a small cottage, was enclosed as it were in a much larger house; and for many years the relics of the poet were piously preserved. "Of late," Mr. Thorne writes, "the ground has been curtailed, and small houses built on the portion cut off; the summer-house has been removed from its original place, whilst the house itself has been turned into an infirmary: altogether, the admirer of Thomson had better leave Rosedale House unvisited." We quote these words because the advice contained in them may be also given to tourists who inquire about Pope's famous villa, grounds, and grotto at Twickenham. There, too, the sacrilege has been complete; the poet's house no longer exists, and the remains of the once famous grotto—which forms a tunnel under the high road—are not worth seeing. Twickenham con-

tains many spots of peaceful beauty where, on a hot summer's day, one may enjoy the Lotus-eater's pleasure—

Leaving the downward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half dream.

But its fame is principally due to Pope and, in a lesser degree, to Horace Walpole, whose Strawberry Hill, renowned in literary gossip, stands on an eminence above the village. In the days before railways Twickenham, like Richmond, was a great resort of the nobility and of people of fashion; and in the present century it will be remembered that the Duc d'Orléans, afterwards Louis Philippe, and his brothers found a refuge there, and that thither, when forced to fly from his kingdom, the ex-King returned. Indeed, the associations connected with Twickenham are numerous, and the cheerful, quaint-looking town deserves more from the tourist than a hasty survey. Of Hampton Court, which lies further up the river, nothing need be said; for, like Kew Gardens, the Court is a London show-place. Both are charming in their way, and both are among the pleasantest resorts open to the London populace. Let us pass on for a moment to Chertsey, to remind the reader that this rural-looking river-side town is not without some notable memories. Chertsey was at one time famous for its abbey, and at a later period for its poet; for here Cowley lived for three years, and when he died it is said that his body was conveyed with great state down the river to be buried in Westminster Abbey. How famous this poet was in his own day is known to all students of our literary history, and why he has lost his reputation will be evident to anyone who reads his poems. Like some poets of a later date, he preferred extravagance to simplicity, barren quibbles to nature, and in spite of unquestionable genius was content to become the poet of a coterie and to write in a scholastic jargon. St. Anne's Hill, famous as having been the residence of Charles James Fox, is within a short walk of Chertsey; and from this hill, which is free to the public, one of those extensive views is to be obtained which form a marked feature of our suburban scenery. The advantages we possess in this respect are enjoyed by few capitals in Europe. Fox, says Earl Russell, loved the place with a passionate fondness; and we have glimpses of him at St. Anne's, pursuing his historical researches, playing with boys at trap-ball, and sitting on a haycock reading novels. It is but fair to add, however, that the latter is a fancy picture. From St. Anne's Hill you see Cooper's Hill, of which Denham sung the praises, and at the foot of which lies the far-famed meadow of Runnymede. The view is very similar from the two summits, but each has special glimpses, and both should be familiar to Londoners.

Chertsey is rather more than twenty miles from the Metropolis, and this fact reminds us that our fitful wanderings have carried us beyond the immediate suburbs of the great city. So much there is to attract us in all directions, so many spots which claim regard from their intrinsic

loveliness, or from the associations to which they are linked, that the stranger who resolves to explore the things of fame and beauty, within an hour's railway journey of London, will find it difficult even with Mr. Thorne's assistance to select the choicest routes. Sometimes the reputation of a place will allure him, sometimes its scenery; and of course the highest pleasure is to be gained on visiting a neighbourhood which is alike beautiful and famous. Many of the loveliest rural scenes are to be found in the neighbourhood of the Thames, and that famous river, which is as dear to England as the Tiber was to Rome, has also spots which, like Windsor and Oxford, occupy a prominent place in the history of the country. The university city lies beyond the circle of London environs, and forms in itself a centre from which sites of almost unequalled interest may readily be visited; but Windsor, with its royal castle and incomparable park scenery; Virginia Water, "a delightful place for a summer holiday;" Eton, the most aristocratic of our public schools, and Datchet, immortalised by Shakespeare, and beloved by the "prince of anglers," are all readily accessible to the excursionist from London.

After enjoying the soft beauty and luxuriant foliage of this charming neighbourhood, he may change the character of the scenery by taking the train or coach from London (for the merry coach days are coming back again) to Boxhill and Dorking, or he may alight at Epsom, once as famous for its wells and the visitors that flocked to them, as it now is for its races, and from thence walk over the high and breezy Downs to Mickleham, a retired village nestling in the vale, and the scene of some interesting memories. On the opposite hill, Norbury Park, a spot of rare beauty, and memorable for its grove of yew trees, whose age is reckoned by centuries, has also a place in literature, for there in the last century lived William Lock, "the Mæcenas of English Literature and Art," the friend of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Sir Thomas Lawrence, of Fuseli, and Fanny Burney. Whether Dr. Johnson was ever at Norbury we do not know, but he wrote of Lock as an "ingenious critic," and no doubt was pleased that his "sweet Fanny" should possess so good a friend. At Lock's table Miss Burney met M. d'Arblay, at Mickleham Church she was married, and the novelist's munificent friend built the couple a cottage in the neighbourhood.

M. d'Arblay was a French exile; and as the pedestrian passes along the road from Mickleham to Boxhill, he will see on his left hand Juniper Hall, where Talleyrand, Madame de Staël, and other exiles, as well as M. d'Arblay, found a refuge from the storms of the Revolution. The walk is a delightful one, and on reaching Burford Bridge, the steep slant of Boxhill, and the Mole, a river celebrated by six poets, winding at its feet, will gladden the eye of the wanderer. The hill is known to every London excursionist; so let us pass on to Dorking, having on our left the lovely park of Betchworth, famous for its Spanish chestnuts, on the right a beautiful valley with the fine hill and goodly plantations of Denbies rising beyond it, and in front of us the town of Dorking, with the

estate of Deepdene, remarkable for the beauty of its grounds—in which, by the way, Lord Beaconsfield is said to have written *Coningsby*—for its sculpture gallery, and for many literary associations. Dorking, noted for its fowls, but much more for the varied scenery of the neighbourhood, might well detain the pedestrian for some days. There are hills to be climbed, parks and woods to be explored, shady lanes with lofty sand-banks and over-arching trees with openings here and there on the distant country, commons heather-covered like Abinger, and heights like Holmbury or the far-famed Leith Hill, bright with gorse and heather,—to allure the traveller's footsteps. No hasty tourist can appreciate the wealth of Dorking scenery, for it does not consist in a few broad pictures, but in an infinite variety of charms, many of which will escape the careless glance of the excursionist. Delightful is the walk along the high ground of Ranmore Common to Guildford, returning through Albury, Shere and Gomshall—rural hamlets nestled in a valley which has not its equal within a similar distance from London. Here, according to a flowery writer, not mentioned, we believe, by Mr. Thorne,* “you may stride the rugged brow, or saunter on its health-breathing summit; you may recline in the sheltered coppice, or stroll along the margin of the rippling rivulet.” The old-fashioned guide-book flavour of this passage reminds us of the days before “Murray;” but the assertion thus oddly made is not an exaggeration, and we will venture to add that the eight or ten miles between Albury and Dorking deserve all the praise that can be bestowed on the loveliest scenery in Surrey.

Pursuing the route we have pointed out, the pedestrian soon approaches the Wotton Woods, and the estate that was the property two centuries ago of the celebrated John Evelyn. Here several roads or paths tempt the traveller to leave the main track, and well will he be repaid for the trouble of the *détour*. There is a pretty road through the beech woods of Wotton to the pine woods of Abinger Common (the scene of many of Mr. Redgrave's landscapes); but there is also a footpath and bridle-track leading near the house, and through the wood rising behind it, until the common is reached, and the tower on Leith Hill invites the traveller to a view of twelve or thirteen counties. After feasting his mind and eye upon a prospect which Pope's irascible critic, John Dennis, compares favourably with some of the finest prospects he had seen in Italy, he can take the direct road to Dorking by Coldharbour, or a longer, lovelier, and more intricate route, which will bring him into the grounds of the Rookery, and so passing in front of the house, once the residence of “Population Malthus,” he will once more enter the Guildford and Dorking road. This rough indication of an excursion that can be made on foot or horseback, or by certain deviations, and with some loss of beauty, in a carriage, may serve the purpose of a direction-post to the tourist who

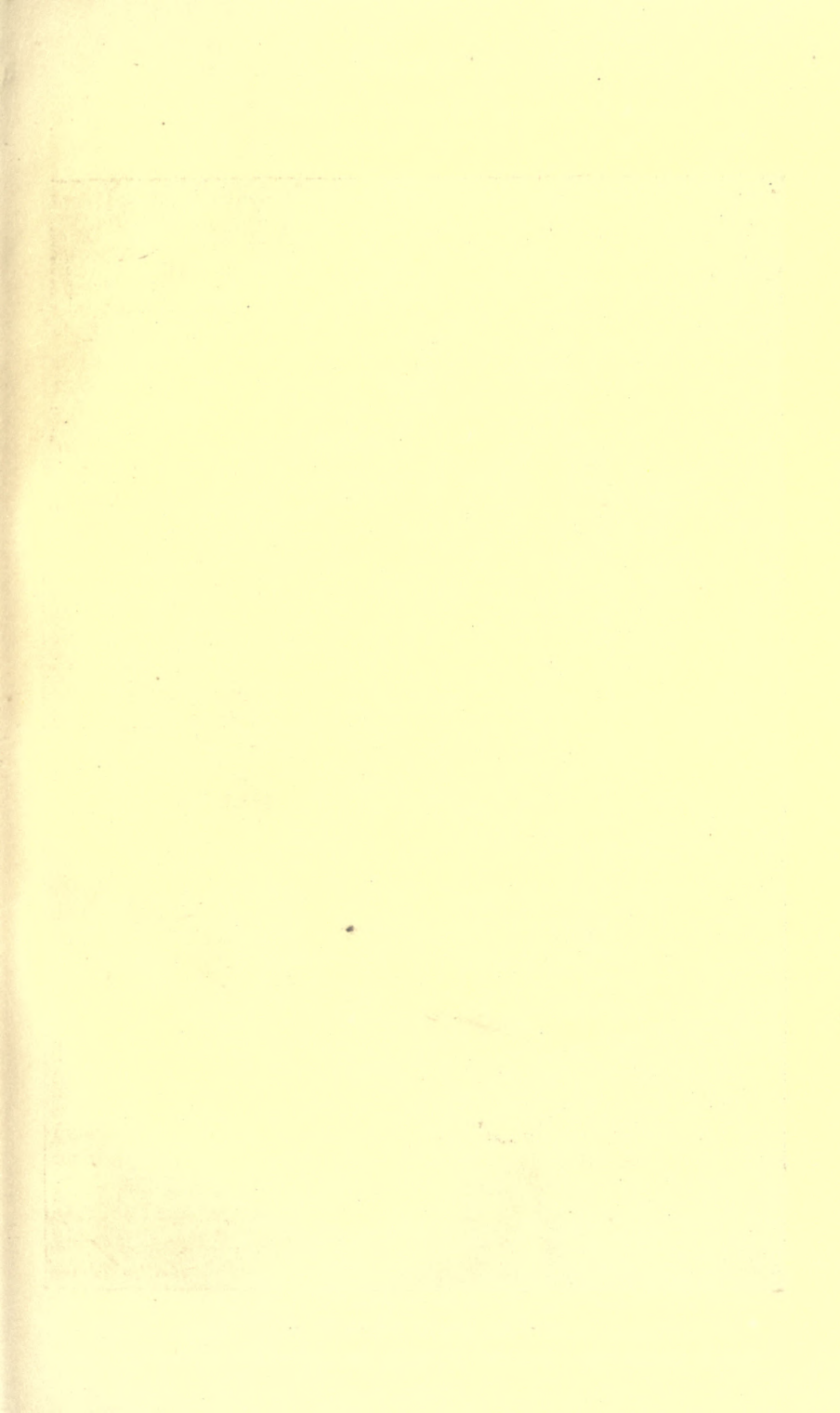
* “Picturesque Rides and Walks, with Excursions by Water, Thirty Miles round the British Metropolis.” By J. Hassell, 2 vols. London, 1818.

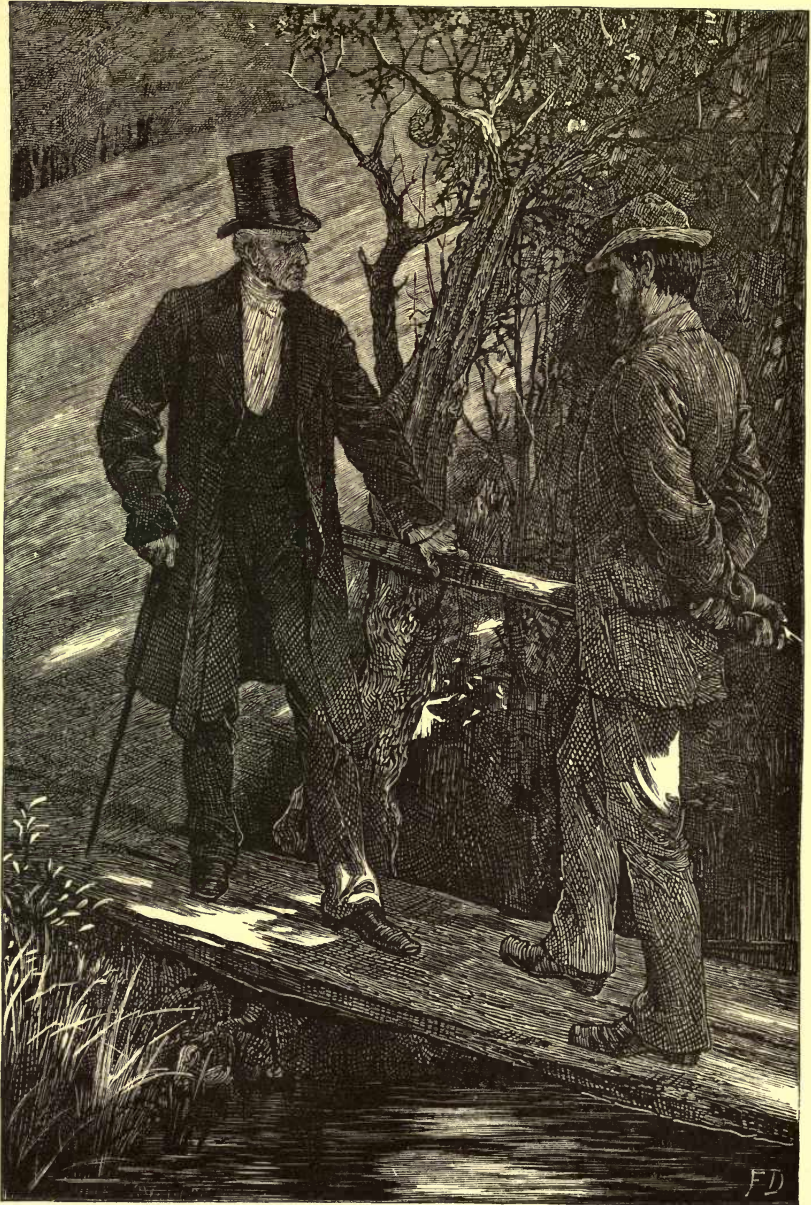
wishes to spend one or two summer days in this charming neighbourhood. Dorking is by road about twenty-three miles from London, and the spots we have mentioned lie within about thirty miles of the Metropolis, and may therefore be included in the environs.

Other places occur to us within a similar distance—Tunbridge Wells, for example—that rival the scenery of Dorking; but neither the space at our command, nor the purpose of this paper, will allow us to undertake the office of the guide-writer. Beauty of prospect is far from being the sole allurements to the rambler round London. If he have read history, if he be a lover of literature, if he have a fancy for antiquities and architecture, the resources open to him will not readily be exhausted. Recollections crowd upon us as we write. We turn to Herts, and are reminded of Cassiobury, the seat of the Earl of Essex, as famous now as it was a century and a half ago for its magnificent gardens; of Hatfield House, “perhaps the most majestic of the Jacobean mansions which have come down to us virtually unaltered;” of St. Albans, “the most interesting place”—we are quoting Mr. Thorne’s judgment—“for its historical associations and antiquarian remains within the like distance of London;” of Panshanger, renowned for its pictures and park, and for many magnificent trees, among which the colossal and far-spreading “Panshanger Oak” stands pre-eminent; and of Gorhambury, where in the mansion built a century ago, and in the ruins of the ancient house there is still much to recall the memory of Lord Bacon. We turn to Bucks, and revisit, under Mr. Thorne’s guidance, the churchyard immortalised by Gray in his *Elegy*; Burnham Beeches, under which the poet delighted to sit reading his *Virgil* and *Horace*; and the village of Chalfont, where Milton sought a refuge from the plague, where in a cottage still standing he finished *Paradise Lost*, and commenced *Paradise Regained*, and where in a homely Friends’ burial-ground lie the remains of William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania. And we remember, too, that fifty miles from London, in the extreme north of the county, is Cowper’s town of Olney, a spot as well known as any poet’s haunt in England, but too far off, perhaps, to be included in the spacious circle allotted to London environs. We turn then to Kent—“famous Kent,” as Drayton terms it—which for beauty of scenery may vie with Surrey, and for historical reminiscences surpasses any county in England. What though many of its most interesting sites are beyond our limits, enough remains that will be found readily accessible to the London tourist. There is Knole, for example, an ancient and venerable seat standing in a noble park, accessible—which at present the house is not—to the public; there are Rochester and Chatham, both of them places of renown; Cobham Hall, famous for its pictures and for three centuries of memories; and Gad’s Hill, which should be visited for the sake of Falstaff and Charles Dickens. We turn to Essex, which is generally a flat county, and in some directions, if the truth must be told, dull; but Essex, too, has many points of interest to Londoners who are familiar with the remnants of its ancient forest,

although they can no longer, as in the beginning of the century, "travel from Hadley Church through Enfield Chase, Epping and Hainault Forests, to Wanstead without ever leaving the green turf or losing sight of forest land;" with Waltham Abbey, the probable burial-place of Harold; and with Brentwood, which stands in the centre of some of the prettiest Essex scenery. We turn to Sussex, famous for its scenery of wood and down, and remember with delight the lovely neighbourhoods of Cuckfield and Uckfield, of Balcombe and East Grinstead; the noble position of Lewes, a name which for six centuries has carried with it the memories of a great battle, and the breezy walk known to all Lewesan citizens from Cliffe Hill to Mount Caburn, from whence "the archæologist may reconstruct for himself the whole panorama of ancient Sussex." We remember too many a delightful spot and many an historical site which, like the neighbourhoods of Midhurst and Petworth, of Arundel and Fairlight, cannot justly be classed among London environs, but are readily accessible to London excursionists. And we turn to Middlesex, a little county which the Great City threatens to absorb, and think directly of the famous Northern Heights, already mentioned; of Harrow-on-the-Hill, a spot dear to many generations of Englishmen; of Canons, albeit the famous "Simon's Villa," in accordance with Pope's prophecy, no longer exists; of Dawley, where Bolingbroke welcomed in rural style the wits of the day and imagined that he had ceased to care for ambition and for politics; of Uxbridge, where Queen Mary burnt several heretics, and where Charles I. signed the famous treaty that was never executed; of Fulham Palace, with its great memories and charming grounds; and of Fulham itself, the home of several eighteenth century celebrities, and, among others, of Richardson, who wrote his novels at North End, and died at Parson's Green.

It would be easy to add to these recollections of places memorable for noble deeds and noble words, for things famous in history and in literature, and for lovely scenery, the joy of poet and artist, and of all who are capable of feeling the soothing, satisfying influences of nature. London, even from the artist's standing-point, and despite greedy builders and greedy railway companies, is far from being a thing of ugliness, and may some day be as remarkable for beauty as for size; but London environs, despite the aggression of evil influences, are worthy of a land which is as dear to us for the natural loveliness which allures and delights the eye as for the memorials which give to every town—we had almost said to every hamlet—a history and a fame. After the brief survey we have taken, it is impossible not to respond to the wise saying of Thomas Fuller, a saying little regarded in these days of foreign travel, that it behoves a man to know his own country well before he passes over the threshold. It is to be feared, however, that England is traversed with greater zest and reverence by Americans than by Englishmen, and that Mr. Thorne's suggestive and accurate volume will be more zealously studied by them than by his own countrymen.





"IF YOU WANT TO ROB ME, TRY IT."

FD

Crema; or, My Father's Sin.

CHAPTER LI.

LIFE SINISTER.



WHEN business and the little cares of earthly life awoke again, everyone told me (to my great surprise and no small terror at first, but soon to just acquiescence) that I was now the mistress of the fair estates of Castlewood, and, the male line being extinct, might claim the barony, if so pleased me; for that, upon default of male heirs, devolved upon the spindle. And as to the property, with or without any will of the late Lord Castlewood, the greater part would descend to me under unbarred settlement, which he

was not known to have meddled with. On the contrary, he confirmed by his last will the settlement—which they told me was quite needless—and left me all that he had to leave; except about a thousand pounds distributed in legacies. A private letter to me was sealed up with his will, which of course it would not behove me to make public. But thus much—since our family history is, alas! so notorious—in duty to him I should declare. He begged me, if his poor lost wife—of whom he had never spoken to me—should reappear and need it, to pay her a certain yearly sum; which I thought a great deal too much for her, but resolved to obey him exactly.

Neither the will nor the letter contained any reference to my grandfather, or the possibility of an adverse claim. I could not, however, be quit of deep uneasiness and anxiety, but staunchly determined that every acre should vanish in folds of “the long robe,” rather than pass to a crafty villain who had robbed me of all my kindred. My hatred of that

man deepened vastly, as he became less abstract; while my terror decreased in proportion. I began to think that, instead of being the reckless fiend I had taken him for, he was only a low, plotting, cold-blooded rogue, without even courage to save him. By this time he must have heard all about me, my pursuit of him, and my presence here—then why not come and shoot me, just as he shot my grandfather?

The idea of this was unwelcome; still I felt no sort of gratitude, but rather a lofty contempt towards him, for not having spirit to try it. In Shoxford churchyard he had expressed (if Sexton Rigg was not then deceived) an unholy wish to have me there, at the feet of my brothers and sisters. Also he had tried to get hold of me—doubtless, with a view to my quietude—when I was too young to defend myself, and left at haphazard in a lawless land. What was the reason, if his mind was still the same, for ceasing to follow me now? Was I to be treated with contempt as one who had tried her best and could do nothing; as a feeble creature whose movements were not even worth enquiry? Anger at such an idea began to supersede fear, as my spirits returned.

Meanwhile Major Hockin was making no sign as to what had befallen him in Paris, or what Cosmopolitan Jack was about. But, strangely enough, he had sent me a letter from Bruntsea instead of Paris, and addressed in grand style to no less a person than “The right honourable Baroness Castlewood”—a title which I had resolved, for the present, neither to claim nor acknowledge. In that letter the Major mingled a pennyweight of condolence with more congratulation than the post could carry for the largest stamp yet invented. His habit of mind was to magnify things; and he magnified my small grandeur, and seemed to think nothing else worthy of mention.

Through love of the good kind cousin I had lost, even more than through common and comely respect towards the late head of the family, I felt it impossible to proceed, for the present, with any enquiries, but left the next move to the other side. And the other side made it, in a manner such as I never even dreamed of.

About three weeks after I became, in that sad way, the mistress, escaping one day from lawyers and agents, who held me in dreary interview, with long computations of this and of that, and formalities almost endless, I went, for a breath of good earnest fresh air, beyond precinct of garden or shrubbery. To me these seemed in mild weather to temper and humanise the wind too strictly, and take the wild spirit out of it; and now, for the turn of the moment, no wind could be too rough to tumble in. After long months of hard trouble, and worry, and fear, and sad shame, and deep sorrow, the natural spring of clear youth into air and freedom set me upward. For the nonce, there was nothing upon my selfish self to keep it downward; troubles were bubbles, and grief a low thief, and reason almost treason. I drank the fine fountain of air unsullied, and the golden light stamped with the royalty of sun.

Hilarious moments are but short, and soon cold sense comes back again. Already I began to feel ashamed of young life's selfish outburst, and the vehement spring of mere bodily health. On this account I sat down sadly in a little cove of hill, whereto the soft breeze from the river came up, with a tone of wavelets, and a sprightly water-gleam. And here in fern, and yellow grass, and tufted bights of bottom-growth, the wind made entry for the sun, and they played with one another.

Resting here, and thinking, with my face between my hands, I wondered what would be the end. Nothing seemed secure, or certain, nothing even steady, or amenable to foresight. Even guess-work, or the wider cast of dreams was always wrong. To-day the hills, and valleys, and the glorious woods of wreathen gold, bright garnet, and deep amethyst, even that blue river yet unvexed by autumn's turbulence, and bordered with green pasture of a thousand sheep and cattle—to-day they all were mine (so far as mortal can hold ownership)—to-morrow, not a stick, or twig, or blade of grass, or fallen leaf, but might call me a trespasser. To see them while they still were mine, and to regard them humbly, I rose and took my black hat off—a black hat trimmed with mourning grey. Then turning round I met a gaze, the wildest, darkest, and most awful ever fixed on human face.

“Who are you? What do you want here?” I faltered forth, while shrinking back for flight, yet dreading, or unable, to withdraw my gaze from his. The hollow ground barred all escape; my own land was a pit for me; and I must face this horror out. Here afar from house or refuge, hand of help, or eye of witness, front to front I must encounter this atrocious murderer.

For moments, which were ages to me, he stood there without a word; and daring not to take my eyes from his, lest he should leap at me, I had no power (except of instinct) and could form no thought of him; for mortal fear fell over me. If he would only speak, would only move his lips, or anything!

“The Baroness is not brave,” he said at last, as if reproachfully; “but she need have no fear now of me. Does her ladyship happen to know who I am?”

“The man who murdered my grandfather.”

“Yes; if you put a false colour on events. The man who punished a miscreant, according to the truer light. But I am not here to argue points. I intend to propose a bargain. Once for all, I will not harm you. Try to listen calmly. Your father behaved like a man to me, and I will be no worse to you. The state of the law in this country is such that I am forced to carry fire-arms. Will it conduce to your peace of mind if I place myself at your mercy?”

I tried to answer; but my heart was beating so that no voice came, only a flutter in my trembling throat. Wrath with myself for want of courage wrestled in vain with pale, abject fear. The hand which offered

me the pistol seemed to my dazed eyes crimson still with the blood of my grandfather.

"You will not take it? Very well; it lies here at your service. If your father's daughter likes to shoot me, from one point of view it will be just; and but for one reason, I care not. Don't look at me with pity, if you please. For what I have done I feel no remorse, no shadow of repentance. It was the best action of my life. But time will fail, unless you call upon your courage speedily. None of your family lack that; and I know that you possess it. Call your spirit up, my dear."

"Oh, please not to call me that! How dare you call me that?"

"That is right. I did it on purpose. And yet I am your uncle. Not by the laws of men; but by the laws of God—if there are such things. Now, have you the strength to hear me?"

"Yes; I am quite recovered now. I can follow every word you say. But—but, I must sit down again."

"Certainly. Sit there, and I will stand. I will not touch or come nearer to you than a story such as mine requires. You know your own side of it—now hear mine.

"More than fifty years ago, there was a brave young nobleman, handsome, rich, accomplished, strong, not given to drink or gambling, or any fashionable vices. His faults were few, and chiefly three—he had a headstrong will, loved money, and possessed no heart at all. With chances in his favour, this man might have done as most men do who have such gifts from fortune. But he happened to meet with a maiden far beneath him in this noble world; and he set his affections—such as they were—upon that poor young damsel.

"This was Winifred Hoyle, the daughter of Thomas Hoyle, a farmer, in a lonely part of Hampshire, and among the moors of Rambledon. The nobleman lost his way, while fishing, and, being thirsty, went to ask for milk. What matter how it came about? He managed to win her heart before she heard of his wealth and title. He persuaded her even to come and meet him, in the valley far from her father's house, where he was wont to angle; and there, on a lonely wooden bridge across a little river, he knelt down (as men used to do) and pledged his solemn truth to her. His solemn lie—his solemn lie!

"Such love as his could not overleap the bars of rank or the pale of wealth—are you listening to me carefully?—or, at any rate, not both of them. If the poor farmer could only have given his Winifred 50,000*l.*, the peer would have dropped his pride perhaps, so far as to be honest. But farmers in that land are poor, and Mr. Hoyle could give his only child his blessing only. And this he did in London, where his simple mind was all abroad, and he knew not church from chapel. He took his daughter for the wife of a lord, and so she took herself, poor thing! when she was but his concubine. In 1809 such tricks were easily played by villains upon young girls so simple.

"But he gave her attestation and certificate under his own hand;

and her poor father signed it, and saw it secured in a costly case, and then went home as proud as need be for the father of a peer, but sworn to keep it three years secret, till the king should give consent. Such foul lies it was the pride of a lord to tell to a farmer.

“You do not exclaim—of course, you do not. The instincts of your race are in you, because you are legitimate. Those of the robbed side are in me, because I am of the robbed. I am your father’s elder brother. Which is the worse, you proud young woman, the dastard or the bastard?”

“You have wrongs, most bitter wrongs,” I answered, meeting fierce eyes mildly; “but you should remember that I am guiltless of those wrongs, and so was my father. And I think that if you talk of birth so, you must know that gentlemen speak quietly to ladies.”

“What concern is that of mine? A gentleman is some one’s son. I am the son of nobody. But to you I will speak quietly, for the sake of your poor father. And you must listen quietly. I am not famous for sweet temper. Well, this great lord took his toy to Paris, where he had her at his mercy. She could not speak a word of French; she did not know a single soul. In vain she prayed him to take her to his English home; or, if not that, to restore her to her father. Not to be too long about it—any more than he was—a few months were enough for him. He found fault with her manners, with her speech, her dress, her everything—all which he had right, perhaps, to do, but should have used it earlier. And she, although not born to the noble privilege of weariness, had been an old man’s darling, and could not put up with harshness. From words they came to worse; until he struck her, told her of her shame, or rather his own infamy, and left her among strangers, helpless, penniless, and broken-hearted, to endure the consequence.

“There and thus I saw the light, beneath most noble auspices. But I need not go on with all that. As long as human rules remain, this happy tale will always be repeated with immense applause. My mother’s love was turned to bitter hatred of his lordship, and, when her father died from grief, to eager thirst for vengeance. And for this purpose I was born.

“You see that—for a bastard—I have been fairly educated; but not a farthing did his lordship ever pay for that, or even to support his casual. My grandfather Hoyle left his little all to his daughter Winifred; and upon that, and my mother’s toil and mine, we have kept alive. Losing sight of my mother gladly—for she was full of pride, and hoped no more to trouble him, after getting her father’s property—he married again, or rather he married for the first time without perjury, which enables the man to escape from it. She was of his own rank—as you know—the daughter of an earl, and not of a farmer. It would not have been safe to mock her, would it? And there was no temptation.

“The history of my mother and myself does not concern you. Such people are of no account, until they grow dangerous to the great. We

lived in cheap places and wandered about, caring for no one, and cared for by the same. Mrs. Hoyle and Thomas Hoyle, we called ourselves when we wanted names; and I did not even know the story of our wrongs, till the heat and fury of youth were past. Both for her own sake, and mine, my mother concealed it from me. Pride and habit, perhaps, had dulled her just desire for vengeance; and, knowing what I was, she feared—the thing which has befallen me. But when I was close upon thirty years old, and my mother eight-and-forty—for she was betrayed in her teens—a sudden illness seized her. Believing her death to be near, she told me, as calmly as possible, everything; with all those large, quiet views of the past, which at such a time seem the regular thing, but make the wrong tenfold blacker. She did not die; if she had, it might have been better both for her and me, and many other people. Are you tired of my tale? Or do you want to hear the rest?"

"You cannot be asking me in earnest," I replied, while I watched his wild eyes carefully. "Tell me the rest, if you are not afraid."

"Afraid, indeed! Then, for want of that proper tendance and comfort which a few pounds would have brought her, although she survived, she survived as a wreck, the mere relic and ruin of her poor unhappy self. I sank my pride for her sake, and even deigned to write to him, in rank and wealth so far above me, in everything else such a clot below my heel. He did the most arrogant thing a snob can do—he never answered my letter.

"I scraped together a little money, and made my way to England, and came to that house—which you now call yours—and bearded that noble nobleman—that father to be so proud of! He was getting on now in years, and growing, perhaps, a little nervous; and my first appearance scared him. He got no obeisance from me, you may be certain, but still I did not revile him. I told him of my mother's state of mind, and the great care she required, and demanded that in common justice, he, having brought her to this, should help her. But nothing would he promise, not a sixpence even, in the way of regular allowance. Anything of that sort could only be arranged by means of his solicitors. He had so expensive a son with a very large and growing family, that he could not be pledged to any yearly sum. But if I would take a draft for 100*l.*, and sign an acquittance in full of all claims, I might have it, upon proving my identity.

"What identity had I to prove? He had taken good care of that. I turned my back on him, and left the house, without even asking for his curse, though as precious as a good man's blessing.

"It was a wild and windy night, but with a bright moon rising, and going across this park—or whatever it is called—I met my brother. At a crest of the road we met face to face, with the moon across our foreheads. We had never met till now, nor even heard of one another; at least he had never heard of me. He started back as if at his own ghost; but I had nothing to be startled at, in this world, or the other.

"I made his acquaintance, with deference of course; and we got on very well together. At one time it seemed good luck for him to have illegitimate kindred; for I saved his life, when he was tangled in the weeds of this river while bathing. You owe me no thanks. I thought twice about it, and if the name would have ended with him I would never have used my basket-knife. By trade, I am a basket-maker, like many another 'love-child.'

"However he was grateful, if ever anybody was, for I ran some risk in doing it; and he always did his very best for me, and encouraged me to visit him. Not at his home—of course that would never do—but when he was with his regiment. Short of money as he always was, through his father's nature and his own, which in some points were the very opposite, he was even desirous to give me some of that; but I never took a farthing from him. If I had it at all, I would have it from the proper one. And from him I resolved to have it.

"How terrified you look! I am coming to it now. Are you sure that you can bear it? It is nothing very harrowing—but still young ladies——"

"I feel a little faint," I could not help saying; "but that is nothing. I must hear the whole of it. Please to go on without minding me."

"For my own sake I will not, as well as for yours. I cannot have you fainting, and bringing people here. Go to the house and take food, and recover your strength, and then come here again. I promise to be here; and your father's daughter will not take advantage of my kindness."

Though his eyes were fierce (instead of being sad) and full of strange tempestuous light, they bore some likeness to my father's, and asserted power over me. Reluctant as I was, I obeyed this man, and left him there, and went slowly to the house, walking as if in a troubled dream.

CHAPTER LII.

FOR LIFE, DEATH.

UPON my return, I saw nothing for a time but fans and feathers of browning fern, dark shags of ling, and podded spurs of broom and furze, and wisps of grass. With great relief (of which I felt ashamed while even breathing it) I thought that the man was afraid to tell the rest of his story, and had fled; but ere my cowardice had much time for self-congratulation, a tall figure rose from the ground, and fear compelled me into courage. For throughout this long interview, more and more I felt an extremely unpleasant conviction. That stranger might not be a downright madman, nor even what is called a lunatic; but still it was clear that upon certain points—the laws of this country, for instance, and the value of rank and station—his opinions were so outrageous that his reason must be affected. And, even without such proofs as these, his eyes and his manner were quite enough. Therefore, I had need of

no small caution, not only concerning my words and gestures, but as to my looks and even thoughts; for he seemed to divine these last as quickly as they flashed across me. I never had learned to conceal my thoughts; and this first lesson was an awkward one.

"I hope you are better," he said, as kindly as it was possible for him to speak. "Now have no fear of me, once more I tell you. I will not sham any admiration, affection, or anything of that kind; but as for harming you—why, your father was almost the only kind heart I ever met!"

"Then why did you send a most vile man to fetch me, when my father was dead in the desert?"

"I never did anything of the sort! It was done in my name, but not by me; I never even heard of it until long after, and I have a score to settle with the man who did it."

"But Mr. Goad told me himself that you came and said you were the true Lord Castlewood, and ordered him at once to America! I never saw truth more plainly stamped on a new situation—the face of a rogue—than I saw it then on the face of Mr. Goad."

"You are quite right; he spoke the truth—to the utmost of his knowledge. I never saw Goad, and he never saw me! I never even dreamed of pretending to the title. I was personated by a mean, low friend of Sir Montague Hockin; base-born as I am, I would never stoop to such a trick. You will find out the meaning of that by-and-by. I have taken the law into my own hands—it is the only way to work such laws—I have committed what is called a crime. But, compared with Sir Montague Hockin, I am whiter than yonder shearling on his way to the river for his evening drink."

I gazed at his face, and could well believe it. The setting sun shone upon his chin and forehead—good, resolute, well-marked features; his nose and mouth were keen and clear, his cheeks curt and pale (though they would have been better for being a trifle cleaner). There was nothing suggestive of falsehood or fraud, and but for the wildness of the eyes and flashes of cold ferocity, it might have been called a handsome face.

"Very well," he began again, with one of those jerks which had frightened me, "your father was kind to me, very kind indeed; but he knew the old lord too well to attempt to interpose on my behalf. On the other hand, he gave no warning of my manifest resolve; perhaps he thought it a woman's threat, and me no better than a woman! And partly for his sake, no doubt, though mainly for my mother's, I made the short work which I made; for he was horribly straitened—and in his free, light way he told me so—by his hard curmudgeon of a father.

"To that man, hopeless as he was, I gave fair grace however, and plenty of openings for repentance. None of them would he embrace, and he thought scorn of my lenity. And I might have gone on with such weakness longer, if I had not heard that his coach-and-four was ordered for the Moonstock Inn.

"That he should dare thus to pollute the spot where he had so for-

sworn himself! I resolved that there he should pay justice, either with his life or death. And I went to your father's place to tell him to prepare for disturbances; but he was gone to see his wife, and I simply borrowed a pistol.

"Now, you need not be at all afraid nor shrink away from me like that. I was bound upon stricter justice than any judge that sets forth on circuit; and I meant to give, and did give, what no judge affords to the guilty—the chance of leading a better life. I had brought my mother to England, and she was in a poor place in London; her mind was failing more and more, and reverting to her love-time, the one short happiness of her life. 'If I could but see him, if I could but see him, and show him his tall and clever son, he would forgive me all my sin in thinking ever to be his wife. Oh, Thomas! I was too young to know it. If I could but see him once, just once!'

"How all this drove me, no tongue can tell. But I never let her know it, I only said: 'Mother, he shall come and see you, if he ever sees anybody more!' And she trusted me and was satisfied. She only said: 'Take my picture, Thomas, to remind him of the happy time, and his pledge to me inside of it.' And she gave me what she had kept for years in a bag of chamois-leather, the case of which I spoke before; which even in our hardest times she would never send to the pawn-shop.

"The rest is simple enough. I swore by the God, or the Devil, who made me, that this black-hearted man should yield either his arrogance or his life. I followed him to the Moon valley, and fate ordained that I should meet him where he forswore himself to my mother; on that very plank where he had breathed his deadly lies, he breathed his last. Would you like to hear all about it?"

For answer I only bowed my head. His calm, methodical way of telling his tale, like a common adventure with a dog, was more shocking than any fury.

"Then it was this. I watched him from the Moonstock Inn to a house in the village, where he dined with company; and I did not even know that it was the house of his son, your father; so great a gulf is fixed between the legitimate and the bastard! He had crossed the wooden bridge in going, and was sure to cross it in coming back. How he could tread those planks without contrition and horror—but never mind. I resolved to bring him to a quiet parley there, and I waited in the valley.

"The night was soft, and dark in patches where the land or wood closed in; and the stream was brown and threw no light, though the moon was on the uplands. Time and place alike were fit for our little explanation. The path wound down the meadow towards me, and I knew that he must come. My firm intention was to spare him, if he gave me a chance of it; but he never had the manners to do that.

"Here I waited, with the cold leaves fluttering around me, until I heard a firm, slow step coming down the narrow path. Then a figure appeared in a stripe of moonlight, and stopped, and rested on a staff.

Perhaps his lordship's mind went back some five-and-thirty years, to times when he told pretty stories here; and perhaps he laughed to himself to think how well he had got out of it. Whatever his meditations were, I let him have them out, and waited.

"If he had even sighed I might have felt more kindness towards him; but he only gave something between a cough and a grunt, and I clearly heard him say: 'Gout to-morrow morning! what the devil did I drink port wine for?' He struck the ground with his stick and came onward, thinking far more of his feet than heart.

"Then, as he planted one foot gingerly on the timber and stayed himself, I leaped along the bridge and met him, and without a word looked at him. The moon was topping the crest of the hills and threw my shadow upon him, the last that ever fell upon his body to its knowledge.

"'Fellow, out of the way!' he cried, with a most commanding voice and air, though only too well he knew me; and my wrath against him began to rise.

"'You pass not here, and you never make another live step on this earth,' I said, as calmly as now I speak, 'unless you obey my orders.'

"He saw his peril, but he had courage—perhaps his only virtue. 'Fool! whoever you are,' he shouted, that his voice might fetch him help; 'none of these moonstruck ways with me! If you want to rob me, try it!'

"'You know too well who I am,' I answered, as he made to push me back. 'Lord Castlewood, here you have the choice—to lick the dust, or be dust! Here you forswore yourself, here you pay for perjury. On this plank you knelt to poor Winifred Hoyle, whom you ruined and cast by; and now on this plank you shall kneel to her son and swear to obey him—or else you die!'

"In spite of all his pride, he trembled as if I had been Death himself, instead of his own dear eldest son.

"'What do you want?' As he asked, he laid one hand on the rickety rail and shook it, and the dark old tree behind him shook. 'How much will satisfy you?'

"'Miser, none of your money for us! it is too late for your half-crowns! We must have a little of what you have grudged—having none to spare—your honour. My demands are simple, and only two. My mother is fool enough to yearn for one more sight of your false face; you will come with me and see her.'

"'And if I yield to that, what next?'

"'The next thing is a trifle to a nobleman like you. Here I have, in this blue trinket (false gems and false gold, of course), your solemn signature to a lie. At the foot of that you will have the truth to write "I am a perjured liar!" and proudly sign it "Castlewood," in the presence of two witnesses. This cannot hurt your feelings much, and it need not be expensive!'

"Fury flashed in his bright old eyes, but he strove to check its outbreak. The gleanings of life, after threescore years, was better, in such

lordly fields, than the whole of the harvest we get. He knew that I had him all to myself, to indulge my filial affection.

“ ‘You have been misled; you have never heard the truth; you have only heard your mother’s story. Allow me to go back, and to sit in a dry place—I am tired, and no longer young—you are bound to hear my tale as well. I passed a dry stump just now, I will go back: there is no fear of interruption.’ My lord was talking against time.

“ ‘From this bridge you do not budge until you have gone on your knees, and sworn what I shall dictate to you; this time it shall be no perjury. Here I hold your cursed pledge——’

“He struck at me, or at the locket—no matter which—but it flew away. My right arm was crippled by his heavy stick; but I am left-handed, as a bastard should be. From my left hand he took his death, and I threw the pistol after him: such love had he earned from his love-child!”

Thomas Castlewood, or Hoyle, or whatever else his name was, here broke off from his miserable words, and, forgetting all about my presence, set his gloomy eyes on the ground. Lightly he might try to speak, but there was no lightness in his mind, and no spark of light in his poor dead soul. Being so young, and unacquainted with the turns of life-worn mind, I was afraid to say a word except to myself; and to myself I only said: “The man is mad, poor fellow; and no wonder!”

The sun was setting, not upon the vast Pacific from desert heights, but over the quiet hills and through the soft valleys of tame England; and, different as the whole scene was, a certain other sad and fearful sunset lay before me. The fall of night upon my dying father and his helpless child, the hour of anguish and despair! Here at last was the cause of all laid horribly before me; and the pity deeply moving me passed into cold abhorrence. But the man was lost in his own visions.

“So in your savage wrath,” I said, “you killed your own father; and in your fright, left mine to bear the brunt of it.”

He raised his dark eyes heavily, and his thoughts were far astray from mine. He did not know what I had said, though he knew that I had spoken. The labour of calling to mind and telling his treatment of his father, had worked upon him so much that he could not freely shift attention.

“I came for something, something that can be only had from you,” he said, “and only since your cousin’s death, and something most important. But will you believe me? it is wholly gone, gone from mind and memory!”

“I am not surprised at that,” I answered, looking at his large wan face, and while I did so, losing half my horror in strange sadness; “whatever it is, I will do it for you; only let me know by post.”

“I see what you mean—not to come any more; you are right about that, for certain. But your father was good to me, and I loved him; though I had no right to love any one. My letter will show that I wronged him never. The weight of the world is off my mind since I

have told you everything ; you can send me to the gallows, if you think fit, but leave it till my mother dies. Good-bye, poor child ; I have spoiled your life, but only by chance consequence, not in murder-birth—as I was born.”

Before I could answer or call him back, if I even wished to do so, he was far away, with his long, quiet stride ; and, like his life, his shadow fell, chilling, sombre, cast away.

CHAPTER LIII.

BRUNTSEA DEFIANT.

THUS at last—by no direct exertion of my own, but by turn after turn of things, to which I blindly gave my little help—the mystery of my life was solved. Many things yet remained to be fetched up to focus, and seen round ; but the point of points was settled.

Of all concerned, my father alone stood blameless and heroic. What tears of shame and pride I shed, for ever having doubted him ! Not doubting his innocence of the crime itself, but his motives for taking it upon him. I had been mean enough to dream that my dear father outraged justice to conceal his own base birth !

That ever such thought should have entered my mind, may not make me charitable to the wicked thoughts of the world at large ; but at any rate, it ought to do so. And the man in question, my own father, who had starved himself to save me ! Better had I been the most illegal child ever issued into this cold world, than dare to think so of my father, and then find him the model of everything.

To hide the perjury, avarice, and cowardice of his father, and to appease the bitter wrong, he had even bowed to take the dark suspicion on himself, until his wronged and half-sane brother (to whom, moreover, he owed his life) should have time to fly from England. No doubt he blamed himself as much as he condemned the wretched criminal, because he had left his father so long unwarned and so unguarded, and had thoughtlessly used light words about him, which fell not lightly on a stern distempered mind. Hence, perhaps, the exclamation, which had told against him so.

And then, when he broke jail—which also told against him terribly—to revisit his shattered home, it is likely enough that he meant after that to declare the truth, and stand his trial, as a man should do. But his wife, perhaps, in her poor weak state, could not endure the thought of it, knowing how often jury is injury, and seeing all the weight against him. She naturally pledged him to pursue his flight “for her sake ;” until she should be better able to endure his trial, and until he should have more than his own pure word and character to show. And probably if he had then been tried, with so many things against him, and no production of that poor brother, his tale would have seemed but a flimsy

invention, and "guilty" would have been the verdict. And they could not know that, in such case, the guilty man would have come forward, as we shall see that he meant to do.

When my father heard of his dear wife's death, and believed, no doubt, that I was buried with the rest, the gloom of a broken and fated man, like Polar night, settled down on him. What matter to him about public opinion, or anything else in the world just now? The sins of his father were on his head; let them rest there, rather than be trumpeted by him. He had nothing to care for; let him wander about. And so he did for several years, until I became a treasure to him—for parental is not intrinsic value—and then for my sake, as now appeared, he betook us both to a large kind land.

Revolving these things sadly, and a great many more which need not be told, I thought it my duty to go as soon as possible to Bruntsea, and tell my good and faithful friends what I was loth to write about. There, moreover, I could obtain what I wanted to confirm me—the opinion of an upright, law-abiding, honourable man, about the course I proposed to take. And there I might hear something more, as to a thing which had troubled me much in the deepest of my own troubles—the melancholy plight of dear Uncle Sam. Wild and absurd as it may appear to people of no gratitude, my heart was set upon faring forth in search of the noble Sawyer; if only it could be reconciled with my duty here in England. That such a proceeding would avail but little, seemed now, alas, too manifest; but a plea of that kind generally means that we have no mind to do a thing.

Be that as it will, I made what my dear Yankees—to use the Major's impertinent phrase—call "straight tracks," for that ancient and obsolete town, rejuvenised now by its Signor. The cause of my good friend's silence—not to use that affected word "reticence"—was quite unknown to me, and disturbed my spirit with futile guesses.

Resolute therefore to pierce the bottom of every surviving mystery, I made claim upon "Mr. Stixon, junior,"—as "Stixon's boy" had now vindicated his right to be called, up to supper-time—and he with high chivalry responded. Not yet was he wedded to Miss Polly Hopkins, the daughter of the pickled porkman; otherwise would he, or could he have made telegraphic blush at the word "Bruntsea?" And would he have been quite so eager to come?

Such things are trifling, compared to our own, which naturally fill the universe. I was bound to be a great lady now, and patronise, and regulate, and drill all the doings of nature. So I durst not even ask, though desiring much to do so, how young Mr. Stixon was getting on with his delightful Polly. And his father, as soon as he found me turned into the Mistress, and "his lady" (as he would have me called thenceforth, whether or no, on my part), not another word would he tell me of the household sentiments, politics, or romances. It would have been thought a thing beneath me to put any nice little questions now; and I

was obliged to take up the tone which others used towards me. But all the while, I longed for freedom, Uncle Sam, Suan Isco, and even Martin of the Mill.

Law-business, however, and other hindrances, kept me from starting at once for Bruntsea, impatient as I was to do so. Indeed, it was not until the morning of the last Saturday in November that I was able to get away. The weather had turned to much rain, I remember, with two or three tempestuous nights, and the woods were almost bare of leaves, and the Thames looked brown and violent.

In the fly from Newport to Bruntsea, I heard great rollers thundering heavily upon the steep bar of shingle, and such a lake of water shone in the old bed of the river, that I quite believed at first that the Major had carried out his grand idea, and brought the river back again. But the fly-man shook his head, and looked very serious, and told me that he feared bad times were coming. What I saw was the work of the Lord in heaven, and no man could prevail against it. He had always said, though no concern of his—for he belonged to Newport—that even a British officer could not fly in the face of the Almighty. He himself had a brother on the works, regular employed, and drawing good money, and proud enough about it; and the times he had told him across a pint of ale—howsoever our place was to hope for the best; but the top of the springs was not come yet, and a pilot out of Newport told him the water was making uncommon strong; but he did hope the wind had nigh blowed itself out; if not, they would have to look blessed sharp tomorrow. He had heard say, that in time of Queen Elizabeth six score of houses was washed clean away, and the river itself knocked right into the sea; and a thing as had been once might just come to pass again, though folk was all so clever now they thought they wor above it. But for all that their grandfathers' goggles might fit them. But here we was in Bruntsea-town, and bless his old eyes—yes! If I pleased to look along his whip, I might see ancient pilot come, he did believe, to warn of them!

Following his guidance, I descried a stout old man, in a sailor's dress, weather-proof hat, and long boots, standing on a low sea-wall and holding vehement converse with some Bruntsea boatmen and fishermen who were sprawling on the stones as usual.

"Driver, you know him. Take the lower road," I said, "and ask what his opinion is."

"No need to ask him," the flyman answered; "old Banks would never be here, Miss, if he was of two opinions. He hath come to fetch his daughter out of harm, I doubt, the wife of that there Bishop Jim, they call him—the chap with two nails to his thumb, you know. Would you like to hear how they all take it, Miss?"

With these words he turned to the right, and drove into Major Hockin's "Sea-parade." There we stopped to hear what was going on, and it proved to be well worth our attention. The old pilot perhaps had

exhausted reason, and now was beginning to give way to wrath. The afternoon was deepening fast, with heavy grey clouds lowering, showing no definite edge, but streaked with hazy lines, and spotted by some little murky blurs or blots, like tar-pots, carried slowly.

"Hath Noah's Ark ever told a lie?" the ancient pilot shouted, pointing with one hand at these, and with a clenched fist at the sea, whence came puffs of sullen air, and turned his gray locks backward. "Mackerel sky when the sun got up, mermaiden's eggs at noon, and now afore sunset Noah's Arks! Any of them breweth a gale of wind, and the three of them bodes a tempest. And the top of the springs of the year to-morrow—are ye daft, or all gone upon the spree, my men? Your fathers would a' knowed what the new moon meant; is this all that cometh out of larning to read?"

"Have a pinch of 'bacco, old man," said one, "to help you off with that stiff reel. What consarn can be be of yourn?"

"Don't you be put out, mate," cried another; "never came sea as could top that bar, and never will in our time. Go and caulk your old leaky craft, Master Banks."

"We have rode out a good many gales, without seeking prophet from Newport—a place never heerd on, when this old town was made."

"Come and whet your old whistle at the 'Hockin Arms,' Banks. You must want it after that long pipe."

"'Hockin Arms' indeed!" the pilot answered, turning away in a rage from them; "what Hockin Arms will there be this time to-morrow? Hocking legs wanted, more likely, and Hockin wings, perhaps. And you poor grinning ninnies, as ought to have four legs, ye'll be praying that ye had them to-morrow. However, ye've had warning, and ye can't blame me. The power of the Lord is in the air and sea. Is this the sort of stuff ye trust in?"

He set one foot against our Major's wall—an action scarcely honest, while it was so green—and, coming from a hale and very thick-set man, the contemptuous push sent a fathom of it outwards. Rattle, rattle went the new patent concrete, starting up the lazy-pated fellows down below.

"You'll try the walls of a jail," cried one. "You go to Noah's Ark," shouted another; the rest bade him go to a place much worse; but he buttoned his jacket in disdain, and marched away without spoiling the effect by any more weak words.

"Right you are," cried my flyman; "right you are, Master Banks. Them lubbers will sing another song to-morrow. Gee up, old hoss, then!"

All this, and the ominous scowl of the sky and menacing roar of the sea (already crowding with black rollers), disturbed me so that I could say nothing, until at the corner of the grand new hotel we met Major Hockin himself, attired in a workman's loose jacket, and carrying a shovel. He was covered with mud and dried flakes of froth, and even his short

white whiskers were encrusted with sparkles of brine; but his face was ruddy and smiling, and his manner as hearty as ever.

"You here, Erema! Oh, I beg pardon, Baroness Castlewood, if you please. My dear, again I congratulate you."

"You have as little cause to do that, as I fear I can find in your case. You have no news for me from America? How sad! But what a poor plight you yourself are in!"

"Not a bit of it! At first sight you might think so; and we certainly have had a very busy time. Send back the fly. Leave your bag at our hotel. Porter, be quick with Lady Castlewood's luggage. One piece of luck befalls me—to receive so often this beautiful hand. What a lot of young fellows now would die of envy——"

"I am glad that you still can talk nonsense," I said; "for I truly was frightened at this great lake, and so many of your houses even standing in the water!"

"It will do them good. It will settle the foundations, and crystallise the mortar. They will look twice as well when they come out again, and never have rats or black beetles. We were foolish enough to be frightened at first; and there may have been danger a fortnight ago. But since that tide we have worked day and night, and everything is now so stable that fear is simply ridiculous. On the whole, it has been a most excellent thing. Quite the making, in fact, of Bruntsea."

"Then Bruntsea must be made of water," I replied, gazing sadly at the gulf which parted us from the Sea Parade, the Lyceum, and Baths, the Bastion-Promenade, and so on; beyond all which the streaky turmoil and misty scud of the waves were seen.

"Made of beer more likely," he retorted, with a laugh. "If my fellows worked like horses—which they did—they also drank like fishes. Their mouths were so dry with the pickle, they said. But the total abstainers were the worst, being out of practice with the can. However, let us make no complaints. We ought to be truly thankful; and I shall miss the exercise. That is why you have heard so little from me. You see the position at a glance. I have never been to Paris at all, Erema. I have not rubbed up my parleywoo, with a blast from Mr. Bellows. I was stopped by a telegram about this job—*acrior illum*—I had some Latin once, quite enough for the House of Commons, but it all oozed out at my elbows; and to ladies (by some superstition) it is rude—though they treat us to bad French enough. Never mind; what I want to say is this, that I have done nothing, but respected your sad trouble—for you took a wild fancy to that poor bed-ridden, who never did you a stroke of good, except about Cosmopolitan Jack, and whose removal has come at the very nick of time; for what could you have done for money, with the Yankees cutting each other's throats, and your nugget quite sure to be annexed; or at the very best, squared up in greenbacks?"

"You ought not to speak so, Major Hockin. If all your plans were not under water, I should be quite put out with you. My cousin was

not bed-ridden; neither was he at all incapable, as you have called him once or twice. He was an infinitely superior man to—to what one generally sees; and when you have heard what I have to tell, in his place you would have done just as he did. And as for money, and 'happy release'—as the people who never want it for themselves express it—such words simply sicken me; at great times, they are so sordid."

"What is there in this world that is not sordid—to the young, in one sense; and to the old in another?"

Major Hockin so seldom spoke in this didactic way, and I was so unable to make it out, that having expected some tiff on his part at my juvenile arrogance, I was just in the mould for a deep impression from sudden stamp of philosophy. I had nothing to say in reply; and he went up in my opinion greatly.

He knew it; and he said with touching kindness, "Erema, come and see your dear Aunt Mary. She has had an attack of rheumatic gout in her thimble-finger, and her maids have worried her out of her life, and by far the most brilliant of her cocks (worth 20*l.* they tell me) breathed his last on Sunday night, with gapes, or croup, or something. This is why you have not heard again from her. I have been in the trenches day and night, stoning out the sea with his own stones, by a new form of concrete discovered by myself. And unless I am very much mistaken—in fact, I do not hesitate to say—but such things are not in your line at all. Let us go up to the house. Our job is done; and I think Master Neptune may pound away in vain. I have got a new range in the kitchen now, partly of my own invention; you can roast, or bake, or steam, or stew, or frizzle kabobs—all by turning a screw. And not only that, but you can keep things hot, piping hot, and ripening as it were, better than when they first were done. Instead of any burnt iron taste, or scum on the gravy, or clottyness, they mellow by waiting, and make their own sauce. If I ever have time I shall patent this invention; why, you may burn brick-dust in it, bath-brick, hearthstone, or potsherds! At any hour of the day or night while the sea is in this condition, I may want my dinner; and there we have it. We say grace immediately, and down we sit. Let us take it by surprise, if it can be taken so. Up through my chief drive, instanter! I think that I scarcely ever felt more hungry. The thought of that range always sets me off. And one of its countless beauties is the noble juicy fragrance."

Major Hockin certainly possessed the art—so meritorious in a host—of making people hungry; and we mounted the hill with alacrity, after passing his letter-box which reminded me of the mysterious lady. He pointed to "Desolate Hole," as he called it, and said that he believed she was there still, though she never came out now to watch their house. And a man of dark and repelling aspect had been seen once or twice by his workmen, during the time of their night relays, rapidly walking towards Desolate Hole. How any one could live in such a place, with the roar and the spray of the sea, as it had been, at the very door, and,

through the windows, some people might understand, but not the Major.

Good Mrs. Hockin received me with her usual warmth and kindness, and scolded me for having failed to write more to her, as all people seem to do when conscious of having neglected that duty themselves. Then she showed me her thimble-finger, which certainly was a little swollen ; and then she poured forth her gratitude for her many blessings, as she always did after any little piece of grumbling. And I told her that if at her age I were only a quarter as pleasant and sweet of temper, I should consider myself a blessing to any man.

After dinner, my host produced the locket, which he had kept for the purpose of showing it to the artist's son in Paris, and which he admired so intensely that I wished it were mine to bestow on him. Then I told him that, through a thing wholly unexpected—the confession of the criminal himself, no journey to Paris was needful now. I repeated that strange and gloomy tale, to the loud accompaniment of a rising wind and roaring sea, while both my friends listened intently.

“Now what can have led him so to come to you?” they asked ; “and what do you mean to do about it?”

“He came to me, no doubt, to propose some bargain, which could not be made in my cousin's lifetime. But the telling of his tale made him feel so strange, that he really could not remember what it was. As to what I am to do, I must beg for your opinion ; such a case is beyond my decision.” Mrs. Hockin began to reply, but stopped, looking dutifully at her lord.

“There is no doubt what you are bound to do, at least in one way,” the Major said ; “you are a British subject, I suppose, and you must obey the laws of the country. A man has confessed to you a murder—no matter whether it was committed twenty years ago, or two minutes ; no matter whether it was a savage, cold-blooded, premeditated crime, or whether there were things to palliate it. Your course is the same ; you must hand him over. In fact, you ought never to have let him go.”

“How could I help it?” I pleaded, with surprise ; “it was impossible for me to hold him.”

“Then you should have shot him with his own pistol. He offered it to you. You should have grasped it, pointed it at his heart, and told him that he was a dead man if he stirred.”

“Aunt Mary, would you have done that?” I asked. “It is so easy to talk of fine things. But in the first place, I had no wish to stop him ; and in the next I could not, if I had.”

“My dear,” Mrs. Hockin replied, perceiving my distress at this view of the subject, “I should have done exactly what you did. If the laws of this country ordain that women are to carry them out against great strong men, who after all have been sadly injured, why it proves that women ought to make the laws, which to my mind is simply ridiculous.”



I THOUGHT OF THE DIFFERENCE IN OUR LOTS, AND MY HEART WAS IN MISERY.

THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

NOVEMBER, 1877.

Crema; or, My Father's Sin.

CHAPTER LIV.

BRUNTSEA DEFEATED.



LITTLE sleep had I, that night. Such conflict was in my mind about the proper thing to be done next, and such a war of the wind outside, above and between the distant uproar of the long tumultuous sea. Of that sound much was intercepted by the dead bulk of the cliff, but the wind swung fiercely over this, and rattled through all shelter. In the morning the storm was furious; but the Major declared that his weather-glass had turned, which proved that the gale was breaking. The top of the

tide would be at one o'clock, and after church we should behold a sight he was rather proud of—the impotent wrath of the wind and tide against his patent concrete.

“My dear, I scarcely like such talk,” Mrs. Hockin gently interposed. “To me it seems almost defiant of the power of the Lord. Remember what happened to poor Smeaton—at least I think his name was Smeaton, or Stanley was it? But I dare say you know best. He defied the strength of the Lord, like the people at the mouth of their tent, and he was swallowed up.”

“Mary, my dear, get your prayer-book. Rasper’s fly is waiting for us, and the parson has no manners. When he drops off, I present to the living; and I am not at all sure that I shall let George have it. He is fond of processions, and all that stuff. The only procession in the Church of England is that of the lord of the manor to his pew. I will be the master in my own church.”

“Of course, dear, of course; so you ought to be. It always was so in my father’s parish. But you must not speak so of our poor George. He may be ‘High-church,’ as they call it; but he knows what is due to his family, and he has a large one coming.”

We set off hastily for the church, through blasts of rain and buffets of wind, which threatened to overturn the cab, and the seaward window was white, as in a snowstorm, with pellets of froth, and the drift of sea-scud. I tried to look out, but the blur and the dash obscured the sight of everything. And though in this lower road we were partly sheltered by the pebble-ridge, the driver was several times obliged to pull his poor horse up and face the wind, for fear of our being blown over.

That ancient church, with its red-tiled spire, stands well up in the good old town, at the head of a street whose principal object now certainly is to lead to it. Three hundred years ago that street had business of its own to think of, and was brave perhaps with fine men and maids, at the time of the Spanish Armada. Its only bravery now was the good old church, and some queer gables, and a crypt (which was true to itself, by being buried up to the spandrils) and one or two corners, where saints used to stand, until they were pelted out of them, and where fisher-like men, in the lodging season, stand selling fish caught at Billingsgate. But to Bruntsea itself the great glory of that street was rather of hope than of memory. Bailiff Hopkins had taken out three latticed windows, and put in one grand one of plate-glass, with “finishing” blinds all varnished. And even on a Sunday morning, Bruntsea wanted to know whatever the Bailiff was at behind them. Some said that he did all his pickling on a Sunday; and by putting up “spectacle glass,” he had challenged the oldest inhabitant to come and try his focus.

Despite all the rattle and roar of the wind, we went on in church as usual. The vicar had a stout young curate from Durham, who could outshout any tempest, with a good stone wall between them; and the Bruntsea folk were of thicker constitution than to care an old hat for the weather. Whatever was “sent by the Lord” they took with a grumble but no excitement. The clock in front of the gallery told the time of the day as five minutes to twelve, when the vicar, a pleasant old-

fashioned man, pronounced his text, which he always did thrice over to make us sure of it. And then he hitched up his old black gown, and directed his gaze at the lord of the manor, to impress the whole church with authority. Major Hockin acknowledged in a proper manner this courtesy of the minister, by rubbing up his crest, and looking even more wide awake than usual; whereas Aunt Mary, whose kind heart longed to see her own son in that pulpit, calmly settled back her shoulders, and arranged her head and eyes so well as to seem at a distance in rapt attention, while having a nice little dream of her own. But suddenly all was broken up. The sexton (whose licence as warden of the church, and even whose duty it was to hear the sermon only fitfully, from the tower arch, where he watched the boys, and sniffed the bakehouse of his own dinner)—to the consternation of everybody, this faithful man ran up the nave, with his hands above his head, and shouted,—

“All Brownzee be awash, awash”—sounding it so as to rhyme with “lash”—“the zea, the zea be all over us!”

The clergyman in the pulpit turned and looked through a window behind him, while all the congregation rose.

“It is too true,” the preacher cried; “the sea is in over the bank, my friends. Every man must rush to his own home. The blessing of the Lord be on you through His fearful visitation!”

He had no time to say more; and we thought it very brave of him to say that, for his own house was in the lower village, and there he had a wife and children sick. In half a minute the church was empty, and the street below it full of people, striving and struggling against the blast, and breasting it at an incline like swimmers, but beaten back ever and anon and hurled against one another, with tattered umbrellas, hats gone, and bonnets hanging. And among them, like gulls before the wind, blew dollops of spray and chunks of froth, with every now and then a slate or pantile.

All this was so bad that scarcely anybody found power to speak, or think, or see. The Major did his very best to lead us, but could by no means manage it. And I screamed into his soundest ear, to pull Aunt Mary into some dry house—for she could not face such buffeting—and to let me fare for myself as I might. So we left Mrs. Hockin in the Bailiff’s house, though she wanted sadly to come with us, and on we went to behold the worst. And thus, by running the byes of the wind, and craftily hugging the corners, we got to the foot of the street at last, and then could go no further.

For here was the very sea itself, with furious billows panting. Before us rolled and ran a fearful surf of crested whiteness, torn by the screeching squalls, and tossed in clashing tufts and pinnacles. And into these came, sweeping over the shattered chine of shingle, gigantic surges from the outer deep, towering as they crossed the bar, and combing against the sky-line, then rushing onward, and driving the huddle of the ponded waves before them.

The tide was yet rising, and at every blow the wreck and the havoc grew worse and worse. That long sweep of brickwork, the "Grand Promenade," bowed and bulged, with wall and window knuckled in and out, like wattles; the "Sea Parade" was a parade of sea; and a bathing machine wheels upward lay, like a wrecked Noah's Ark, on the top of the "Saline-Silico-Calcareous Baths."

The Major stood by me, while all his constructions "went by the board," as they say at sea; and verily everything was at sea. I grieved for him, so that it was not the spray alone that put salt drops on my cheeks. And I could not bear to turn and look at his good old weather-beaten face. But he was not the man to brood upon his woes in silence. He might have used nicer language perhaps, but his inner sense was manful.

"I don't care a damn," he shouted so that all the women heard him; "I can only say I am devilish glad that I never let one of those houses."

There was a little band of seamen, under the shelter of a garden-wall, crouching, or sitting, or standing (or whatever may be the attitude, acquired by much voyaging and experience of bad weather, which cannot be solved, as to centre of gravity, even by the man who does it), and these men were so taken with the Major's manifesto, clenched at once and clarified to them by strong short language, that they gave him a loud "hurrah," which flew on the wings of the wind over housetops. So queer and sound is English feeling, that now Major Hockin became in truth what hitherto he was in title only—the lord and master of Bruntsea.

"A boat! a boat!" he called out again. "We know not who are drowning. The bank still breaks the waves; a stout boat surely could live inside it."

"Yes, a boat could live well enough in this cockle, though never among them breakers," old Barnes the fisherman answered, who used to take us out for whiting; "but Lord bless your honour, all the boats are thumped to pieces, except yonner one, and who can get at her?"

Before restoring his hands to their proper dwelling-place—his pockets,—he jerked his thumb towards a long white boat, which we had not seen through the blinding scud. Bereft of its brethren, or sisters—for all fluctuating things are feminine—that boat survived, in virtue of standing a few feet higher than the rest. But even so, and mounted on the last hump of the pebble-ridge, it was rolling and reeling with stress of the wind and the wash of wild water under it.

"How nobly our Lyceum stands!" the Major shouted, for anything less than a shout was dumb; "this is the time to try institutions. I am proud of my foundations."

In answer to his words, appeared a huge brown surge, a mountain-ridge, seething backward at the crest, with the spread and weight of onset. This great wave smote all other waves away, or else embodied them, and gathered its height against the poor worn pebble-bank, and descended. A

roar distinct above the universal roar proclaimed it, a crash of conflict shook the earth, and the shattered bank was swallowed in a world of leaping whiteness. When this wild mass dashed onward into the swelling flood before us, there was no sign of Lyceum left, but stubs of foundation, and a mangled roof rolling over and over, like a hen-coop.

"Well, that beats everything I ever saw," exclaimed the gallant Major. "What noble timber! What mortice-work! No London scamping there, my lads. But what comes here? Why the very thing we wanted! Barnes, look alive, my man. Run to your house, and get a pair of oars, and a bucket."

It was the boat, the last surviving boat of all that hailed from Bruntsea. That monstrous billow had tossed it up like a schoolboy's kite, and dropped it whole, with an upright keel, in the inland sea, though nearly half-full of water. Driven on by wind and wave it laboured heavily towards us; and more than once it seemed certain to sink, as it broached to, and shipped seas again. But half a dozen bold fishermen rushed with a rope into the short angry surf—to which the polled shingle-bank still acted as a powerful breakwater, else all Bruntsea had collapsed—and they hauled up the boat with a hearty cheer, and ran her up straight with "yo—heave—oh," and turned her on her side to drain, and then launched her again with a bucket and a man to bail out the rest of the water, and a pair of heavy oars brought down by Barnes, and nobody knows what other things.

"Nought to steer with. Rudder gone!" cried one of the men, as the furious gale drove the boat, athwart the street, back again.

"Wants another oar," said Barnes. "What a fool I were to bring only two!"

"Here you are," shouted Major Hockin; "one of you help me to pull up this pole."

Through a shattered gate they waded into a little garden, which had been the pride of the season at Bruntsea; and there from the ground they tore up a pole, with a board at the top nailed across it, and the following not rare legend—"Lodgings to let. Enquire within. First floor front, and back parlours."

"Fust-rate thing to steer with! Would never have believed you had the sense!" So shouted Barnes, a rough man, roughened by the stress of storm and fright. "Get into starn-sheets if so liketh. Ye know, ye may be useful."

"I defy you to push off without my sanction. Useful, indeed! I am the captain of this boat. All the ground under it is mine. Did you think, you set of salted radicals, that I meant to let you go without me? And all among my own houses!"

"Look sharp, governor, if you has the pluck, then. Mind, we are more like to be swamped than not."

As the boat swung about, Major Hockin jumped in, and so, on the spur of the moment, did I. We staggered all about with the heave and

roll, and both would have fallen on the planks, or out over, if we had not tumbled, with opposite impetus, into the arms of each other. Then a great wave burst and soaked us both, and we fell into sitting on a slippery seat.

Meanwhile two men were tugging at each oar, and Barnes himself steering with the signboard; and the head of the boat was kept against the wind and the billows from our breakwater. Some of these seemed resolved (though shorn of depth and height in crossing) to rush all over us and drown us in the washerwomen's drying-ground. By skill, and presence of mind, our captain, Barnes, foiled all their violence, till we got a little shelter from the ruins of the "Young Men's Christian Institute."

"Hold all," cried Barnes; "only keep her head up, while I look about what there is to do."

The sight was a thing to remember; and being on the better side now of the scud, because it was flying away from us, we could make out a great deal more of the trouble which had befallen Bruntsea. The stormy fiord which had usurped the ancient track of the river was about a furlong in width, and troughed with white waves vaulting over. And the sea rushed through at the bottom as well, through scores of yards of pebbles, as it did in quiet weather even, when the tide was brimming. We in the tossing boat, with her head to the inrush of the outer sea, were just like people sitting upon the floats or rafts of a furious weir; and if any such surge had topped the ridge as the one which flung our boat to us, there could be no doubt that we must go down, as badly as the Major's houses. However, we hoped for the best, and gazed at the desolation inland.

Not only the Major's great plan, but all the lower line of old Bruntsea, was knocked to pieces, and lost to knowledge in freaks of wind-lashed waters. Men and women were running about with favourite bits of furniture, or featherbeds, or babies' cradles, or whatever they had caught hold of. The butt-ends of the three old streets that led down towards the sea-ground were dipped, as if playing see-saw in the surf, and the storm made gangways of them and lighthouses of the lamp-posts. The old public-house at the corner was down, and the waves leaping in at the post-office door, and wrecking the globes of the chemist.

"Drift and dash, and roar and rush, and the devil let loose in the thick of it. My eyes are worn out with it. Take the glass, Erema, and tell us who is next to be washed away. A new set of clothes-props for Mrs. Mangles I paid for the very day I came back from town."

With these words, the lord of the submarine manor (whose strength of spirit amazed me) offered his pet binocular, which he never went without upon his own domain. And fisherman Barnes, as we rose and fell, once more saved us from being "swamped," by his clever way of paddling through a scollop in the stern, with the board about the first floor front to let.

The seamen, just keeping way on the boat, sheltered their eyes with their left hands, and fixed them on the tumultuous scene.

I also gazed through the double glass, which was a very clear one; but none of us saw any human being at present in any peril.

"Old pilot was right after all," said one; "but what a good job as it come o' middle day, and best of all of a Sunday!"

"I have heered say," replied another, "that the like thing come to pass nigh upon three hunder years agone. How did you get your things out, Jem Bishop?"

Jem, the only one of them whose house was in the havoc, regarded with a sailor's calmness the entry of the sea through his bedroom window, and was going to favour us with a narrative, when one of his mates exclaimed—

"What do I see yonner, lads? Away beyond town altogether. Seemeth to me like a fellow swimming. Miss, will you lend me spy-glass? Never seed a double-barrelled one before. Can use him with one eye shut, I s'pose?"

"No good that way, Joe," cried Barnes, with a wink of superior knowledge, for he often had used this "binocular;" "shut one eye for one barrel—stands to reason then, you must shut both for two, my son."

"Stow that," said the quick-eyed sailor, as he brought the glass to bear in a moment. "It is a man in the water, lads, and swimming to save the witch, I do believe."

"Bless me!" cried the Major; "how stupid of us! I never thought once of that poor woman. She must be washed out long ago. Pull for your lives, my friends. A guinea a-piece if you save her."

"And another from me," I cried. Whereupon the boat swept round, and the tough ash bent, and we rushed into no small danger. For nearly half a mile had we to pass of raging and boisterous water, almost as wild as the open sea itself, at the breaches of the pebble-ridge. And the risk of a heavy sea boarding us was fearfully multiplied by having thus to cross the storm, instead of breasting it. Useless and helpless, and only in the way, and battered about by wind and sea, so that my Sunday dress was become a drag; what folly, what fatuity, what frenzy I might call it, could ever have led me to jump into that boat? "I don't know. I only know that I always do it," said my sensible self to its mad sister, as they both shut their eyes at a great white wave. "If I possibly survive, I will try to know better. But ever from my childhood I am getting into scrapes."

The boat laboured on, with a good [many grunts, but not a word from any one. More than once we were obliged to fetch up, as a great billow topped the poor shingle bank; and we took so much water on board that the men said afterwards that I saved them. I only remember sitting down, and working at the bucket with both hands, till much of the skin was gone, and my arms and many other places ached. But what was that, to be compared with drowning?

At length we were opposite "Desolate Hole," which was a hole no longer, but filled and flooded with the churning whirl and reckless dominance of water. Tufts and tussocks of shattered brush and rolling wreck played round it, and the old gray stone of mullioned windows split the wash, like mooring-posts. We passed and gazed; but the only sound was the whistling of the tempest, and the only living sight a seagull, weary of his wings, and drowning.

"No living creature can be there," the Major broke our long silence; "land, my friends; if land we may. We risk our own lives for nothing."

The men lay back on their oars, to fetch the gallant boat to the wind again, when through a great gap in the ruins they saw a sight that startled manhood. At the back of that ruin, on the landward side, on a wall which tottered under them, there were two figures standing. One a tall man, urging on, the other a woman shrinking. At a glance, or with a thought, I knew them both. One was Lord Castlewood's first love; the other his son and murderer.

Our men shouted with the whole power of their hearts to tell that miserable pair to wait till succour should be brought to them. And the Major stood up and waved his hat, and in doing so tumbled back again. I cannot tell—how could I tell in the thick of it?—but an idea or a flit of fancy touched me (and afterwards became conviction) that while the man heard us not at all, and had no knowledge of us, his mother turned round, and saw us all, and faced the storm in preference.

Whatever the cause may have been, at least she suddenly changed her attitude. The man had been pointing to the roof, which threatened to fall in a mass upon them; while she had been shuddering back from the depth of eddying waves below her. But now she drew up her poor bent figure, and leaned on her son to obey him.

Our boat, with strong arms labouring for life, swept round the old gable of the ruin; but we were compelled to "give it wide berth," as Captain Barnes shouted; and then a black squall of terrific wind and hail burst forth. We bowed our heads, and drew our bodies to their tightest compass, and every rib of our boat vibrated, as a violin does; and the oars were beaten flat, and dashed their drip into fringes like a small-toothed comb.

That great squall was either a whirlwind, or the crowning blast of a hurricane. It beat the high waves hollow, as if it fell from the sky upon them; and it snapped off one of our oars at the hilt, so that two of our men rolled backward. And when we were able to look about again, the whole roof of "Desolate Hole" was gone, and little of the walls left standing. And how we should guide our course, or even save our lives, we knew not.

We were compelled to bring up—as best we might—with the boat's head to the sea, and so to keep it, by using the steering gear against the surviving oar. As for the people we were come to save, there was no

chance whatever of approaching them. Even without the mishap to the oar, we never could have reached them.

And indeed when first we saw them again, they seemed better off than ourselves were. For they were not far from dry land, and the man (a skilful and powerful swimmer) had a short piece of plank, which he knew how to use, to support his weak companion.

“ Brave fellow ! Fine fellow ! ” the Major cried, little knowing whom he was admiring. “ See how he keeps up his presence of mind ! Such a man as that is worth anything. And he cares more for her than he does for himself. He shall have the Society’s medal. One more long and strong stroke, my noble friend. Oh, great God ! what has befallen him ? ”

In horror and pity we gazed. The man had been dashed against something headlong. He whirled round and round in white water, his legs were thrown up, and we saw no more of him. The woman cast off the plank, and tossed her helpless arms in search of him. A shriek, ringing far on the billowy shore, declared that she had lost him ; and then, without a struggle, she clasped her hands, and the merciless water swallowed her.

“ It is all over, ” cried Major Hockin, lifting his drenched hat solemnly. “ The Lord knoweth best. He has taken them home. ”

CHAPTER LV.

A DEAD LETTER.

WITH that great tornado, the wind took a leap of more points of the compass than I can tell. Barnes, the fisherman, said how many ; but I might be quite wrong in repeating it. One thing, at any rate, was within my compass—it had been blowing to the top of its capacity, direct from the sea ; but now it began to blow quite as hard along the shore. This rough ingratitude of wind to waves, which had followed each breath of its orders, produced extraordinary passion, and raked them into pointed wind-cocks.

“ Captain, we can’t live this out, ” cried Barnes ; “ we must run her ashore at once ; tide has turned ; we might be blown out to sea, with one oar, and then the Lord himself couldn’t save us. ”

Crippled as we were, we contrived to get into a creek, or back-water, near the Major’s gate. Here the men ran the boat up, and we all climbed out, stiff, battered, and terrified, but doing our best to be most truly thankful.

“ Go home, Captain, as fast as you can, and take the young lady along of you, ” said Mr. Barnes, as we stood and gazed at the weltering breadth of disaster ; “ we are born to the drip ; but not you, sir ; and you are not so young as you was, you know. ”

"I am younger than ever I was," the lord of the manor answered, sternly, yet glancing back, to make sure of no interruption from his better half—who had not even heard of his danger—"none of that nonsense to me, Barnes! You know your position, and I know mine. On board of that boat, you took the lead, and that may have misled you. I am very much obliged to you, I am sure, for all your skill and courage; which have saved the lives of all of us. But on land, you will just obey me."

"Sartinly, Captain. What's your orders?"

"Nothing at all. I give no orders. I only make suggestions. But if your experience sees a way to recover those two poor bodies, let us try it at once—at once, Barnes. Erema, run home. This is no scene for you. And tell Margaret to put on the double-bottomed boiler, with the stock she made on Friday, and a peck of patent peas. There is nothing to beat pea-soup; and truly one never knows what may happen."

This was only too evident now, and nobody disobeyed him.

Running up his "drive," to deliver that message, at one of the many bends I saw people from Bruntsea hurrying along a footpath through the dairy-farm. While the flood continued, this was their only way to meet the boat's crew. On the steps of "Smuggler's Castle" (as Bruntlands House was still called by the wicked) I turned again, and the new sea-line was fringed with active searchers. I knew what they were looking for; but scared, and drenched, and shivering as I was, no more would I go near them. My duty was rather to go in and comfort dear Aunt Mary, and myself. In that melancholy quest I could do no good, but a great deal of harm, perhaps, if anything was found, by breaking forth about it.

Mrs. Hockin had not the least idea of the danger we had encountered. Bailiff Hopkins had sent her home, in Rasper's fly, by an inland road, and she kept a good scolding quite ready for her husband, to distract his mind from disaster. That trouble had happened, she could not look out of her window without knowing; but could it be right, at their time of life, to stand in the wet so, and challenge Providence, and spoil the first turkey-poult of the season?

But when she heard of her husband's peril, in the midst of all his losses, his self-command, and noble impulse first of all to rescue life, she burst into tears, and hugged and kissed me, and said the same thing nearly fifty times.

"Just like him. Just like my Nicholas. You thought him a speculative, selfish man. Now you see your mistake, Erema."

When her veteran husband came home at last (thoroughly jaded, and bringing his fishermen to gulp the pea-soup and to gollop the turkey) a small share of mind, but a large one of heart, is required to imagine her doings. Enough that the Major kept saying "Pooh-pooh!" and the more he said the less he got of it.

When feelings calmed down, and we returned to facts, our host and hero—who in plain truth had not so wholly eclipsed me in courage, though of course I expected no praise, and got none, for people hate courage in a lady—to put it more simply, the Major himself, making a considerable fuss, as usual—for to my mind he never could be Uncle Sam—produced from the case of his little “Church Service,” to which he had stuck like a Briton, a sealed and stamped letter, addressed to me at Castlewood, in Berkshire, “stamped,” not with any post-office tool, but merely with the red thing which pays the English post.

Sodden and blurred as the writing was, I knew the clear, firm hand, the same which on the envelope at Shoxford had tempted me to meanness. This letter was from Thomas Hoyle; the Major had taken it from the pocket of his corpse; all doubt about his death was gone. When he felt his feet on the very shore, and turned to support his mother, a violent wave struck the back of his head upon Major Hockin’s pillar-box.

Such sadness came into my heart—though sternly it should have been gladness—that I begged their pardon, and went away, as if with a private message. And wicked as it may have been, to read was more than once to cry. The letter began abruptly—

“You know nearly all my story now. I have only to tell you what brought me to you, and what my present offer is. But to make it clear, I must enlarge a little.

“There was no compact of any kind between your father and myself. He forbore at first to tell what he must have known, partly perhaps to secure my escape, and partly for other reasons. If he had been brought to trial, his duty to his family and himself would have led him, no doubt, to explain things. And if that had failed, I would have returned and surrendered myself. As things happened, there was no need.

“Through bad luck, with which I had nothing to do, though doubtless the whole has been piled on my head, your father’s home was destroyed, and he seems to have lost all care for everything. Yet how much better off was he than I! Upon me the curse fell at birth; upon him, after thirty years of ease and happiness. However, for that very reason, perhaps, he bore it worse than I did. He grew embittered against the world, which had in no way ill-treated him; whereas its very first principle is to scorn all such as I am. He seems to have become a misanthrope, and a fatalist like myself. Though it might almost make one believe the existence of such a thing as justice, to see pride pay for its wickedness thus—the injury to the outcast son recoil upon the pampered one, and the family arrogance crown itself with the ignominy of the family.

“In any case there was no necessity for my interference; and being denied by fate all sense of duty to a father, I was naturally driven to double my duty to my mother, whose life was left hanging upon mine. So we two for many years wandered about, shunning islands and insular prejudice. I also shunned your father, though (so far as I know)

he neither sought me nor took any trouble to clear himself. If the one child now left him had been a son, heir to the family property and so on, he might have behaved quite otherwise, and he would have been bound to do so. But having only a female child, who might never grow up, and, if she did, was very unlikely to succeed, he must have resolved at least to wait. And perhaps he confirmed himself with the reflection that even if people believed his tale (so long after date, and so unvouched), so far as family annals were concerned, the remedy would be as bad as the disease. Moreover, he owed his life to me, at great risk of my own; and to pay such a debt with the hangman's rope would scarcely appear quite honourable, even in the best society.

"It is not for me to pretend to give his motives, although from my knowledge of his character I can guess them pretty well perhaps. We went our several ways in the world, neither of us very fortunate.

"One summer, in the Black Forest, I fell in with an outcast Englishman, almost as great a vagabond as myself. He was under the ban of the law for writing his father's name without licence. He did not tell me that, or perhaps even I might have despised him, for I never was dishonest. But one great bond there was between us—we both detested laws and men. My intimacy with him is the one thing in life which I am ashamed of. He passed by a false name then, of course. But his true name was Montague Hockin. My mother was in very weak health then, and her mind for the most part clouded; and I need not say that she knew nothing of what I had done for her sake. That man pretended to take the greatest interest in her condition, and to know a doctor at Baden who could cure her.

"We avoided all cities (as he knew well), and lived in simple villages, subsisting partly upon my work, and partly upon the little income left by my grandfather, Thomas Hoyle. But compared with Hockin, we were well off; and he did his best to swindle us. Luckily all my faith in mankind was confined to the feminine gender; and not much even of that survived. In a very little time I saw that people may repudiate law, as well from being below as from being above it.

"Then he came one night, with the finest style, and noblest contempt of everything. We must prepare ourselves for great news, and all our kindness to him would be repaid tenfold in a week or two. Let me go into Freyburg that time to-morrow night, and listen! I asked him nothing as to what he meant, for I was beginning to weary of him, as of everybody. However, I thought it just worth while, having someone who bought my wicker-work, to enter the outskirts of the town on the following evening, and wait to be told if any news was stirring. And the people were amazed at my not knowing that last night the wife of an English lord—for so they called him, though no lord yet—had run away with a golden-bearded man, believed to be also English.

"About that you know more perhaps than I do. But I wish you to know what that Hockin was, and to clear myself of complicity. Of

Herbert Castlewood I knew nothing, and I never even saw the lady. And to say (as Sir Montague Hockin has said) that I plotted all that wickedness, from spite towards all of the Castlewood name, is to tell as foul a lie as even he can well indulge in.

“It need not be said that he does not know my story from any word of mine. To such a fellow I was not likely to commit my mother’s fate. But he seems to have guessed at once that there was something strange in my history; and then after spying and low prying at my mother, to have shaped his own conclusion. Then having entirely under his power that young fool who left a kind husband for him, he conceived a most audacious scheme. This was no less than to rob your cousin, the last Lord Castlewood—not of his wife, and jewels, and ready money only—but also of all the disposable portion of the Castlewood estates. For the lady’s mother had taken good care, like a true Hungarian, to have all the lands settled upon her daughter, so far as the husband could deal with them. And though, at the date of the marriage, he could not really deal at all with them—your father being still alive—it appears that his succession (when it afterwards took place) was bound, at any rate, as against himself. A divorce might have cancelled this—I cannot say—but your late cousin was the last man in the world to incur the needful exposure. Upon this they naturally counted.

“The new ‘Lady Hockin’ (as she called herself, with as much right as ‘Lady Castlewood’) flirted about, while her beauty lasted; but even then found her master in a man of deeper wickedness. But if her poor husband desired revenge—which he does not seem to have done perhaps—he could not have had it better. She was seized with a loathsome disease, which devoured her beauty, like Herod and his glory. I believe that she still lives, but no one can go near her; least of all, the fastidious Montague.”

At this part of the letter, I drew a deep breath, and exclaimed, “Thank God!” I know not how many times; and perhaps it was a crime of me to do it even once.

“Finding his nice prospective game destroyed by this little accident—for he meant to have married the lady, after her husband’s death, and set you at defiance; but even he could not do that now, little as he cares for opinion—what did he do but shift hands altogether? He made up his mind to confer the honour of his hand on you, having seen you somewhere in London, and his tactics became the very opposite of what they had been hitherto. Your father’s innocence now must be maintained instead of his guiltiness.

“With this in view, he was fool enough to set the detective police after me—me, who could snap all their noses off! For he saw how your heart was all set on one thing, and expected to have you his serf for ever, by the simple expedient of hanging me. The detectives failed, as they always do. He also failed in his overtures to you.

“You did your utmost against me also; for which I bear you no ill-

will, but rather admire your courage. You acted in a straightforward way, and employed no dirty agency. Of your simple devices I had no fear. However, I thought it as well to keep an eye upon that Hockin, and a worthy old fool, some relation of his, who had brought you back from America. To this end, I kept my head-quarters near him, and established my mother comfortably. She was ordered sea-air, and has had enough. To-morrow I shall remove her. By the time you receive this letter, we shall both be far away, and come back no more; but first I shall punish that Hockin. Without personal violence this will be done.

“Now what I propose to you is simple, moderate, and most strictly just. My mother’s little residue of life must pass in ease and comfort. She has wronged no one, but ever been wronged. Allow her 300*l.* a year, to be paid as I shall direct you. For myself I will not take a farthing. You will also restore, as I shall direct, the trinket upon which she sets great value, and for which I sought vainly, when we came back to England. I happen to know that you have it now.

“In return for these just acts, you have the right to set forth the whole truth publicly, to proclaim your father’s innocence, and (as people will say) his chivalry; and which will perhaps rejoice you also, to hear no more of

“THOMAS HOYLE.

“P.S.—Of course, I am trusting your honour in this. But your father’s daughter can be no sneak; as indeed I have already proved.”

CHAPTER LVI.

WITH HIS OWN SWORD.

“WHAT a most wonderful letter!” cried the Major, when, after several careful perusals, I thought it my duty to show it to him. “He calls me a ‘worthy old fool,’ does he? Well, I call him something a great deal worse—an unworthy skulk, a lunatic, a subverter of rank, and a Radical! And because he was a bastard, is the whole world base? And to come, and live like that, in a house of mine, and pay me no rent, and never even let me see him! Your grandfather was quite right, my dear, in giving him the cold shoulder. Of course you won’t pay him a farthing.”

“You forget that he is dead,” I answered; “and his poor mother with him. At least he behaved well to his mother. You called him a hero—when you knew not who he was. Poor fellow, he is dead! And in spite of all, I cannot help being very sorry for him.”

“Yes, I dare say. Women always are. But you must show a little common sense, Erema. Your grandfather seems to have had too much, and your father far too little. We must keep this matter quiet. Neither the man nor the woman must we know, or a nice stir we shall have in

all the county papers. There must be an inquest, of course, upon them both; but none of the fellows read this direction, for the admirable reason that they cannot read. Our coming forward could do no good, and just now Bruntsea has other things to think of; and first and foremost, my ruin, as they say."

"Please not to talk of that," I exclaimed. "I can raise any quantity of money now, and you shall have it without paying interest. You wanted the course of the river restored, and now you have more—you have got the very sea. You could float the 'Bridal Veil' itself, I do believe, at Bruntsea."

"You have suggested a fine idea," the Major exclaimed with emphasis. "You certainly should have been an engineer. It is a thousand times easier—as everybody knows—to keep water in than to keep it out. Having burst my barricade, the sea shall stop inside and pay for it. Far less capital will be required. By Jove, what a fool I must have been not to see the hand of Providence in all this! Mary, can you spare me a minute, my dear? The noblest idea has occurred to me. Well, never mind, if you are busy; perhaps I had better not state it crudely, though it is not true that it happens every hour. I shall turn it over in my mind, throughout the evening service. I mean to be there, just to let them see. They think that I am crushed, of course. They will see their mistake; and, Erema, you may come. The gale is over, and the evening bright. You sit by the fire, Mary, my dear; I shall not let you out again; keep the silver kettle boiling. In church I always think more clearly than where people talk so much. But when I come home I require something. I see, I see. Instead of an idle, fashionable lounging-place for nincompoops from London, instead of flirtation and novel-reading, vulgarity, show, and indecent attire, and positively immoral bathing, we will now have industry, commerce, wealth, triumph of mechanism, lofty enterprise, and international goodwill. A harbour has been the great want of this coast; see what a thing it is at Newport! We will now have a harbour and floating docks, without any muddy, malarious river—all blue water from the sea; and our fine cliff-range shall be studded with good houses. And the whole shall be called 'Erema-port.'"

Well, Erema must be getting very near her port, although it was not at Bruntsea. Enough for this excellent man, and that still more excellent woman, that there they are, as busy and as happy as the day is long—which imposes some limit upon happiness, perhaps, inasmuch as to the busy every day is short. But Mrs. Hockin, though as full of fowls as ever, gets no White Sultans, nor any other rarity now from Sir Montague Hockin. That gentleman still is alive—so far, at least, as we have heard of; but no people owning any self-respect ever deal with him, to their knowledge. He gambled away all his father's estates, and the Major bought the last of them for his youngest son, a very noble Captain Hockin (according to his mother's judgment), whom I never had the

honour of seeing. Sir Montague lives in a sad plight somewhere, and his cousin still hopes that he may turn honest.

But as to myself and far greater persons, still there are a few words to be said. As soon as all necessary things were done at Bruntsea and at Castlewood, and my father's memory cleared from all stain, and by simple truth ennobled, in a manner strictly legal and consistent with heavy expenses, myself having made a long deposition and received congratulations—as soon as it was possible, I left them all, and set sail for America.

The rashness of such a plan it is more easy for one to establish than two to deny. But what was there in it of peril or of enterprise compared with what I had been through already? I could not keep myself now from going, and reasoned but little about it.

Meanwhile there had been no further tidings of Colonel Gundry or Firm, or even Martin of the Mill himself. But one thing I did which showed some little foresight. As soon as my mind was made up, and long before ever I could get away, I wrote to Martin Clogfast telling him of my intention, and begging him, if he had any idea of the armies, or the Sawyer, or even Firm, or anything whatever of interest, to write (without losing a day) to me, directing his letter to a house in New York, whose address Major Hockin gave me.

So many things had to be done, and I listened so foolishly to the Major (who did his very best to stop me) that it came to be May, 1862 (nearly four years after my father's death), before I could settle all my plans and start. For everybody said that I was much too young to take such a journey all by myself, and "what everybody says must be right," whenever there is no exception to prove the rule. "Aunt Marys" are not to be found every day, nor even Major Hockins; and this again helped to throw me back in getting away from England. And but for his vast engineering ideas, and another slight touch of rheumatic gout (brought upon herself by Mrs. Hockin through setting seven hens in one evening), the Major himself might have come with me, "to observe the new military tactics," as well as to look for his cousin Sampson.

In recounting this, I seem to be as long as the thing itself was in accomplishing. But at last it was done, and most kindly was I offered the very thing to suit me—permission to join the party of a well-known British officer, Colonel Cheriton, of the Engineers. This gentleman, being of the highest repute as a writer upon military subjects, had leave from the Federal Government to observe the course of this tremendous war. And perhaps he will publish some day what seems as yet to be wholly wanting—a calm and impartial narrative of that unparalleled conflict. At any rate, he meant to spare no trouble in a matter so instructive, and he took his wife and two daughters—very nice girls who did me a world of good—to establish them in Washington, or wherever the case might require.

Lucky as this was for me, I could not leave my dear and faithful

friends without deep sorrow ; but we all agreed that it should be only for a very little time. We landed first at New York, and there I found two letters from Martin of the Mill. In the first he grumbled much, and told me that nothing was yet known about Uncle Sam ; in the second he grumbled (if possible) more, but gave me some important news. To wit, he had received a few lines from the Sawyer, who had failed as yet to find his grandson, and sadly lamented the misery he saw, and the shocking destruction of God's good works. He said that he could not bring himself to fight (even if he were young enough) against his own dear countrymen, one of whom was his own grandson ; at the same time he felt that they must be put down, for trying to have things too much their own way. About slavery, he had seen too much of niggers to take them at all for his equals, and no white man with any self-respect would desire to be their brother. The children of Ham were put down at the bottom, as their noses and their lips pronounced, according to Divine revelation ; and for sons of Japhet to break up the noblest nation in the world, on their account, was like rushing in to inherit their curse. As sure as his name was Sampson Gundry, those who had done it would get the worst, though as yet they were doing wonders. And there could be no doubt about one thing—which party it was that began it. But come what would of it, here he was ; and never would Saw-mills see him again, unless he brought Firm Gundry. But he wanted news of poor Miss 'Rema ; and if any came to the house, they must please to send it to the care of Colonel Baker, head-quarters of the army of the Potomac.

This was the very thing I wished to know, and I saw now how stupid I must have been not to have thought of it long ago. For Colonel Baker was, to my knowledge, an ancient friend of Uncle Sam, and had joined the national army at the very outbreak of the war. Well-known not only in California, but throughout the States, for gallantry and conduct, this officer had been a great accession to the Federal cause, when so many wavered, and so he was appointed to a good command. But, alas, when I told Colonel Cheriton my news, I learned from him (who had carefully watched all the incidents of the struggle) that Uncle Sam's noble friend had fallen in the battle of Ball's Bluff, while charging at the head of his regiment.

Still there was hope that some of the officers might know where to find Uncle Sam, who was not at all a man to be mislaid ; and being allowed to accompany my English friends, I went on to Washington. We found that city in a highly nervous state, and from time to time ready to be captured. General Jackson was almost at the gates, and the President every day was calling out for men. The army of Virginia had been beaten back to intrenchments before the capital, and General Lee was invading Maryland. Battle followed battle, thick as blows upon a threshing-floor, and though we were always said to be victorious, the enemy seemed none the more to run away. In this confusion, what chance had I of discovering even the Sawyer ?

Colonel Cheriton (who must have found me a dreadful thorn in the flank of his strategy,) missed no opportunity of inquiry, as he went from one valley to another. For the war seemed to run along the course of rivers, though it also passed through the forests and lakes, and went up into the mountains. Our wonderfully clever and kind member of the British army was delighted with the movements of General Lee, who alone showed scientific elegance in slaying his fellow-countrymen; and the worst of it was that instead of going after my dear Uncle Sam, Colonel Cheriton was always rushing about with maps, plans, and telescopes, to follow the tracery of Lee's campaign. To treat of such matters is far beyond me, as I am most thankful to confess. Neither will I dare to be sorry for a great man doing what became his duty. My only complaint against him is that he kept us in a continual fright.

However, this went by, and so did many other things, though heavily laden with grief and death; and the one thing we learned was to disbelieve ninety-nine out of every hundred. Letters for the Sawyer were despatched by me to every likely place for him, and advertisements put into countless newspapers, but none of them seemed to go near him. Old as he was, he avoided feather-beds, and roamed like a true Californian. But at last I found him, in a sad, sad way.

It was after the battle of Chancellorsville, and our army had been driven back across the Rappahannock. "Our army," I call it, because (although we belonged to neither party), fortune had brought us into contact with these; and knowing more about them, we were bound to take their side. And not only that, but to me it appeared altogether beyond controversy, that a man of large mind and long experience (such as Uncle Sam had) should know much better than his grandson which cause was the one to fight for. At the same time Firm was not at all to be condemned. And if it was true, as Martin Clogfast said, that trouble of mind at my absence had driven him into a prejudiced view, nothing could possibly be more ungracious than for me to make light of his judgment.

Being twenty years old by this time, I was wiser than I used to be, and now made a practice of thinking twice before rushing into peril, as I used to do in California, and to some extent also in England. For though my adventures might not have been as strange as many I myself have heard of (especially from Suan Isco), nevertheless they had comprised enough of teaching and suffering also, to make me careful about having any more. And so, for a long time, I kept at the furthest distance possible, in such a war, from the vexing of the air with cannons, till even Colonel Cheriton's daughters, perfectly soft and peaceful girls, began to despise me as a coward! Knowing what I had been through, I indulged their young opinions.

Therefore they were the more startled when I set forth under a sudden impulse, or perhaps impatience, for a town very near the headquarters of the defeated General Hooker. As they were so brave, I asked

them whether they would come with me ; but although their father was known to be there, they turned pale at the thought of it. This pleased me, and made me more resolute to go ; and in three days' time, I was at Falmouth, a town on our side of the Rappahannock.

Here I saw most miserable sights that made me ashamed of all trifling fear. When hundreds and thousands of gallant men were dying in crippled agony, who or what was I to make any fuss about my paltry self ? Clumsy as I was, some kind and noble ladies taught me how to give help among the sufferers.

At first I cried so at everybody's pain, while asking why ever they should have it, that I did some good by putting them up to bear it rather than distress me so. And when I began to command myself (as custom soon enabled me), I did some little good again by showing them how I cared for them. Their poor weak eyes, perhaps never expecting to see a nice thing in the world again, used to follow me about with a faint, slow roll, and a feeble spark of jealousy.

That I should have had such a chance of doing good, onefold to others and a thousandfold to self, at this turn of life, when I was full of little me, is another of the many most clear indications of a kind hand over me. Every day there was better than a year of ordinary life, in breaking the mind from its little selfish turns, and opening the heart to a larger power. And all this discipline was needed.

For one afternoon when we all were tired, with great heat upon us suddenly, and the flies beginning to be dreadful, our chief being rather unwell and fast asleep, the surgeons away, and our beds as full as they could be, I was called down to reason with an applicant who would take no denial. "A rough man, a very rough old man, and in a most terrible state of mind," said the girl who brought the message ; "and room he would have, or he would know the reason."

"The reason is not far to seek," I answered, more to myself than her, as I ran down the stairs to discomfit that old man. At the open door, with the hot wind tossing worn white curls, and parching shrivelled cheeks, now wearily raising his battered hat, stood my dear Uncle Sam, the Sawyer.

"Lor' a massy, young lady, be you altogether daft ? In my best of days, never was I lips for kissing. And the bootifullest creatur—come now, I ain't saved your life, have I now ?"

"Yes, fifty times over. Fifty thousand times. Uncle Sam, don't you know Erema ?"

"My eyes be dashed ! And dashed they be, to forget the look of yours, my dearie. Seven days have I marched, without thanking the Lord ; and hot coals of fire has He poured upon me now, for his mercy endureth for ever. To think of you—to think of you—as like my own child as could be—only of more finer breed—here standing in front of me, like this here ! There, I never dreamed to do that again, and would scorn a young man at the sight of it."

The Sawyer was too honest to conceal that he was weeping. He simply turned his tanned and weathered face towards the door-post, not to hide his tears, but reconcile his pride by feigning it. I felt that he must be at very low ebb, and all that I had seen of other people's sorrow had no power to assuage me. Inside the door, to keep the hot wind out and hide my eyes from the old man's face, I had some little quiet sobs, until we could both express ourselves.

"It is poor Firm, the poor, poor lad—oh, what hath happened him? That I should see the day!"

Uncle Sam's deep voice broke into a moan, and he bowed his rough forehead on his arm, and shook. Then I took him by the sleeve and brought him in.

"Not dead—poor Firm, your only one—not dead?" as soon as words would come, I asked, and trembled for the opening of his lips.

"Not dead—not quite; but ten times worse. He hath flown into the face of the Lord, like Saul and his armour-bearer. He hath fallen on his own sword; and the worst of it is that the darned thing won't come out again."

"Firm, the last person in the world to do it! Oh, Uncle Sam, surely they have told you ——"

"No lies, no lie at all, my dear. And not only that, but he wanteth now to die—and won't be long first, I reckon. But no time to lose, my dear. The Lord hath sent you to make him happy in his leaving of the world. Can 'e raise a bed and a doctor here? If he would but groan I could bear it a bit, instead of bleeding inward. And for sartin sure, a' would groan nicely, if only by force of habit, at first sight of a real doctor."

"There are half-a-dozen here," I said; "or at least close by. He shall have my own bed. But where is he?"

"We have laid 'un in the sand," he answered simply, "for to dry his perspiration. That weak the poor chap is that he streameth night and day, Miss. Never would you know him for our Firm now, any more than me for Sampson Gundry. Ah me, but the Lord is hard on us!"

Slowly and heavily he went his way to fetch poor Firm to the hospital; while, with light feet but a heavy heart, I returned to arouse our managers. Speedily and well were all things done; and in half an hour Firm lay upon my bed, with two of the cleverest surgeons of New York most carefully examining his wasted frame. These whispered and shook their heads, as in such a case was indispensable; and listening eagerly, I heard the senior surgeon say—"No, he could never bear it." The younger man seemed to think otherwise, but to give way to the longer experience. Then dear Uncle Sam, having bought a new hat at the corner of the street, came forward. Knowing too well what excitement is, and how it changes every one, I lifted my hand for him to go back; but he only put his great hot web of fingers into mine, and drew me to him softly, and covered me up with his side. "He heareth nort, nort, nort," he whispered to me; and then spoke aloud.

“Gentlemen and ladies, or ladies and gentlemen, is the more correct form now-a-days, have I leave to say a word or two? Then if I have, as your manner to me showeth, and heartily thanking you for that same my words shall go into an acorn-cup. This lad, laid out at your mercy here. was as fine a young fellow as the West hath ever raised; straight, and nimble, and could tell no lie. Family reasons, as you will excoose of, drew him to the arms of rebellion. I may have done, and overdone it myself, in arguing cantrips, and convictions, whereof to my knowledge good never came yet. At any rate, off he went anyhow; and the force of nature drew me after him. No matter that to you, I dare say; but it would be, if you was in it.

“Ladies and gentlemen, here he is; and no harm can you make out of him. Although he hath fought for the wrong side to our thinking, bravely hath he fought, and made his way to a Colonelship, worth five thousand dollars, if ever they pay their wages. Never did I think that he would earn so much, having never owned gifts of machinery; and concerning the handling of the dollars perhaps will carry my opinion out. But where was I wandering of a little thing like that?

“It hath pleased the Lord, who doeth all things well, when finally come to look back upon—the Lord hath seen fit to be down on this young man for going agin his grandfather. From Californy—a free state, mind you—he come away to fight for slavery. And how hath he magnified his office? By shooting the biggest man on that side, the almighty foe of the Union, the foremost captain of Midian—the General in whom they trusted. No bullets of ours could touch him; but by his own weapons he hath fallen. And soon as Ephraim Gundry heard it, he did what you see done to him.”

Uncle Sam having said his say—which must have cost him dearly—withdrawed from the bed where his grandson’s body lay shrunken, lax, and grimy. To be sure that it was Firm, I gave one glance—for Firm had always been straight, tall, and large—and then, in a miserable mood, I stole to the Sawyer’s side, to stand with him. “Am I to blame? Is this my fault? For even this am I to blame?” I whispered; but he did not heed me, and his hands were like hard stone.

After a long, hot, heavy time, while I was labouring vainly, the Sawyer also (through exhaustion of excitement) weary, and afraid to begin again with new bad news, as beaten people expect to do—the younger surgeon came up to him, and said, “Will you authorise it?”

“To cut ’un up? To show your museums what a Western lad is? Never. By the Blue River, he shall have a good grave. So help me God, to my own, my man!”

“You misunderstand me. We have more subjects now than we should want for fifty years. War knocks the whole of their value on the head. We have fifty bodies as good as his, and are simply obliged to bury them. What I mean is—shall we pull the blade out?”

“Can he do anything with that there blade in him? I have heard of a man in Kentucky once——”

“Yes, yes; we know all those stories, Colonel—suit the newspapers, not the journals. This fellow has what must kill him inside; he is worn to a shadow already. If there it is left, die he must, and quick stick; inflammation is set up already. If we extract it, his chance of surviving is scarcely one in a hundred.”

“Let him have the one then, the one in the hundred, like the ninety and nine lost sheep. The Lord can multiply a hundredfold—some threescore, and some an hundredfold. I will speak to Him, gentlemen, while you try the job.”

CHAPTER LVII.

FEMALE SUFFRAGE.

ALL that could be done by skill, and care, and love, was done for Firm. Our lady manager, and head-nurse, never left him when she could be spared, and all the other ladies vied in zeal for this young soldier, so that I could scarcely get near him. His grandfather's sad and extraordinary tale was confirmed by a wounded prisoner. Poor Ephraim Gundry's rare power of sight had been fatal perhaps to the cause he fought for, or at least to its greatest captain. Returning from desperate victory, the general, wrapped in the folds of night, and perhaps in the gloom of his own stern thoughts, while it seemed quite impossible that he should be seen, encountered the fire of his own troops; and the order to fire was given by his favourite officer, Colonel Firm Gundry. When the young man learned that he had destroyed, by a lingering death, the chief idol of his heart, he called for a rifle, but all refused him, knowing too well what his purpose was. Then under the trees, without a word or sigh, he set the hilt of his sword upon the earth, and the point to his heart—as well as he could find it. The blade passed through him, and then snapped off—but I cannot bear to speak of it.

And now, few people might suppose it, but the substance of which he was made will be clear, when not only his own knowledge of his case, but also the purest scientific reasoning established a truth more frankly acknowledged in the New World than in the Old one. It was proved that, with a good constitution, it is safer to receive two wounds than one, even though they may not be at the same time taken. Firm had been shot by the captain of Mexican robbers, as long ago related. He was dreadfully pulled down at the time, and few people could have survived it. But now that stood him in the very best stead, not only as a lesson of patience, but also in the question of cartilage. But not being certain what cartilage is, I can only refer inquirers to the note-book of the hospital, which has been printed.

For us, it was enough to know, that (shattered as he was and must

be) this brave and single-minded warrior struggled for the time successfully with that great enemy of the human race, to whom the human race so largely consign one another, and themselves. But some did say, and emphatically Uncle Sam, that Colonel Firm Gundry—for a colonel he was now, not by courtesy, but commission—would never have held up his head to do it, but must have gone on with his ravings for death, if somebody had not arrived, in the nick of time, and cried over him—a female somebody from old England.

And even after that, they say, that he never would have cared to be a man again, never would have calmed his conscience with the reflection, so common-place and yet so high—that having done our best according to our lights, we must not dwell always on our darkness—if once again, and for the residue of life, there had not been some one to console him. A consolation, that need not have, and is better without pure reason, coming, as that would come, from a quarter whence it is never quite welcome. Enough for me that he never laid hand to a weapon of war again, and never shall, unless our own home is invaded.

For after many months—each equal to a year of teaching and of humbling—there seemed to be a good time for me to get away, and attend to my duties in England. Of these I had been reminded often by letters, and once by a messenger, but all money-matters seemed dust in the balance where life and death were swinging. But now Uncle Sam and his grandson, having their love knit afresh by disaster, were eager to start for the Saw-mill, and trust all except their own business to Providence.

I had told them that, when they went westward, my time would be come for starting eastward; and being unlikely to see them again, I should hope for good news frequently. And then I got dear Uncle Sam by himself, and begged him, for the sake of Firm's happiness, to keep him as far as he could from Pennsylvania Sylvester. At the same time I thought that the very nice young lady, who jumped upon his nose from the window, Miss Annie — I forgot her name, or at any rate I told him so—would make him a good straightforward wife, so far as one could tell from having seen her. And that seemed to have been settled in their infancy. And if he would let me know when it was to be, I had seen a thing in London I should like to give them.

When I asked the Sawyer to see to this, instead of being sorry, he seemed quite pleased, and nodded sagaciously, and put his hat on, as he generally did, to calculate.

"Both of them gals have married long ago," he said, looking at me with a fine soft gaze; "and bad handfuls their mates have got of them. But what made you talk of them, Missy, or 'my lady'—as now you are in old country, I hear—what made you think of them like that, my dearie?"

"I can't tell what made me think of them. How can I tell why I think of everything?"

"Still, it was an odd thing for your ladyship to say."

"Uncle Sam, I am nobody's ladyship; least of all yours. What

makes you speak so? I am your own little wandering child, whose life you saved, and whose father you loved, and who loses all who love her. Even from you, I am forced to go away. Oh, why is it always my fate—my fate?"

"Hush!" said the old man; and I stopped my outburst at his whisper. "To talk of fate, my dearie, shows either one thing or the other—that we have no will of our own, or else that we know not how to guide it. I never knew a good man talk of fate. The heathens and the pagans made it. The Lord in heaven is enough for me; and he always hath allowed me my own free will, though I may not have handled 'un cleverly. And He giveth you your own will now, my Missy—to go from us, or to stop with us. And being as you are a very grand young woman now, owning English land and income paid in gold, instead of greenbacks—the same as our nugget seems likely—to my ideas it would be wrong if we was so much as to ask you."

"Is that what you are full of then, and what makes you so mysterious? I did think that you knew me better; and I had a right to hope so."

"Concerning of yourself alone is not what we must think of. You might do this, or you might do that, according to what you was told, or even more, according to what was denied you. For poor honest people, like Firm and me, to deal with such a case is out of knowledge. For us it is—go by the will of the Lord, and dead agin' your own desires."

"But, dear Uncle Sam," I cried, feeling that now I had him upon his own tenter-hooks, "you rebuked me as sharply as lies in your nature, for daring to talk about fate just now; but to what else comes your own conduct, if you are bound to go against your own desire? If you have such a lot of free will, why must you do what you do not like to do?"

"Well, well, perhaps I was talking rather large. The will of the world is upon us as well. And we must have respect for its settlements."

"Now let me," I said, with a trembling wish to have everything right and maidenly. "I have seen so much harm from misunderstandings, and they are so simple when it is too late; let me ask you one or two questions, Uncle Sam. You always answer everybody. And to you a crooked answer is impossible."

"Business is business," the Sawyer said. "My dear, I contract accordingly."

"Very well. Then, in the first place, what do you wish to have done with me? Putting aside all the gossip, I mean, of people who have never even heard of me."

"Why, to take you back to Saw-mill with us, where you always was so natural."

"In the next place, what does your grandson wish?"

"To take you back to Saw-mill with him, and keep you there till death do you part, as chanceth to all mortal pairs."

"And now, Uncle Sam, what do I wish? You say we all have so much free will."

"It is natural that you should wish, my dear, to go and be a great lady, and marry a nobleman of your own rank, and have a lot of little noblemen."

"Then I fly against nature; and the fault is yours, for filling me so with machinery."

The Sawyer was beaten, and he never said again that a woman cannot argue.

CHAPTER LVIII.

BEYOND DESERT, AND DESERTS.

FROM all the carnage, havoc, ruin, hatred, and fury of that wicked war, we set our little convoy forth, with passes procured from either side. According to all rules of war, Firm was no doubt a prisoner; but having saved his life, and taken his word to serve no more against them, remembering also that he had done them more service than ten regiments, the Federal authorities were not sorry to be quit of him.

He, for his part, being of a deep, retentive nature, bore in his wounded breast a sorrow which would last his lifetime. To me he said not a single word about his bitter fortune, and he could not bring himself to ask me whether I would share it. Only from his eyes sometimes I knew what he was thinking; and having passed through so much grief, I was moved with deep compassion. Poor Firm had been trained by his grandfather to a strong, earnest faith in Providence, and now this compelled him almost to believe that he had been specially visited. For flying in the face of his good grandfather, and selfishly indulging his own stiff neck, his punishment had been hard and almost heavier than he could bear. Whatever might happen to him now, the spring and the flower of his life were gone; he still might have some calm existence, but never win another day of cloudless joy. And if he had only said this, or thought about it, we might have looked at him with less sadness of our own.

But he never said anything about himself, nor gave any opening for our comfort to come in. Only from day to day he behaved gently and lovingly to both of us, as if his own trouble must be fought out by himself, and should dim no other happiness. And this kept us thinking of his sorrow all the more; so that I could not even look at him without a flutter of the heart, which was afraid to be a sigh.

At last upon the great mountain range, through which we now were toiling, with the snow little more than a mantle for the peaks, and a sparkling veil for sunrise, dear Uncle Sam, who had often shown signs of impatience, drew me apart from the rest. Straightforward and blunt as he generally was, he did not seem altogether ready to begin, but pulled

off his hat, and then put it on again, the weather being now cold and hot by turns. And while he did this he was thinking at his utmost, as every full vein of his forehead declared. And being at home with his ways, I waited.

"Think you got ahead of me? No, not you," he exclaimed at last, in reply to some version of his own of my ideas, which I carefully made a nonentity under the scrutiny of his keen blue eyes. "No, no, Missy, you wait a bit. Uncle Sam was not hatched yesterday, and it takes fifty young ladies to go round him."

"Is that from your size, Uncle Sam, or your depth?"

"Well, a mixture of both, I do believe. Now, the last thing you ever would think of, if you lived to be older than Washington's nurse, is the very thing I mean to put to you. Only you must please to take it well, according to my meaning. You see our Firm going to a shadow, don't you? Very well, the fault of that is all yourn. Why not up and speak to him?"

"I speak to him every day, Uncle Sam; and I spare no efforts to fatten him. I am sure I never dreamed of becoming such a cook. But soon he will have Suan Isco."

"Old Injun be darned! It's not the stomach, it's the heart as wants nourishment with yon poor lad. He looketh that pitiful at you sometimes, my faith, I can hardly tell whether to laugh at his newings, or cry at the lean face that does it."

"You are not talking like yourself, Uncle Sam. And he never does anything of the kind. I am sure there is nothing to laugh at."

"No, no; to be sure not. I made a mistake. Heroic is the word, of course—everything is heroic."

"It is heroic," I answered, with some vexation at his lightness. "If you cannot see it, I am sorry for you. I like large things; and I know of nothing larger than the way poor Firm is going on."

"You to stand up for him!" Colonel Gundry answered, as if he could scarcely look at me. "You to talk large of him, my Lady Castlewood, while you are doing of his heart into small wittles! Well, I did believe, if no one else, that you were a straightforward one."

"And what am I doing that is crooked now?"

"Well, not to say crooked, Miss 'Rema; no, no. Only onconsistent, when squared up."

"Uncle Sam, you're a puzzle to me to-day. What is inconsistent? What is there to square up?"

He fetched a long breath, and looked wondrous wise. Then, as if his main object was to irritate me, he made a long stride, and said, "Soup's a-bilin' now."

"Let it boil over, then. You must say what you mean. Oh, Uncle Sam, I only want to do the right."

"I dessay. I dessay. But have you got the pluck, Miss? Our little Missy would a' done more than that. But come to be great lady—

why, they take another tune. With much mind, of course it might be otherwise. But none of 'em have any much of that to spare."

"Your view is a narrow one," I replied, knowing how that would astonish him. "You judge by your own experience only; and to do that shows a sad want of breadth, as the ladies in England express it."

The Sawyer stared, and then took off his hat, and then felt all about for his spectacles. The idea of being regarded by a "female" from a larger and loftier point of view, made a new sensation in his system.

"Yes," I continued, with some enjoyment, "let us try to look largely at all things, Uncle Sam. And supposing me capable of that, what is the proper and the lofty course to take?"

He looked at me with a strange twinkle in his eyes, and with three words discomfited me—"Pop the question."

Much as I had heard of woman's rights, equality of body and mind with man, and superiority in morals, it did not appear to me that her privilege could be driven to this extent. But I shook my head till all my hair came down, and so if our constitutional right of voting by colour was exercised, on this occasion it claimed the timid benefit of ballot.

With us, a suggestion for the time discarded has often double effect by-and-by; and though it was out of my power to dream of acting up to such directions, there could be no possible harm in reviewing such a theory theoretically.

Now nothing beyond this was in my thoughts, nor even so much as that (safely may I say), when Firm and myself met face to face on the third day after Uncle Sam's ideas. Our little caravan, of which the Sawyer was the captain, being bound for Blue River and its neighbourhood, had quitted the Sacramento track, by a fork on the left, not a league from the spot where my father had bidden adieu to mankind. And knowing every twist and turn of rock, our drivers brought us at the camping-time almost to the verge of chaparral.

I knew not exactly how far we were come, but the dust-cloud of memory was stirring, and though mountains looked smaller than they used to look, the things done among them seemed larger. And wandering forth from the camp to think, when the evening meal was over, lo! there I stood in that self-same breach or portal of the desert, in which I stood once by my father's side, with scared and weary eyes, vainly seeking safety's shattered landmark. The time of year was different, being the ripe end of October now; but though the view was changed in tint, it was even more impressive. Sombre memories, and deep sense of grandeur, which is always sad, and solemn lights, and stealing shadows, compassed me with thoughtfulness. In the mouth of the gorge was a gray block of granite, whereupon I sat down to think.

Old thoughts, dull thoughts, thoughts as common as the clouds that cross the distant plain, and as vague as the wind that moves them—they please and they pass, and they may have shed kindly influence, but what are they? The life that lies before us is, in some way too, below us, like

yon vast amplitude of plain ; but it must be traversed foot by foot, and laboriously travailed, without the cloudy vapouring or the high-flown meditation. And all that must be done by me, alone, with none to love me, and (which for a woman is so much worse) nobody ever to have for my own, to cherish, love, and cling to.

Tier upon tier, and peak over peak, the finest mountains of the world are soaring into the purple firmament. Like Northern lights, they flash, or flush, or fade into a reclining gleam ; like ladders of heaven, they bar themselves with cloudy air ; and like heaven itself they rank their white procession. Lonely, feeble, puny, I look up with awe and reverence ; the mind pronounces all things small compared with this magnificence. Yet what will all such grandeur do—the self-defensive heart inquires—for puny, feeble, lonely me ?

Before another shadow deepened, or another light grew pale, a slow, uncertain step drew near, and by the merest chance it happened to be Ephraim Gundry's. I was quite surprised, and told him so ; and he said that he also was surprised at meeting me in this way. Remembering how long I had been here, I thought this most irrational, but checked myself from saying so, because he looked so poorly. And more than that, I asked him kindly how he was this evening, and smoothed my dress to please his eye, and offered him a chair of rock. But he took no notice of all these things.

I thought of the time when he would have behaved so very differently from this, and nothing but downright pride enabled me to repress vexation. However, I resolved to behave as kindly as if he were his own grandfather.

“How grand these mountains are !” I said. “It must do you good to see them again. Even to me it is such a delight. And what must it be to you, a native ?”

“Yes, I shall wander from them no more. How I wish that I had never done so !”

“Have men less courage than women ?” I asked, with one glance at his pale worn face. “I owe you the debt of life ; and this is the place to think and speak of it. I used to talk freely of that, you know. You used to like to hear me speak ; but now you are tired of that, and tired of all the world as well, I fear.”

“No, I am tired of nothing, except my own vile degradation. I am tired of my want of spirit, that I cannot cast my load. I am tired of my lack of reason, which should always guide a man. What is the use of mind, or intellect, reasoning power, or whatever it is called, if the whole of them cannot enable a man to hold out against a stupid heart ?”

“I think you should be proud,” I said, while trembling to approach the subject which never had been touched between us, “at having a nature so sensitive. Your evil chance might have been anybody's, and must of course have been somebody's. But nobody else would have taken it so—so delightfully as you have done.”

"Delightfully! Is that the word you use? May I ask who gets any delight from it?"

"Why, all who hate the Southern cause," I replied, with a sudden turn of thought, though I never had meant to use the word; "surely that needs no explanation."

"They are delighted, are they? Yes, I can very well believe it. Narrow-minded bigots! Yes, they are sure to be delighted. They call it a just visitation, of course, a righteous retribution. And they hope I may never get over it."

"I pray you to take it more gently," I said; "they are very good men, and wish you no harm. But they must have their own opinions; and naturally they think them just."

"Then all their opinions are just wrong. They hope to see me go down to my grave. They shall not have that pleasure. I will outlive every old John Brown of them. I did not care two cents to live just now. Henceforth I will make a point of it. If I cannot fight for true freedom any more, having ruined it perhaps already, the least I can do is to give no more triumph to its bitter enemies. I will eat and drink, and begin this very night. I suppose you are one of them, as you put their arguments so neatly. I suppose you consider me a vile slave-driver?"

"You are very ill," I said, with my heart so full of pity that anger could not enter; "you are very ill, and very weak. How could you drive the very best slave now—even such a marvel as Uncle Tom?"

Firm Gundry smiled; on his lean dry face there shone a little flicker, which made me think of the time when he bought a jest-book, published at Cincinnati, to make himself agreeable to my mind. And little as I meant it, I smiled also, thinking of the way he used to come out with his hard-fought jokes, and expect it.

"I wish you were at all as you used to be," he said, looking at me, softly, through the courage of his smile, "instead of being such a grand lady."

"And I wish you were a little more like yourself," I answered, without thinking; "you used to think always there was nobody like me."

"Suppose that I am of the same opinion still? Tenfold, fiftyfold, a millionfold?"

"To suppose a thing of that sort is a little too absurd, when you have shown no sign of it."

"For your own dear sake I have shown no sign. The reason of that is too clear to explain."

"Then how stupid I must be, not to see an atom of it!"

"Why, who would have anything to say to me—a broken-down man, a fellow marked out for curses, one who hates even the sight of himself? The lowest of the low would shun me."

He turned away from me, and gazed back towards the dismal, miserable, spectral desert; while I stood facing the fruitful, delicious, flowery Paradise of all the world. I thought of the difference in our lots, and

my heart was in misery about him. Then I conquered my pride, and my littleness, and trumpery, and did what the gentle sweet Eve might have done. And never have I grieved for that action since.

With tears on my cheeks quite undissembled, and a breast not ashamed of fluttering, I ran to Firm Gundry, and took his right hand, and allowed him no refuge from tender wet eyes. Then before he could come to see the meaning of this haste—because of his very high discipline—I was out of his distance, and sitting on a rock, and I lifted my eyes, full of eloquence, to his; then I dropped them, and pulled my hat forward, and said, as calmly as was possible, “I have done enough. The rest remains with you, Firm Gundry.”

The rest remained with him. Enough that I was part of that rest; and if not the foundation or crown of it, something desirous to be both, and failing (if fail it ever does) from no want of trial. Uncle Sam says that I never fail at all, and never did fail in anything, unless it was when I found that blamed nugget, for which we got three wagon-loads of green-backs; which (when prosperity at last revives) will pay perhaps for greasing all twelve wheels.

Jowler admits not that failure even. As soon as he recovered from canine dementia, approaching very closely to rabies, at seeing me in the flesh once more (so that the Sierra Nevada rang with avalanches of barking), he tugged me to the place where his teeth were set in gold, and proved that he had no hydrophobia. His teeth are scanty now, but he still can catch a salmon, and the bright zeal and loyalty of his soft brown eyes, and the sprightly elevation of his tail, are still among dogs as pre-eminent as they are to mankind inimitable.

Now the war is past, and here we sit by the banks of the soft Blue River. The early storm and young conflict of a clouded life are over. Still out of sight there may be yet a sea of troubles to buffet with; but it is not merely a selfish thought, that others will face it with me. Dark mysteries have been cleared away by being confronted bravely; and the lesson has been learned that life (like Californian flowers) is of infinite variety. This little river, ten steps wide, on one side has all lupins, on the other side all larkspurs. Can I tell why? Can anybody? Can even itself, so full of voice and light, unroll the reason?

Behind us tower the stormy crags, before us spreads soft tapestry of earth, and sweep of ocean. Below us lies my father's grave, whose sin was not his own, but fell on him, and found him loyal. To him was I loyal also, as a daughter should be; and in my lap lies my reward—for I am no more Erema.

THE END.

Some Sonnets of Campanella.



In every realm of intellectual activity the Italians were the pioneers of modern civilisation. It was their destiny to discover and inaugurate, to try experiments and make the first essays, giving the form of final perfection only to the fine arts, but opening new paths in science and philosophy, in politics and commerce, in the analysis of human life, and in the exploration of the globe. Of late years, while acknowledging the æsthetical pre-eminence of the Italians, we have been apt to ignore or to depreciate the services they rendered to philosophy, philology, history, political economy, and science. Yet three centuries have not fully elapsed since the attention of Europe was habitually directed to the South for brilliant discoveries in each of these departments. At the beginning of the modern era Italy was emphatically the mistress and the teacher of the northern and more tardily developed nations in all that concerned their intellectual advancement; and if we have forgotten what we owed to her, it is because those nations, starting from the level gained by the Italians, have carried knowledge further than was possible in the first dawn of thought for them to do.

These general remarks form an introduction to the mention of a name now almost wholly forgotten. Tommaso Campanella is scarcely known by hearsay except to epicures of philosophical antiquities, like Sir William Hamilton, or to essayists on Utopias, who use the *Città del Sole* to illustrate the more famous ideal of Sir Thomas More. Yet the writings of this extraordinary man contain, as it were, proleptically, or in germ, nearly all the thoughts that have been fruitful since his day in modern science and philosophy. His poems, with which I am specially concerned in this place, are luminous with ideas remarkable for boldness even at the present time, and truly marvellous when we consider that he who penned those weighty phrases in his southern dungeon, was a Dominican monk of the sixteenth century. That Campanella did not or could not mould his teeming thoughts into a system, that he was unable to do more than take a Pisgah-view of modern development, renders his scientific work of little actual value now. In philosophy he was but a precursor; and his fame, like the light of a morning star, has very justly been swallowed up in that of men who make our noon. His poetry has a stronger claim to recognition; for the profound and pregnant thoughts, which Campanella had no opportunity of basing on a solid ground of proof and scientific demonstration, here appear in their true medium of emotional intensity and half-prophetic imagery.

The fate of these philosophical poems is not a little curious. Composed by Campanella at intervals during his imprisonment at Naples, they would probably have remained in manuscript but for an accident. A German gentleman, named Tobia Adami by the philosopher, visited Campanella in his dungeon, and received from him the seven books of his poems. They took his fancy so much that he determined to publish a portion of them; and accordingly in 1622 he gave about a seventh part of the whole collection to the press in Germany. This first edition was badly printed on very bad paper, without the name of press or place. It bore this title:—"Scelta d'alcune poesie filosofiche di Settimontano Squilla cavate da' suo' libri detti La Cantica con l'esposizione, stampato nell' anno MDCXXII." The pseudonym *Squilla* is a pun upon Campanella's name, since both *Campana* and *Squilla* mean a bell; while *Settimontano* contains a quaint allusion to his physical peculiarities, since the poet's skull was remarkable for seven protuberances. A very few copies of this book were printed; and none of them seem to have found their way into Italy, though it is possible that they had a limited circulation in Germany. At any rate, there is strong reason to suppose that Leibnitz was acquainted with the contents of the obscure little volume, while Herder in his *Adrastea* at a later period published free translations from a certain number of the sonnets. To this circumstance we owe the reprint of 1834, published at Lugano by John Gaspar Orelli, the celebrated Zürich scholar. Early in his youth Orelli was delighted with the German version made by Herder; and during his manhood, while residing as Protestant pastor at Bergamo, he used his utmost endeavours to procure a copy of the original. In his preface to the reprint he tells us that these efforts were wholly unsuccessful through a period of twenty-five years. He applied to all his literary friends, among whom he mentions the ardent Ugo Foscolo and the learned Mazzuchelli; but none of these could help him. He turned the pages of Crescimbeni, Quadrio, Gamba, Corniani, Tiraboschi, weighty with enormous erudition—and only those who make a special study of Italian know how little has escaped their scrutiny—but found no mention of Campanella as a poet. At last, after the lapse of a quarter of a century, he received the long-coveted little quarto volume from Wolfenbüttel in the north of Germany. The new edition which Orelli gave to the press at Lugano has this title:—"Poesie filosofiche di Tomaso Campanella pubblicate per la prima volta in Italia di Gio. Gaspare Orelli, Professore all' Università di Zurigo. Lugano, 1834." It has been again reprinted at Turin, in 1854, by Alessandro d'Ancona, together with some of Campanella's minor works and an essay on his life and writings. This third edition professes to have improved Orelli's punctuation and to have rectified the text. But it still leaves much to be desired on the score of careful editorship. Neither Orelli nor d'Ancona have done much to clear up the difficulties of the poems—difficulties in many cases obviously due to misprints and errors of the first transcriber; while in one or two instances they allow patent blunders to

pass uncorrected. In the sonnet entitled "A Dio" (D'Ancona, p. 102), for example, *bocca* stands for *buca* in a place where sense and rhyme alike demand the restitution of the right word. Speaking briefly, Campanella's poems, though they have been three times printed, have never yet received the care of a scrupulous editor.

At no time could the book have hoped for many readers. Least of all would it have found them among the Italians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, to whom its energetic language and extraordinary ideas would have presented insuperable difficulties. Between Dante and Alfieri no Italian poet except Michael Angelo expressed so much deep thought and feeling in phrases so terse, and with originality of style so daring: and even Michael Angelo is monotonous in the range of his ideas and conventional in his diction, when compared with the indescribable violence and vigour of Campanella. Campanella borrows little by way of simile or illustration from the outer world, and he never falls into the commonplaces of poetic phraseology. His poems exhibit the exact opposite of the Petrarchistic or the Marinistic mannerism. Each sonnet seems to have been wrenched alive and palpitating from the poet's breast, with the drops of life-blood fresh upon it. There is no smoothness, no gradual unfolding of a *thémé*, no rhetorical exposition, no fanciful embroidery, no sweetness of melodic cadences, in his masculine art of poetry. Brusque, rough, violent in transition, leaping from the sublime to the ridiculous—his poems owe their elevation to the passion of their feeling, the nobleness and condensation of their thought, the energy and audacity of their expression, their brevity, sincerity, and weight of sentiment. Campanella had an essentially combative intellect. He was both a poet and a philosopher militant. He stood alone, making war upon the authority of Aristotle in science and of Petrarch in art, taking the fortresses of phrase by storm, and subduing the hardest material of philosophy to the tyranny of his rhymes. Plebeian saws, salient images, dry sentences of metaphysical speculation, logical summaries, and splendid tirades are hurled together—half crude and cindery scoriæ, half molten metal and resplendent ore—from the volcano of his passionate mind. Such being the nature of Campanella's style, when in addition it is remembered that his text is often hopelessly corrupt and his allusions obscure, the difficulties offered by his sonnets to the translator will be readily conceived.

Before presenting any specimens of Campanella's poems, it will be necessary to say something about his philosophy and his life. At the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries, philosophy took a new point of departure among the Italians, and all the fundamental ideas which have formed the staple of modern European systems were anticipated by a few obscure thinkers. It is noticeable that the States of Naples, hitherto comparatively inert in the intellectual development of Italy, furnished the five writers who preceded Bacon, Leibnitz, Schelling, and Comte, Telesio of Cosenza, Bruno of Nola,

Campanella of Stilo, Vanini and Vico of Naples, are the chief among these *novi homines* or pioneers of modern thought. The characteristic point of this new philosophy was an unconditional return to Nature as the source of knowledge, combined with a belief in the intuitive forces of the human reason: so that from the first it showed two sides or faces to the world; the one positive, scientific, critical, and analytical; the other mystical, metaphysical, subjective. Modern materialism and modern idealism were both contained in the audacious guesses of Bruno and Campanella; nor had the time arrived for separating the two strains of thought, or for attempting a systematic synthesis of knowledge under one or the other head.

The men who led this mighty intellectual movement burned with the passionate ardour of discoverers, the fiery enthusiasm of confessors. They stood alone, sustained but little by intercourse among themselves, and wholly misunderstood by the people round them. Italy, sunk in sloth, priest-ridden, tyrant-ridden, exhausted with the unparalleled activity of the Renaissance, besotted with the vices of slavery and slow corruption, had no ears for spirit-thrilling prophecy. The Church, terrified by the Reformation, when she chanced to hear those strange voices sounding through "the blessed mutter of the mass," burned the prophets. The State, represented by absolute Spain, if it listened to them at all, flung them into prison. To both Church and State there was peril in the new philosophy; for the new philosophy was the first birth-cry of the modern genius, with all the crudity and clearness, the brutality and uncompromising sincerity of youth. The Church feared Nature. The State feared the People. Nature and the People—those watchwords of modern Science and modern Liberty—were already on the lips of the philosophers.

It was a philosophy militant, errant, exiled; a philosophy in chains and solitary, at war with society, authority, opinion; self-sustained by the prescience of ultimate triumph, and invincible through the sheer force of passionate conviction. The men of whom I speak were conscious of pariahdom, and eager to be martyred in the glorious cause. "A very Proteus is the philosopher," says Pomponazzo; "seeking to penetrate the secrets of God, he is consumed with ceaseless cares; he forgets to thirst, to hunger, to sleep, to eat; he is derided of all men; he is held for a fool and irreligious person; he is persecuted by inquisitors; he becomes a gazing-stock to the common folk. These are the gains of the philosopher; these are his guerdon." Pomponazzo's words were prophetic. Of the five philosophers whom I have mentioned, Vanini was burned as an atheist, Bruno was burned, and Campanella was imprisoned for a quarter of a century. Both Bruno and Campanella were Dominican friars. Bruno was persecuted by the Church, and burned for heresy. Campanella was persecuted by both Church and State, and was imprisoned on the double charge of sedition and heresy. *Dormitantium animarum excubitor* was the self-given title of Bruno. *Nunquam tacebo* was the favourite motto of Campanella.

Giovanni Domenico Campanella was born in the year 1568 at Stilo in Calabria, one of the most southern townships of all Italy. In his boyhood he showed a remarkable faculty for acquiring and retaining knowledge, together with no small dialectical ability. His keen interest in philosophy and his admiration for the great Dominican doctors, Thomas Aquinas and Albertus Magnus, induced him at the age of fifteen to enter the order of S. Dominic, exchanging his secular name for Tommaso. But the old alliance between philosophy and orthodoxy, drawn up by scholasticism and approved by the mediæval Church, had been succeeded by mutual hostility; and the youthful thinker found no favour in the cloister of Cosenza, where he now resided. The new philosophy taught by Telesius placed itself in direct antagonism to the pseudo-Aristotelian tenets of the theologians, and founded its own principles upon the Interrogation of Nature. Telesius, says Bacon, was the prince of the *novi homines*, or inaugurators of modern thought. It was natural that Campanella should be drawn towards this great man. But the superiors of his convent prevented his forming the acquaintance of Telesius; and though the two men dwelt in the same city of Cosenza, Campanella never knew the teacher he admired so passionately. Only when the old man died and his body was exposed in the church before burial, did the neophyte of his philosophy approach the bier, and pray beside it, and place poems upon the dead.

From this time forward Campanella became an object of suspicion to his brethren. They perceived that the fire of the new philosophy burned in his powerful nature with incalculable and explosive force. He moved restlessly from place to place, learning and discussing, drawing men towards him by the magnetism of a noble personality, and preaching his new gospel with perilous audacity. His papers were seized at Bologna; and at Rome the Holy Inquisition condemned him to perpetual incarceration on the ground that he derived his science from the devil, that he had written the book *De tribus Impostoribus*, that he was a follower of Democritus, and that his opposition to Aristotle savoured of gross heresy. At the same time, the Spanish Government of Naples accused him of having set on foot a dangerous conspiracy for overthrowing the viceregal power and establishing a communistic commonwealth in southern Italy. Though nothing was proved satisfactorily against him, Campanella was held a prisoner under the sentence which the Inquisition had pronounced upon him. He was, in fact, a man too dangerous, too original in his opinions, and too bold in their enunciation, to be at large. For twenty-five years he remained in Neapolitan dungeons; three times during that period he was tortured to the verge of dying; and at last he was released, while quite an old man, at the urgent request of the French Court. Soon after his liberation Campanella died. The numerous philosophical works on metaphysics, mathematics, politics, and æsthetics which Campanella gave to the press, were composed during his long imprisonment. How he got them printed I do not know; but it is obvious that

he cannot have been strictly debarred from writing by his jailors. In prison, too, he made both friends and converts. We have seen that we owe the publication of a portion of his poems to the visit of a German knight.

In arranging the few poems I have selected for translation, I cannot do better than divide them into four classes:—1. Philosophical; 2. Political; 3. Prophetic; and 4. Personal. The Philosophical sonnets throw light upon Campanella's relation to his predecessors, his conception of the universe as a complex animated organism, his conviction that true knowledge must be gained by the interrogation of Nature, his theory of human life and action, and his judgment of the age in which he lived. The Political sonnets may be divided into two groups—those which discuss royalty, nobility, and the sovereignty of the people, and those which treat of the several European States. The Prophetic sonnets seem to have been suggested by the misery and corruption of Italy, and express the poet's unwavering belief in the speedy triumph of right and reason. Among the Personal sonnets I have placed those which refer immediately to Campanella's own sufferings, or which describe his ideal of the philosophic character.

1. When Adami published his selection of Campanella's poems, he printed the sonnet which I shall quote first, as the Proem to the whole book. The thought expressed in it is this: the true philosopher, who in this place is Campanella himself, is the child of Eternal Wisdom, the father, and of human Science, the mother of his reason. True philosophy brings men face to face with Nature; wherefore Campanella bids his readers leave the schoolmen and the learning of books. He calls upon them to exchange logomachy for positive inquiry, dissolving their pride and prejudice in the heat of the fire, which he, a second Prometheus, has stolen from the luminary of all truth.

Born of God's Wisdom and Philosophy,
Keen lover of true beauty and true good,
I call the vain self-traitorous multitude
Back to my mother's milk; for it is she,
Faithful to God her Lord, who nourished me,
Making me quick and active to intrude
Within the inmost veil, where I have viewed
And handled all things in eternity.
If the whole world's our home where we may run,
Up, friends, forsake those secondary schools
Which give grains, units, inches for the whole!
If facts surpass mere words, melt pride of soul,
And pain, and ignorance that hardens fools,
Here in the fire I've stolen from the Sun!

The next I mean to quote is addressed to Telesius, the veteran of the new philosophy. The "tyrant of souls" is Aristotle, whose authority Telesius, like Bacon, sought to undermine. The saint of the new school is the science founded upon the immediate interrogation of Nature

by the senses. What the senses report, reason judges; and Nature, thus interrogated, utters through the voice of Science oracles that can be trusted.

Telesius, the arrow from thy bow
 Midmost his band of sophists slays that high
 Tyrant of souls that think; he cannot fly:
 While Truth soars free, loosed by the self same blow.
 Proud lyres with thine immortal praises glow,
 Smitten by bards elate with victory:
 Lo, thine own Cavalcante, stormfully
 Lightning, still strikes the fortress of the foe!
 Good Gaieta bedecks our saint serene
 With robes translucent, light-irradiate,
 Restoring her to all her natural sheen;
 The while my tocsin at the temple-gate
 Of the wide universe proclaims her queen,
 Pythia of first and last ordained by fate.

In the third sonnet Campanella expands the ground-notion of the new philosophy. Nature lies before the mind of man like an open book, where God has written his thoughts. This book, then, should be studied, instead of the works of the schoolmen and the sophists.

The world's the book where the eternal Sense
 Wrote his own thoughts; the living temple where,
 Painting his very self, with figures fair
 He filled the whole immense circumference.
 Here then should each man read, and gazing find
 Both how to live and govern, and beware
 Of godlessness; and, seeing God all-where,
 Be bold to grasp the universal mind.
 But we tied down to books and temples dead,
 Copied with countless errors from the life,—
 These nobler than that school sublime we call.
 O may our senseless souls at length be led
 To truth by pain, grief, anguish, trouble, strife!
 Turn we to read the one original!

Campanella conceived that the radical evils of the world are Tyranny in politics, Sophistry in philosophy, and Hypocrisy in religion. Ignorance, which has its root in self-love, lies at the bottom of all these vices, and must be fought to the death by the champion of Science.

To quell three Titan evils I was made,—
 Tyranny, Sophistry, Hypocrisy;
 Whence I perceive with what wise harmony
 Themis on me Love, Power, and Wisdom laid.
 These are the basements firm whereon is stayed,
 Supreme and strong, our new philosophy;
 The antidotes against that trinal lie
 Wherewith the burdened world groaning is weighed.

Famine, war, pestilence, fraud, envy, pride,
 Injustice, idleness, lust, fury, fear,
 Beneath these three great plagues securely hide.
 Grounded on blind self-love, the offspring dear
 Of Ignorance, they flourish and abide :—
 Wherefore to root up Ignorance I'm here !

The theme of self-love is further developed in a sonnet, remarkable for its brevity and pregnant thought. Preoccupation with himself makes man fancy that the world is without thought and feeling, that his own race alone has received the care of God ; from this he passes to the pride of impiety, and at last can see no other God in the world but himself. Heine might have quoted the last line against Hegel.

Self-love fools man with false opinion
 That earth, air, water, fire, the stars we see,
 Though stronger and more beautiful than we,
 Feel nought, love not, but move for us alone.
 Then all the tribes of earth except his own
 Seem to him senseless, rude—God lets them be :
 To kith and kin next shrinks his sympathy,
 Till in the end loves only self each one.
 Learning he shuns that he may live at ease ;
 And since the world is little to his mind,
 God and God's ruling Forethought he denies.
 Craft he calls wisdom ; and, perversely blind,
 Seeking to reign, erects new deities :
 At last "I make the Universe!" he cries.

Campanella's own conception of the earth as part of the universal *ζῳον*, or animated being, and of man as a minor parasitic creature, living on the world as lower creatures live on him, is contained in the sixth sonnet I have marked.

The world's a living creature, whole and great,
 God's image, praising God whose type it is ;
 We are imperfect worms, vile families,
 That in its belly have our low estate.
 If we know not its love, its intellect,
 Neither the worm within my belly seeks
 To know me, but his petty mischief wreaks :—
 Thus it behoves us to be circumspect.
 Again, the earth is a great animal,
 Within the greatest ; we are like the lice
 Upon its body, doing harm as they.
 Proud men, lift up your eyes ; on you I call :
 Measure each being's worth ; and thence be wise,
 Learning what part in the great scheme you play !

The seventh sets forth his profoundly religious fatalism. All things have been ordained by the Divine Wisdom, and all human lives have been written by God like parts in a play. At the end of the play we shall see

by gazing on God Himself which part was best; and we shall share the mirth which our past action caused for Him.

The world's a theatre: age after age,
Souls masked and muffled in their fleshly gear
Before the supreme audience appear,
As Nature, God's own art, appoints the stage.
Each plays the part that is his heritage;
From choir to choir they pass, from sphere to sphere,
And deck themselves with joy or sorry cheer,
As fate the comic playwright fills the page.
None do or suffer, be they cursed or blest,
Aught otherwise than the great Wisdom wrote
To gladden each and all who gave Him mirth,
When we at last to sea or air or earth
Yielding these masks that weal or woe denote,
In God shall see who spoke and acted best.

Campanella frequently recurs to the conception of the Universe regarded as a drama, in which good and evil are both necessary, and will in the end be found far other than our present imperfect insight makes us think. In the following passage from one of his Canzoni he illustrates the difference between evil relative to the world at large and the same evil relative to us.

War, ignorance, fraud, tyranny,
Death, homicide, abortion, woe—
These to the world are fair; as we
Reckon the chase or gladiatorial show.
To pile our hearth we fell the tree;
Kill bird or beast our strength to stay;
The vines, the hives our wants obey;—
Like spiders spreading nets, we take and slay.
As tragedy gives men delight,
So the exchange of death and strife
Still yields a pleasure infinite
To the great world's triumphant life:
Nay, seeming ugliness and pain
Avert returning Chaos' reign.—
Thus the whole world's a comedy;
And they who by philosophy
Unite themselves to God, will see
In ugliness and evil nought
But beauteous masks:—oh, mirthful thought!

2. Passing to those sonnets which contain Campanella's political theories, I will begin with two upon the conception of royalty as independent both of birth and accident. The first lays down the principle that just as the implements of painting do not make an artist, so the possession of lands and states do not make a royal nature.

He who hath brush and colours, and chance-wise
Doth daub, befouling walls and canvases,

Is not a painter ; but, unhelped by these,
 He who in art is masterful and wise.
 Cowls and the tonsure do not make a friar ;
 Nor make a king wide realms and pompous wars ;
 But he who is all Jesus, Pallas, Mars,
 Though he be slave or base-born, wears the tiar.
 Man is not born crowned like the natural king
 Of beasts, for beasts by this investiture
 Have need to know the head they must obey ;
 Wherefore a commonwealth fits men, I say,
 Or else a prince whose worth is tried and sure,
 Not proved by sloth or false imagining.

The second illustrates the same subject with examples, showing how accident makes mock-kings and nature real ones ; and how the bastard breed of tyrants persecutes the royal spirits, but cannot prevent their empire over the souls of men.

Nero was king by accident in show,
 But Socrates by nature in good sooth ;
 By right of both Augustus ; luck and truth
 Less perfectly were blent in Scipio.
 The spurious prince still seeks to extirpate
 The seed of natures born imperial—
 Like Herod, Caiaphas, Meletus, all
 Who by bad acts sustain their stolen state.
 Slaves whose souls tell them that they are but slaves,
 Strike those whose native kinghood all can see :—
 Martyrdom is the stamp of royalty.
 Dead though they be, these govern from their graves :
 The tyrants fall, nor can their laws remain ;
 While Paul and Peter rise o'er Rome to reign.

The next sonnet expresses a similar doctrine concerning nobility. Wealth and blood do not constitute true aristocracy. That should always be tested by courage and prudence. The allusion to the Turk, the foe of Europe, is curious. Campanella says the Turks are wiser than the European princes, since they honour men according to their deeds, and not according to their birth or riches :

Valour and mind form real nobility,
 The which bears fruit and shows a fair increase
 By doughty actions: these and nought but these
 Confer true patents of gentility.
 Money is false and light unless it be
 Bought by a man's own worthy qualities ;
 And blood is such that its corrupt disease
 And ignorant pretence are foul to see.
 Honours that ought to yield more true a type,
 Europe, thou measurest by fortune still,
 To thy great hurt ; and this thy foe perceives :
 He rates the tree by fruits mature and ripe,
 Not by mere shadows, roots, and verdant leaves :—
 Why then neglect so grave a cause of ill ?

The whole of Campanella's original and daring genius shines forth in the next sonnet, which treats of the sovereignty of the people. Shelley might have written it, so modern and so democratic is the thought.

The people is a beast of muddy brain,
 That knows not its own force, and therefore stands
 Loaded with wood and stone; the powerless hands
 Of a mere child guide it with bit and rein:
 One kick would be enough to break the chain;
 But the beast fears, and what the child demands,
 It does; nor its own terror understands,
 Confused and stupefied by bugbears vain.
 Most wonderful! with its own hand it ties
 And gags itself, gives itself death and war
 For pence doled out by kings from its own store.
 Its own are all things between earth and heaven;
 But this it knows not, and if one arise
 To tell this truth, it kills him unforgiven.

After reading these lines we do not wonder that the Spanish viceroy thought Campanella dangerous to established monarchy.

As specimens of Campanella's opinions about contemporary politics, I may insert two sonnets upon the Swiss Confederation and Genoa. The drift of the first is that, though the Swiss are a race of natural freemen, they sell themselves for hire, and so become the slaves of despots who scorn them.

Ye Alpine rocks! If less your peaks elate
 To heaven exalt you than that gift divine,
 Freedom; why do your children still combine
 To keep the despots in their stolen state?
 Lo, for a piece of bread from windows wide
 You fling your blood, taking no thought what cause,
 Righteous or wrong, your strength to battle draws;
 So is your valour spurned and vilified.
 All things belong to free men; but the slave
 Clothes and feeds poorly. Even so from you
 Broad lands and Malta's knighthood men withhold.
 Up, free yourselves, and act as heroes do!
 Go, take your own from tyrants, which you gave
 So recklessly, and they so dear have sold!

It would be impossible to pass a clearer-sighted judgment on the barbarous action of the Swiss during the sixteenth century.

The second follows the same train of thought. In elder days Genoa by her courage and spirit of adventure held the East in fee, stood first in Italy, and discovered new worlds. Now she bows to the Spaniard, not because her people is enfeebled, but because her nobility is pusillanimous.

The nymphs of Arno; Adria's goddess-queen;
 Greece, where the Latin banner floated free;
 The lands that border on the Syrian sea;
 The Euxine, and fair Naples; these have been
 Thine, by the right of conquest; these should be
 Still thine by empire: Asia's broad demesne,

Afric, America—realms never seen
 But by thy venture—all belong to thee.
 But thou, thyself not knowing, leavest all
 For a poor price to strangers; since thy head
 Is weak, albeit thy limbs are stout and good.
 Genoa, mistress of the world! recall
 Thy soul magnanimous! Nay, be not led
 Slave to base gold, thou and thy tameless brood!

3. The transition from Campanella's poems on politics to his prophecy is easy. Here is a very curious sonnet, in which he observes that the black clothes assumed by the Italians under the influence of Spanish fashions suited the corrupt, enslaved, and mournful state of the nation.

Black robes befit our age. Once they were white;
 Next many-hued; now dark as Afric's Moor,
 Night-black, infernal, traitorous, obscure,
 Horrid with ignorance and sick with fright.
 For very shame we shun all colours bright,
 Who mourn our end—the tyrants we endure,
 The chains, the noose, the lead, the snares, the lure—
 Our dismal heroes, our souls sunk in night.
 Black weeds again denote that extreme folly
 Which makes us blind, mournful, and woe-begone:
 For dusk is dear to doleful melancholy.
 Nathless fate's wheel still turns: this raiment dun
 We shall exchange hereafter for the holy
 Garments of white in which of yore we shone.

The next is a prophecy of the new age, when Christ shall return to reign in peace upon the earth, and when black clothes shall be exchanged for white. It is probable that Campanella was not looking for the millennium in the vulgar sense of the word. Christ was for him always the symbol of right reason and real virtue.

Clothed in white robes I see the Holy Sire
 Descend to hold his court amid the band
 Of shining saints and elders: at his hand
 The white immortal Lamb commands their choir.
 John ends his long lament for torments dire,
 Now Judah's lion rises to expand
 The fatal book, and the first broken band
 Sends the white courier forth to work God's ire.
 The first fair spirits raimented in white
 Go out to meet him who on his white cloud
 Comes heralded by horsemen white as snow.
 Ye black-stoled folk, be dumb, who hate the loud
 Blare of God's lifted angel-trumpets! Lo,
 The pure white dove puts the black crows to flight!

In spite of persecution, torture, and lifelong imprisonment, Campanella never lost his faith and hope—faith in the ultimate triumph of righteousness and justice, hope that even he might live to see it. In the

following sonnet he declares his belief that the sophists, tyrants, and hypocrites must in course of time be banished, and the world regain the golden age through communism and brotherly affection.

If men were happy in that age of gold,
 We yet may hope to see mild Saturn's reign ;
 For all things that were buried live again,
 By time's revolving cycle forward rolled.
 Yet this the fox, the wolf, the crow, made bold
 By fraud and perfidy, deny—in vain :
 For God that rules, the signs in heaven, the train
 Of prophets, and all hearts this faith uphold.
 If thine and mine were banished in good sooth
 From honour, pleasure, and utility,
 The world would turn, I ween, to Paradise ;
 Blind love to modest love with open eyes ;
 Cunning and ignorance to living truth ;
 And foul oppression to fraternity.

The belief that this glorious consummation was not far distant is energetically expressed in a sonnet written in answer to certain friends who had recommended him to try his hand at comic poetry.

Nay, God forbid that mid these tragic throes
 To idle comedy my thought should bend,
 When torments dire and warning woes portend
 Of this our world the instantaneous close !
 The day approaches which shall discompose
 All earthly sects, the elements shall blend
 In utter ruin, and with joy shall send
 Just spirits to their spheres in heaven's repose.
 The Highest comes in Holy Land to hold
 His sovran court and synod sanctified,
 As all the psalms and prophets have foretold :
 The riches of his grace He will spread wide
 Through his own realm, that seat and chosen fold
 Of worship and free mercies multiplied.

It is probable that the majority of the Prophetic poems were written in his youth, about the time when he attracted the suspicions of the Spanish government in Naples. The following sonnet, at any rate, must have been composed before 1603, since it foretells a great mutation which he expected in that year.

The first heaven-wandering lights I see ascend
 Upon the seventh and ninth centenary,
 When in the Archer's realm three years shall be
 Added, this æon and our age to end.
 Thou too, Mercurius, like a scribe dost lend
 Thine aid to promulgate that dread decree,
 Stored in the archives of eternity,
 And signed and sealed by powers no prayers can bend.

O'er Europe's full meridian on thy morn
 In the tenth house thy court I see thee hold :
 The Sun with thee consents in Capricorn.
 God grant that I may keep this mortal breath
 Until I too that glorious day behold
 Which shall at last confound the sons of death !

I have translated the astrological portion of this sonnet as literally as I could. Campanella's conviction that each part of the universe was endowed with sensibility and reason, and that the stars had more of divinity than we have, rendered him peculiarly open to astrological illusions.

4. I have left for the last those sonnets which describe Campanella's sufferings in prison. We have seen that he was wont to compare himself to Prometheus, and he called his dungeon by the name of Caucasus. Here is one of which the title—"Sonetto nel Caucaso"—tells its own tale. The philosopher rejects suicide, because he does not believe in escaping from himself by death.

I fear that by my death the human race
 Would gain no vantage. Thus I do not die.
 So wide is this vast cage of misery
 That flight and change lead to no happier place.
 Shifting our pains, we risk a sorrier case :
 All worlds, like ours, are sunk in agony :
 Go where we will, we feel ; and this my cry
 I may forget like many an old disgrace.
 Who knows what doom is mine ? The Omnipotent
 Keeps silence ; nay, I know not whether strife
 Or peace was with me in some earlier life.
 Philip in a worse prison me hath pent
 These three days past—but not without God's will.
 Stay we as God decrees : God doth no ill.

Here is another sonnet on the theme of his imprisonment. The seekers after truth find a dungeon as naturally as stones fall to earth, or mice run into the cat's mouth.

As to the centre all things that have weight
 Sink from the surface : as the silly mouse
 Runs at a venture, rash though timorous,
 Into the monster's jaws to meet her fate :
 Thus all who love high Science, from the strait
 Dead sea of Sophistry sailing like us
 Into Truth's ocean, bold and amorous,
 Must in our haven anchor soon or late.
 One calls this haunt a Cave of Polypheme,
 And one Atlante's Palace, one of Crete
 The Labyrinth, and one Hell's lowest pit.
 Knowledge, grace, mercy are an idle dream
 In this dread place. Nought but fear dwells in it,
 Of stealthy Tyranny the sacred seat.

The next sonnet dates probably from the early days of his imprisonment, when he discovered the incompetence or the baseness of the friends in whom he trusted, and when he had been tempted by the promises of an impostor. It is addressed to God.

How wilt Thou I should gain a harbour fair,
 If after proof among my friends I find
 That some are faithless, some devoid of mind,
 Some short of sense, though stout to do and dare ?
 If some, though wise and loyal, like the hare
 Hide in a hole, or fly in terror blind,
 While nerve with wisdom and with faith combined
 Through malice and through penury despair ?
 Reason, thy honour, and my weal eschewed
 That false ally who said he came from Thee,
 With promise vain of power and liberty.
 I trust :—I'll do. Change Thou the bad to good !
 But ere I raise me to that altitude,
 Needs must I merge in Thee as Thou in me.

Who the impostor was who came to tempt him we do not know. It is possible that his enemies sent this mysterious person as a spy to extract his supposed secrets from him. The three last lines of the sonnet are obscure. They seem to mean that Campanella has not lost faith and self-confidence. All he requires is that the human instruments of his great work should not break in his hand. If God will give him true allies instead of covert enemies, he will be able to act, having attempted to cast himself into the Divine Nature, even as God dwells in us and penetrates us with his spirit.

His conception of the philosopher as a sufferer and yet as royal, doomed to endure pain and scorn in this life, but destined to enjoy eternal fame, and in the midst of wretchedness more happy than the common crowd of fools, is very finely expressed in these lines.

Wisdom is riches great and great estate,
 Far above wealth ; nor are the wise unblest
 If born of lineage vile or race oppressed :
 These by their doom sublime they illustrate.
 They have their griefs for guerdon, to dilate
 Their name and glory ; nay, the cross, the sword
 Make them to be like saints or God adored ;
 And gladness greets them in the frowns of fate :
 For joys and sorrows are their dear delight ;—
 Even as a lover takes the weal and woe
 Felt for his lady. Such is wisdom's might.
 But wealth still vexes fools ; more vile they grow
 By being noble ; and their luckless light
 With each new misadventure burns more low.

There is an excellent vein of humour in the next sonnet, which de-

scribes the relation of the wise men to the rest of the world in a well-conceived apologue.

Once on a time the astronomers foresaw
 The coming of a star to madden men :
 Thus warned they fled the land, thinking that when
 The folk were crazed, they'd hold the reins of law.
 When they returned the realm to overawe,
 They prayed those maniacs to quit cave and den,
 And use their old good customs once again ;
 But these mude answer with fist, tooth, and claw ;
 So that the wise men were obliged to rule
 Themselves like lunatics to shun grim death,
 Seeing the biggest maniac now was king.
 Stifling their sense, they lived aping the fool,
 In public praising act and word and thing
 Just as the whims of madmen swayed their breath.

The last of the personal poems I have marked for quotation refers to an obscure passage in Campanella's biography. Condemned to the galleys, he feigned madness in order to escape that dreadful doom. He here justifies his conduct by citing the great men of history who did the like, or who committed suicide. The Italian, which I have rendered by the Mystic, is *l'Astratto*. I am not sure whether the word does not rather mean a man lost to his senses.

From Rome to Greece, from Greece to Libya's sand,
 Yearning for liberty, just Cato went ;
 Nor finding freedom to his heart's content,
 Sought it in death, and died by his own hand.
 Wise Hannibal, when neither sea nor land
 Could save him from the Roman eagles, rent
 His soul with poison from imprisonment ;
 And a snake's tooth cut Cleopatra's band.
 In this way died one valiant Maccabee ;
 Brutus feigned madness ; prudent Solon hid
 His sense ; and David, when he feared Gath's king.
 Thus when the Mystic found that Jonah's sea
 Was yawning to engulf him, what he did
 He gave to God—a wise man's offering.

I have reserved the following three sonnets, which do not fall exactly into any of the four divisions adopted in this article, but which are eminently characteristic of Campanella's bold and original thought. The first is such an adaptation of the parable about the Samaritan as might have occurred to Clough.

From Rome to Ostia a poor man went ;
 Thieves robbed and wounded him upon the way :
 Some monks, great saints, observed him where he lay,
 And left him, on their breviaries intent.
 A Bishop passed thereby, and careless bent
 To sign the cross, a blessing brief to say ;

But a great Cardinal, to clutch their prey,
 Followed the thieves, falsely benevolent.
 At last there came a German Lutheran,
 Who builds on faith, merit of works withstands;
 He raised and clothed and healed the dying man.
 Now which of these was worthiest, most humane?
 The heart is better than the head, kind hands
 Than cold lip-service; faith without works is vain.

The second gives Campanella's opinion about the low state of Italian literature. English students, comparing the chivalrous romances of the Italians with the high theme chosen by our Milton, and their comedies with our Elizabethan drama, will feel that the philosopher of Stilo has not used too strong a language of invective.

Valour to pride hath turned; grave holiness
 To vile hypocrisy; all gentle ways
 To empty forms; sound sense to subtleties;
 Pure love to heat; beauty to paint and dress:
 Thanks to you, Poets! you who sing the press
 Of fabled knights, foul fires, lies, nullities;
 Not virtue, nor the wrapped sublimities
 Of God, as bards were wont in those old days.
 How far more wondrous than your phantasies
 Are Nature's works, how far more sweet to sing!
 Thus taught, the soul falsehood and truth describes.
 That tale alone is worth the pondering,
 Which hath not smothered history in lies,
 And arms the soul against each sinful thing.

The third is addressed to a young German knight, Rudolph von Bünau, who travelled in the company of Adami and visited Campanella in his prison. His name is Italianised into Ridolfo di Bina—

Wisdom and love, O Bina, gave thee wings,
 Before the blossom of thy years had faded,
 To fly with Adam for thy guide, God-aided,
 Through many lands in divers journeyings.
 Pure virtue is thy guerdon: virtue brings
 Glory to thee, death to the foes degraded,
 Who through long years of darkness have invaded
 Thy Germany, mother of slaves not kings.
 Yet, gazing on heaven's book, heroic child,
 My soul discerns graces divine in thee:—
 Leave toys and playthings to the crowd of fools!
 Do thou with heart fervent and proudly mild
 Make war upon those fraud-engendering schools!
 I see thee victor, and in God I see.

The translations I have now offered to English readers present but a poor likeness of Campanella's rough but energetic and often splendidly impassioned style. It is my hope before long to complete a version of his sonnets, and to print them with such explanations as an unavoidable

absence from all libraries or centres of literature will suffer me to make. For students of the Italian genius he has an almost unique interest, not only as the precursor of modern modes of thought, but also as the only poet who, in an age of enervation and effeminacy, preserved a manliness of speech and sentiment worthy of Dante's heroic century.

Here then for the moment I leave Campanella. But before laying down my pen, I must quote the only poetical utterance of the seventeenth century in Italy, which can be at all compared with his verse. The sonnet is commonly attributed to Bruno. It occurs in his dialogue on the Heroic Love, and is there placed in the mouth of Tansillo, who is probably the real author. Nowhere has the rapture, the daring, and the danger of the poet-philosopher's flight into super-terrestrial regions of pure thought been described with fervour more intense, and with a feeling for spiritual beauty more impassioned. The spirit of the martyr-sages of South Italy vibrates in its thrilling lines.

Now that these wings to speed my soul ascend,
 The more I feel vast air beneath my feet,
 The more toward boundless air on pinions fleet,
 Spurning the earth, soaring to heaven, I tend :
 Nor makes them stoop their flight the direful end
 Of Daedal's son ; but upward still they beat.
 What life the while with my life can compete,
 Though dead to earth at last I shall descend ?
 My own heart's voice in the void air I hear :
 "Where wilt thou bear me, O rash man ? Recall
 "Thy daring will ! This boldness waits on fear !"
 "Dread not," I answer, "that tremendous fall !
 "Strike through the clouds, and smile when death is near,
 "If death so glorious be our doom at all !"

J. A. S.

The Czar's Clemency; a Polish Priest's Story.

I.

THE Governor of the district of Podlaquia sent for me and said in French "Casimir Barinski has been pardoned, and will return from Siberia to-day. He is to reside in this town of Dolw. I rely upon you to impress on him that he must show himself deserving of the Czar's clemency by the most scrupulous loyalty henceforth."

I bowed humbly and retired.

So many Poles from the district of Podlaquia were transported after the rebellion of 1863-4 that nine persons out of ten might not have remembered who Casimir Barinski was; but I knew very well. I am the priest of the town of Dolw, which has but one Catholic parish, a great number of the population being Jews; and I keep a register, in which I have entered the names and alleged crimes of those among my parishioners who have suffered for our national cause. The police, who pay me frequent domiciliary visits, have asked more than once what I mean by keeping this register; but I have always answered that, in the event of his Majesty deigning to pardon any of the misguided men or women who joined in the Civil War, it is good that I should preserve some record of their individual offences, so as to caution them against relapsing into the same on their return. I have also had the honour of explaining to the chief of the police that the notes, which I have preserved as to the characters of the offenders, would enable me to address each with the words of admonition best suited to him.

The police, seeing how very unfavourable are all these character notes, have been satisfied till now; but I think they would be less pleased could they guess that every censorious epithet bears in my eyes a contrary sense, and that by certain cryptographic signs of my own, such as the shape of capital letters and the position of commas, I am able to reconstruct at a glance the true and private history of the exiles, whom my entries appear one and all to condemn.

Thus, I consulted my register on getting home, and found by a large looped *k* in Casimir Barinski's name that he had done nothing whatever worthy of punishment; the words *quarrelsome and disingenuous* reminded me at the same time of his courage and candour. He was barely twenty when exiled in 1863, along with his father and three brothers, who had all died since, as I heard, in the mines of Oural. His mother was dead likewise, and his only sister, Eveline, was married and

settled in France. Every one knows that the Barinskis have been from father to son staunch patriots ; and I have no doubt that, if the occasion had offered, Casimir would have drawn his sword for Poland, as others of his family did ; but it happened that the insurrection had not yet spread to Dolw when the father and his sons were all arrested one night and sent away to Siberia, without even the form of a trial. Such proceedings were not exceptional in those days. The denunciation of a spy was enough ; and a semicolon apprised me that the spy who had betrayed the Barinskis was Countess Paulina Marienha, who still resides in our town.

I stood pensively looking at the semicolon for nearly half an hour, then closed the register, and went out to pay a visit to the Countess Marienha.

She was at home in her large old mansion of the Artillery Square. Her maid, the red-haired Jewess, Rebecca, conducted me to her boudoir, and I found her deep in her favourite occupation of drinking Caravan tea, and telling her own fortune with a pack of cards. She had just turned up the knave of hearts when I entered.

Paulina Marienha was close upon forty, but could have passed herself off for thirty, and I believe did. The proverbial beauty of Polish women was all hers ; with her dark hair, large eyes, lithe figure, and dazzling complexion, she quite realised the Lithuanian poet's description of his countrywomen : " Frisky as kittens, white as cream, under their black eyelashes their eyes sparkle like stars." I have never known any woman exercise such fascination on those who approached her, so that even I, her confessor, found that the sins which she avowed to me had not such a bad appearance as the sins of other people. She had coaxing ways and a childlike manner of pouting, by placing her hands before her face and crying real tears when rebuked, the which made me often wonder whether she was as conscious as ordinary grown-up persons of the enormity of the things which she did. Her laugh was as seductive as her weeping ; and, notwithstanding that she was so near middle age, there was not a wrinkle on her white brow, though God and I knew too well what deep lines would have been imprinted there if the fearful secrets of her heart had each left a mark.

Rebecca, the Jewess, placed my shovel-hat on a chiffonnière and brought me a cup ; then left us. When I was alone with the Countess, who was wrapped up in a pale blue satin dressing-gown, and had a number of jewelled rings on her finger, I said to her :—

" Paulina, Casimir Barinski has been pardoned and is coming back."

" That is my knave of hearts," she answered, pointing to her cards ; " I knew it announced a fair stranger."

" Casimir has been in exile thirteen years, and those years count double."

" Poor fellow ! but a man is still young at thirty-three."

" If Casimir should still be young in heart, if he should still feel for you as he once did, you must not trifle with him as you did last time, eh ?"

"What an idea, father!" And she laughed with the coquetry of a girl of eighteen. "Who would fall in love with an old woman of my age?"

"Paulina," I said, with more sadness than severity, "not one of the patriot Poles, save myself, whose lips are sealed, knows of the treacherous part you played towards our countrymen. You are respected as one of the mainstays of our cause; you give alms and are beloved; and yet it was you who sent those Barinskis, with numerous others, into exile."

"Well, I confessed it to you, and you gave me absolution," she replied, preparing to pout. "You have no right to reproach me with an old story now."

"I do not reproach you, but being ignorant how far you are dealing faithfully with us now, I appeal to you not to do the same thing again. Casimir's only crime was that he made love to you at a time when you were flirting with some one whom you liked better."

"He plagued me with his outbursts of jealousy," she said, assuming her plaintive tone. "As to doing the same thing again, why should you deem me capable of it? Do not I attend your confessional every week, and tell you the smallest of my sins?"

"Alas! it is the smallness of your sins, Paulina, which makes me fear that you have some other private confessor to whom you retail the big ones," said I, stirring my tea, with a sigh, for I knew the duplicity of women. At this I noticed that she changed colour, but she laughed at the same moment, and asked where I could have learned of such tricks? "Is it possible that some women can split their confessions into halves, and divide them between two priests?" she said.

"Yes, and I believe that is your case," I replied, sternly. "Will you look in my eyes and affirm it is not so?"

"Oh, I will look into your eyes for a whole hour," she ejaculated, opening wide her eyeballs as they do to amuse children. "I am a better penitent than you think, father. There is not a naughty thing I do but you hear of it. However, if you find my sins too small I can make them larger."

I chid her for this profanity, and we talked for a while of other things; then I left her. But I was not without misgivings.

Paulina Marienha had no religion, but she was superstitious as an old peasant-woman. I believe she imagined herself adroit enough to throw dust into the eyes of the saints and get into heaven under cover of her mere good works. What with her prayers and alms, the votive-tapers she burned, and the fine gifts she made to adorn our Lady-altar, the account of her benefactions exceeded that of most pious Christians: and she alluded to this fact with the utmost complacency, as though the doors of Paradise could never be decently closed to one who had laid up so much treasure there as she. I am afraid that she never scrupled to tell untruths, but she would not have let a week pass without confessing these falsehoods to some priest in order to get absolved from them.

I have observed that women who habitually resort to confession are much more liable to commit atrocities than others. They look upon their shrift as a wiping off of all old scores, and a licence to begin sinning afresh. I have heard a peasant-woman threaten to poison her husband, adding that when he was safe underground she would make her confession, do a penance of long prayers, and then live with a conscience clear, owing to absolution. Paulina Marienha was a Catholic who would have considered herself quit of any crime on the same terms. She had once poured out her whole soul to me, but finding me firm in the doctrine that Divine pardon can only be earned by a true repentance as shown in altered modes of life, she grew reticent, and from that day forth began to confess to me only trifles, which it was a trouble to listen to with patience. Evidently she told me many untruths in answer to the searching questions I put her: but what could a few falsehoods more or less signify to a woman who would relieve herself by repairing to the confessional of some obscure village priest, to whom she was unknown, and, after telling him things to make his hair stand on end, purchase absolution by a donation which led him to believe in the fervour of her charity? There are many good men among my country brethren who would not have absolved Paulina Marienha if they had known her as I did, but one cannot marvel that simple-minded ministers should often have been deceived by the well-dressed lady who would kneel and weep by the hour until forgiven. Besides, there may have been some of the poorer ones who truly thought that her gifts atoned for a great deal.

Two days after my conversation with the Countess, I was saying early mass in our church of St. Stanislas, when a tall man, in furred boots, walked up the nave and knelt reverently near the chancel rail. I recognised him at a glance for Casimir Barinski.

There was never such a handsome family in Dolw as the Barinskis. The men looked proud and bold, though gentle as women; and the women had the high spirit and courage of their brothers. But if I had not known that Casimir was coming back I might have gazed twice before guessing which one of the family this was, for he had aged so as to be the image of the dead father. His brown beard was streaked with grey, his shoulders stooped, and his eyes were cavernous, with the melancholy of long-suffering. He cast a mild glance at me, and our eyes met as I faced my scanty congregation, chiefly composed of women, and said, "Dominus vobiscum."

I could not help hurrying a little through the service, for my heart beat as fast as my lips moved, and as I passed down the chancel I beckoned to Casimir to follow me. As soon as we were in the sacristy we fell into each other's arms, and I held him to me as if I had found a lost son.

"Father, father," he sobbed. "I thought I should never see any of you again."

"God is good, my son," I said, wiping my eyes. "And your brothers, your father? is it true that——?"

"Yes, they are dead," he replied, with calm sorrow. "You did hear of it, then?"

"Alas! yes, but the news that comes from Siberia is so uncertain that I thought there might be hope."

"They died of privations and of grief, father; I wonder how I survived them."

"Heaven be praised that you did; and you are strong and well?"

"With such strength and health as you see," he answered, pointing to his grizzling beard, which in the dim light of the sacristy looked greyer than in the church.

We said nothing more then because of my sacristan, who came in. Nicholas Levitski, a conceited Jew, was a man in whose presence it was well to hold one's peace, for, without transgressing charity, I may say that words which dropped into his ears were not lost. He smiled with unctuous humility, and walked round Casimir as if smelling him, like a watch dog does a stranger.

"You will come and breakfast with me?" I said to Casimir, and I had soon removed my chasuble and surplice: then I opened the door, and we stepped across the street to my small presbytery. I promise you that I embraced the poor boy again when I was out of Nicholas Levitski's sight. I made him sit down by the glazed stove in the dining room and called to my old servant, Elizabeth, to prepare us the best meal she could.

Elizabeth was apt to grumble when I brought home a guest without having forewarned her, so, before obeying me, she came in to take a peep at the stranger. But when I had pronounced Casimir Barinski's name, she knelt down at his feet, as the women always do before a returned exile, and asked him his blessing as if he had come back from the dead. He made the sign of the cross upon her forehead, and simply said, "God prosper all such of thy wishes as are good!" Thereon Elizabeth, who was crying, went off to the butcher's to fetch some veal chops: the worthy soul would have gone barefoot to market through the snow to feed an exile. As for me I uncorked a bottle of white Crimean wine, and, while we were waiting breakfast, sought to draw from Casimir an account of the things he had suffered. He answered obligingly, but I soon saw that his reminiscences distressed him. He was not like a traveller who returns from a far country, and is happy to astonish people with his marvellous adventures; if I wrote down but a part of what he told me, you would understand that thirteen years of such things as he endured are more gladly forgotten than recounted, even to a friend whose questions are not prompted by idle curiosity. I am too old a man not to know that at Casimir's age it is more natural to look forward than behind, so I ended by asking him what he was going to do now?

"Why, I shall marry my pretty Ioulka (Juliet) Zezioff," he said,

brightening, and as though alluding to an affair settled long ago. "Where is the betrothed who has ever remained so faithful as she has to me?"

"Do you mean the late Dr. Zeziouff's daughter?" I asked, astonished. "I was not even aware that she knew you."

"Ah, she has kept her secret then!" he said with a smiling face. "Why, she cut her hair off on the day I went away, and she has worn it short till now. She was seventeen then, and thirteen years have passed since then, but they have not rendered her less fair or tender."

"And did you love Ioulka before you went away, Casimir?"

"She loved me, and I love her now. I have done so ever since I thought upon her in my exile, and reflected how blind I had been not to accept the child-heart that was offered me. But it was generous of her to guess that I should repent, wasn't it? and to remain faithful to me exactly as if we had plighted our troths?"

"Does Ioulka's mother approve this match?"

"She approves it, and encouraged Ioulka's fidelity. To-day she placed her daughter's hand in mine, and she says it is owing to her prayers and Ioulka's that Heaven sent me back."

It was as though a great weight had been lifted off my heart when I heard that Casimir Barinski was to marry Ioulka Zeziouff, one of the most pious and sensible girls in our town. His life would not be purposeless now, and there was no danger of his falling into trouble with such a good young creature for his wife. My only wonder was that neither Ioulka nor her mother, who were good friends of mine, had ever breathed a word about the engagement; but to be sure, those who remain faithful to Siberian exiles are like those who are wedded to the memory of the dead, and they cherish their love in silence. I had so little hope that Casimir would ever return, that I might have been the first to dissuade Ioulka from wasting her youth in waiting for him.

Now, however, I told Casimir that I trusted he would call upon me to solemnize his marriage as soon as possible; and thereupon we sat down to the real chops and fried ham which Elizabeth had prepared. I was glad to see Casimir eat with a good appetite, but he was so thorough a gentleman that he may have done this out of politeness to me, his host. While we ate he inquired as to what changes had taken place in the town during his absence, and I could only give him a poor account of the lives we led under the harrows of our oppressors. Elizabeth too lifted up her voice, so that I was obliged to check her, for women's tongues often carry them too far.

One point, nevertheless, pre-occupied me greatly; and when, breakfast being over, Casimir and I drew our chairs near the stove to drink our black coffee and smoke a pipe, I asked him whether he knew through whose intercession he had obtained his pardon?

He shook his head.

"I have not the least idea. Thousands of others who are more inno-

cent than I will remain in Siberia all their lives. I thought you might know more about it than I."

"If I were speaking to any other but a Barinski," said I, "I might suppose that persecution had shaken your fidelity to our cause, as it has in other cases where the flesh is weak; but I know you too well to think you would crave a pardon by recanting. Have you any friends at court?"

"None that I know of," he replied, "and far from recanting I was often too outspoken in my loathing of Russian barbarity. I expect the Chief Inspector told me the truth when he said it was my poems that had procured me the pardon I never deigned to seek."

"Your poems, Casimir? Have you turned poet then?"

"A man must do something in those long Siberian evenings, which are eighteen hours long," he answered, with a smile and a slight blush. "I wrote some verses which the exiles repeated over their winter fires, and after I had been ten years at Irmsk, many of them had become familiar in the mouths of the colonists. One day when the Chief Inspector came on his half-yearly rounds, he alluded to these poems and asked whether I would give him copies of them. I did so, for there was no reason to refuse."

"Were they patriotic poems? Was there politics in them?"

"Oh no, they were ballads and sonnets such as the peasants in Lithuania and Ukraine might sing in wedding feasts, or drone at funeral wakes. As I had composed them amid perennial snows I entitled them collectively *Snow Flakes*. They were enough to make a small volume."

"Which has been published?"

"So it seems, but not with my name to it, or with my leave. Three years passed after I had seen the Chief Inspector, and then he came again (it was not always the same man who came). 'I have had your verses printed,' said he; 'here are a thousand roubles as the price of the copyright, and the Emperor's pardon along with them.' I thought he was joking, but next morning the escort arrived to take me away in the sledges, and here I am."

I made no immediate answer, for I was plunged in deep thought. I remembered having seen on Countess Marienha's table a small volume with the title *Snow Flakes*, and I felt a presentiment that it must be she who had applied for Casimir's pardon. But if my suspicions were correct, and if Paulina had influence enough to bring back a proscribed from Siberia, then it was evident that she must still be in the pay of the Imperial Police, and her treacherous friendship might be as dangerous to Casimir now as it had been of yore. I stood in woful straits, for I could not warn Casimir to stand aloof from a lady who enjoyed the respect of the Poles, and upon whom he would be sure to call as a matter of duty. All I knew to Paulina's disadvantage had been told me by herself in the confessional, and if I had divulged a word of it, I must have betrayed the most sacred trust of my ministry.

I could only rejoice that neither by word nor sign did Casimir give any indication of remembering the boyish passion which had brought him such cruel hardships. He did not once pronounce Paulina's name while we sat together.

II.

It is not all to give an exile his pardon : one must afford him some means of living, and this the Russian Government neglects to do. It also throws many obstacles in the way of a Pole's earning his bread as he best can.

The property of the Barinskis had been confiscated : not only their lands, but their personalities, even to the wine in their cellars, had been seized ; and Casimir had to begin life afresh with the thousand roubles which a publisher had paid for his poems. He had been educated like a nobleman,—that is, he had learned many things superficially and nothing well, but he completed his education in exile, and he might have prospered either as a professor or a writer of books, had not the Government imposed such rigorous conditions to his release as virtually chained both his tongue and his pen. Casimir was compelled to reside at Dolw, and was obliged to report himself at the police-office twice a week ; he was prohibited from teaching children, from publishing a line not previously submitted to the press-censorship, and was warned, moreover, that if he attempted to leave the country, or to excite public sympathy for his wrongs, either by dilating upon them among his friends or by communicating with foreign newspapers, his pardon would instantly be revoked. These conditions were not made known to the proscrip until his arrival at Dolw, but he had no alternative except submission, unless he would return to Siberia. For want of a better handicraft, he determined upon utilising the metallurgical knowledge he had acquired in the mines of Oural, and hired himself out as a journeyman to a silversmith.

I felt sad and ashamed upon learning that the heir of the great family of Barinski was going to be employed as a smelter for less than a rouble a day by Solomon Paskoff, who keeps the jeweller's shop in the street of St. Isaac, close to the ancestral mansion of the Barinskis. This very street was formerly called after the Barinskis, and every day in going to his work and returning from it, Casimir would pass by the home of his fathers, which was now the residence of the general who commands the garrison. He did not seem to mind this much ; and as to his work, he said with resignation, that he was glad to find a livelihood at all, for that Ioulka and her mother had only just enough to keep them, and he would have scrupled to take a wife, unless he could earn at least the bread he ate. Besides he hoped to be able to get away before long with his wife and mother-in-law and join his sister Eveline in France.

I owed Madame Zeziöff and her daughter a call now that I knew of Ioulka's engagement, and so proceeded to their house, after vespers the day following that when I had seen Casimir. The Zeziöffs lived in

modest lodgings, without a servant, and did their cooking for themselves, though time was when they had had several servants, in the days when Dr. Zeziuff was the chief practitioner in Dolw, before the Civil War, where he was killed by a bullet in tending the wounded upon a battlefield. Ioulka's hands were covered with flour when she opened the door for me, and at the first compliment I uttered upon her coming marriage, she blushed and ran back to the kitchen. Her mother came forward, laughing, and led me into the drawing-room, where I found Casimir, who was seated near the stove with muddy boots, for he had been walking about the town all day in search of occupation.

It was then he told me that Solomon Paskoff had employed him, and we talked about this matter, Madame Zeziuff seeming as concerned as I that no worthier field could be found for his talents. Presently Ioulka came back, with her hands washed, and sat down near her mother to hem a handkerchief, but she was all radiant with inward happiness and saw nothing to fret about, now that Casimir had returned in health. It takes a good deal to persuade a girl in love that the earth is not full of bright prospects. I noticed that there was a striking resemblance between mother and daughter: they looked like copies of the same engraving,—the one in pale tints, the other in bright. Madame Zeziuff's hair was silver white, though she was no more than fifty, and her complexion was pale as wax; Ioulka's hair was glossy chestnut, and her features pink; but both had the same large hazel eyes and an identical voice, low and soft, which, as Milton truly says, is an excellent thing in woman.

The Zezioffs wanted me to stay for supper, but I had some parish visiting to do, and wished to avail myself of the evening, for we were in early summer. My visit was only one of congratulation: however, I lingered awhile, when Casimir said he would dictate to me the ages and full names of Ioulka and himself, to put in the banns, as he was desirous that no time should be lost in concluding the preliminaries of his marriage, which I thought a wise resolve.

"We will be married in three weeks, father," he said, whilst I put on my spectacles and looked at Ioulka, who reddened again. "After that I will see if I cannot give the police the slip, and cross the Gallician frontier, with or without a passport."

"Take care, my son," I answered, for I was always fearful lest some one with ears like those of Nicholas Levitski should be eaves-dropping. "Had not you better submit to the discomforts of this country, rather than risk worse by trying to leave it?"

"They will end by driving me mad, if I stay here," said Casimir, rather moodily.

"We will all cross the frontier, disguised as peasants," said Ioulka, with as much hopefulness as if she were in her teens again.

"I do not wonder at your wishing to forsake a country which our oppressors render uninhabitable; and yet it is sad to me to see all of Poland's best sons who are not exiled, emigrate of their own will," said I.

"If I could do good by staying I would stay," said Casimir, taking one of Ioulka's hands from her work and putting it between his own. "But of what use can I be here, father? In France I might take to authorship and publish what things our brothers in Siberia are suffering: not many of us come back to tell the tale."

"And you might write more poems," added Ioulka, softly.

"Yes, Casimir Barinski has turned poet," remarked Madame Zeziouff, addressing me with a motherly pride in her glance. He has told you of his book, has he not, father? The worst of it is that we had never heard of the *Snow Flakes*, and cannot procure a copy. Ioulka and I went the round of the booksellers this morning in vain."

"That proves that my genius has not yet set the world on fire," remarked Casimir, good-humouredly.

I did not say I knew where a copy of the poems was to be obtained, but in the next breath Casimir fortuitously mentioned Countess Marienha's name in a manner that caused me uneasiness.

"I want to find out where my sister Eveline is," he said; "but dare not write to France, for my letters would be opened by the Black Bureau at the post-office. I am told that the Countess Marienha still keeps up relations with the Polish Committee in Paris, and I have a good mind to ask her if she will be so obliging as to make inquiries."

"No, don't ask anything of Countess Marienha," I replied, hastily.

"Why not?" he rejoined, in surprise; then added, as he raised Ioulka's fingers to his lips with a smile, "oh, it is because I once allowed my wings to be singed by the flame of her bright eyes! I warn you that is an old, old tale, father."

"The tale of a boy's romance," said Mme. Zeziouff, with an air as though she felt sure that there existed no danger for the future.

"And Ioulka is not jealous," continued Casimir.

The excellent girl cast a trustful look at him as she playfully answered: "The Countess is still very pretty though—but she is good—oh, so good!"

"Yes, she is good," I grumbled, "but that is precisely why I would not have Casimir requesting any favours that might compromise her."

"God forbid that I should lead her into any trouble," said Casimir seriously. "If you think I might injure her I will refrain. It is my intention to call on her this evening, for they tell me Thursday is still her reception night. I bought a dress suit this morning for the purpose."

"Yes, it is a duty to pay your respects to Countess Marienha," concurred Mme. Zeziouff. "She is the Providence of all our suffering countrymen."

"There is not a man or woman in want but she relieves them," chimed in Ioulka enthusiastically. "If she were to disappear from amongst us, it would be as if the sun's light were darkened."

It hurt me to hear these honest people join in the praises of a woman

who—Heaven help her—was not worthy to tie their shoe-strings, so I took my leave in sorry humour ; but before reaching the bottom of the stairs I had made up my mind that I too would attend the Countess's levee, to witness the meeting between her and unsuspecting Casimir.

Paulina Marienha opened her gilded drawing-rooms every Thursday evening, and hers was the only house where anything like social festivity was kept up among Christian Poles of the respectable classes. I say Christians, because the Jews form a class apart in our midst. The insurrection of 1863 was conducted without reference to their interests ; perhaps the Catholic nobles, who were its leaders, were even too forgetful that the Jews stinted neither their blood nor money, and were consequently deserving of more consideration than was shown them ; anyhow, having been constantly treated as pariahs by our nobility, the Jews have dissociated themselves, in heart, from our cause, and get on well enough with our oppressors. All the trade of Poland is in their hands, and a great many of the smaller Government clerkships : they keep open shop, manage the hotels, lend money to Russian officers, and by their numbers, industry, wealth, and general appearance of equanimity, keep up a semblance of life in cities, which but for them would be dead.

A stranger who visited such a town as Dolw in the expectation of finding it silent and mournful, would be mistaken. The garrisons are so large, and the officers and civil functionaries are so fond of gaiety, that they of themselves are enough to make the streets lively. They have their clubs, where they gamble wofully, their theatre, their regimental bands, which play on the summer evenings in the Artillery Square, their dinner-parties and balls ; but from all these rejoicings the true Poles remain absent, and by their very absence contribute to the idea that they are non-existent. If you would find traces of Russian oppression, you must seek it in the schools, where our language is not allowed to be taught ; in our Catholic churches, where priests dare not speak a word that would revive the patriotism of their countrymen ; in the conscription, which takes off our young men to serve for years in regiments where they have no chance of promotion, and where they are harshly treated by officers who dread and hate them ; in our country districts, where the confiscated estates of patriot noblemen are all managed by the agents of absentee court favourites ; and in the general air of moroseness prevalent amongst our Christian countrymen, who are terrorised by police espionage. There are no exponents of Polish grievances in the local press ; a Catholic Pole, unless he be some shameless renegade who has joined in spoiling us, is not suffered to hold any public post of trust ; and such of the Polish nobles who remain in our towns lead hole-and-corner lives in lodgings, whose walls seem to have ears, judging by the promptness with which any unguarded word is carried to the police-office and punished.

I have often wondered that the fact of Countess Marienha's being permitted to retain her estates, and exercise such lavish hospitality as she

did, should not have opened the eyes of some of our better educated countrymen to her true character ; and yet I myself certainly attended her receptions for a long time without suspecting aught of what I subsequently learned. The truth is, that, as she herself told me, the Russian Government find it convenient to tolerate a social outlet for the national discontent, which else might ferment under the surface in conspiracies ; and Paulina was instructed to join in the disaffected talk of her countrymen, nay to promote disaffection, so that she might become possessed of the secrets of the patriots, and skilfully lead them to a pass where sudden detection (resulting apparently from chance) should place them at the mercy of the police. Whether she played this evil game during all the thirteen years of Casimir Barinski's absence, I am unable to say, wishing only to write of such things as I know ; and, in any case, her work during this epoch would have been comparatively light, for the repression of 1864 had been so bloody and thorough that there was no spirit left in any of us. But at the time of Casimir's return rumours were rife of the Eastern War now raging ; and I began to feel convinced from what our young exile had told me, that Paulina was once again about to co-operate with our enemies in thwarting whatever national impulses the troubled state of political matters might call forth.

It was about eight o'clock, and the crowds of Russian soldiers and nursemaids, mingled with young Jews and Jewesses, were streaming homewards from the Artillery Square, where the band of the Kherson regiment of Hussars had been playing, when I, having put on my Sunday cassock and plated shoe-buckles, presented myself at the Countess's house. The major-domo, in black livery, made me a bow and conducted me to the chief drawing-room, where several guests were already assembled, among whom my arrival excited no surprise, for I had long been free of the house. I thought I could detect, however, that Paulina coloured slightly and bit her lips, though she received me with much outward cordiality and deference. She was very beautifully dressed in white silk looped up with bunches of carnations, the assortment of these two colours forming those of our Polish flag—scarlet and white. I had no need of introduction to any of the company, who were all known to me. There were two or three aged noblemen, who had been too old at the time of the rebellion to take part in it, and some young men who had been boys at the same date, but there was not a single man of middle age. A few pretty young ladies in white muslin, and some elderly ones, attired in somewhat worn-out finery, completed the circle in which, needless to say, there was not a Russian uniform to be seen.

While tea and sweetmeats were being handed round, Paulina, who was an active hostess, organized the card-tables, where the old noblemen sat down to play whist at two kopecks the point. Casimir had not yet come, but as the clock on the mantle-shelf struck nine, the major-domo opened the door and announced : "Count Barinski."

All eyes converged towards the threshold, and by a common move-

ment of sympathy and respect, every one of the guests, men and women, stood up. Like my old servant Elizabeth, they were disposed to look upon the young exile as returned from the grave. Irreproachably dressed, and looking quite the well-bred nobleman that he was, Casimir advanced to greet our hostess, but she with an impulse which would have been charming in any other person, put her hands on his shoulders, and kissed him on both cheeks. Many of the other women did the same, and so did the men. As for the young ladies, hearing that Casimir was only thirty-three, though his hair and beard were grey, they began to cry, and peeped at him out of the corners of their eyes, while drying them with their handkerchiefs.

I forget whether Paulina cried or not : if my memory serves me, she was all of a flush, and led Casimir to a sofa, where she sat down beside him, while the rest of the company clustered around to hear the sound of his voice. At all events everybody was so enrapt in the hero that no attention was paid to my doings, and this suited me very well, for I commenced prowling about the rooms to seek for the Countess's copy of the *Snow Flakes*.

I found it at last behind a book-shelf in her boudoir, where it had evidently been thrust out of sight. This boudoir was a wondrous chamber, furnished with yellow satin, and it had a fire-place after the French fashion, with pine-logs burning ; so I sat down by the hearth, and put on my spectacles to examine the pages of the volume.

The first poem on which my eyes lit was this little ode, which I have translated into prose :—

TO PAULINA.

The snow flakes fall and cloak the ground—Whiter than the feathers of the Holy dove—Whiter than bridal veil or Virgin's shroud—But not whiter than thy snowy breast—Paulina!

Soft they fall over land and sea—Their touch could not wake a sleeping child—Softer than the balm of May's mild breeze—But not more soft than thy kiss—Paulina!

Cold is the earth where the snow flakes fall—Cold as the hand that rests in death—Colder than marble which hides the grave—But not more cold than thy heart—Paulina!

It is not possible to render in any other tongue—not even in our Polish—the dreamy beauty of these verses written in the Lithuanian dialect. There were many others like them addressed to the Countess, and, from what I could conjecture, they must have been indited before Casimir went into exile, whilst he was completely under the thralldom of his dangerous charmer, and he must have kept them in his collection after his love had grown cold, merely from the vanity usual to young poets. However, as I conned over one amorous sonnet after another I was at no loss to account for the reason which must have impelled Paulina to sue for Casimir's pardon : beyond a doubt she was in love with him. She was a widow, and nearing the age when the adoration of men was likely to cease, but she had yet several years of beauty before her

and what more likely than that, finding (as she must have supposed) the heart of the noble young exile still faithful to her, gratified self-love, mixed with remorse, may have induced her to dream of devoting the remainder of her life to one whom she had so fearfully wronged? Paulina Marienha was quite capable of forming a plan of this sort, for, in her, good was curiously wrought up with evil, as in the clay-footed beast of the apocalyptical vision. I sat so long by the fire in the boudoir, reading the pretty poems, that midnight struck before I was aware of the flight of time, whereon, straining my ears to hearken, it seemed to me that all the company had gone. However, two persons were still conversing in the adjoining room, and upon my walking to the door, which was closed by a silk hanging, I saw through the lace-work of the fringe Paulina and Casimir wishing each other good-night.

They were alone. Her face was tinted with a bright glow, and her eyes glistened. Casimir maintained the deeply respectful attitude of a man who believes he is speaking to a kind of saint upon earth.

“Good night, Casimir Barinski,” said the Countess, in a voice soft as music, though it quavered slightly. “Mind, you must come often to see me, for I wish to hear you relate all your sorrowful adventures.”

“Dear lady, those sorrows are half-forgotten now that you shed such a kindly compassion on them.”

“I have constantly thought about you,” she said. “And I may hope that you did not quite forget me, judging by the verses in your charming book of poems?”

“You have read those verses, then?” he rejoined, with a little surprise. “Dear lady, my poems conveyed a homage scarcely worthy of your acceptance. It remains for me to offer with my lips the expressions of worship which your grace, beauty, and virtues call for.”

“I liked the homage in the book very well,” she remarked, with a quiet archness. “Good night again; you have come back upon me like a vision of my youth.”

“You have made me feel that it was but yesterday I last saw you,” he replied, and, with an exquisite gallantry that was not of love, but of simple worldly courtesy, he stooped to kiss the hand she extended, then made a low bow and retired.

For a few minutes after he was gone Paulina stood motionless, pensively gazing after him; then she glided to the window and lifted the curtain, apparently to see him once more as he crossed the square outside. When he was out of view she dropped the curtain, thrilled from head to foot, and walked off with a slow step to her private apartments, without coming into the boudoir where I was ensconced.

Glad at not having been detected spying, I hastened downstairs and left the house, just as the porter, who thought that all the guests were gone, was barring the door; but in my hurry I left the volume of Casimir's *Snow Flakes* open on the boudoir table, and the shagreen case of my spectacles inside it.

III.

It may have been owing to this omission, or because she had found other reasons to suspect my perspicacity; but the very next morning Paulina came and knelt in my confessional.

On the previous occasion of her coming to make her shrift she had accused herself of the sin of greediness—for eating a few strawberries between meals—and I was prepared for a repetition of some such triviality. But this time she laid her heart bare in one sentence.

“Father,” she said, “I love Casimir Barinski.”

“And it was you who obtained his pardon?” I rejoined, with mingled sentiments, in which I knew not whether it was anger or pity that predominated.

“Yes,” she answered, almost inaudibly, through the grating.

“And you are still a spy—a traitor? You contemplate playing the part of Dalila again towards this man whom you have rendered fatherless, and whom you have aged before his time? Tell me the truth. Out with it.”

“I *am* a spy,” she faltered; “but by my hopes of salvation, father, if I could become Casimir Barinski’s wife, I should be an honest woman. I wish to atone for the evil I have done. My heart has never spoken as it has now, and I feel I could die for this man. If he would take me for his wife I would go away with him wherever he would . . .”

She rambled on in this way till I roughly checked her, bidding her give me her confession in order, and, as she valued her soul, not attempt to deceive me as to her proceedings in the past or her schemes for the future. She heaved a deep sigh, so lamentable in sound that it smote me as a reproach, for in one’s dealings with this woman it was never possible to know whether she might not be truly contrite. When the fear of the devil was upon her, or when she wanted to coax some favour from her patron saint, she could be truthful by the hour, and upbraid herself with such virulent invectives as tempted one to cry, “Enough!” She began by telling me that she had loved Casimir from the moment of reading his poems, and had applied for his pardon on the spur of her first impulse of remorse. The pardon had been granted the more readily as some personages of high standing at court had also read the poems, and had been touched by them; but a condition had been put to Count Barinski’s release, namely that Paulina should do her best to win the late exile into loyalty by offering him some lucrative secret service employment if he would consent openly to forswear the Polish cause, and put his signature to a document stating that the exiles in Siberia were treated with the utmost humanity. This document was to go the round of the Russophilist journals of Europe.

When I heard Paulina say that she had undertaken this job, and meant to proceed with it, I knew that what she felt for Casimir Barinski might be caprice, but could not be real love, for a woman who

loves a man does not begin by speculating on his dishonour. A few minutes before she had declared herself eager to forsake her present life and fly to the end of the earth with the man whose wife she aspired to become ; but this inconsistency was after all consistent with the character of a woman who craved for nothing but material enjoyments, and had never let herself be hindered in any enterprise by principle. I let her speak on, and plied her with some questions as to her political doings during the years when she had hidden her conduct from me, but she answered rather shortly that she had confessed these things elsewhere, and been absolved from them. When, again, I tried to elicit information as to her present relations with the police, she replied that, having recently gone on a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Elizabeth of Hungary in respect of her police tasks, she was entitled to a plenary indulgence, and was not bound to make me any disclosures. It was quite of a piece with these views on religion that she should have concluded by announcing her intention of burning six wax tapers of a pound's weight each before the Lady-altar so that her matrimonial projects might succeed.

I told her drily that she might save herself that expense. "Casimir Barinski is going to be married to another," said I, "and the best atonement you can make him is to leave him alone."

"Ah!" was the answer blown to me through the grating, and her breath came and went in gasps.

"He is going to marry Ioulka Zeziouff, whom he tenderly loves," I added implacably. "As for you, the affection he once bore you has died away."

"But it can revive," she responded, resolutely.

"No, it cannot," I ejaculated, in wrath. "Be content with the respect he vouchsafes you, and which you so ill deserve. If you married Casimir Barinski without telling him what you are, it would be an imposture that would carry Heaven's curse with it; and if he knew you as I do, he would spurn you with his foot."

"Then you think that I have freed this man from Siberia to throw him into the arms of a rival!" murmured Paulina, in a tone that vibrated.

"You have done your best to kill a patriot, and do you dare to boast of having given him his freedom?" I exclaimed, exasperated. "Out upon you for an impertinent profligate! All your thoughts are devilish, and your presence in this church is a pollution!"

These were harsh words, but I meant them to be so. There was wafted to me through the grating the penetrating odour of a perfume which Paulina used. I could hear the rustle of her silk dress, and I felt outraged to think that the gold wherewith this woman bought her finery, and paid for the tapers she offered to the Virgin—nay, the gold with which she desired to enrich Casimir—was blood-money, counted to her for having sent Casimir's father and brothers, with countless others, to death. I could not see the Countess through the wire grating, and of course our conversation had been carried on in whispers, owing to the people who kept entering and leaving the church for short prayers

during market hours. She remained silent a moment, and then, without asking me for absolution, remarked that her design to marry Casimir Barinski being a laudable one, she should persevere in the prosecution of it without minding Ioulka Zezioff. She was sorry for the bad opinion I entertained of her, but begged to remind me that all she had just revealed, having been communicated to me under seal of confession, I was debarred from reporting a word of it to anybody. This said—in a tone of half-menace, as I fancied—she rose from her knees, and her place in the confessional was almost immediately occupied by a potter's wife, who had contrite avowals to make about the peculations she committed in the course of business.

I knew but too well that Paulina Marienha had only made me her confession in order to close my lips as to facts I might have suspected and acted upon had she not told them me. For my absolution she cared not a doit, since she could go and obtain it of some other more accommodating priest, who took no such liberties in lecturing her as I did; indeed, from words she let fall, I had gathered that she was in frequent consultation with a priest who could be no true Pole, for he appeared to have assured her that her treacheries were not culpable, but rather meritorious as proofs of submission to "those in authority over us." I am sorry to say that there is no sin which cannot be twisted into a virtue by a tortuous-minded priest, which reminds me of one who, anxious to get on in the world, solaced a wealthy but immoral lady by persuading her that it is not good to be too virtuous, seeing that excess of virtue leads us to pride—which is as much a deadly sin as that other sin whereof the said lady had accused herself. Sin or not, I certainly had no right to put Casimir on his guard against the Countess Paulina, with regard to things derived from her own lips; but there was nothing to prevent my assisting Casimir to leave the country, according to his own wishes, and this I determined to do without any delay, for I felt that we were in a perilous juncture. Oddly enough—or I should say providentially—the potter's wife to whom I have just alluded became a timely instrument for the work I desired to perform.

If this were not a narrative in which true names have been altered—names of localities as well as persons—I should scruple to write down that Macha Planiwitz, wife of the chief potter in Dolw, was in the habit of charging her husband's customers for more pots than they actually received, and that, moreover, in wholesale transactions she supplied pots of a quality inferior to the samples. These misdoings she confessed once a month or so, with promises of amendment; but she and Planiwitz conducted a yet more serious business in that they smuggled goods into Gallicia and out of it by means of a double-keeled barge, which carried their pots down the Vistula from Dolw to Cracow and back.

Now this double-keeled barge had been the subject of much spiritual wrangling between Macha Planiwitz and me.

A buxom, blue-eyed, and good-humoured mother of children, Macha
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had a great reverence for the saints, but was withal too fond of money, so that when she first told me of the barge I found her ready to argue that it was no sin in her and her husband, who were Christians, to defraud the Russians, who were schismatics; the less so, as the schismatic officials of the custom-house were wont to abet the frauds in consideration of being bribed. I had to correct these notions, and, with a sigh, Macha promised that the barge should be suppressed. But eighteen months later, her eldest boy, Peter, being in danger of death by measles, she came to me in great trouble, attributing this trial to the double-keeled barge, which had not been suppressed after all, notwithstanding a variety of fibs she had told me on her knees as to its having been broken up for fire-wood. I offered up prayers for young Peter, requiring his mother to vow more honesty for the future, and when the boy had recovered, she swore by his precious head that the barge should no more be used. But alas for the deceitfulness of women! When, at the end of two years more, Macha's youngest little girl was seized with the whooping-cough, she had to avow with many tears that, although the original barge had no more been used, two other and larger ones had been bought, owing to the extension which Stanislas Planiwitz's affairs were taking. Little Mary was cured of her whooping-cough, and her mother pretended to abjure barges for ever; but I was not at all sure but that she had found means of evading the spirit of a vow, which maybe she had fulfilled in the letter.

So as Macha was kneeling and telling me of some profitable mistakes she had been making in her addition sums, I thought of the double-keeled barge, and reflected how convenient a vehicle it would have been for smuggling Casimir Barinski into Galicia. The difficulty was to extract an avowal from Macha that she still smuggled, for her husband and children were all in good health at that moment.

"Macha," I said suddenly, "you must tell me about the cargo of tea, leather, and furs you sent off to Cracow last week."

"As I live, father, there wasn't a pound of tea in it," she replied in a flutter.

"You can't deny about the leather and skins though," I proceeded, sternly, though I was only going by guess-work. "What do you mean by trying to deceive the saints? Do you think they don't prompt me the questions I ought to put you, and keep an open eye on your games besides?"

"All the Jews in the carrying trade smuggle, and the saints don't hinder them," said Macha dismally. "It's very hard that we Christians shouldn't be allowed to pick up a little of the money which would else go into their pockets."

"Wait till the day of judgment," said I. "You'll see what faces the Jews will pull when they are ordered downstairs, whilst all the good Christians march off to the right. Not that you'll ever march off to the right though, Macha, for you've told me many a lie about those double-keeled barges."

"Father, if the saints have told you that we've a single double-keeled barge afloat, they've lost the use of their eyes," affirmed Macha, with rather ironical earnestness.

I was somewhat disconcerted, but thought it good to feign anger. "Out upon you for mocking at the saints now!" said I. "Is it because a poor saint has been dead a thousand years and more, that he's to be scoffed at for not knowing the names of the new-fangled craft that ply on our rivers? I suppose you won't tell me that your skins float up stream to Cracow by themselves, with the incantation of some Lithuanian water-witch to speed them?"

"God forbid," exclaimed Macha, and I am sure she signed herself piously.

"Well, then, it's the devil who carries them in his phantom ship, manned by heretics who have died by their own hand? If you don't want me to believe that there's some evil mystery in all this, Macha, you'll let me know in what sort of boat all those skins are hidden."

"It's a steam-launch," murmured Macha, terrified.

The secret was out at last, and I could hear poor Macha behind the grating beginning to whimper. I suspect she was already in conference with the fiend as to how she should elude any new vow I might impose upon her in respect of the vessel from which her husband derived so much more money than from his pots; so she must have felt surprised when I simply questioned her as to the facilities which the custom-house officials allowed Planiwitz for his smuggling. She hastened to say, in self-excuse, that they allowed so many that a saint himself would have been tempted into the contraband trade. They never overhauled the cargo, but pretended to believe that pots were the only merchandise on board, and it was not ten days since Planiwitz had presented the chief inspector with 20 lbs. of Turkish tobacco and ten sacks of Mocha coffee, brought from Cracow on the return journey. I ought to mention that Planiwitz, though a true-hearted Pole, was by birth a Gallician, and had not settled in Dolw till after the rebellion, so that the authorities had no reason to treat him with the mistrust shown to Poles indigenous to the Russian districts. Among these last (that is among the Christians) trade was hampered with so many restrictions that few cared to embark in it.

All I wanted to know of Macha was whether, in the event of Casimir Barinski being hidden on board the launch, there was any danger of the inspectors detecting him, and having ascertained there was none, I proceeded to inform my penitent, in a rather circumlocutory way, what I wanted her to do. She was a good woman, who I knew would willingly render me a service; and yet such awe attaches among the people to the words police and Siberian exile that I doubted how my communication would affect her. But she received it better than I thought, and better, I am sure, than her husband would have done, for women have, according to my experience, more courage than men.

"You want us to carry a patriot out of the country. I see no diffi-

culty," said she, in a whisper ; " is it Count Barinski, whom the papers say has been pardoned ? "

" The same, and I charge you, on your soul, Macha, not to confide his plan to any man, save your husband, and the mate of your launch, for you would jeopardise his life. How many men compose the crew of the launch ? "

" Two—one is an Austrian, the other a Greek, and neither like the Russians. I will talk to my husband, and bring you his answer to-morrow at this hour."

" And tell him the Count wants to start as soon as possible," said I, pleased with her docility. " He was to have got married before starting, but his bride can join him abroad, and they will be married more comfortably where Russian faces are scarce."

Macha reflected a moment, and then the jade thought she would drive a bargain with the saints.

" We take tea and skins on board as ballast," said she ; " will it be a sin if we do so on this journey with the Count, father ? "

" Nobody asks you what you are going to take," muttered I.

" I should like to have my conscience clear," said she, a bit slyly. " May I have absolution for past smuggling ? "

" Yes, I absolve thee, for thou art a good woman," said I, and I am glad the grating was there to prevent my seeing her smile, as she must have done, when I so readily gave her a clean bill for all her husband's sins against the revenue.

Truth to say, I was much pleased with what I had accomplished, and I lost no time in making Casimir acquainted with my scheme for his flight ; but judge of my mortification when he told me that he had just confided his projects to Countess Marienha, and that she had promised to abet him. It seems he had met her as she was coming out of church, had gone home to lunch with her, and had spent several hours in her company, so that he was in a very enthusiastic mood about her goodness.

He and I were talking together in the court-yard of the house where the Zezioffs lived. Some little Jew boys, with black ringlets and conical caps, were gambling for cherry-stones in the doorway, and I drew my young friend to the opposite end of the yard :

" You must not trust to Countess Marienha, Casimir," said I, in agitation. " She herself would gladly serve you, no doubt ; but I am not sure as to the instruments she would use. She is surrounded by people who might play her false."

" What ? Do you believe the police have suspicions about her ? "

" The police suspect everybody, and I as a confessor know a great deal more about the people here than I can tell you. It is unsafe to involve Countess Marienha in any of your affairs, unsafe for her as well as for you."

" I told her how afraid I was of compromising her, but she laughed at the notion," exclaimed Casimir, removing his felt hat and stroking his furrowed brow. " Great heavens, what a country this has become ! "

and he went on to say that Paulina had generously volunteered to take him out of the country disguised as one of her servants. As to the Zezioffs, as there was nothing to prevent them from leaving Poland at their pleasure, she would take care that Ioulka and her mother joined him when he was safe over the frontier.

"Yes, trust her for that," I grumbled to myself, feeling persuaded that when once Casimir was gone, Paulina's first care would be to have Ioulka and her mother arrested and taken to St. Petersburg, where they might undergo a year of "preventive detention" on some charge of being concerned in a political conspiracy. "No, no," I added aloud, "you must leave Poland at once, Casimir, and the Countess must know neither where nor how you are going."

I had just said this much, when there sprang up from underground as it were the figure of Nicholas Levitski, my sacristan. He stepped out of the house, wearing his usual unctuous smile, made us a bow which brought his hat to a level with his knees, and glided away like a shadow. "Now, what was *he* doing here?" thought I. "This comes of speaking too near to a wall," and I drew Casimir into the middle of the yard to finish our colloquy.

We talked nearly half-an-hour, and he entered into all my views. At length we were interrupted by Mme. Zezioff and Ioulka, who returned from market and came into the yard, each with a basket on her arm. Ioulka had also a bunch of roses in her hands, and she looked so pretty in her fresh blue-spotted dress and straw-hat, that I patted her cheek, and informed her that Casimir would have some secrets to tell her when he got upstairs. In effect, Barinski and I had decided that Mme. Zezioff ought at once to apply for a passport, as if she and her daughter were going to Berlin to see a relative there, which would throw the police off the scent of the direction Casimir had taken, in case they should suspect the Zezioffs of having been parties to his flight. Once they were all three out of the country they might meet in any city agreed upon, and make thence for Paris, where Casimir would be sure to find friends among the Polish Emigration Committee, who would put him in the way of getting honourable employment. His sister Eveline, too, who, as I heard, was married to a civil engineer, would be able to offer Mme. Zezioff and her daughter a home until the arrangements for Ioulka's own wedding should be completed.

I was right to be thus precipitate in my recommendations; for whilst I was advising Casimir, Paulina Marienha was, on her side, not inactive, and in fact it was a regular contest of speed that had commenced between her and me.

IV.

In the morning I got a favourable answer from Macha Planiwitz. The steam launch was going to start for Cracow at evening next day, and Casimir was welcome to a corner in the secret hold among the bales of contraband stuff. However, as it was pretty certain that the Count's

footsteps were for the present dogged by spies, this was the roundabout way he must take in order to reach the wharf and get on board. At six o'clock next evening he was to enter a tobacconist's shop in Sobieski Street with the stalk of a rose in his mouth, and ask for a five-kopeck cigar ; by these tokens the tobacconist's wife, who was a friend of Macha's, would know him, and point to her parlour door, which would remain ajar. Casimir would have to pass through the parlour without a word, make for a yard behind, and issue thence into Little Podlack Street, where there are some public baths, which he must enter, requesting a warm bath "with bran." The bath proprietress, another friend of Macha's, would lead him to a bath closet, where he would find a tarpaulin hat, a waterproof cloak, and some shaving tackle. Having shaved off his beard, and donned his disguise, Casimir must open the closet window, drop into the yard of the bath-house, and by means of a short ladder, placed there in readiness, climb over the wall, and so gain a brandy wharf, which would lead him to Planiwitz's Pottery Wharf further on, and there the Austrian mate of the launch would be on the look-out, also with a rose in his mouth ; and the fugitive must say to him, "I have come to examine the boiler of your launch ;" whereupon without a word the mate would conduct him on board, and stow him away among the tea-chests and skins, where he must make such shift to breathe as he could until the launch passed the Austrian frontier.

Such were the precautions needed to assist a patriot in escaping from his own country ; and I knew that Macha, while doing her best to shield her husband from any suspicion of complicity, had not exaggerated the risks that would be run if things were managed without proper cunning. She told me that her husband feared to speak to the runaway, or even to see him ; and that if it had not been for her entreaties (I think she might have said her "orders," for she was the master spirit of her household) he would not have mixed in so perilous a business. All that Macha begged in requital of her good offices was that I would ask Casimir Barinski to give her some portion of attire that he had worn in Siberia, so that she might cut it up into scapularies for her children to wear as safeguards against lightning and the Evil Eye—the which I duly promised.

One thing annoyed me, and this was that Nicholas Levitski, who was stealing noiselessly about the church replenishing the oil in the lamps of the lateral chapels, saw Macha on her knees in my confessional. He had seen her there on the day before, for he took faithful ocular note of all who came to shrive themselves ; so by and by, as I was unrobing in the sacristy, he said with a mealy smile and a voice that came through his nose, as through an ill-tuned organ : "Alack, the potter's wife has many a sin to confess, since she comes two days running." "Hold thy peace," said I ; "if thou wouldst confess all *thy* sins, a week on thy knees would not suffice thee."

By and by, when the midday sun was so hot that the Russian soldiers I met were hanging out their tongues like dogs, I went out to tell the Zezioffs of the arrangements I had made ; and I found that they had

been to the police-office to apply for their passports. The officials had only put them the usual formal questions, and after taking down a minute description of their features and figures, during which Ioulka had blushed, said her mother, they had promised that the passports should be forwarded next day. I did not see Casimir, for, by the advice of us all, he had entered upon his new situation at the silversmith's; we had even bidden him to talk with Solomon Paskoff as to make the latter believe that he was going to smelt in his service for months, if not years.

That day was spent by Ioulka and her mother in the exciting task of packing for their departure. Casimir did not lodge in the same house as the Zezioffs, but he took his meals with them, and on coming in to dinner he brought a pink note that had been sent to him in the course of the day, inviting him to take tea at the Countess's house, at nine o'clock. The Zezioffs, in their honest belief of Paulina's purity, advised him to go, and he went, but said nothing as to his intended escape. On the contrary, he gladdened the Countess above measure by consenting to fly with her three days' thence, and saying so many gallant things that she must have felt persuaded her blandishments had partly won back his heart, a consummation which her vanity could not deem improbable.

All this Casimir told me next day, when he came to see me at the church during the hour allotted him for dinner. He looked pensive, and as I led him to the space behind the high altar, where we could be in privacy for this interview, the last I should probably ever have with him, he whispered that he had discovered the secret of Paulina's kindness to him. "I should be a simpleton," said he, "if I were blind to the fact that Paulina loves me, father."

"It's no great matter, provided you don't love her," answered I, scrutinizing his face rather anxiously.

"No, I love Ioulka," he rejoined, steadfastly; but then a faint gleam shot through his blue eyes as he added: "It's flattering, though, to have kindled a passion in a woman I courted so hopelessly of yore."

"My son, Paulina Marienha is forty years old now."

"It may be, but she still looks young; that is why I treated her yesterday as if she were no more than twenty, and an instinct warned me that the less I talked about Ioulka the more it would please her. Was that a sin, father?"

"Eh, my son! these are points of casuistry I cannot decide outside a confessional," I replied, edging away; though I was mighty relieved to think that, in flirting with the Countess, Casimir had doubtless thrown her off her guard and caused her to stay proceedings she might otherwise have taken against Ioulka Zezioff. "Here we are alone," said I, as we reached St. Stanislas' small and dimly-lighted chapel behind the high altar, "Kneel down, my son, that I may bless thee before thou goest away."

He knelt down on the flags, humbly bowing his head, and I stretched my hands over him: "God Almighty protect thee, Casimir Barinski, and give thee long life that thou mayest see our poor country freed."

"Amen!" he responded fervently.

"Mayest thou carry the example of Polish virtues to the strange land whither thou goest, so that in learning to honour thee, men may honour thy friendless country!" I added, "Be not like the Poles who fought in the Communal rebellion of Paris, Casimir, and thereby showed ingratitude for the hospitality which a great nation had extended to them. Be not like that madman Bevezowski either, who thought that a cause such as ours could be advanced by assassination. The cross and the sword must be thy weapons, my son, when thy day comes—which, alas! I shall not live to see."

"Who knows, father?" said he, still on his knees. "The Russians may shortly be involved in a war which will lead to the dismemberment of their empire. When that war comes, can I in conscience join the Turkish standard?"

"No!" said I, after a moment's hesitation. "These men have pardoned thee, and thou canst not use the liberty they have restored to bear arms against them. It is a point of honour. Not till the day when the whole of Poland rises to arms will thy time have arrived; meanwhile, be faithful and patient."

"I will obey you, father," answered Casimir; and rising from his knees he threw himself into my arms. There were tears in the eyes of us both; but even as I was embracing the poor fellow whom I loved, I noticed that the drapery of the high altar shook as though there were a cat behind. This made me exclaim at once: "Good-bye, Casimir; thou wilt start to-morrow morning by the road to Kaptcha, in peasant's disguise."

"Kaptcha?" echoed he; but looking up he caught the wink I gave him, and followed the direction of my glance. Nicholas Levitski was just then protruding his bust through the drapery, and held in one hand a bowl full of liquid plaster.

"Father," whined he, "the rats play havoc with the altar cloth, and I have been stopping their holes."

"Thou art a good servant," said I drily; "but since thou hast still plaster enough, I will show thee a spot in the crypt where thou mayest stop other holes; I fear the rats have been eating at the shrine of St. Stanislas."

"They are an evil vermin," remarked Nicholas, following me as if anxious to render a service.

"Down these stairs," said I; and, when we had descended a dozen steep steps and reached the crypt, where a feeble oil lamp burns day and night, I let him pass me, then pulled the door behind him, and locked it, crying through the keyhole: "Thou wilt not be wanted till vespers, Nicholas, so thou mayest spend the whole of thy afternoon with the rats."

"But I have not dined, father," he protested, his voice ringing with a piteous sonority under the vault.

"I doubt not that St. Stanislas will consider the sacrifice of thy dinner, and send thee a better appetite for supper!" was my rejoinder, and I returned upstairs laughing in my sleeve. Casimir Barinski was

gone, for a gesture of mine had bidden him depart ; so, being alone, I knelt down on the stones, and offered up a prayer that it might go well with him and with his bride Ioulka, even as it went well with Moses when he fled from among the Egyptians.

I had no positive proof that Nicholas Levitski was a spy, but things I had uttered at different times had been noised abroad without its being possible that any save himself could be the retailer ; besides which, every Catholic priest in Poland has a spy in his sacristy, so there were reasons enough why I should keep the man locked up in the crypt until Casimir and the Zezioffs had left Dolw. A word from him in the ear of a police inspector would have overturned all our plans.

At four o'clock in the afternoon, Ioulka and her mother went away by the coach which travels from Dolw to Gerinsk, where there is a railway station whence they would take the train for Posen. There were the usual tightly-buttoned police officers at the coach-yard, who closely examined the passports ; but Ioulka and her mother were not signalled as being under an interdict from travelling, so they were allowed to seat themselves on the dusty drab cushions of the vehicle without impediment. Mme. Zezioff was a little sad at leaving the town where her married life had been spent ; but Ioulka was in high spirits, and chatted gaily to me as her small store of luggage and her mother's was being lifted on to the roof by a Jew ostler much freckled. At last the Ukranian driver, in his white smock, climbed on the box, and gathering the reins of his three flea-bitten horses, clucked his tongue against his cheek and cracked his whip. Ioulka blew a kiss to me, and her mother waved her hand, as the ponderous yellow carriage jolted out of the yard and disappeared down the street amid the yells of the little Jew boys and the barking of those many long-nosed dogs who are suffered to prowl masterless about our towns. When the coach was gone I heaved a sigh of relief and went off to say vespers. Up to the last moment I had feared that Paulina Marienha might have given orders to arrest the Zezioffs.

V.

I performed vespers without the help of my sacristan, and it was past six o'clock when I went down to the crypt to release him. He looked like a man who has seen a ghost and is famished besides ; and, as I expected, his first thought was to scamper home to supper, so that there was no likelihood of his making any revelations to the police for another hour at least. " And when he does make them," mused I, " he will go and say that Casimir is to start to-morrow in the disguise of a peasant by the road to Kaptcha, so that our enemies will be hunting on the wrong track." With a chuckle over the trick I had played the worthy, I locked the church doors, took the keys home, and having supped off a dish of Vistulan trout, dressed myself for a visit to the Countess, whom I wished to see rather out of curiosity than because my visit could avail much at this juncture. On my way I passed by Stanislas Planiwitz's pottery shop,

and saw Macha standing in the doorway with her last-born baby in her arms, who clutched a rose in his little fist ; by which preconcerted sign I was informed that Casimir Barinski was safe on board the steam launch.

Paulina received me very affably, although this was not a reception-night, and she was alone in the *déshabille* of a white-laced cashmere *peignoir*. I noticed there was a moist glitter in her eyes and a something subdued and yet ecstatic in her manner, which proved sufficiently that Casimir's flirtation of the preceding day had altogether blinded her and turned her head. She looked like a woman who is in love, and whose passionate artifices are triumphant. Certainly at that moment she would have scorned to do an unkind thing to Ioulka Zezioff, for it was a much greater womanly feat to seduce a lover from his betrothed by the simple might of her charms, instead of having recourse to police interference to crush her rival. At the age of forty, so far as I have seen, women take an extraordinary delight in winning a love battle in a fair fight.

Paulina and I talked about Casimir, for his name seemed to fly incontinently from her lips, so that she could allude to nothing else ; but we did not touch upon his marriage or proposed departure in Paulina's company, I being supposed to know nought of this last scheme. We conversed rather about his family, his talents, his sufferings in Siberia—and hereon my fair hostess soon began to shed hysterical tears, vowing that, after all, it was not she who had caused Casimir to be sent into exile, for that he would have been arrested in any case, the Government having long noted down his family for persecution. It was but natural that the unhappy woman should now seek to disculpate herself of her great crime against the man she loved, and should lay particular stress on the pardon she had obtained for him. She seemed to be working herself up to the conviction that, since it was she who had prevented the patriot from ending his days in the Oural mines, the remainder of his life properly belonged to her ; which proves once again that woman's logic is often at fault.

I said nothing that might grieve the Countess, for it was my duty to be courteous, as a visitor in her own house ; and so we talked confidentially enough for a couple of hours. It was about ten o'clock, I think, and I was on the point of taking my departure, when a footman came in with a letter on a tray, which he handed to his mistress. Paulina begged my leave to open it ; but the instant she had glanced at the first lines, she started to her feet, shot me a glance of viperous hatred such as a she-wolf may throw when she has fallen into a trap ; then, bereft of all colour, she flew to her desk, and snatched up a pen. She wrote for a minute, panting as her pen flew over the paper ; then, without blotting what she had written, she hastily folded the sheet, enclosed it in an envelope, and handed it to the footman, who retired.

This done, Paulina advanced towards me with flashing eyes and arms folded, whilst, in a voice that was almost a scream, she exclaimed—

"Do you know what I have just done? I have signed an order for the arrest of those two Zezioffs."

"It was a useless piece of work, for they went away this afternoon, and are over the frontier by this time," replied I, calmly.

This information staggered her for a moment. "Fool that I am; I should have had them seized two days ago!" she ejaculated, gasping. "But, anyhow, Casimir Barinski shall not escape. I know that he is to leave for Kaptcha to-morrow, disguised as a peasant."

"And what if you do prevent his escape? Love him as you may, you can't force him to marry you against his will."

"But I can send him back to Siberia, and will. I would rather see him there than married to that drudge of a girl!"

"Tut, tut!" said I. "Our enemies are bad enough, but they won't cancel an Imperial pardon for the sake of advancing your love affairs. You haven't the power you boast, Paulina."

This sally drove her almost mad.

"Haven't I the power?" shrieked she, as she spread out her hands wildly. "Know that I am queen of this town, and have been for years. I am the only person here in direct relation with the Police Minister at St. Petersburg; and a line of mine could send *you*, priest as you are, to Siberia."

"I don't believe it," said I; "and in any case feel no fear," nor did I feel any.

"Ah, you think you can defy me, but you will do well not to go too far!" she exclaimed, wringing her hands, and looking as if she would smite me.

"I do defy you," said I, standing up, in wrath; "for there isn't a priest in Poland who would give you absolution if you once laid a finger on one of our order. If we don't all hold together from brotherly love, we do from the necessity of mutual protection, as you well know, else you would have disposed of me long ago."

"I am too good, and that is my weakness!" said Paulina, panting as she dropped, half fainting, on to the sofa. "I have let myself be held in bondage by your superstitions like a child; but I'll turn schismatic."

"And I'll excommunicate you from the sacraments, and denounce you to the Camarilla as a heretic and a traitress, with whom no pact of faith need be kept," cried I, paying her back glance for glance, without quaking.

I knew the sort of woman with whom I had to deal, you see. Half choking with rage, she pointed to the door, and I walked out; but I felt quite confident that she would neither molest me nor suffer others to do so. Religion, as she practised it, was half the business of Paulina's life, and she had need to believe in the inviolability of its ministers. She would have known no peace in sinning if she had destroyed one of us priests, who have power to absolve sins.

All this did not prevent my passing a very anxious night, for I had

hoped that the news of Casimir's flight, or the intention of it, would not reach the Countess till morning, by which time all researches would be vain. I was not so sure that they would be vain at this hour, if actively conducted; and every time I heard the tramping walk of the night police under my window, I quaked lest one of these individuals should knock at my door, and request me to accompany him to the central office, there to answer questions as to my connivance in Casimir's flight. There was no knocking, and I received no police visit till ten o'clock next morning. At that hour a crop-headed man in plain clothes arrived at the church, and told me laconically that I was wanted to identify a dead body.

"Whose dead body?" I asked, my tongue almost cleaving to my palate.

"Casimir Barinski's," he answered. "The man was overtaken as he was trying to escape in peasant's clothes; and as he offered resistance, he was shot down."

"Where? On the road to Kaptcha?"

"Precisely," replied the policeman, with a significant look into my eyes. "It was on the road to Kaptcha."

VI.

Some poor peasant it was who had paid for Casimir Barinski with his innocent life; and, by the time the mistake was discovered, Casimir was safe in Galicia, with Stanislas Planiwitz's pots and chests of tea. He soon afterwards married Ioulka Zezioff in Paris, and is now employed as a journalist, I believe, in the French capital. I was never molested about his escape, nor was Macha, though, thanks to Nicholas Levitski (as I suppose), we were both suspected; but, then, the Russian police have a policy about hushing up disagreeable matters when these are beyond remedy.

As for Paulina Marienha, she remained six months without coming near me, and I, for my part, did not go near her. One day, however, she walked into our church bravely, attired after her wont, and, sending for me out of the sacristy, said, with a grave sort of downcast smile, that she had come to make a confession. Prepared, by her manner, for something serious, I took my seat in the central box of the confessional, while she knelt in that to the left.

"Father," she began, "I accuse myself of the sin of ill-temper in often speaking sharply to my maid——"

And that was how the Countess Paulina squared her accounts with heaven.

Æsthetic Analysis of an Obelisk.

I HAD climbed with a friend up the steep down which overhangs Ventnor, and reached the obelisk at Appuldurcombe. From its base the eye ranges over the loveliest panorama in the Isle of Wight. The Solent gleams blue in the sunlight to northward, and the Channel, studded with white sails, spreads below us to the south; while at the eastern and western ends of the island, the great chalk cliffs of the Culvers and the Main Bench stand out in dazzling purity against the purple waters of Sandown Bay and Freshwater Gate. Around us on every side stretches an undulating reach of tilled or wooded country, all the more grateful, perhaps, for its trim neatness to an eye wearied with the rank luxuriance of tropical hill-sides. But what strikes one most in the prospect, is the singular way in which every conspicuous height is crowned by some kind of monument or landmark, giving to each portion of the scene an individuality and a topographical distinctness of its own. Here, close at hand, is the Appuldurcombe Obelisk, built on a commanding point of view by Sir Richard Worsley, the former owner of the great house which stands in solitary grandeur, shrouded by the elms of the park, at our feet. The obelisk has been struck by lightning and shaken to its very base; while the topmost stones have fallen in a long line on the down, still preserving their relative positions, and impressing the visitor with a very massive idea of ruin. Looking northward, we see the monument on Bembridge cliffs and the sea-mark on Ashe Down; while on the opposite side the St. Catherine's beacon and Cook's Castle stand out amongst a number of minor pillars. We had been discussing some question of æsthetics on our way, and as we gazed round upon this exquisite view—a mere hackneyed English scene, it is true, and perhaps on that account not worth the trouble of a description to those who measure nature with a foot-rule, but lovely, indeed, to anyone who worships beauty for its own sake, and acknowledges it wherever he may find it—my friend inquired of me, “How do you account, on general æsthetic principles, for the pleasure we derive from an obelisk?”

The question was not one to be answered in a moment. Indeed, the actual analysis into simple psychological elements of any æsthetic object, however slight, is a lengthy task; for many separate factors, intellectual, emotional, and sensuous, must be taken into consideration and duly co-ordinated. We talked over the point as we returned to Ventnor, and several other observations occurred to me in the course of our rambles

afterwards ; so I propose to set down in this paper the net result of our joint investigations. The starting point of our exposition will seem at first sight sufficiently remote from any question, either of obelisks or of æsthetics, but I trust that as I proceed its relevancy to the main subject will become clearer.

A baby of my acquaintance, aged seven months, is very fond of hearing a spoon knocked against a finger-glass. One day the spoon was put into her hands, and after a series of random efforts she at last succeeded, half by accident, in striking the glass and producing the musical note which pleases her. This performance gave her the most intense delight, as was evidenced by her smiles and chuckles. She continued her endeavours with varying success, and soon learnt how to direct her muscles so as to bring about the desired effect. Every exercise of this power gives her acute pleasure, and is followed by a crow of excitement and a glance around which asks mutely for the sympathy or approbation of bystanders. Evidently, even at this early age, the gratification of power, the pleasure of successful effort, is a feeling within the range of her unfolding intelligence.

Another baby, half a year older, is in the habit of pursing her lips and blowing upon her papa, who thereupon pretends to be knocked down, and falls upon the carpet. In this case the gratification is even more evident, and the supposed effect is more conspicuous and striking. Other children, again, push down grown-up people with their hands, and are delighted at their resistless fall. The main element in all these pleasures is the production of a noticeable effect ; and it is obviously desirable, both for the individual and the race, that such efficient action should be followed by pleasurable feeling. The power to produce great mechanical results and the will to initiate them are necessary factors of success in the struggle for life amongst the higher animals.

Boys a little more advanced in nervous and muscular development derive analogous pleasure from somewhat similar exercises. They love to roll huge stones close to the edge of a hill, and then watch them tearing down its slopes, rooting up the plants or shrubs, and thundering into the valley beneath. At other times they band together to fling a small boulder into a lake, and revel in the exhibition of power given by its splash and roar. And this enjoyment is probably not confined to human beings ; for our congeners, the monkeys, delight in similar displays ; and those of them who are trained in the Malay peninsula to pick and fling down cocoa-nuts from the palms, chuckle and grin over each nut as it falls, with true boyish merriment.

But the most conspicuous manifestation of these feelings is to be seen when the constructive faculty comes into play. The first desire of children in their games is to build *something big*, a visible trophy of their architectural skill. On the sea-shore they pile up great mounds of sand, or dig a pit surrounded by a mimic rampart. If they can get at a heap of bricks or deal planks, they will arrange them in a pyramid, and will judge their success by the height which they can attain. Indoors their

ambition finds vent in card-houses, or lofty edifices of wooden blocks. In winter, the big snowball forms a never-failing centre of attraction; while American and Canadian boys obtain a firm material in the frozen snow for neatly-built palaces which sometimes outlast an entire week. But, above all, it is important in every case to notice that children invariably call the attention of older people to these great effects which their hands and arms have produced. The first element of the sublime is possibly to be sought in this sympathetic admiration for the big products of childish effort.

Amongst the earliest works of human art which are yet left to us from the sacrilegious hands of landlords and pachas, the same love for something big is still to be noticed. The chieftain's body lies beneath a big tumulus, or its resting-place is marked by a cromlech of big unhewn stones. The Gael crowns his mountain top with a monstrous cairn; the Cymry pile the long avenues of Carnac; or perhaps a still earlier race lift into their places the huge rocks of Stonehenge. Italy and Greece still show us the Cyclopean masonry of Volaterræ and Tiryns; while further east, the Pyramids, the Sphinx, the colossal Memnon, the endless colonnades of Karnak, bear witness to the self-same delight in bigness for its own sake, as a monument of power, personal or vicarious.

So here, almost without knowing it, we have traced back our obelisk to the land of its birth, and seen the main reasons which gave it origin. All phallic speculations would obviously be out of place here; for even if we grant that the obelisk is in its first conception a phallus (which is far from certain), at any rate our present point will be gained if objectors allow us in return that it is a *very big* phallus. Beginning as a rough monolith, in all probability, the obelisk assumed in Egypt the form in which we know it best, a massive, tapering, sharply-pointed square column of polished granite. A few more words must be devoted to its historical growth before we pass on to its modern æsthetic value.

Egypt is the land of colossi. The notion of bigness seems to have held a closer grip over the despotic Egyptian mind than over any other psychological specimen with which we are acquainted. It does not need a journey up the Nile to show us their fondness for the immense; half-an-hour at the British Museum is quite sufficient. Now *why* did the Egyptians so revel in enormous works of art? This question is usually answered by saying that their absolute rulers loved thus to show the vastness of their power; and doubtless the answer is very true as far as it goes, and quite falls in with our theory given above. But it does not *always* happen that despotic monarchs build pyramids or Memnons; and the further question suggests itself—what was there in the circumstances of Egypt which determined this special and exceptional display of architectural extravagance? As we cast about for an answer, an analogy strikes us at once. Taking the world as a whole, I think it will be seen that the greatest architectural achievements are to be found in the great plain countries; and that mountain districts are comparatively bare of large edifices. The plain of Lombardy, the plain of the Low Countries, the plain

of Chartres, the lower Rhine valley, the Eastern Counties—these are the spots where our great European cathedrals are to be found ; and if we pass over to Asia, we shall similarly discover the country for pagodas, mosques, and temples in the broad basins of the Euphrates, the Ganges, the Indus, the Hoang-Ho, and the Yang-tze-kiang. No doubt castles and fortresses are to be found everywhere on heights for purposes of defence ; but purely ornamental architecture is most flourishing in level expanses of land. Now there is no level expanse in the world, habitable by man, so utterly unbroken and continuous as the valley of the Nile. Herein, doubtless, we have a clue to the special Egyptian love for colossal undertakings of every sort. Let us proceed to apply it psychologically.

Children at play on the sands do not pile up their great mound in the midst of rocks and boulders. On the contrary, they choose a level space, where no neighbouring object overpeers and casts into the shade their little colossus,—not by premeditation and concert, of course, but by instinctive feeling that a big heap will look bigger just here. So with primitive man ; he puts his tumulus not in the midst of natural elevations which mock his puny efforts, but in some wide plain where its size comes out by contrast with the small objects around. And as civilisation advances, it will naturally follow that man will most indulge his love for conspicuous displays of material power in those places where such displays produce the greatest effect. In mountain countries, man's handiwork is apt to be dwarfed by the proximity of nature's majestic piles, and his *amour propre* is not constantly stimulated to some greater and yet greater achievement ; but in wide and level valleys the effects he can produce are so relatively striking, that every despot is urged on by an overwhelming desire to outdo the triumphs of his predecessors. From Timur's pyramid of skulls to the Arc de l'Etoile in Paris one sees the same spirit of boastfulness, allied with the same predatory instinct, running through the long line of columns, pillars, triumphal arches, and Nelson monuments.

A word must be added to prevent misconception. Undoubtedly some splendid architectural works are to be found in mountainous districts ; but they are the exception not the rule. And even so they are apt to be rather military than ornamental, owing their beauty more to incidental circumstances than to deliberate design. Beginning with the rude earthworks which cap most heights in the British Isles, we go on to the Hellenic Acropolis and the Italian Arx, the ruined castles of Rhineland, the fortress-crowned heights of Stirling and Dumbarton, the frowning battlements of Quebec and Gibraltar. When an ecclesiastical character has been given to such buildings, it seldom quite obscures their original warlike purpose. Most of the churches dedicated to St. Michael, the militant archangel who delights in airy pinnacles, are connected with adjoining fortresses : the cathedrals of Zion and Durham are fronted by the castles of the Prince Bishop ; and the Parthenon or the Capitol do not make us forget the real nature of the Acropolis and the Arx. Such

cases are very different from those of Milan and Cologne, of the Memnonium and the Táj Mahál. Moreover, it is worth noticing that in mountainous or hilly regions the buildings usually crown the highest points, so that nature aids art instead of obscuring it. If a tumulus *must* be placed in a hill country, it is piled on the top of the most conspicuous elevation; and all landmarks, from cairns to Hardy monuments, are perched in similar situations. But this point is one which will come in further on.

Egypt, then, being the flattest of all flat countries, is the one where we might naturally expect the taste for bigness to reach the most portentous development. Aided by the existence of a simple autocracy and an overwhelming military spirit, it produced all those forms of colossi with which we are so familiar; and amongst them our present subject, the obelisk. But so far we have only considered its historical origin; we have now to inquire what are the points about it which give it æsthetic beauty in our eyes at the present day.

In a formal analysis it would be necessary to divide the elements of our feeling into various classes—the sensuous, the emotional, and the intellectual; but for our immediate purpose it will perhaps be better if we take the complex total in its *ensemble*, and notice its different factors in the order of their prominence. To do so properly, let us begin with the obelisk in itself, viewed absolutely, and apart from all considerations of locality, fitness, and association.

As we look up at our present specimen, the first point which strikes us is its *size*. It appeals to the emotion of the sublime in its simplest form, the admiration for the literally great in man's handiwork. We think instinctively, "What a huge mass of stone this is! How it towers up into the air! How many men it must have taken to raise it to that height!" In short, one's earliest feeling is summed up in a note of admiration. The Appuldurcombe Obelisk is formed of separate stones, each of immense size, and we see immediately how impossible it would be for our unaided efforts to roll over even a single one of them. But most other obelisks are monolithic, and in that case our direct affection of the sublime is far more vivid. We picture to ourselves the difficulty of hewing that immense, unbroken mass from the solid rock of its parent quarry; the care that must have been taken to ensure it against fracture or chipping; the mechanical power involved in raising it successfully to its final site, and planting it firmly on its pedestal. The most conspicuous element in our æsthetic pleasure on viewing an obelisk is clearly the sympathetic reflex of that primitive Egyptian delight in something big.

The next element in order of conspicuousness is its *form*. This it is which on the one hand marks off the obelisk, as such, from any other massive monument, and on the other hand adds a further element of beauty when massiveness is wanting. Any obelisk, great or small, pleases us (irrespective of its surroundings) by its graceful tapering shape. It is not like the pyramid, a squat heap of stones, placed in the position

where the least possible mass is supported by the greatest possible base. On the contrary, while the stability of the shaft is sufficiently ensured, its slender dimensions yield the notion of comparative slightness. Nor is it like the column, whose natural purpose is that of a support to some other body, and which always looks ridiculous when surmounted by a figure; an absurdity conspicuous enough in Trafalgar Square and the Place Vendôme, but reaching a culminating point in the meaningless colonnades of the Taylorian Institute at Oxford. The column has no natural termination, and so, when it is wrested from its original intention, it always disappoints us by its useless capital, which obviously implies a superincumbent mass; but the obelisk has no other object to serve save that of beauty, and its summit is planed off into the most graceful and appropriate form. Again, the simplicity of its outline pleases us. If the angles were cut down so as to make an octagonal plinth, we should feel that additional trouble had been taken with no additional effect. But as it now stands, we see in its plain sides and rectangular corners a native grandeur which would be lost by more ambitious decoration. Carve its contour, ornament its simple summit, bevel its straight edges, and all its impressiveness is gone at once.

From these complex considerations of form, mainly composed of intellectual factors, we may pass on to those more elementary ones, the effect of which is rather directly sensuous. The obelisk is bounded by straight lines whose length is not excessive, and whose direction can be followed by the eye with ease and gratification. Its upward tapering form adapts itself admirably to the natural convergence of the lines of vision. Its four sides can be grasped at once without confusion, and its pointed top, levelled all round, gives an obvious and pleasing termination to the muscular sweep. Then, too, it is throughout symmetrical, and that in a manner which requires no effort for its comprehension. If one side bulged a little, if one angle were untrue, if one line of slope at the summit did not "come square" with its neighbour, if anywhere there were a breach of symmetry, an indication of unworkmanlike carelessness, all our pleasure would be gone. But when we see that the artisan has exactly carried out his ideal, simple as that ideal is, we are pleased by the evidence of skill and care, and sensuously gratified by the simplification of our visual act in apprehending the form produced.

Closely allied to these sources of pleasure are those which depend upon the polish of a granite obelisk. Sensuously we derive two kinds of gratification from this property: the visual gloss gives an agreeable stimulus to the eye, while the tactual smoothness affords pleasure to the nervous terminals of the hand. Further, it is intellectually gratifying as another symbol of the care bestowed by the workman upon his work. And when in certain cases we add to the last-named idea the historical conception of the inadequate tools with which our Egyptian artist must have wrought this exquisite sheen, we raise our feeling at once to a far higher emotional level.

But we have not yet exhausted the elements of beauty and interest given by an obelisk, even apart from special circumstances of site and surroundings. Its surface may be deeply scored with hieroglyphics, and this, though in one sense a detriment to the general effect, yet gives a certain detailed interest of its own. We can notice, too, how this carving of the plane surfaces, which nowhere interferes with the typical outline, does not disfigure our obelisk in at all the same way as ornamentation of its edges or summit would disfigure it. The hieroglyphics leave it still essentially the same as ever; while a little floral decoration, a few scrolls or acanthus leaves at its critical points, would make it something totally different and vastly inferior. Again, the mere colour and texture of the stone may form partial elements in the total result. Red granite, closely dappled with points of crystalline transparency, or blue and grey limestone, shining with a dull and subdued glossiness, are in themselves striking components of the beauty which we notice in particular instances.

When we pass on from these immediate and general impressions to those more special ones which are given by historical and geographical association, a whole flood of feelings crowds upon our mind. Let us try to disentangle a few of the most prominent strands, again in the order of their conspicuousness.

Part of our pleasure in viewing such an erection is undoubtedly due to the recognition, "This is an obelisk." Every cognition, as Mr. Herbert Spencer tells us, is a recognition; and every recognition is in itself, apart from specialities, pleasurable. And when an educated man recognises an obelisk as such, he greets it as an old acquaintance, around which cling many interesting associations of time and place. In its origin it is, for our present purpose at least, Egyptian; and we see in it always a certain Egyptian massiveness, solidity, simplicity, grandeur. While to the merest child or boor it is beautiful for its form, its height, its size, its gloss, its texture—to the cultivated mind it is further beautiful for its suggestions of a dim past, a great empire, a forgotten language, a mighty race, now gone for ever, but once the teachers and pioneers of humanity on its upward struggle to light. We cannot divorce from our recognition of its shape and name some dim recollection of its history and its birthplace. When we meet it in the cemeteries of Western America, or on the hill sides of sub-tropical Australia, it carries us back, perhaps unconsciously, but none the less effectively, over a thousand miles and ten thousand years to the temple-courts of Meroe or the mitred presence of Amenoph.

If we feel thus in the case of any obelisk, still more do we feel so in the case of an actual Egyptian obelisk. It makes a great difference in the impressiveness of each particular block of stone whether it was hewn a myriad of years ago in the quarries of Syene, or last year in the quarries of Aberdeen. The sublime in its most developed forms comes in to complicate our simple sense of beauty when we have to deal with

long-past time and the relics of ancient empire. There is a great gulf between the child's admiration for that big pillar of polished rock and the cultivated man's half awe-struck gaze upon that sculptured monument of the earliest great civilisation whose memory has come down to us across the abyss of ages.

More or less remotely present in some few minds will be the still earlier history of that smooth needle of serpentine. The fancy will run back to those primæval days when the action of seething subterranean waves melted together and fixed into solid crystal the intricate veins of green and russet whose mazes traverse its surface. But the eyes that so turn backward instinctively to the first beginnings of mundane things are as yet but very few, and we need hardly follow out their speculations further; rather satisfying ourselves with the passing observation that each such prolongation of our field of vision lays open before us wider and yet wider expanses for the exercise of our æsthetic faculties in the regions of the highest and truest sublime.

Thus we have unravelled a few among the many tangled threads of semi-automatic consciousness which go to make up our idea of beauty in the case of an obelisk in itself, regarded without any reference to place or time. Let us now turn our attention awhile to the question of surrounding circumstances, and inquire how far the beauty of every particular obelisk depends upon its harmony with neighbouring objects.

There is a Dissenting chapel in Oxford, the four corners of whose roof are decorated—as I suppose the architect fondly hoped—with four obelisks of painted stucco. I have often noticed in passing this chapel that each separate obelisk, regarded apart from its incongruous position, is capable of yielding considerable pleasure on the score of form alone, even in spite of the poor and flimsy material of which it is composed. Some faint odour of Egyptian solidity, some evanescent tinge of architectural grace, still clings individually about every one of these brick and plaster monstrosities. Shoddy though they are, they nevertheless suggest the notion of massive stone, which custom has associated with the shape in which they are cast. But when the eye turns from each isolated pillar to the whole of which they form a part, the utter incongruity of their position overwhelms one with its absurdity. Wherever else an obelisk ought to be set, it is clear that it should not be set at every angle of a roof.

On the other hand, as we look away from Appuldurcombe over to the monuments which mark and individualise every ridge in the distance, we see that an obelisk placed on a commanding natural height, in a solitary conspicuous position, adds to the beauty of certain scenes instead of detracting from it. Certain scenes, I am careful to say; for there are some wild rocky districts where such puny decorations only reveal a miserable Cockney conceit. But in typical English undulating country—such a country as that which swells on every side of Appuldurcombe—with its gentle alternation of hill and dale, dotted with church towers

and stately mansions, a monument on every greater ridge is an unmitigated boon. It gives the eye a salient object on which to rest as it sweeps the horizon. It makes up in part for the want of jutting peaks or glacier-worn bosses. Above all, it harmonises with the general evidences of cultivation and painstaking human endeavour. In a highland glen we look for unmixed nature—purple heather, brown and naked rock, brawling stream, rugged hill-side, and lonely fir-trees beaten and distorted by the wind. But in a graceful English scene like this, we are gratified by the triumph of man's art—level lawns, green or golden cornfields, lofty steeples, smooth parks shaded with majestic and evenly-grown oaks. So, in the first case, we are displeased by any obtrusion of would-be artistic handicraft, such as the eighteenth century officiously foisted upon the scenery it admired; while in the second case we find in these purely ornamental structures the final touch which finishes off an artificial landscape. In such circumstances the obelisk is a symbol of loving care, giving to the complex picture the one element which it lacks.

Whatever may have been the original purpose of the obelisk—and we can hardly doubt that it had once a religious signification—its modern use is the one thus indicated, as a mark or salient point to fix the eye upon a critical site, either in a close area or an extended prospect. When we employ it to decorate a town, we place it in some open and conspicuous situation, either in the centre of a square, or where roads diverge, or at the apex of a triangular green, or at the point of bisection in one side of a bi-laterally symmetrical oblong. When we use it for rural decoration, we perch it on the summit of a rounded and sloping hill. It does not look well on an elevation which already possesses a natural peak or well marked crest; but it serves admirably to fasten the eye on the otherwise doubtful crown of a long and sweeping ridge. Again, such a pillar would be absurd half-way up a hill, where it would hardly come out against the neighbouring background of green; but it stands up with a pleasing boldness against the cold grey and somewhat monotonous sky-line of an English down. In short, an obelisk, viewed apart from its own individuality, and with reference to the whole scene in which it fills a place, is essentially a mark to call attention to the site on which it stands. Of course a column often serves the same purpose; but then, a column serves it badly, and an obelisk serves it well. It is just because it does so that it has survived to the present day.

If we look at a few such individual cases we shall find yet other elements in the complex feeling of beauty and fitness. There is the Luxor Obelisk in the Place de la Concorde. Here we have all the usual points which belong to the form as such, to the massive and monolithic character, to the high polish and sombre colouring, to the quaint and suggestive hieroglyphics with which it is deeply scored; and we have also the additional points given by its central and symmetrical position in a noble square, marking as it were a node in the long vista which reaches

to the Louvre on the one side and the Arc de Triomphe on the other: but over and above all these factors in our complex emotional state, there is a strange sense of irony in the collocation of that mute memorial of a solid and patient primæval race beside the gilded dome of the Invalides, the brand-new architectural elegancies of the Haussmann order, and the frivolous modern throng which pours ceaselessly past it up the Champs Elysées. I have seen that relic of the Pharaohs illuminated with gas jets and coloured lanterns in honour of the Fête Napoléon. And yet few will be disposed to deny that there is, by reason of this very contrast, a sort of odd fitness in the present position of the Luxor Obelisk.

Now let us turn to a very different instance, the Speke memorial in Kensington Gardens. Here we have to deal with a perfectly modern specimen, lacking all the historical interest of the Colonne de Luxor. But we have still the graceful form, the hard and solid material, the glistening surface, the suggestion of antique workmanship. And here the obelisk stands at the end of a green vista, it is approached by a close-cut sward, and it forms a pleasant termination to a pretty, if strictly artificial, scene. Moreover, there is a solemn appropriateness in the choice of an old Egyptian form for the commemoration of a fearless and ill-fated Nile explorer; while the brevity and simplicity of the legend—the single word “Speke” engraved on its base—is in admirable keeping with the general characteristics of the obelisk. On the whole, it is probably the best chosen and best situated monument in London.

Another similar structure with which many of us are familiar may supply a passing illustration. It is a column this time, not an obelisk, but it will serve equally well to point the moral in hand. On the heights which bound the valley of the Niagara and overlook the sleepy waters of Lake Ontario stands a Corinthian column, surmounted by a statue, and known as Brock's monument. As one passes down the river, leaving behind the great cataract itself, and the pine-clad ravine through which the whirlpool rapids surge with ceaseless foam, a turn of the stream brings one suddenly in view of a level reach which forms part of the monotonous Ontario basin. Brock's monument stands at the very edge of the higher lands before they dip into this low-lying plain. If it stood in Waterloo Place the visitor would pass it by with the same carelessly contemptuous glance which he vouchsafes in passing to the Duke of York's Column. But on the banks of a great American stream the righteous indignation which man naturally feels towards a supporter with nothing to support is waived in favour of other associations. In the midst of a wide half-tilled expanse, still dotted with stumps of trees and interspersed with shabby wooden villages, that tall shaft of sculptured stone, in memory of a British soldier, has an air of European solidity and ancient civilisation that contrasts well with the shuffling modern appearance of everything else in the prospect. All other human additions to the neighbourhood of Niagara—the big wooden hotels with

their sham cupolas, the line of bazaars with their sham Indians, the paper-mills of Luna island with their intensely realistic appurtenances—are simply hideous. But that one touch of familiar European art, spurious as it is in itself, can hardly fail to raise a thrill of pleasurable surprise and grateful recognition in every visitor from the older lands across the Atlantic.

Perhaps it is this very consciousness of contrast which fills Greenwood and Mount Auburn with Ionic temples or Roman mausoleums. Bad as is generally the taste displayed in such structures and the choice of their position, an occasional success half redeems the many failures. A monument which struck me much in this respect is situated in the graveyard of a church in the mountain district of Jamaica. As you ride down from the Newcastle cantonment you pass through a narrow horse-path, almost choked with tropical ferns, wild brushwood, and spreading aloe-plants. But when you reach this little churchyard, neatly kept and planted with English looking flowers, you see a plain obelisk of polished Aberdonian granite, whose simple gracefulness could not offend the most fastidious eye, while the evidence of care and comparative culture strikes the mind at once with a pleasant relief.

There are many other cases nearer home of similar erections which might be examined, did space permit, such as the Baxter monument near Kidderminster, the various London and Paris columns, the Colonne de la Grande Armée at Boulogne, and so forth. But the instances already given will suffice to mark the complexity which is introduced by consideration of surrounding circumstances. It would be interesting, too, to compare them as regards their origin and purpose, their harmonies and contrasts, with the Highland cairn and the Welsh maen-hir, the white horses of Calne and Wantage, the arches of Titus and Severus, the pillars of Byzantium, the minarets of Delhi, the pagodas of Kew and Peking, the campanili of Italy, the steeples of our own village churches, and the Albert, Scott, Stewart, and Martyrs' memorials. But such a treatment of the subject would probably prove too exhaustive for even the most minutely conscientious student, and perhaps their relations are sufficiently hinted even in the brief list we have just strung together. Let us pass on to see the net results of our previous inquiry.

At first sight few æsthetic objects could seem simpler of explanation than an obelisk. Compared with an historical painting, or a lyric poem, or an operatic aria, or even a landscape, it is but a single element by the side of the many which go to compose those complex wholes. But when we proceeded to analyse this seemingly elementary factor in the whole scene which lay before us from Appuldurcombe, we saw that it is really itself made up of a thousand different threads of feeling, sensuous, intellectual, and emotional. While most theorists are ready to account for every manifestation of beauty by a single uniform principle, actual analysis revealed to us the fact that even the most apparently uncompounded perception depended for its pleasurable effect upon a whole mass

of complicated causes. Some of these factors are immediate and universal, appealing to the senses of child and savage and cultivated man alike; others are mediate and special, being entirely relative to the knowledge and emotional constitution of the individual percipient. We will sum them up briefly under the different categories into which they would fall in a systematic scheme of our æsthetic nature.

Sensuously, the obelisk has tactual smoothness and visual gloss; a simple, graceful, and easily-apprehended form, and sometimes delicate or variegated colouring, as well as crystalline texture. In special cases it may also afford harmonious relief from neighbouring tints, and may stand out with pleasing boldness against a monotonous horizon.

Emotionally, the obelisk appeals to the affection of the sublime, both directly, by its massive size and weight, and indirectly, by its suggestion of remote antiquity and despotic power. It arouses the sympathetic admiration of skill and honest workmanship, and in special cases it recalls historical or geographical associations, and brings back to the spectator familiar scenes in the midst of unfamiliar surroundings, besides yielding grateful evidence of human care and industry.

Intellectually, the obelisk accords with the natural love of symmetry, both in itself, owing to the even arrangement of its sides and angles, and with reference to its surroundings, in those cases where it occupies the central or nodal position in a regular enclosure. In a landscape, it yields us the pleasurable feeling of individuality and recognisability, aiding us in the determination of distant topographical details. In a city, it decorates and defines the noticeable sites. And in all cases alike it produces either the intellectual pleasure resulting from a sense of harmony with neighbouring conditions, or the intellectual discomfort due to a consciousness of discord and incongruity.

Now if an obelisk, with all its apparent simplicity, really involves so immense a number of feelings for its proper perception, we may perhaps form some dim idea of the infinite plexus of feelings which are concerned in the proper perception of a great work of art. We may thus be led, by an easy example, to hesitate before we accept those current æsthetic dogmas which attribute the sense of beauty to any one faculty, intellectual or emotional. And we may conclude that every separate thrill of that developed emotion which we call the consciousness of beauty is ultimately analysable into an immense number of factors, the main and original members of which are purely sensuous, while its minor and derivative members are more or less distinctly ideal. To the child and the savage a beautiful object is chiefly one which gives immediate and pleasurable stimulation to the eye or the ear: to the cultivated man, a beautiful object is still the same in essence, with the superadded gratifications of the highly-evolved intelligence and moral nature.

A Mighty Sea-wave.

ON May 10th last a tremendous wave swept the Pacific Ocean from Peru northwards, westwards, and southwards, travelling at a rate many times greater than that of the swiftest express train. For reasons best known to themselves, writers in the newspapers have by almost common consent called this phenomenon a tidal wave. But the tides have had nothing to do with it. Unquestionably the wave resulted from the upheaval of the bed of the ocean in some part of that angle of the Pacific Ocean which is bounded by the shores of Peru and Chili. This region has long been celebrated for tremendous submarine and subterranean upheavals. The opinions of geologists and geographers have been divided as to the real origin of the disturbances by which at one time the land, at another time the sea, and at yet other times (oftener in fact than either of the others) both land and sea have been shaken as by some mighty imprisoned giant struggling, like Prometheus, to cast from his limbs the mountain masses which hold them down. Some consider that the seat of the Vulcanian forces lies deep below that part of the chain of the Andes which lies at the apex of the angle just mentioned, and that the direction of their action varies according to the varying conditions under which the imprisoned gases find vent. Others consider that there are two if not several seats of subterranean activity. Yet others suppose that the real seat of disturbance lies beneath the ocean itself, a view which seems to find support in several phenomena of recent Peruvian earthquakes.

Although we have not as yet full information concerning the great wave which in May last swept across the Pacific, and northwards and southwards along the shores of the two Americas, it may be interesting to consider some of the more striking features of this great disturbance of the so-called peaceful ocean, and to compare them with those which have characterized former disturbances of a similar kind. We may thus, perhaps, find some evidence by which an opinion may be formed as to the real seat of subterranean activity in this region.

It may seem strange, in dealing with the case of a wave which apparently had its origin in or near Peru on May 9, to consider the behaviour of a volcano, distant 5,000 miles from this region, a week before the disturbance took place. But, although the coincidence may possibly have been accidental, yet in endeavouring to ascertain the true seat of disturbance we must overlook no evidence, however seemingly remote, which may throw light on that point; and as the sea-wave gene-

rated by the disturbance reached very quickly the distant region referred to, it is by no means unlikely that the subterranean excitement which the disturbance relieved may have manifested its effects beforehand at the same remote volcanic region. Be this as it may, it is certain that on May 1 the great crater of Kilauea, in the island of Hawaii, became active, and on the 4th severe shocks of earthquake were felt at the Volcano House. At three in the afternoon a jet of lava was thrown up to a height of about 100 feet, and afterwards some fifty jets came into action. Subsequently jets of steam issued along the line formed by a fissure four miles in length down the mountain side. The disturbance lessened considerably on the 5th, and an observing party examined the crater. They found that a rounded hill, 700 feet in height, and 1,400 feet in diameter, had been thrown up on the plain which forms the floor of the crater. Fire and scoria were spouted up in various places.

Before rejecting utterly the belief that the activity thus exhibited in the Hawaii volcano had its origin in the same subterrene or submarine region as the Peruvian earthquake, we should remember that other regions scarcely less remote have been regarded as forming part of this great vulcanian district. The violent earthquakes which occurred at New Madrid, in Missouri, in 1812, took place at the same time as the earthquake of Caraccas, the West Indian volcanoes being simultaneously active; and earthquakes had been felt in South Carolina for several months before the destruction of Caraccas and La Guayra. Now we have abundant evidence to show that the West Indian volcanoes are connected with the Peruvian and Chilian regions of vulcanian energy, and the Chilian region is about as far from New Madrid as Arica in Peru from the Sandwich Isles.

It was not, however, until about half-past eight on the evening of May 9 that the Peruvian earthquake began. A severe shock, lasting from four to five minutes, was felt along the entire southern coast, even reaching Autofagasta. The shock was so severe that it was impossible, in many places, to stand upright. It was succeeded by several others of less intensity.

While the land was thus disturbed, the sea was observed to be gradually receding, a movement which former experiences have taught the Peruvians to regard with even more terror than the disturbance of the earth itself. The waters which had thus withdrawn, as if concentrating their energies to leap more fiercely on their prey, presently returned in a mighty wave, which swept past Callao, travelling southwards with fearful velocity, while in its train followed wave after wave, until no less than eight had taken their part in the work of destruction. At Mollendo the railway was torn up by the sea for a distance of 300 feet. A violent hurricane which set in afterwards from the south prevented all vessels from approaching, and unroofed most of the houses in the town. At Arica the people were busily engaged in preparing temporary fortifications to repel a threatened assault of the rebel ram *Huisicar*, at the

moment when the roar of the earthquake was heard. The shocks here were very numerous, and caused immense damage in the town, the people flying to the Morro for safety. The sea was suddenly perceived to recede from the beach, and a wave from ten feet to fifteen feet in height rolled in upon the shore, carrying before it all that it met. Eight times was this assault of the ocean repeated. The earthquake had levelled to the ground a portion of the custom-house, the railway-station, the submarine cable office, the hotel, the British Consulate, the steamship agency, and many private dwellings. Owing to the early hour of the evening, and the excitement attendant on the proposed attack of the *Huisca*, every one was out and stirring; but the only loss of life which was reported is that of three little children who were overtaken by the water. The progress of the wave was only stopped at the foot of the hill on which the church stands, which point is further inland than that reached in August 1868. Four miles of the embankment of the railway were swept away like sand before the wind. Locomotives, cars, and rails, were hurled about by the sea like so many playthings, and left in a tumbled mass of rubbish.

The account proceeds to say that the United States' steamer *Waters*, stranded by the bore of 1868, was lifted up bodily by the wave at Arica and floated two miles north of her former position. The reference is no doubt to the double-ender *Watertree*, not stranded by a bore (a term utterly inapplicable to any kind of sea-wave at Arica, where there is no large river), but carried in by the great wave which followed the earthquake of August 13. The description of the wave at Arica on that occasion should be compared with that of the wave last May. About twenty minutes after the first earth shock the sea was seen to retire as if about to leave the shores wholly dry; but presently its waters returned with tremendous force. A mighty wave, whose length seemed immeasurable, was seen advancing like a dark wall upon the unfortunate town, a large part of which was overwhelmed by it. Two ships, the Peruvian corvette *America*, and the American double-ender *Watertree*, were carried nearly half a mile to the north of Arica, beyond the railroad which runs to Tacna, and there left stranded high and dry. As the English vice-consul at Arica estimated the height of this enormous wave at fully fifty feet, it would not seem that the account of the wave of last May has been exaggerated, for a much less height is, as we have seen, attributed to it, though, as it carried the *Watertree* still farther inland, it must have been higher. The small loss of life can be easily understood, when we consider that the earthquake was not followed instantly by the sea-wave. Warned by the experience of the earthquake of 1868, which most of them must have remembered, the inhabitants sought safety on the higher grounds until the great wave and its successors had flowed in. We read that the damage done was greater than that caused by the previous calamity, the new buildings erected since 1868 being of a more costly and substantial class. Merchandise from the custom-house and

stores was carried by the water to a point on the beach five miles distant.

At Iquique, in 1868, the great wave was estimated at fifty feet in height. We are told that it was black with the mud and slime of the sea bottom. "Those who witnessed its progress from the upper balconies of their houses, and presently saw its black mass rushing close beneath their feet, looked on their safety as a miracle. Many buildings were, indeed, washed away, and in the low-lying parts of the town there was a terrible loss of life." Last May the greatest mischief at Iquique would seem to have been caused by the earthquake, not by the sea-wave, though this also was destructive in its own way. "Iquique," we are told, "is in ruins. The movement was experienced there at the same time and with the same force [as at Arica]. Its duration was exactly four minutes and a third. It proceeded from the south-east, exactly from the direction of Ilaga." The houses built of wood and cane tumbled down at the first attack, lamps were broken, and the burning oil spread over and set fire to the ruins. Three companies of firemen, German, Italian, and Peruvian, were instantly at their posts, although it was difficult to maintain an upright position, shock following shock with dreadful rapidity. Nearly 400,000 quintals of nitrate in the stores at Iquique and the adjacent ports of Molle and Pisagua were destroyed. The British barque *Caprera* and a German barque sank, and all the coasting craft and small boats in the harbour were broken to pieces and drifted about in every direction.

At Chanavaya, a small town at the guano-loading deposit known as Pabellon de Pica, only two houses were left standing out of four hundred. Here the earthquake shock was specially severe. In some places the earth opened in crevices seventeen yards deep, and the whole surface of the ground was changed. The shipping along the Peruvian and Bolivian coast suffered terribly. The list of vessels lost or badly injured at Pabellon de Pica alone reads like the list of a fleet.

We have been particular in thus describing the effects produced by the earthquake and sea-wave on the shores of South America, in order that the reader may recognise in the disturbance produced there the real origin of the great wave which a few hours later reached the Sandwich Isles, 5,000 miles away. Doubt has been entertained respecting the possibility of a wave, other than the tidal wave, being transmitted right across the Pacific. Although in August 1868 the course of the great wave which swept from some region near Peru, not only to the Sandwich Isles, but in all directions over the entire ocean, could be clearly traced, there were some who considered the connection between the oceanic phenomena and the Peruvian earthquake a mere coincidence. It is on this account perhaps chiefly that the evidence obtained last May is most important. It is interesting, indeed, as showing how tremendous was the disturbance which the earth's frame must then have undergone. It would have been possible, however, had we no other evidence, for some to have maintained that the wave which came in upon the shores of the

Sandwich Isles a few hours after the earthquake and sea disturbance in South America was in reality an entirely independent phenomenon. But when we compare the events which happened last May with those of August 1868, and perceive their exact similarity, we can no longer reasonably entertain any doubt of the really stupendous fact that *the throes of the earth in and near Peru are of sufficient energy to send an oceanic wave right across the Pacific*, and of such enormous height at starting, that, after travelling with necessarily diminishing height the whole way to Hawaii, it still rises and falls through thirty-six feet. The real significance of this amazing oceanic disturbance is exemplified by the wave circles which spread around the spot where a stone has fallen into a smooth lake. We know how, as the circle widens, the height of the wave grows less and less, until at no great distance from the centre of disturbance the wave can no longer be discerned, so slight is the slope of its advancing and following faces. How tremendous, then, must have been the upheaval of the bed of ocean by which wave-circles were sent across the Pacific, retaining, after travelling five thousand miles from the centre of disturbance, the height of a two-storied house. In 1868, indeed, we know (now even more certainly than then) that the wave travelled very much farther, reaching the shores of Japan, of New Zealand, and of Australia, even if it did not make its way through the East Indian Archipelago to the Indian Ocean, as some observations seem to show. Doubtless we shall hear in the course of the next few months of the corresponding effects of the spread of last May's mighty wave athwart the Pacific, though the dimensions of the wave of last May, when it reached the Sandwich Isles, fell far short of those of the great wave of August 13-14, 1868.

It will be well to make a direct comparison between the waves of May last and August 1868 in this respect, as also with regard to the rate at which they would seem to have traversed the distance between Peru and Hawaii. On this last point, however, it must be noted that we cannot form an exact opinion until we have ascertained the real region of vulcanian disturbance on each occasion. It is possible that a careful comparison of times, and of the direction in which the wave front advanced upon different shores, might serve to show where this region lay. We should not be greatly surprised to learn that it was far from the continent of South America.

The great wave reached the Sandwich Isles between four and five on the morning of May 10, corresponding to about five hours later of Peruvian time. An oscillation only was first observed at Hilo, on the east coast of the great southern island of Hawaii, the wave itself not reaching the village till about a quarter before five. The greatest difference between the crest and trough of the wave was found to be thirty-six feet here; but at the opposite side of the island, in Kealakekua Bay (where Captain Cook died), amounted only to thirty feet. In other places the difference was much less, being in some only three feet, a cir-

circumstance, doubtless due to interference, waves which had reached the same spot along different courses chancing so to arrive that the crest of one corresponded with the trough of the other, so that the resulting wave was only the difference of the two. We must explain, however, in the same way, the highest waves of thirty-six to forty feet, which were doubtless due to similar interference, crest agreeing with crest and trough with trough, so that the resulting wave was the sum of the two which had been divided, and had reached the same spot along different courses. It would follow that the higher of the two waves was about twenty-one feet high, the lower about eighteen feet high; but as some height would be lost in the encounter with the shore line, wherever it lay, on which the waves divided, we may fairly assume that in the open ocean, before reaching the Sandwich group, the wave had a height of nearly thirty feet from trough to crest. We read, in accordance with this explanation, that "the regurgitations of the sea were violent and complex, and continued through the day."

The wave, regarded as a whole, seems to have reached all the islands at the same time. If this is confirmed by later accounts, we shall be compelled to conclude that the wave reached the group with its front parallel to the length of the group, so that it must have come (arriving as it did from the side towards which Hilo lies) from the north-east. It was then not the direct wave from Peru, but the wave reflected from the shores of California, which produced the most marked effects. We can understand well, this being so, that the regurgitations of the sea were complex. Any one who has watched the inflow of waves on a beach so lying within an angle of the shore, that while one set of waves comes straight in from the sea, another thwart set comes from the shore forming the other side of the angle, will understand how such waves differ from a set of ordinary rollers. The crests of the two sets form a sort of network, ever changing as each set rolls on; and considering any one of the four-cornered meshes of this wave-net, the observer will notice that while the middle of the raised sides rises little above the surrounding level, because here the crests of one set cross the troughs of the other, the corners of each quadrangle are higher than they would be in either set taken separately, while the middle of the four-cornered space is correspondingly depressed. The reason is that at the corners of the wave net crests join with crests to raise the water surface, which in the middle of the net (not the middle of the sides, but the middle of the space enclosed by the four sides) trough joins with trough to depress the water surface.*

* The phenomena here described are well worth observing on their own account as affording a very instructive and at the same time very beautiful illustration of wave motions. They can be well seen at many of our watering-places. The same laws of wave motion can be readily illustrated also by throwing two stones into a large smooth pool at points a few yards apart. The crossing of the two sets of circular waves produces a wave-net, the meshes of which vary in shape according to their position.

We must take into account the circumstance that the wave which reached Hawaii last May was probably reflected from the Californian coast when we endeavour to determine the rate at which the sea disturbance was propagated across the Atlantic. The direct wave would have come sooner, and may have escaped notice because arriving in the night-time, as it would necessarily have done if a wave which travelled to California, and thence, after reflexion, to the Sandwich group, arrived there at a quarter before five in the morning following the Peruvian earthquake. We shall be better able to form an opinion on this point after considering what happened in August 1868.

The earth thro on that occasion was felt in Peru about five minutes past five on the evening of August 13. Twelve hours later, or shortly before midnight, August 13, Sandwich Island time (corresponding to 5 p.m., August 14, Peruvian time), the sea round the group of the Sandwich Isles rose in a surprising manner, "insomuch that many thought the islands were sinking, and would shortly subside altogether beneath the waves. Some of the smaller islands were for a time completely submerged. Before long, however, the sea fell again, and as it did so the observers found it impossible to resist the impression that the islands were rising bodily out of the water. For no less than three days this strange oscillation of the sea continued to be experienced, the most remarkable ebbs and floods being noticed at Honolulu, on the island of Woahoo."

The distance between Honolulu and Arica is about 6,300 statute miles; so that, if the wave travelled directly from the shores of Peru to the Sandwich Isles, it must have advanced at an average rate of about 525 miles an hour (about 450 knots an hour). This is nearly half the rate at which the earth's surface near the equator is carried round by the earth's rotation, or is about the rate at which parts in latitude 62 or 63 degrees north are carried round by rotation; so that the motion of the great wave in 1868 was fairly comparable with one of the movements which we are accustomed to regard as cosmical. We shall presently have something more to say on this point.

Now last May, as we have seen, the wave reached Hawaii at about a quarter to five in the morning, corresponding to about ten Peruvian time. Since, then, the earthquake was felt in Peru at half-past eight on the previous evening, it follows that the wave, if it travelled directly from Peru, must have taken about $13\frac{1}{2}$ hours, or an hour and a half longer, in travelling from Peru to the Sandwich Isles, than it took in August 1868. This is unlikely, because ocean waves travel nearly at the same rate in the same parts of the ocean, whatever their dimensions, so only that they are large. We have, then, in the difference of time occupied by the wave in May last and in August 1868, in reaching Hawaii, some corroboration of the result to which we were led by the arrival of the wave simultaneously at all the islands of the Sandwich group—the inference, namely, that the observed wave had reached these

islands after reflexion from the Californian shore line. As the hour when the direct wave probably reached Hawaii was about a quarter past three in the morning, when not only was it night-time but also a time when few would be awake to notice the rise and fall of the sea, it seems not at all improbable that the direct wave escaped notice, and that the wave actually observed was the reflected wave from California. The direction, also, in which the oscillation was first observed corresponds well with this explanation.

It is clear that the wave which traversed the Pacific last May was somewhat inferior in size to that of August 1868, which therefore still deserves to be called (as then by the present writer) the greatest sea-wave ever known. The earthquake, indeed, which preceded the oceanic disturbance of 1868 was far more destructive than that of May last, and the waves which came in upon the Peruvian and Bolivian shores were larger. Nevertheless, the wave of last May was not so far inferior to that of August 1868 but that we may expect to hear of its course being traced athwart the entire extent of the Pacific Ocean.

When we consider the characteristic features of the Peruvian and Chilian earthquakes, and especially when we note how wide is the extent of the region over which their action is felt in one way or another, it can scarcely be doubted that the earth's vulcanian energies are at present more actively at work throughout that region than in any other. There is nothing so remarkable, one may even say so stupendous, in the history of subterranean disturbance as the alternation of mighty earth-throes by which, at one time, the whole of the Chilian Andes seem disturbed and anon the whole of the Peruvian Andes. In Chili scarce a year ever passes without earthquakes, and the same may be said of Peru; but so far as great earthquakes are concerned the activity of the Peruvian region seems to synchronise with the comparative quiescence of the Chilian region, and *vice versa*. Thus, in 1797, the terrible earthquake occurred known as the earthquake of Riobamba, which affected the entire Peruvian earthquake region. Thirty years later a series of tremendous throes shook the whole of Chili, permanently elevating the whole line of coast to the height of several feet. During the last ten years the Peruvian region has in turn been disturbed by great earthquakes. It should be added that between Chili and Peru there is a region about five hundred miles in length in which scarcely any volcanic action has been observed. And singularly enough, "this very portion of the Andes, to which one would imagine that the Peruvians and Chilians would fly as to a region of safety, is the part most thinly inhabited; insomuch that, as Von Buch observes, it is in some places entirely deserted."

One can readily understand that this enormous double region of earthquakes, whose oscillations on either side of the central region of comparative rest may be compared to the swaying of a mighty see-saw on either side of its point of support, should be capable of giving birth to throes propelling sea-waves across the Pacific Ocean. The throes actually ex-

perienced at any given place is relatively but an insignificant phenomenon, it is the disturbance of the entire region over which the throe is felt which must be considered in attempting to estimate the energy of the disturbing cause. The region shaken by the earthquake of 1868, for instance, was equal to at least a fourth of Europe, and probably to fully one-half. From Quito southwards as far as Iquique—or along a full third part of the length of the South American Andes—the shock produced destructive effects. It was also distinctly felt far to the north of Quito, far to the south of Iquique, and inland to enormous distances. The disturbing force which thus shook 1,000,000 square miles of the earth's surface must have been one of almost inconceivable energy. If directed entirely to the upheaval of a land region no larger than England, those forces would have sufficed to have destroyed utterly every city, town, and village within such a region; if directed entirely to the upheaval of an oceanic region, they would have been capable of raising a wave which would have been felt on every shore-line of the whole earth. Divided even between the ocean on the one side and a land region larger than Russia in Europe on the other, those vulcanian forces shook the whole of the land region and sent athwart the largest of our earth's oceans a wave which ran in upon shores 10,000 miles from the centre of disturbance with a crest thirty feet high. Forces such as these may fairly be regarded as cosmical; they show unmistakably that the earth has by no means settled down into that condition of repose in which some geologists still believe. We may ask with the late Sir Charles Lyell whether, after contemplating the tremendous energy thus displayed by the earth, any geologist will continue to assert that the changes of relative level of land and sea, so common in former ages of the world, have now ceased? and agree with him that if, in the face of such evidence, a geologist persists in maintaining this favourite dogma, it would be vain to hope, by accumulating proofs of similar convulsions during a series of ages, to shake the tenacity of his conviction—

*Si fractus illa atur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinae.*

But there is one aspect in which such mighty sea-waves as, in 1868 and again last May, have swept over the surface of our terrestrial oceans, remains yet to be considered.

The oceans and continents of our earth must be clearly discernible from her nearer neighbours among the planets—from Venus and Mercury on the inner side of her path around the sun, and from Mars (though under less favourable conditions) from the outer side. When we consider, indeed, that the lands and seas of Mars can be clearly discerned with telescopic aid from our earth at a distance of forty millions of miles, we perceive that our earth, seen from Venus at little more than half this distance, must present a very interesting appearance. Enlarged, owing to greater proximity, nearly fourfold, having a diameter nearly twice as

great as that of Mars, so that at the same distance her disc would seem more than three times as large, more brightly illuminated by the sun in the proportion of about five to two, she would shine with a lustre exceeding that of Mars, when in full brightness in the midnight sky, about thirty times; and all her features would of course be seen with correspondingly increased distinctness. Moreover, the oceans of our earth are so much larger in relative extent than those of Mars, covering nearly three-fourths instead of barely one-half of the surface of the world they belong to, that they would appear as far more marked and characteristic features than the seas and lakes of Mars. When the Pacific Ocean, indeed, occupies centrally the disc of the earth which at the moment is turned towards any planet, nearly the whole of that disc must appear to be covered by the ocean. Under such circumstances the passage of a wide-spreading series of waves over the Pacific, at the rate of about 500 miles an hour, is a phenomenon which could scarcely fail to be discernible from Venus or Mercury, if either planet chanced to be favourably placed for the observation of the earth—always supposing there were observers in Mercury or Venus, and that these observers were provided with powerful telescopes.

It must be remembered that the waves which spread over the Pacific on August 13–14, 1868, and again on May 9–10 last, were not only of enormous range in length (measured along crest or trough), but also of enormous breadth (measured from crest to crest, or from trough to trough). Were it otherwise, indeed, the progress of a wave forty or fifty feet high (at starting, and thirty-five feet high after travelling 6,000 miles), at the rate of 500 miles per hour, must have proved destructive to ships in the open ocean as well as along the shore line. Suppose, for instance, the breadth of the wave from crest to crest one mile, then, in passing under a ship at the rate of 500 miles per hour, the wave would raise the ship from trough to crest—that is, through a height of forty feet—in one-thousandth part of an hour (for the distance from trough to crest is but half the breadth of the wave), or in less than four seconds, lowering it again in the same short interval of time, lifting and lowering it at the same rate several successive times. The velocity with which the ship would travel upwards and downwards would be greatest when she was midway in her ascent and descent, and would then be equal to about the velocity with which a body strikes the ground after falling from a height of four yards. It is hardly necessary to say that small vessels subjected to such tossing as this would inevitably be swamped. On even the largest ships the effect of such motion would be most unpleasantly obvious. Now, as a matter of fact, the passage of the great sea-wave in 1868 was not noticed at all on board ships in open sea. Even within sight of the shore of Peru, where the oscillation of the sea was most marked, the motion was such that its effects were referred to the shore. We are told that observers on the deck of a United States' war-steamer distinctly saw the "peaks of the mountains in the chain of the Córdilleras

wave to and fro like reeds in a storm ;" the fact really being that the deck on which they stood was swayed to and fro. This, too, was in a part of the sea where the great wave had not attained its open sea form, but was a rolling wave, because of the shallowness of the water. In the open sea, we read that the passage of the great sea-wave was no more noticed than is the passage of the tidal wave itself. "Among the hundreds of ships which were sailing upon the Pacific when its length and breadth were traversed by the great sea-wave, there was not one in which any unusual motion was perceived." The inference is clear, that the slope of the advancing and following faces of the great wave was very much less than in the case above imagined ; in other words, that the breadth of the wave greatly exceeded one mile—amounting, in fact, to many miles.

Where the interval between the passage of successive wave-crests was noted, we can tell the actual breadth of the wave. Thus, at the Samoan Isles, in 1868, the crests succeeded each other at intervals of sixteen minutes, corresponding to eight minutes between crest and trough. As we have seen, that if the waves were one mile in breadth, the corresponding interval would be only four seconds, or only 120th part of eight minutes, it would follow that the breadth of the great wave, where it reached the Samoan Isles in 1868, was about 120 miles.

Now a wave extending right athwart the Pacific Ocean, and having a cross breadth of more than 100 miles, would be discernible as a marked feature of the disc of our earth, seen, under the conditions described above, either from Mercury or Venus. It is true that the slope of the wave's advancing and following surfaces would be but slight, yet the difference of illumination under the sun's rays would be recognisable. Then, also, it is to be remembered that there was not merely a single wave, but a succession of many waves. These travelled also with enormous velocity ; and though at the distance of even the nearest planet, the apparent motion of the great wave, swift though it was in reality, would be so far reduced that it would have to be estimated rather than actually seen, yet there would be no difficulty in thus perceiving it with the mind's eye. The rate of motion indeed would almost be exactly the same as that of the equatorial part of the surface of Mars, in consequence of the planet's rotation ; and this (as is well known to telescopists), though not discernible, directly produces, even in a few minutes, changes which a good eye can clearly recognise. We can scarcely doubt then that if our earth were so situated at any time when one of the great waves generated by Peruvian earthquakes is traversing the Pacific that the hemisphere containing this ocean were turned fully illuminated towards Venus (favourably placed for observing her), the disturbance of the Pacific could be observed and measured by telescopists on that planet.

Unfortunately there is little chance that terrestrial observers will ever be able to watch the progress of great waves athwart the oceans of Mars, and still less that any disturbance of the frame of Venus should become

discernible to us by its effects. We can scarce even be assured that there are lands and seas on Venus, so far as direct observation is concerned, so unfavourably is she always placed for observation; and though we see Mars under much more favourable conditions, his seas are too small and would seem to be too shallow (compared with our own) for great waves to traverse them such as could be discerned from the earth.

Yet it may be well to remember the possibility that changes may at times take place in the nearer planets—the terrestrial planets as they are commonly called, Mars, Venus, and Mercury—such as telescopic observation under favourable conditions might detect. Telescopists have, indeed, described apparent changes, lasting only for a short time, in the appearance of one of these planets, Mars, which may fairly be attributed to disturbances affecting its surface in no greater degree than the great Peruvian earthquakes have affected for a time the surface of our earth. For instance, the American astronomer Mitchel says that on the night of July 12, 1845, the bright polar snows of Mars exhibited an appearance never noticed at any preceding or succeeding observation. In the very centre of the white surface appeared a dark spot, which retained its position during several hours. On the following evening not a trace of the spot could be seen. Again the same observer says that on the evening of August 30, 1845, he observed for the first time a small bright spot, nearly or quite round, projecting out of the lower side of the polar spot. “In the early part of the evening,” he says, “the small bright spot seemed to be partly buried in the large one. After the lapse of an hour or more my attention was again directed to the planet, when I was astonished to find a manifest change in the position of the small bright spot. It had apparently separated from the large spot, and the edges alone of the two were now in contact, whereas when first seen they overlapped by an amount quite equal to one-third of the diameter of the small one. This, however, was merely an optical phenomenon, for on the next evening the spots went through the same apparent changes, as the planet went through the corresponding part of its rotation. But it showed the spots to be real ice masses. The strange part of the story is that in the course of a few days the smaller spot, which must have been a mass of snow and ice as large as Nova Zembla, gradually disappeared.” Probably some great shock had separated an enormous field of ice from the polar snows, and it had eventually been broken up and its fragments carried away from the arctic regions by currents in the Martian oceans. It appears to us that the study of our own earth, and of the changes and occasional convulsions which affect its surface, gives to the observation of such phenomena as we have just described a new interest. Or rather, perhaps, it is not too much to say that telescopic observations of the planets derive their only real interest from such considerations.

The Last Redoubt.

[“With Mehemet Ali.”—*Vide the Times*, September 29.]

KACELYEVO's slope still felt
The cannon's bolts and the rifles' pelt;
For a last redoubt up the hill remained,
By the Russ yet held, by the Turk not gained.

Mehemet Ali stroked his beard;
His lips were clinched and his look was weird;
Round him were ranks of his ragged folk,
Their faces blackened with blood and smoke.

“Clear me the Muscovite out!” he cried.
Then the name of “Allah!” echoed wide,
And the fezzes were waved and the bayonets lowered,
And on to the last redoubt they poured.

One fell, and a second quickly stopped
The gap that he left when he reeled and dropped;
The second,—a third straight filled his place;
The third,—and a fourth kept up the race.

Many a fez in the mud was crushed,
Many a throat that cheered was hushed,
Many a heart that sought the crest
Found Allah's arms and a houri's breast.

Over their corpses the living sprang,
And the ridge with their musket-rattle rang,
Till the faces that lined the last redoubt
Could see their faces and hear their shout.

In the redoubt a fair form towered,
That cheered up the brave and chid the coward;
Brandishing blade with a gallant air,
His head erect and his bosom bare.

“Fly! they are on us!” his men implored;
 But he waved them on with his waving sword.
 “It cannot be held; ’tis no shame to go!”
 But he stood with his face set hard to the foe.

Then clung they about him, and tugged, and knelt.
 He drew a pistol from out his belt,
 And fired it blank at the first that set
 Foot on the edge of the parapet.

Over, that first one toppled; but on
 Clambered the rest till their bayonets shone,
 As hurriedly fled his men dismayed,
 Not a bayonet’s length from the length of his blade.

“Yield!” But aloft his steel he flashed,
 And down on their steel it ringing clashed;
 Then back he reeled with a bladeless hilt,
 His honour full, but his life-blood spilt.

They lifted him up from the dabbled ground;
 His limbs were shapely, and soft, and round.
 No down on his lip, on his cheek no shade:—
 “Bismillah!” they cried, “’tis an Infidel maid!”

Mehemet Ali came and saw
 The riddled breast and the tender jaw.
 “Make her a bier of your arms,” he said,
 “And daintily bury this dainty dead!”

“Make her a grave where she stood and fell,
 ’Gainst the jackal’s scratch and the vulture’s smell.
 Did the Muscovite men like their maidens fight,
 In their lines we had scarcely supped to-night.”

So a deeper trench ’mong the trenches there
 Was dug, for the form as brave as fair;
 And none, till the Judgment trump and shout,
 Shall drive her out of the Last Redoubt.

ALFRED AUSTIN.

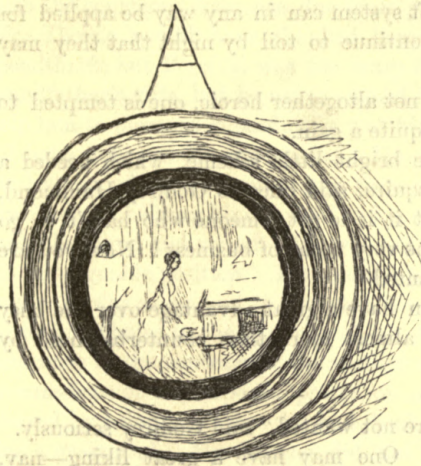


ADDIE STOOD BREATHLESS, AND PERCEVAL'S HEART GAVE A QUICK THROB.

“For Percival.”

CHAPTER IX.

SISSY LOOKS INTO THE MIRROR.



LADY'S hero generally has ample leisure. He may write novels, or poems, or paint the picture or carve the statue of the season, or he is a statesman and rules the destinies of nations, or he makes money mysteriously in the City, or even, it may be, not less mysteriously on the turf, but he does it in his odd minutes. That is his characteristic. Perhaps he spends his morning in stupendous efforts to gratify a wish, expressed in smiling hopelessness by the heroine; later, he calls on her, or he rides with her; evening comes—he dances with her till the first grey streak of dawn has touched the eastern sky. He goes home. His pen flies along the paper—he is knee-deep in manuscript; he is possessed with burning enthusiasm and energy; her features grow in idealised loveliness beneath his chisel, or the sunny tide of daylight pours in, to irradiate the finished picture, as well as the exhausted artist, with a golden glory. He has a talent for sitting up. He gets up very early indeed if he is in the country, but he never goes to bed early, or when would he achieve his triumphs? Some things, it is true, must be done by day, but half-an-hour will work wonders. The gigantic intellect is brought to bear on the confidential clerk; the latter is, as it were, wound up, and the great machine goes on. Or a hasty telegram arrives as the guests file into dinner. “Pardon me, one moment,” and instantly something is sent off in cypher which shall change the face of Europe. Unmoved, the hero returns to the love-making which is the true business of life.

There is poetry and romance enough in many an outwardly prosaic life. How often have we been told this? Nay, we have read stories in which the hero possesses a season-ticket, and starts from his trim suburban

home after an early breakfast, to return in due time to dine, perhaps to talk a little "shop" over the meal, and, it may be, even to feel somewhat sleepy in the evening. But as far as my experience goes, the day on which the story opens is the last on which he does all this. That morning he meets the woman with the haunting eyes, or the old friend who died long ago—did not the papers say so?—and whose resurrection includes a secret or two. Or he is sent for to some out-of-the-way spot in the country, where there is a mysterious business of some kind to be unravelled. At any rate, he needs his season-ticket never again, but changes more or less into the hero we all know.

It is hard work for these unresting men no doubt, yet what is to be done? Unless the double-shift system can in any way be applied for their relief, I fear they must continue to toil by night that they may appear to be idle men.

And after all, were the hero not altogether heroic, one is tempted to doubt if this abundant leisure is quite a gain.

Addie Blake, planning some bright little scheme, which needed a whole day, and an unoccupied squire, said once to Godfrey Hammond, "You can't think what a comfort it is to get someone who hasn't to go to business every day. I hate the very name of business! Now you are always at hand when you are wanted."

"Yes," he said, "we idle men have a great advantage over the busy ones, no doubt; but I think it almost more than counterbalanced by our terrible disadvantage.

"What is that?"

"We are at hand when we are not wanted," said Godfrey seriously.

And I think he was right. One may have a great liking—nay, something warmer than liking—for one's companions in endless idle *tête-à-têtes*, but they are perilous nevertheless. Some day the pale ghost—weariness, *ennui*, dearth of ideas, I hardly know what its true name is—comes into the room to see if the atmosphere will suit it, and sits down between you. You cannot see the colourless spectre, but are conscious of a slight exhaustion in the air. Everything requires a little effort—to breathe, to question, to answer, to look up, to appear interested. You feel that it is your own fault, perhaps; you would gladly take all the blame if you could only take all the burden. Perhaps the failing *is* yours, but it is your fault only as it is the fault of an electric eel that after many shocks his power is weakened, and he wants to be left alone to recover it.

Still, though there may be no fault, it is a terrible thing to feel one's heart sink suddenly when one's friend pauses for a moment in the doorway as if about to return. One thinks, if weariness cannot be kept at bay in the society of those we love, where can we be safe from the cold and subtle blight? As soon as we are conscious of it, it seems to become part of us, and we shrink from the popular idea of the hereafter, assured of finding our spectre even in the courts of heaven.

Godfrey Hammond expressed the fear of too much companionship in speech, Percival Thorne in action. He was given to lonely walks if the weather were fine, to shutting himself in his own room with a book if it were wet. He would dream for hours, for I will frankly confess that when he was shut up with a book, his book, as often as not, was in that condition too.

His grandfather had complained more than once, "You don't often come to Brackenhill, Percival, except to solve the problem of how little you can see of us in a given time." He did not suspect it, but much of the strong attraction which drew him to his grandson lay in that very fact. The latter confronted him in grave independence, just touched with the courteous deference due from youth to age, but nothing more. Mr. Thorne would have thanked heaven had the boy been a bit of a spendthrift, but Percival was too wary for that. He did not refuse his grandfather's gifts, but he never seemed in want of them. They might help him to pleasant superfluities, but his attitude said plainly enough, "I have sufficient for my needs." He was not to be bought—the very aimlessness of his life secured him from that. You cannot earn a man's gratitude by helping him onward in his course when he is drifting contentedly round and round. He was not to be bullied, being conscious of his impregnable position. He was not to be flattered in any ordinary way. It was so evident to him that the life he had chosen must appear an unwise choice to the majority of his fellow-men, that he accepted any assurance to the contrary as the verdict of a small minority. Nor was he conscious of any especial power or originality, so that he could be pleased by being told that he had broken conventional trammels, and was a great soul. Mr. Thorne did not know how to conquer him, and could not have enough of him.

It is needful to note how the day after the Agricultural Show was spent at Brackenhill.

Godfrey Hammond left by an early train. Mrs. Middleton came down to see about his breakfast with a splitting headache. The poor old lady's suffering was evident, and Sissy's suggestion that it was due to their having walked about so much in the broiling sun the day before was unanimously accepted. Mrs. Middleton countenanced the theory, though she privately attributed it to a sleepless night which had followed a conversation with Hammond about Horace.

Percival vanished immediately after breakfast. As soon as he had ascertained that there were no especial plans for the day, he slipped quietly away with his hands in his pockets, strolled through the park, whistling dreamily as he went, and passing out into the road, crossed it, and made straight for the river. He lay on the grass for half an hour or so, studying the growth of willows, and the habits of dragon-flies, and then sauntered along the bank. Had he gone to the left it would have led him past Langley Wood to Fordborough. He went to the right.

It was a gentle little river which had plenty of time to spare, and

amused itself with wandering here and there, tracing a bright maze of curves and unexpected turns. At times it would linger in shady pools, where, half asleep, it seemed to hesitate whether it cared to go on to the county town at all that day. But Percival defied it to have more leisure than he had, and followed the silvery clue till all at once he found himself face to face with an artist who sat by the riverside, sketching.

The young man looked up with a half-smile as Percival came suddenly upon him from behind a clump of alders. A remark of some kind, were it but concerning the weather, was inevitable. It was made, and was followed by others. Young Thorne looked, admired, and questioned, and they drifted into an aimless talk, about the art which the painter loved. Even to an outsider, such as Percival, it was full of colour and grace, and a charm half understood; vaguely suggestive of a world of beauty—not far off and inaccessible, but underlying the common everyday world of which we are at times a little weary. It was as if one should tell us of virtue new and strange in the often turned earth of our garden-plot. Percival was rather apt to analyse his pains and pleasures, but his ideal was enjoyment which should defy analysis, and he found something of it that morning in the summer weather and his new friend's talk.

It was past noon. The young artist looked at his watch, and ascertained the fact. "Do you live near here?" he asked.

Percival shook his head. "I live anywhere. I am a wanderer on the face of the earth. But my grandfather lives in that grey house over yonder, and I am free to come and go as I choose. I am staying there now."

"Brackenhill, do you mean? That fine old house on the side of the hill? I am lodging at the farm down there, and the farmer——"

"John Collins," said Percival.

"Entertains me every night with stories of its magnificence. Since we have smoked our pipes together, I have learnt that Brackenhill is the eighth wonder of the world."

"Not quite," said Thorne. "But it is a good old manor-house, and, thank heaven, my ancestors for a good many generations wasted their money and had none to spare for restoring and beautifying it. I don't mean my grandfather—he wouldn't hurt it. It's a quaint old place. Come some afternoon and look at it. He shall show you his pictures."

"Thanks," the other said, but he hesitated and looked at his unfinished work. "I should like, but I don't quite know. The fact is, when I have done for to-day, I'm to have old Collins' gig and drive into Fordborough, to see if there are any letters for me. I am not sure I shall not have to leave the first thing to-morrow."

"And I have made you waste your time this morning."

"Don't mention it," said the young artist, with the brightest smile. "I'm not much given to bemoaning past troubles, and I shall be in a very bad way indeed before I begin to find fault with past pleasures. I may

not find my letter after all, and in that case I should like very much to look you up. To-morrow?"

"Pray do." The tone was unmistakably cordial.

"Your grandfather's name is Thorne, isn't it? Shall I ask for young Mr. Thorne?"

"Percival Thorne," was the quick correction. "I have a cousin."

They shook hands, but as Thorne turned away the other called after him. "I say—is there any name to that little wood—out there, looking like a dark cloud on the green?"

"Yes—Langley Wood." Percival nodded a second farewell, and went on his way, pondering. And this was the subject of his thoughts.

"Then, my brother, I have to go through Langley Wood to-morrow evening, and I am afraid to go alone."

Of course he had not forgotten his promise to Addie, but having made his arrangements and worked it all out in his own mind, he had dismissed it from his thoughts. Now, however, it rose up before him as a slightly disagreeable puzzle.

What on earth did Addie want towards nine at night in Langley Wood? The day before, in haste to answer her request, and anxiety not to betray her, he had not considered whether the service he had promised to render were pleasant to him or not. In very truth he was willing to serve Addie, and he had professed his willingness the more eagerly that he had expected a harder task. She asked so slight a thing that only eager readiness could give the service any grace at all.

But when he came to consider it, he half wished that his task had been harder if it might have been different. He liked Addie, he was ready to serve her, but he foresaw possible annoyances to them both from her hasty request. He had no confidence in her prudence.

"Some silly freak of hers," he thought, while he walked along, catching at the tops of the tall flowering weeds as he went. "Some silly girlish freak. Why didn't she ask Horace? Wouldn't run any risk of getting him into trouble, I suppose."

Did Horace know? he wondered. "I'm not going to be made use of by him and her, they needn't think it!" vowed Percival in sudden anger. But next moment he smiled at his own folly. "When I have given my word, and must go if fifty Horaces had planned it! I had better save my resolutions for next time." He did not think, however, that Horace *did* know. "Which makes it all the worse," he reflected. "A charming complication it will be if I get into trouble with him about Addie. Suppose some one sees us! Suppose Mrs. Blake is down upon me, questioning, and I, pledged to secrecy, haven't a word to say for myself! Suppose Lottie . . . Oh, I say, a delightful arrangement this is, and no mistake!"

He could only hope that no one would see them, and that Addie's mystery would prove a harmless one.

He got in just as they were sitting down to luncheon. Horace and

Sissy had spent the morning in archery and idleness, Mrs. Middleton in nursing her headache. Mr. Thorne was not there.

"Been enjoying a little solitude?" Horace inquired.

"Not much of that," was the answer. "A good deal of talk instead."

"What, did you find a friend out in the fields?"

"Yes," said Percival, "a young artist." As he spoke he remembered that he was ignorant of his new friend's name. At least he knew it was "Alf," owing to some story the painter had told. "I heard my brother calling 'Alf! Alf!' so I, &c." Alf—probably therefore Alfred—surname unknown.

They were half-way through their meal when Mr. Thorne came noiselessly in and took his accustomed place. He was very silent, and had a curiously intent expression. Horace, who was telling Sissy some trifling story about himself (Horace's little stories generally were about himself,) finished it lamely in a lowered voice. Mr. Thorne smiled.

There was a silence. Percival went steadily on with his luncheon, but Horace pushed away his plate and sipped his sherry. The birds were twittering outside in the sunshine, but there was no other sound. It was like a breathless little pause of expectation.

At last Mr. Thorne spoke, in such sweetly courteous tones that they all knew he meant mischief. "Are you particularly engaged this afternoon?" he inquired of Horace.

"Not at all engaged," said the young man. His heart gave a great throb.

"Then perhaps you could give me a few minutes in the library?"

"I shall be most"—Horace began. But he checked himself, and said, "Certainly. When shall I come?"

"As soon as you have finished your luncheon, if that will suit you?"

"I have finished." He drank off his wine, and, without looking at the others, walked defiantly to the door, stood aside for his grandfather to pass, and followed him out.

Mrs. Middleton and Sissy exchanged glances. "Oh, my dear!" the old lady exclaimed. "Oh, I am so frightened! I am afraid poor Horace is in trouble. Godfrey Hammond was saying only last night——"

She paused suddenly, looking at Percival. He sat with his back to the window, and the dark face was very dark in the shadow. It was just as well perhaps, for he was thinking "Told you so!" a train of thought which seldom produces an agreeable expression.

"What did Godfrey Hammond say?" Sissy asked. But nothing was to be got out of Aunt Middleton, so they adjourned to the drawing-room to wait for Horace's return. Percival read the paper, Mrs. Middleton lay on the sofa, Sissy fiddled to and fro, now taking up a book, now her work, then at the piano playing idly with one hand, or singing snatches of her favourite songs. There was a mirror in which looking sideways she could see herself reflected as she played, and Percival as he read—as much of him at least as was not swallowed up in the *Times*.

There is something ghostly about a little picture like this reflected in a glass. It is so silent and yet so real; the people stir, look up, their lips move, they have every sign of life, but there is no sound. There are noises in the room behind you, but the people in the mirror make none. The *Times* may be rustling and crackling elsewhere, but Percival's ghost turns a ghostly paper whence no sound proceeds. Sissy is playing a little tinkling treble tune, but at the piano yonder, slim white fingers are silently wandering over the ivory keys, and the girl's eyes look strangely out from the polished surface.

Sissy gazed and mused. Perhaps some day Percival will reign at Brackenhill. And who will sit at that piano where the ghost-girl sits now, and what soundless melodies will be played in that silent room?

Sissy's left hand steals down to the bass, striking solemn chords. "If one could but look into the glass," she thinks, "and see the future there, as people do in stories. What eyes would look out at me instead of mine? Ah, well! If I could but see Percival there I would try to be content, even if the girl turned away her face. I *would* be content. I would! I would!"

She turns resolutely away from the mirror and begins that old Royalist song, in which yearning for the vanished past, and mourning for the dreary present, cannot triumph over the hope of far-off brightness, "When the King enjoys his own again." To Mrs. Middleton, to Percival a mere song, to Sissy a solemn renunciation of all but the one hope. Let her king enjoy his own, and the rest be as fate wills.

The last note dies away. Moved by a sudden impulse she lifts her eyes to the ghost Percival. He has lowered his paper a little, and is looking at her with a wondering smile. A voice behind her exclaims, "Why, Sissy!" She darts across the room to the speaker, and pushes the *Times* away altogether. "Percival," she says in a low breathless voice, "does Miss Lisle play?"

"Miss Lisle!" He is surprised. "Oh, yes, she plays. But not as well as her brother, I believe."

"And does she sing?"

"Yes. I heard her once. But no better than you sang just now. What has come to you, Sissy? You have found the one thing that was wanting."

"What was that?"

"Earnestness—depth. You sang it as if your soul and the soul of the song were one. Now I can tell you that I fancied you only skimmed over the surface of things—like a bird over the sea. I can tell you now since I was wrong."

Her cheeks are glowing. "And Miss Lisle?" she says.

"What, now, about Miss Lisle?" He is amused and perplexed at Sissy's persistence.

"She is one of your heroic women," and Miss Langton nods her pretty head. "Oh, I know! Jael, and *Judith*, and Charlotte Corday."

"I don't think I said anything about Judith; surely *you* suggested her. And to tell you the truth, Sissy, I looked in the Apocrypha, and I thought I liked her the least of the trio. It wasn't a swift impulse like Jael's, who suddenly saw the tyrant given into her hands; and it wanted the grace of Charlotte Corday's utter self-sacrifice and quick death. Judith had great honour, and lived to be over a hundred, didn't she? I wonder if she often talked about Holofernes when she was eighty or ninety, and about her triumph—how she was crowned with a garland, and led the dance? She ran an awful risk, no doubt, but she was in awful peril—it was glory or death. Charlotte Corday had no chance of a triumph; she must have known that success, as well as failure, meant the death-cart and the guillotine. Judith seems to have played her part fairly well to the end, I allow; but don't you think the praises and the after life spoil it rather?"

Sissy, passing lightly over Percival's views about Charlotte Corday and the widow of a hundred-and-five who was mourned by all Israel, pounced on a more interesting avowal. "So you looked Judith out and studied her? Oh, Percival!"

"My dear Sissy, shall I tell you how many times I have seen Miss Lisle?" He was answering her arch glance rather than her spoken question. "How few times, I should say. Twice!"

"I've made up *my* mind about people when I've only seen them once," said Sissy, apparently addressing the carpet.

"Very likely—some people have that power," said Percival. "Besides, seeing them once may mean that you had a good long interview under favourable circumstances. Now," with a smile, "shall I tell you all that Miss Lisle and I said to each other in our two meetings?" He paused, encountering Sissy's eyes, brilliantly and wickedly full of meaning.

"What! do you remember every word? Oh, Percival!"

"Hush!" said Mrs. Middleton, lifting her head from the cushion; "listen! isn't that Horace?"

"I think so," and Percival stooped for the *Times*, which had fallen on the floor. Sissy stood, with her hand on his chair, making no attempt to conceal her anxiety. The old lady noted her parted lips and eager eyes: "Ah! she does care for Horace. I knew it, I knew it," she thought.

He came in, looking white and angry; his mouth was sternly set, and there was a fierce spark in his grey eyes. Mrs. Middleton beckoned him to her sofa, and would have drawn the proud head down to her with a tender whisper of "Tell me, my dear." But the young fellow straightened himself, and faced them all as he stood by her side. She clasped and fondled his passive hand. "What is the matter, Horace?" she said at last.

"As it happens, there is nothing much the matter," he replied.

"You look as if a good deal might be the matter," said Sissy.

He made no answer for the moment. Then he looked at her with a curious sort of smile: "Sissy, when we were little—when you were very little indeed—do you remember old Rover?"

"That curly dog? oh, yes!"

"I used to have him in a string sometimes, and take him out; it was great fun," said Horace pensively. "I liked to feel him all alive, scampering and tugging at the end of the string. It was best of all, I think, to give him an unexpected jerk just when he was going to sniff at something, and take him pretty well off his legs—he was so astonished and disappointed. But it was very grand, too, if he would but make up his mind he wanted to go one way, to pull at him and *make* him go just the opposite. He was obstinate, was old Rover; but that was the fun of it. I was obstinate, too, and the stronger. How long has he been dead?"

"I'm sure I don't know; twelve or thirteen years. Why?"

"Is it as long as that? Well, I daresay it is. It has occurred to me to-day for the first time that perhaps it was rather hard on Rover now and then. Aunt Harriet, why did you let me have the poor old fellow and ill-use him?"

"My dear boy! what *do* you mean? I don't think you were ever cruel—not really cruel, you know. Children always will be heedless, but I think Rover was fond of you."

"I doubt it," said Horace.

"But what do you mean?" The old lady was fairly perplexed. "What makes you think of having poor old Rover in a string, to-day? I don't understand."

"Which things are an allegory." Horace looked more kindly down at the suffering face, and attempted to smile. "It was very nice then, but to-day I'm the dog!"

"String pulled tight?" said Percival.

"Jerked!" He disengaged his hand. "I think I'll go and have a cigar in the park." Percival was going to rise, but Horace, as he passed, pressed his fingers on his shoulder, "No, old fellow! not to-day—many thanks. You lecture me, you know, and generally I don't care a rap, so you are quite welcome. But to-day I'm a little sore, rubbed up the wrong way; I might take it seriously. Another time."

And he departed, leaving his lecturer to reflect on this brilliant result of all his outpourings of wisdom.

CHAPTER X.

IN LANGLEY WOOD.

AT Brackenhill they invariably dined at six o'clock, nor was the meal a lengthy one. Mr. Thorne drank little wine, and Horace was generally only too happy to escape to the drawing-room at the earliest opportunity.

Percival could very well dine at home, and yet be true to his rendezvous in Langley Wood.

As the time drew near he became thoughtful, and, to tell the truth, a little out of temper. He liked his dinner, and Addie Blake interfered with his quiet enjoyment of it. He would have chosen to lie on the sofa in the cool, quaint, rose-scented drawing-room, and get Sissy to sing to him. Instead of which, he must tramp three miles along a dusty white road that July evening to meet a girl he didn't particularly want to see, and to hear a secret which he didn't much want to know, and which he distinctly didn't want to be bound to keep. Decidedly a bore!

It was only twenty minutes past seven when they joined the ladies. Sissy represented the latter force, Aunt Middleton having gone to lie down in the hope of being better later in the evening. Mr. Thorne fidgeted about the room for a minute, and then went off to the library, whereupon Horace stretched himself with a sigh of relief. "Come out, Sissy, and have a turn in the garden."

"But, Percival," she hesitated, "what are you going to do?"

"Don't think about me, I must go out for a little while." He left them on the terrace, and started on his mysterious errand. As he left himself out into the road, by a little side gate of which he had pocketed the key, it was five-and-twenty minutes to eight. He had abundance of time. It was not three miles to the white gate into Langley Wood, a little more than three miles to the milestone beyond which he was on no account to go, and he had almost an hour to do it in. Nevertheless, he started on his walk like a man in haste.

The great Fordborough Agricultural Show lasted two days, and on the second the price of admission was considerably reduced. It had occurred to Percival that the roads in every direction would probably be crowded with people making their way home—people who would have had more beer than was good for them. Addie would never think of such a possibility. It was true that the road from Fordborough which led past Brackenhill would be quieter than any other, but young Thorne was seriously uneasy as he strode along. It was also true that he met hardly any one as he went, but even that failed to reassure him. "A little too early for them to have come so far, I suppose," was his comment to himself; "at any rate, she shall not wait for me."

He passed the white gate, having encountered only a few stragglers, but before he reached the milestone he saw Addie Blake coming along the road to meet him.

She was flushed, eager, excited, and looked even handsomer than usual. Percival would never fall in love with Addie. That was very certain; but the certainty did not prevent a quick thrill of admiration which tingled through his blood, as she advanced in her ripe dark beauty to meet him. By it, as by a charm, the service which had been almost a weariness was transmuted to a happy privilege, and the half-reluctant squire became willing and devoted.

"You are more than punctual," was his greeting.

She smiled as she held out her hand. "I may say the same of you."

"I was anxious," he confessed. "The roads are not likely to be very quiet to-day. And after sunset——"

"Yes," said Addie. "No doubt it seems strange to you that I should choose this day and this time——"

"I hardly know what I should have done if I had seen nothing of you when I reached the milestone," he went on, interrupting her. His curiosity was awakened now that he was so close to Addie's little mystery, but he was anxious that she should not feel bound to tell him anything she would rather keep to herself, very anxious that she should understand that he would not pry into her secrets.

"If you had gone much further you would have missed me," she said.

"Which way did you come?"

"I did not come straight from home. Do you see that little red house? I am drinking tea there, and spending a quiet evening."

"How very pleasant!" said Percival. "And who has the privilege of entertaining you?"

"Mrs. Wardlaw. She is the widow of an officer—quite young. She is a friend of mine; she lives with an invalid aunt, an old Mrs. Watson."

"And what does Mrs. Wardlaw think of your taking a little stroll by yourself in the evening?"

"Mrs. Wardlaw asked me there on purpose. Yesterday I saw her at the show, and gave her a little note as we shook hands. This morning came an invitation to me to go and drink tea there. I told mamma and Lottie I should go—papa is out—so one of the servants walked there with me at half-past six, and will call for me again at ten or a little after."

"Very ingeniously managed," said Percival. "And the invalid aunt?"

"Went up to her room and left Mary and me to our devices," smiled Addie. "A delightful old lady—ah, here is the wood."

"We shall probably have this part of our walk to ourselves," Percival remarked, as he swung the gate open. "People going home from the show are not likely to stop to take a turn in Langley Wood."

The sound of a rattling cart, and shouts of discordant laughter, mixed with what was intended for a song, came along the road they had just quitted. Addie took a few hurried steps along the path, which curved enough to hide her from observation in a moment. Safe behind a screen of leaves, she paused. "What horrible people! Is that a sample of what I may expect as I go back?"

"I fear so," said Percival. "I shall see you safe to Mrs. Wardlaw's door."

"You shall see me safe, if you have good eyes," she answered. "But you will not go to the door with me."

"Ah?" he said. "Mrs. Wardlaw is only half trusted?"

Addie smiled. "What people don't know, they can't let out, can they?"

"Pray understand that you are quite at liberty to apply that very wise—mark me, that very wise—discovery of yours to my case," said Thorne, looking straight at her. "You talked about good eyes just now. Mine are good or bad as it suits me."

At any rate they were earnest as they met hers.

"Don't shut them on my account," said Addie. "No, Percival; you are not like Mrs. Wardlaw. I mean to tell you all about it."

But for a moment she did not speak. They were fairly in the wood; the trees were arching high above their heads; their steps were noiseless on the turf below; outside were warmth and daylight still, but here the shadows and the coolness of the night. A leathern-winged bat flitted across their path through the gathering dusk. "They always look like ghosts," said Addie. "Doesn't it seem, Percival, as if the night had come upon us unawares?"

As she spoke they reached a little open space. The path forked right and left. "Which way?" said Thorne.

"I don't know, I'm sure. There's a cottage on the further side of the wood, towards the river——"

"Is that your destination? To the right, then." And to the right they went.

"When you promised to help me," Addie began, "do you remember what you said? I was to consider you as——" She paused, fixing her questioning eyes on him.

"As a brother. What then? Have I failed in my duty already?"

She shook her head, smiling. "Percival, what do you think that means to me?"

"Ah, that's a difficult question. Of course we, who have no brothers, can only imagine, we cannot know. But I have sometimes fancied that the idea we attach to the word brother is higher because no commonplace reality has ever stepped in to spoil it. For it is an evident fact that some people have brothers who are prosaic, and even disagreeable, while all the noble brothers of history and romance are ours. We may take Lord Tresham for our ideal (you remember Tresham in *A Blot in the Scutcheon*?) and declare with him—

I think, am sure, a brother's love exceeds
All the world's love in its unworldliness."

"Stop!" said Addie. "You are going into the question much too enthusiastically, and much too poetically. I don't know anything about your Tresham. And you mustn't class me with yourself, 'we who have no brothers'—I have one, Percival!"

"A brother? You have one? Why, I always fancied——"

"Well—a half-brother." Addie made this concession to strict truth

with something of reluctance in her tone, as if she did not like to own that her brother could possibly have been any nearer than he was. "It is my brother I am going to meet to-night."

Percival, fluent on the subject of brothers in general, was so astonished at the idea of this particular brother or half-brother, that he said "Oh!"

"Papa married twice," Addie explained; "the first time when he was very young. I don't think his first wife was *quite* a lady," she said, lowering her voice as if the beeches might be given to gossiping.

Percival would not have been happy as a dweller in the Palace of Truth. He thought "Then Mr. Blake's two wives were alike in *one* respect."

"And though Oliver was a dear boy," she went on, "he hasn't been very steady. He has had a good deal of money at one time or another, and wasted it, and he and mamma don't get on at all."

"Ah—I daresay not."

"Naturally she thinks more about Lottie and me; and Oliver has been very tiresome. He was to be in the business with papa, but he didn't do anything, and he got terribly into debt, and then he ran away and enlisted. Papa bought him off, and found him something else to do; but mamma was dreadfully vexed—she said it was a disgrace to the family."

"Did he do better after that?"

"Not much," Addie owned. "In fact, I think he has spent most of his time since then in running away and enlisting. I really believe he has been in a dozen regiments. We were always having to write to him, 'Private Oliver Blake, Number so and so, C company, such a regiment.' It didn't look well at all."

(Addie, as she spoke, remembered how her mother used to sneer, "No doubt some day you'll meet your *brother* in a red jacket, with a little cane, his cap very much on one side, and a tail of nursemaids wheeling their perambulators after him." Such remarks had been painful to Addie, but even then she had felt that Mrs. Blake had cause to complain.)

"He was always bought off, I suppose?" said Percival.

"Once papa declared he wouldn't. Oliver went on very quietly for a little while, and was to be a corporal. Then he wrote and said he was going to desert that day week, and he was afraid it might be very awkward for him afterwards, especially if he ever enlisted again, but he would take his chance sooner than stop. Papa knew he would do it, so he had to buy him off again."

"But is this going on for ever?"

"No; for the last three years Oliver has been in dreadful disgrace, I don't exactly know why, and we were not allowed to mention his name at home. But I don't care," said Addie impetuously; "if he were ever so foolish, and if he had enlisted in every regiment under the sun—he's my brother!"

"And Lottie? Does she stand by him as valiantly?"

"Oliver is nothing to Lottie; he never was. He is nine years older than she is, and when she would really begin to remember him he and mamma were always quarrelling. Besides, he always petted me—not Lottie. And now she despises him because he doesn't stick to anything and get on. No—poor old Noll is *my* brother, only mine. No one else cares for him—except papa."

"Mr. Blake hasn't given him up then?"

"Oh, he is angry with Oliver when they are apart, but he always forgives him when they meet. He was really angry this last time, but Oliver wrote to him, and they made it up. Only my poor old Noll is to be sent over the sea to Canada with a man papa knows something of."

"And this is good-bye? But surely, they can't mind your meeting him before he goes?"

"They do," said Addie. "Papa and mamma saw him in London ten days ago, and he was only forgiven on condition that he went away quietly, and said nothing to any one. As if he wasn't sure to tell me! Mamma knows how it has been before; she thinks if papa or I saw him alone he might get round us, and then he wouldn't go. If he is steady, and does well there, he is to come and see us all in two years."

"That isn't very long, is it?" said Percival, cheerfully. It was evident to him that this black sheep would be much better away.

"Long! Oh, no! Only, you see, Oliver *won't* do well, unless there's something very converting in Canadian air. So I may as well say good-bye to him; mayn't I? Mind, Percival, you are not to think he's wicked. He won't do anything dreadful. He'll spend all the money he can get, and then drift away somewhere."

"A sort of Prodigal Son," Thorne suggested.

"Yes. You won't understand him—how should you? You are always wise and well-behaved, and a credit to everyone, more like the son who stayed at home."

"Not an attractive character," was his reply. And he remembered Horace a few hours before. "Not to-day, old fellow, you lecture me, you know." He was startled. "Good heavens!" he thought. "Am I a prig?"

Addie laughed. "Well, I am trusting to you to understand *me* at any rate. Just like Oliver," she went on, "he came once, years ago, to stay with old Miss Hayward, who left us the house, and he knew something then of the man at this cottage, so he tells me to meet him there, without ever thinking how I should get to the place by myself at nine at night—Hush! what's that? Oh, Noll! Noll!"

A man's voice was heard at a little distance singing, and she darted forward, her eyes alight with joy. Percival followed, slackening his pace, and listening to Mr. Oliver Blake's rendering of "Champagne Charlie is my name." It ceased abruptly. He doubted what to do, took a step or two mechanically, and came suddenly out on the open

space at the further side of the wood, where was the cottage in question. Addie had run forward and forgotten him. He strolled with elaborate unconsciousness to some palings near by, turning his back on Addie and her brother, rested his folded arms there, and gazed at the placid landscape. Below ran the little stream, by which he had loitered in the morning, hurrying now in a straighter course, like an idle messenger who finds that time has fled much faster than he thought. The river mist hung white above the level meadows, and it seemed to Percival as if Nature, falling asleep, had glided into a pallid and melancholy dream. The last gleams of day were blending with a misty flood of moonlight, beneath which the world lay dwarfed and dark. On the horizon a little black windmill, with motionless sails, stood high against the sky, looking like a toy, as if a child had set it there and gone to bed.

To Percival, as he stood, came the sound, though not the words, of a rapid flow of talk, broken by a short, often-recurring laugh. But at last there was a pause, and the two came towards him. He turned to meet them, and saw in the moonlight that Oliver Blake was big and broad-shouldered, with black hair, curling thickly under a jaunty cap, and bright restless eyes. Addie had her arm drawn fondly through her brother's.

“Oliver,” she said, “this is Percival; you have heard me speak of him.”

Oliver bent his head in a blunt, constrained way, and looked doubtfully at the other. Percival, who was going to extend his hand, withheld it, and made a stately little bow in return.

“That's very magnificent,” said Addie to him. “Why, Noll,” she laughed, “you needn't be so cautious. Percival knows. He is to be trusted.”

“Ah?” said Oliver. “What does that feel like, now?”

“What does what feel like?” said Thorne, as they shook hands. “Being trusted, do you mean?”

“Ay. Being trusted, or being to be trusted. I don't know either sensation myself.”

“Not likely, dear boy,” said Addie, “with your way of going on. And yet Mr. Osborne must have trusted you, or how did you get the money and get away? You weren't to have any till you sailed, were you?”

“Would you like to know?” said Oliver, his dark eyes twinkling. “I tried to persuade him—no good. Then I told him a—don't be horrified—it was a very fine specimen of fiction——”

“Oliver!”

“Which is no doubt set down to the governor's account.”

“Did he believe you?”

“Well, he didn't know what to do. I don't think he would have, only, if it wasn't true, it was so stupendous, you see. He hesitated, and that made him relax his watchfulness a little. So I gave him the slip!

and pawned part of my outfit, which we bought together the day before."

"You bad boy!"

"I left him a bit of a note. I told him that if he held his tongue, I would surely be there again to-morrow, we'd get the things, and no one would be any the wiser. But if he made a row, he might whistle for me, and catch me if he could."

"And you don't know the effect of that, I suppose?" said Percival.

"Well, no. I read it over when I'd done, to try and judge it impartially. And I made up my mind—considering the character he'd had of me—that if I were Osborne I should say that Blake meant to back out of his bargain, with all he could lay his hands on, and was trying to secure two days' start. What do you think I did, Addie?"

"Something silly, I've no doubt."

"Well," he said, looking at her with an admiring gaze, which partly explained to Percival the secret of her fondness for her brother. "I thought it was rather clever. I just popped in the letter I had from you and your photograph, and, if that doesn't convince him, I give him up!"

"Oh, Noll! How *could* you? What is he like?"

Blake burst out laughing. "Listen to her! A man has got her photograph—he instantly becomes an interesting object. Oh! he isn't a bad-looking fellow, Addie. I daresay he's glaring at you now through his spectacles."

"Spectacles! Oliver, you've no business to go giving my photograph to all sorts of people. And I hate him too, because if it hadn't been for him, perhaps you wouldn't have been going away to Canada."

"What then?" said he philosophically. "Your mother would have had a dear friend on the point of starting for the Cannibal Islands."

Percival began to feel a little anxious about time, and to wonder when the real leave-taking was to commence. He looked at his watch after the manner of a stage aside, and Addie took the hint.

Five minutes later she came towards him with bent head and averted eyes. "I'm ready, Percival." But they had not gone a dozen steps when she sobbed, "Oh, my poor Noll!" and rushed back. As young Thorne looked after her, he heard the quick spurt of a match. Oliver had turned on his heel already, and was lighting his cigar. "Heartless brute," said Percival.

The verdict was unjust. Oliver had taken infinite pains to secure this glimpse of his sister; but since it was over, it *was* over. He loved her, and she knew it, but he was not the man to stand sentimentally staring at Addie's back as she disappeared into the shadows of Langley Wood. Now Percival could not have failed in such a matter, though he might have thought no more about it than did Oliver Blake.

When he and Addie were once more on their way, he occupied himself solely with the slight difficulties of her path, but before they had

gone half-way she was making an effort to talk in her usual style, and succeeding fairly well. They were just at the place where the paths branched off, and Percival was stooping to disentangle her dress, which was caught on a bramble. As he raised himself he heard an approaching step, and quick as thought he laid his hand on Addie's arm. A couple of yards further and they would be in the one path, and must meet the new comer. Standing where they were, it was an even chance; he might pass them or might go the other way. Addie stood breathless, and Percival's heart gave a quick throb, more for Addie's sake than his own. But, after all, it might be no one who knew them, and in that dim light—

The moon glided with startling swiftiness from behind a fleecy cloud, and shone on their white faces. The man, passing close by, started and stepped back, recovered himself with a muttered ejaculation, and said,

"Fine evening, Mr. Thorne," as he passed.

"Very," Percival replied. "Good night."

The other returned a "Good night, sir," and disappeared in the twilight.

"He knew you," said Addie. She looked frightened. Her parting from Oliver had unnerved her; difficulties which she had made light of in the happiness of anticipation seemed more formidable now. Standing there in the white moonlight and dim shadows of the wood, she suddenly realised the strange and doubtful aspect her expedition with Percival Thorne must wear to ordinary eyes. Nor was her companion likely to reassure her. An air of sombre resolution was more in his line than the light-hearted confidence which would have treated the whole affair as a trifle. He was, as Addie herself had called him, "well-behaved." She would have trusted him to the death, only just at that moment a little touch of happy recklessness would have been a greater comfort to her than his anxious loyalty. But Percival could never be reckless; deliberately indifferent he might be, but reckless—never.

"He knew you," said Addie, as they resumed their walk.

"Yes; but he would not know you. It does not signify much," was Percival's reply.

"But he does know me."

"Impossible! Oh, you mean he knows your name."

She nodded. "He often passes our house. Always on Thursday when a lot of people go by—isn't it a market somewhere?"

"Brookley market. Oh, yes; he would go there, no doubt."

"Once or twice I have been walking on the road and he has driven past; I know his face quite well, and I'm sure—I should think—he knows mine."

"Very likely he may not have recognised you in this half-light," said Percival.

She shivered. "He did. I felt him look right through me."

"Well, suppose he did. After all, there is no reason why we

should not take a walk together on a summer evening if we like—is there?"

"Where is he going?" said Addie. "To the cottage?"

"Oh dear, no! There are endless paths in the wood. He will turn off still more to the right; he cuts off a corner so going from Fordborough to his home."

"Who and what is he?" was Miss Blake's next question, as they emerged into the road.

"Silas Fielding. He farms a little bit of old Garnett's land, and I rather think he rents an outlying field or two of my grandfather's. A horsey sort of fellow. I am not particularly fond of Mr. Silas Fielding," said Percival, and they walked a little way in silence.

"You mustn't come any further," said Addie. "Percival, I don't know how to thank you."

"Don't do it, then. I see no occasion."

"But I see occasion—very great occasion."

"Then we will consider it done," said Percival.

Mrs. Wardlaw's house was very near. "I'm not late, am I?" said Addie.

He looked at his watch. "A little more than a quarter to ten; very good time. I shall watch you along this last little bit of road, and see you let in. Good night."

"Good night." She went quickly away, and he waited as he had promised. She looked back at him once, and saw him stand, dark and motionless, like a bronze statue. She reached the garden gate, and just as a farmer's gig, with one man in it, dashed past, she ran up the little flight of steps, knocked, and was instantly admitted, as if Mrs. Wardlaw stood inside with her hand on the latch. Percival, seeing this, turned to begin his homeward walk, but as the gig rattled up to him its speed was slackened.

"Mr. Thorne! Isn't it Mr. Percival Thorne?"

It was the young artist driving back to the farm in Mr. Collins' old gig, and inducing Mr. Collins' old horse to go at a headlong pace. "I thought it was you standing in the moonlight," he said. "Can't I give you a lift?"

Percival accepted, and they started off, if possible, more vehemently than before.

"I must look sharp," explained the young man, whose name was Alf, "or I shall be late at the farm."

"You have only just come from Fordborough?" said Percival.

"No. I put up the horse and stayed later than I meant. I'd no idea that dull little hole of a town could wake up so. Why, it is flapping with flags from one end to the other. I never saw such a lot of tramps and drunken men in my life."

"Charming idea you have of waking up."

"And brass bands—and gipsies," the other went on. "When I

wanted to come away the ostler was drunk, and couldn't find the horse, and I couldn't find the gig—that is, I could find a score all exactly like this one, but as to knowing which of all the gigs in the yard belonged to old Collins—I couldn't have told to save my life."

"You got it at last, I suppose?" said Thorne.

The other was cautious. "Well, I got *this*. The man put the horse in somehow, and then, he was so far gone, he began to talk to himself and undo the harness again. I believe he thought he'd put in a pair by mistake, and was trying to take one out. However, I stopped that, and got away after a fashion."

"They are early birds at the farm, no doubt."

"Early? Rather! At half-past nine old Collins creaks upstairs, and Mrs. Collins goes into the kitchen, and rakes out the cinders for fear of fire. I was out late one night last week, and she couldn't wake the old man up to let me in. It was twenty minutes to eleven!"

"Did she come herself?" said Percival. "I know Mrs. Collins by daylight; but I can't imagine Mrs. Collins aroused from her first sleep."

"'Where ignorance is bliss.' The dear old lady kept me on the door-step for ten minutes or so, while she was trying to make up her mind whether she would keep her nightcap on or whether she would take it off and put on the light brown front she ordinarily wears. At last she made up her mind to retain the nightcap, and add the front by way of a finish. But I have it on her own authority that she was flurried, and all of a shake, so she didn't carry out her idea skilfully. The cap was half off, and the front was only half on. I saw her forehead getting lower and lower as she spoke to me."

"Could she ever forgive you for seeing her so?"

"Oh, yes. I'm rather a favourite I think. She beamed on me just the same the next morning."

"She did?" said Thorne. "A wonderful woman!"

"I think I shall ask her for a lock of her chestnut hair to-morrow, before I go, to show that my faith in it is—well, as implicit as ever. Ah! by the way, I got my letter. I thought most likely I should. I leave the first thing in the morning."

"Sorry to hear it," said Percival. But it occurred to him that the artist's departure would prevent any talk the next day of the circumstances of their meeting that evening. He jumped down, with hasty thanks to his new friend when they came to the little gate. "You'll be in a ditch if you don't look out!" he called after him.

"All right!" was shouted back, and old Collins' gig vanished into the outer darkness, with the young artist, whom Percival Thorne has never chanced to meet again to this day.

He let himself in with his key, and hurried up to the house. The door which opened on the terrace was unfastened as usual. The lights were burning in the drawing-room, but no one was there, and the bright

vacant room had a strange ghostly aspect, a little island of mellow radiance in the vast silence and darkness of the night. He felt like one in a dream, and stood idly thinking of the young painter rattling in old Collins' gig to Willow Farm; of Silas Fielding striding across the meadows, with thoughts intent on his bargains; of Oliver Blake turning in with a yawn when his cigar was done; of Addie forcing back her unshed tears, and hiding deep in her heart the well-spring of her tenderness for her poor Noll. He had not done justice to Addie Blake. Something of the feeling of underlying beauty, unsought or ignored, which he gained from his artist friend's talk in the morning, had come to him in a slightly altered form with Addie that evening. With Alf, it was the every-day world which revealed new beauty; with Addie it was shown in what Percival had taken for a prosaic and commonplace character. He found himself wondering whether he might not have failed to do justice to others besides Addie. He had looked far away for his ideal, and had found a fair faint dream, when it might be that the reality was close at hand. Since the wayside had blossomed with unexpected loveliness, what grace, and charm, and hidden treasure might be his prize, who should win his way into the fenced garden of Sissy's sweet soul!

He started from his reverie, and was surprised to find that it had lasted only two or three minutes; it seemed to him as if he had been dreaming a long while in that bright loneliness. He walked to the window, with "Where can they all be?" on his lips. And for an answer to his question, standing at the far end of the terrace was Sissy. As he hurried through the hall to join her, the library door opened an inch or two, and a voice inquired,

"Who is that?"

"It is I—Percival," he answered in haste.

At the word "Percival" the door opened wider, and Mr. Thorne looked out.

"Oh! where is Sissy?"

"On the terrace."

"And Horace?"

"I don't know," still chafing to be gone.

"Sissy ought to come in. It's a quarter-past ten." He looked up at the great hall clock. "Yes; a quarter-past ten, and she will be catching cold."

"I'll tell her."

"Did you come in for a shawl for her? Take her one—anything."

"I will," and Percival made a dash at the row of pegs, and caught down the first thing which looked moderately like a cloak. Then he escaped.

Sissy was coming to the house, but so leisurely that the journey was likely to take her a considerable time. "At last," she said, as he came up to her. "Why, which way—oh, it's *you*, Percival!"

"You thought I was Horace," he said, as he put the cloak round her.

"Yes, for the moment I did. What are you muffling me up like this for?"

"Orders," said Percival. "My grandfather said you were to come in, and that I was to bring you a shawl."

"What is the good of this thing if I'm to go in?"

"Very sensibly put. Evidently no good at all. So we will turn round, and go to the end of the terrace and back, unless you are tired."

She was not tired.

"And you took me for Horace? I always said we were alike."

"You are not a bit alike."

"Oh, no! Of course not."

"Don't be absurd," said Sissy. "Anybody's like anybody if it's pitch dark, and they don't speak."

"I rather suspect Horace and I might be alike if it were a half-light, and if we *did* speak," said Percival. "Remember the photograph. But where is Horace all this time? What have you been doing with yourself?"

"He's somewhere about," said Sissy. "First of all, we had a little croquet. Then it got too dark to play, so I went to see after Aunt Harriet. Her head was worse; so she said she would go to bed."

"Poor old lady! Best thing she could do. She'll be better to-morrow, I hope."

"Then Horace and I thought we would go and look up his old nurse. She has been teasing me ever so long, wanting to see 'Master Horace,' and it's only across a couple of fields. But she wasn't at home, and the cottage was shut up."

"Gone to Fordborough for the day, most likely."

"I daresay. She has a niece there. Then we came back, and Horace didn't much want to go in, because of this afternoon, you know, so we stayed in the long walk, and he smoked and we listened to the nightingales."

"Very delightful," said Percival. "The long walk and the nightingales, I mean."

"And then there was a little pinkish light in the sky, and he thought there was a fire somewhere. So he went into the park to get a better view, and after I had waited for him a little while, I came up here and met you."

A quick step was heard on the gravel behind them.

"Oh, here you are!" said Horace. "The fire doesn't seem to be anything, Sissy, after all. The light got fainter and fainter, and it's all gone now."

"Where did you think it was?" Percival inquired.

"Well, I thought from the direction that it must be at old Garnett's Upland Farm, but it can't have been much. So you have got back?"

"Yes. Hadn't we better go in? You must mind what you are about Horace, though it *is* warm. That cough of yours——"

"Stuff and nonsense about my cough." But he turned to go in nevertheless.

"By the way," said Percival, as he walked between them, "you've been out all the evening—does anyone know I've been away?"

"No," said Sissy. "Why; don't you want——"

"I would rather they didn't," he replied. (The stars in their courses seemed to fight for Addie and her secret, had it not been for that untoward meeting with Silas Fielding).

Horace wore a knowing expression. He was rather pleased that his lecturer should be compelled to seek a pledge of secrecy from him. It made him feel more on a level with the well-conducted and independent Percival. "All right," he said.

"You may trust me," in a softly earnest voice on the other side.

"Thank you both," said Percival, but his eyes thanked Sissy.

"What have you been after?" asked Horace; "I thought most likely you were off to the friend you met this morning."

The astonishing way in which circumstances conspired to aid in guarding the mystery! "I have been with him," said Percival.

(We value the opinion of others too much very often for our own peace. Queer, unsubstantial things those opinions often are. "I have been with him." Sissy felt a little glow of kindness towards the unknown; it might have been, "I have been with her." She was prejudiced in his favour, and sure that he was a nice fellow. Horace was ready to stake something on his conviction that he was a bad lot, this fellow Percy had picked up, and that Percy knew it).

Percy was still warm with the chivalrous devotion which had been kindled in him that evening. It was reserved for the colder morning light to reveal to him that what with Lottie on the hillside, and Addie in Langley Wood, he was plunging into little adventures which were hardly consistent with the character of a most prudent young man. Yet such was the character he was supposed to have undertaken to support in the world's drama.

They reached the door, and Horace went in, but Sissy lingered yet a moment on the threshold. "Isn't it all beautiful?" she said, taking one more look; "if it could only last!"

Percival smiled. "Sissy, have *you* learnt that?"

"November—bare boughs and bitter winds—I hate to think of it," she said.

"I would say, 'don't think of it,' but it would be no good," he replied. "When the thought of change has once occurred to you while you look at a landscape, it is a part of every landscape thenceforward. But it gives a bitter charm."

"Spring will come again," she said; "but death and parting, and loss—they are so dreadful. And growing old—oh, Percival, why must they all be?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "The whole world echoes your 'Why?' Sissy, I wish I could help you, but I can't. I can only tell you that I understand what you feel. It is very terrible looking forward to age, to loss of powers, hopes, and friends. One feels sometimes as if one could not tread that long grey road to the grave."

Sissy shivered as if she saw it drawn out before her eyes.

"But after all it may be brighter than we think," he went on, after a pause. "There is joy and beauty in change as well as bitterness. If everything in the world were fixed and unalterable, would not that be far more terrible? As it is, we have all the possibilities on our side. Who knows what gladness may grow out of endless change?" Yet, even as he spoke, he was conscious of a wild, impotent longing to snatch her—she was so delicate and sweet—from beneath the great revolving wheels of time, with a cry of—

Stay as you are, and be loved for ever.

But the poet's very words carry the sentence of doom in the memory that the blossom to which they were uttered must have perished years ago.

"Sissy," he said suddenly, "surely there cannot be much suffering reserved for you! Oh, poor child, I wish I could take it all in your place!" He spoke in all earnestness, yet could he have looked into the future he would have seen that her suffering would not be long, but very keen, and his not to bear, but to inflict.

CHAPTER XI.

MEANWHILE.

PERCIVAL THORNE had never thought much on the subject of revenge. He rather took it for granted that deliberate revenge was an extraordinary and altogether exceptional thing. People give way to bursts of passion, which pass away and leave no trace, they are so hot with fury which comes to nothing at all, that at the first glance it seems as if the anger which bears fruit must be something different in kind. But it is possible that if Percival had considered the matter, he might have arrived at the conclusion that revenge does not depend only on intensity of passion, but on intensity of passion and aptness of opportunity together. Disembodied hate soon dies, unless it is fiendish in its strength.

He had had fair warning at the birthday party. Lottie, smarting with humiliation, had looked him full in the face with a flash of such bitter enmity as springs from the consciousness of one's own folly. And Lottie's eyes conveyed their meaning well. That very afternoon, when Percival looked up, as he lay on the turf at her feet, they had been most eloquent of love. "Foolish child!" he had thought, "she is only seventeen to-day, and childish still." When he encountered the sudden

flash of hate, he would hardly have been surprised at some instant manifestation of it. Had she carried a dagger, like

Our Lombard country girls along the coast,

vengeance might have come at once. But she spoke to him later in her ordinary voice, and touched his hand when she bade him good night; and it was only natural to conclude that nothing would follow her glance of fury. Something of bitterness might linger for awhile, but Lottie was only seventeen, and that afternoon she had loved him.

He was right enough. There was nothing fiendish in Lottie's hatred; it would soon have spent its strength in helpless longings and died. But that very night it flew straight to Horace Thorne, and unobserved found shelter there. It assumed a shape, not clearly defined as yet, but a shape which time would surely reveal. It drew Lottie to the young man's side while the tears of pain and shame were hardly yet dry upon her burning cheeks.

In spite of the talk on her birthday morning, Lottie hardly understood the relative positions of the Thornes. Percival was disinherited, and Horace was the heir. Naturally she supposed that Horace was the favourite, and that the old man was displeased with Percival. She concluded that the small income of which the latter had spoken was probably a grudging allowance from Mr. Thorne. His grandfather protected and patronised him now, and no doubt it would be in Horace's power to protect and patronise him hereafter. Lottie hardly knew what she dreamed or wished, but she felt that she should indeed be avenged if the dole might in any way be regulated by her caprice, given or withheld according to the mood of the moment.

Meanwhile, Percival drifted contentedly on, unconscious that Lottie had vowed vengeance, and Sissy devotion. Mr. Thorne went about with an air of furtive triumph, as if he were tasting the sweetness of having outwitted somebody. Horace divided his time between divers pleasures, but contrived to run down to Fordborough once just before he went yachting with a friend. He took to letter-writing with praiseworthy regularity, and yet his accustomed correspondents were curiously unaware of his sudden energy. He too had his look of triumph sometimes, but it was uneasy triumph, as if he were not absolutely certain that someone might not have outwitted him. Oliver Blake on board the good ship "Curlaw," had passed the period of sea-sickness, and was flirting desperately with a lively fellow passenger, while Addie followed him with anxious thoughts. About this time his father went in secret to consult a London doctor, and came away with a grave face, and a tender softening of his heart towards his only son. A visit to his lawyer ensued, and of this also Mrs. Blake knew nothing. The girls played croquet as before, Lottie won the ivory mallet on the great field-day of the Fordborough club, and Mrs. Rawlinson and Miss Lloyd hated her with their sweetest smiles. Week after week of glorious weather went by. Bracken-

hill lay stretched in the sleepy golden sunshine, and the leaves in Langley Wood, quivering against the unclouded blue, had lost the freshness of the early summer. The shadows and the sadness were to come.

CHAPTER XII.

Well, what's gone from me?

What have I lost in you?

R. BROWNING.

PERCIVAL awoke one day to the consciousness that the world was smaller, greyer, and flatter than he had supposed it. At the same moment he became aware that a burden was lifted from his shoulders, and that a disturbing element was gone out of his life.

This is how the change in the universe was effected. Percival met Godfrey Hammond, and they talked of indifferent things. As they were parting, Hammond looked over his shoulder, and came back.

"I knew there was something I wanted to ask you. Have you heard that the young lady with the latent nobility in her face is going to be married?"

"What young lady?" said Percival, stiffly. He knew perfectly well, and Hammond knew that he knew.

"Miss Lisle."

"No. I hadn't heard. Who is he?"

"The happy man? Lord Scarbrook's eldest son."

"Who told you?"

"You are incredulous, but I fear I can't soften the blow. The man who told me heard Lisle talking about it."

"There's no blow to soften," said Thorne. "I assure you I don't feel it."

"Ah," said Hammond, "there was once a man who didn't know that his head had been cut off till he sneezed—wasn't there? Take great care of yourself, Percival." And, nodding a second farewell, Godfrey left him, and Percival went on his way through that curiously shrunken world.

And after all the blow was premature. Mr. Lisle had only talked of a probability which he earnestly hoped would be realised.

But Percival did not doubt it. He tried to analyse his feelings as he walked away. He had known but little of Judith Lisle, but, when first he saw her face, he felt that the vague dream, which till then had approached, only to elude him, in clouds, in fire, in poems, in flowers, in music, had taken human shape and looked at him out of her grey eyes. Percival had no certain assurance that she *was* his ideal, but from that time forward he pictured his ideal in her guise.

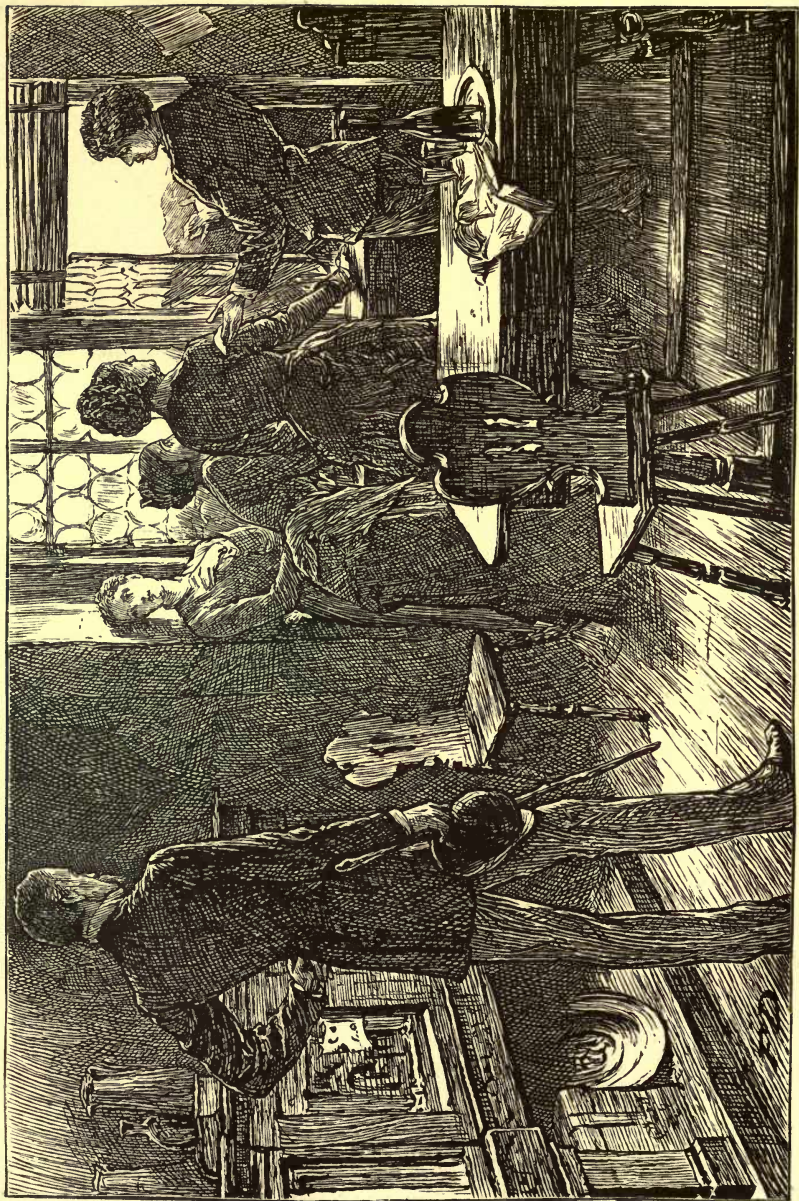
He did not dream of winning her. Mr. Lisle had boasted to him one evening, as they sat over their wine, of all that he meant to do for his

daughter, and of the great match he hoped she would make. Percival had a feeling of peculiar loyalty to Mr. Lisle, as the friend whom his dead father had trusted most of all. He could not think of Judith, for he could never be a fit husband for her in Mr. Lisle's eyes. Had he been heir to Brackenhill — But he was not.

So he acquiesced, patiently enough. He did not attempt to do anything. What was there to do? By the time that he had struggled through the crowd, and got his foot on the first round of that ladder which *may* lead to fortune, Judith would probably be married. He did not even know certainly that she was the woman he wanted to win. Why should he force the lazy stream of his existence into a rough and stony channel, that he might have a chance—infinitesimally small—of winning her?

Yet there were moments of exaltation, when it seemed to him as if his acquiescence were tame and mean, as if his life would miss its crown, unless he could attain to his ideal. At such moments he felt the stings of shame and ambition. Yet what could he do? The mood passed, and left him drifting onward as before.

But now all thought of Judith Lisle was over. Even if she were in truth his ideal woman, it was certain that she was no longer within his reach. That haunting possibility was gone. All that it had ever done for him was to make him dissatisfied with himself from time to time, and yet he found himself regretting it.



JASPER WAS CRITICISING THE COLOURS.

THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

DECEMBER, 1877.

Da Capo.

CHAPTER I.

COLONEL BAXTER'S RETROSPECTIONS.



IT is a curious experience to come back in after years to an old mood and to find it all changed and swept and garnished; emotionless, orderly now;—are the devils of indifference and selfish preoccupation those against which we are warned in the parable? Perhaps it is some old once-read and re-read letter which has brought it all back to you; perhaps it is some person quietly walking in, followed by a whole train of associations. Who has not answered to the call of an old tune breaking the dream of to-day? Is the past, past, if such trifles can recall it all vividly again, or only not-present?

One day Colonel Baxter, an officer lately returned from abroad, came up to the door of an old house in Sussex, and stopped for an instant before he rang the bell. The not-present suddenly swept away all the fabric of the last few years.

He stopped, looking for a little phantom of five years before that he could still conjure up, coming flitting along the terrace, gentle, capricious, lovely Felicia Marlow, as he remembered her at eighteen, and not so happy as eighteen should be. The little phantom had once appealed to him for help, and it had needed all Colonel Baxter's years of service, all his standing in the army, all the courage of a self-reliant man, and all the energies of his Victoria Cross and many clasps to help him to withstand the innocent entreaty of those two wild grey eyes which had said "Help me, help me!" The story was simple enough, and one which has been told before, of a foolish little creature who had scarcely been beyond the iron scrolls of the gates of Harpington Court, who had been promised to her cousin, the only man she had ever seen, and who suddenly finding a world beyond her own, had realised the possibility of a love that was not her cousin James's old familiar everyday, ever-since-she-could-remember, mood.

Colonel Baxter had seen the world and travelled far beyond Harpington, but nevertheless he, too, had been carried away by the touching vehemence of this poor little victim to circumstances, and felt that he could give his whole life to make her more happy. Only somehow it was not for him to make her happy. That right then belonged to James Marlow, who was Baxter's friend, and one of the best and most loyal of men.

Baxter walked up to the gates and stopped to look round, as I have said, before he rang. The place was changed. A new spirit seemed to have come over the periwinkle avenue. There were bright flowers in tubs at intervals along the road; a couple of gardeners were at work in the sunshine, chipping, chopping, binding up all the drifts and wreaths, carefully nipping away all the desolate sweetness and carrying it off in wheelbarrows. Gay striped blinds were sprouting from the old diamond windows; Minton china twinkled on the terrace; the stone steps had been repaired and smartened up somehow; a green trellis had been nailed against the walls. It was scarcely possible to see in which of these trifling signs the difference lay, but it was unmistakable. Once more an old feeling seemed to come over the man as he tramped along the gravel walks with long even strides; a feeling of hopeless separation, of utter and insurmountable distance: all this orderly comfort seemed to come only to divide them. In the old days of her forlorn negligence and trouble Felicia had seemed nearer, far nearer than now. When he had come back after James's death, he had thought it wrong to obtrude his personal feelings. He was then under orders to rejoin his regiment. Before he went to India, he had written an ambiguous little message to Felicia Marlow, to which no answer had come; he had been too proud to write again; and now that he was home once more, an impulse had brought him back to her door. And he had listened to the advice of a woman whom he had always trusted, and who told him that he had been

wrong and proud, and that he had almost deserved to lose the woman he loved.

A very pert housemaid with a mob-cap opened the door; and to Colonel Baxter's enquiry replied that Miss Marlow was abroad, travelling with friends, Mr. and Mrs. Bracy and Mr. Jasper Bracy from Brayfield. She was not expected? O dear no; all letters were to be sent on to the hotel at Berne. "Here is the foreign address," says the housemaid, going to a table and coming back with a piece of paper.

A minute ago it had been on Baxter's lips to ask her to give him back a letter which he had posted himself only the day before, addressed to Miss Marlow, at Harpington, not to the Falcon Hotel, at Berne. But the sight of her writing, of a little flourish to the F, touched him oddly. When the lively housemaid went on to say that a packet was just a-going, and Baxter saw his own letter lying on the hall table, he gave the maid a card and asked her to put it in as well, and thoughtfully turned on his heel and walked away. Then he stopped, walked back a few steps once more along the terrace to a side window that he remembered, and he stood for an instant trying to recall a vision of that starry dim evening when the iron gates were first closed and he had waited, while Felicia flitted in through that shuttered window. He still heard her childish sweet voice; he could remember the pain with which he left her then; and now—what was there between them? Nothing. Baxter thought as he walked away that Felicia had been more really present this time in remembrance than the last time when he had really seen her, touched her hand, and found her at home indeed, but preoccupied, surrounded by adulating sympathisers, dressed in crape, excited, unlike herself, and passionately sobbing for James's death. Yes, she had once loved him better than that. It was not Felicia whom he had really seen that last time. He *must* see her again, her herself. She would get his letter; but what good was a letter? It had a voice perhaps, but no eyes, no ears. The Hôtel du Faucon at Berne was not a very long way off. Before he left the terrace, Baxter had made up his mind to go there.

I wrote this little story down many years ago now. The people interested me at the time, for they were all well-meaning folks, moving in a somewhat morbid atmosphere, but doing the best they could under difficult circumstances. There was the young couple, who had been engaged from childhood without, as I have said, much knowledge of anything outside the dreary old home in which Fate had enclosed their lives. There was an old couple, whose experience might have taught them better than to try and twine hymeneal garlands out of dead men's shoes, strips of parchment, twigs and dried leaves off their genealogical tree, with a little gold tinsel for sunshine. The saving clause in it all was that James Marlow truly loved his cousin Felicia; but this the old folks scarcely took into account; and it was for quite different reasons that they decreed the two should be one. And then came human nature in

the shape of a very inoffending and unconscious soldier, a widower with one child, a soldier of fortune without a fortune, as he called himself, whereas James Marlow, the hero of this little tragedy (for it *was* a tragedy of some sort), was the heir to the estate, and a good man, and tenderly attached to his cousin. But, nevertheless, the little heroine's heart went away from mousy old Harpington, and flashed something for itself which neither grandmother nor grandfather had intended, and which Felicia herself did not quite understand. James Marlow, perhaps, of them all was the person who most clearly realised the facts which concerned these complicated experiences.

Felicia found out her own secret in time, in shame and remorse ; and James, who had found it out, kept silence, for he too had a secret, and knew that for him a very short time must break the solemnest engagements. He did full justice to Felicia's impulsive, vivid-hearted nature ; to the honesty of the man she preferred to himself.

The three had parted under peculiar circumstances. James had been sent abroad by the doctors as his last chance for life, and before he went he had said something to Felicia, and Baxter not one word. The Captain, as he was then, was faithfully attached to James ; he went abroad with his friend, and remained with him while he lived and tended him in those journeys, and administered those delusive prescriptions which were to have cured him. The air was so life-giving, the doctors spoke so confidently, James himself was almost deceived at one time.

His was a wise heart, and a just one, consequently ; if he had lived he would have done his part to make those he loved happy, even though their own dream of happiness should not include his own. But he had no chance from the first, except, indeed, that of being a good man, and knowing the meaning of a few commonplace words, such as duty, love, friendship. From a child he was always ailing and sensitive. When he found that his happiness (it had been christened Felicia some eighteen years before) was gone from him, it made him languid, indifferent, his pulse ebbed away, not even African sun could warm him, he would have lived if he could, but he was not sorry to die ; and when he found he was dying, he sent a message home to "his sweet happiness," so he spoke of her.

Baxter had come back to England, with his heart sore for his friend's loss, and neither he nor Felicia, who had been wearying and pining to see him again, could find one word, except words of grief. In those days it had seemed to them both that it would be wronging James's memory to speak of their own preoccupations at such a time ; so little do people with the best hearts and intentions trust each other, or those who have loved them most. Baxter had not come to Harpington, but to London, where Felicia was staying with her aunt in Queen's Square. The old butler showed him up the old staircase, looked round, and then went to the window and said, "Miss Felicia, you are wanted. Here is Colonel Baxter."

She had come into the room to speak to him, stepping across the

window-sill from the balcony, where she had been sitting. How well he remembered it, and the last time they had been there together. That was in the evening, and Jem had been alive. Now it was morning, and Felicia wore her black dress; a burning autumn morning, striking across the withered parks in broad lines of dusky light. They flooded through the awnings, making the very crape and blackness twinkle. But Felicia's face somehow put out the light; it was pale, and set, and wan. There was no appeal in it now. She frightened Baxter for a moment; then, when he saw her hands tremble, a great longing came to him to hold them fast, to be her help and comforter once more and to befriend this forlorn though much-loved woman. He talked on quickly to hide his emotion. He gave her the few details she wanted.

"Jem told me to come and see you," he concluded. "He thought I might perhaps be your friend, Felicia," said Baxter, "and he sent you his love."

Baxter turned pale, and his voice faltered; he hardly knew how to give the remainder of James's message, which was to tell Felicia that she must let Baxter take care of her now. James sent them both his blessing. Perhaps he might have said the words, but the door opened, and another Miss Marlow came bustling in; Aunt Mary Anne, a stout, beaming, good-natured, and fussy lady, with many bugles and ornaments and earrings, and a jet-bespangled bonnet rather awry, and two fat black kid hands put out.

"Here he is! Here is our Captain. How is he? They told me you were here; how glad I am to see you. You two poor dears have been having a sad talk, I daresay. Well, it is a good thing got over. It's no use dwelling on what can't be helped. You don't look well, Baxter; you must come and let us nurse you up." And then, as she grasped Colonel Baxter's hands, "We must make the best of what is left us. Eh, Felicia?" said the fat lady, who hated anything in the shape of grief, and only tolerated its bugles and lighter ornaments. "No, we won't speak of the past—better not—but tell us how long you can stay." And the old aunt, who took things so easy, began to wink and nod at the poor little passionate-hearted girl, to whom all this seemed like some horrible mockery—like ribald talk in a sacred place. Felicia and Baxter both began to shrink before the old lady's incantations. Felicia had wiped her tears, and stood silent and dull. Baxter was cold, vexed, and ajar. He saw Felicia's averted looks; his own face grew dark. He could not remain in London; he said he had not yet been to his own home. His little girl was at Brighton, with his cousin Emily. And while Miss Marlow the elder, disappointed in her well-meant efforts to cheer up the young people, was remonstrating, and scolding, and threatening to appeal to Flora Bracy, whoever she might be, Baxter stood, looking abstractedly at Felicia, and Felicia drew herself away farther and farther.

"Perhaps you will let me hear from you, when you can see me again," said Baxter, taking leave with some sudden change of manner,

"Yes, yes; you shall hear from us," cried Miss Marlow the elder, giving him a friendly tap on the shoulder; young Miss Marlow dropped her eyes, with a sigh, and did not speak. And so he had walked away and out into the street, disappointed. It had not been the meeting he had hoped; it had not been the meeting Felicia hoped. They had neither of them made a sign to the other. Baxter thought of Felicia day after day, Felicia thought of Baxter. "You sly thing; I know you will write to him as soon as you get back, though you won't let me write now," her aunt used to say; and Felicia would shake her head.

"It seems to me that, for dear James's sake, you ought to show him some attention," persists the old lady.

Was it indeed for James's sake only, or for her own, that Felicia wished to see Baxter? This was a question she could never answer. She went back to Harpington, and day after day Felicia put off writing; and Baxter was too proud to go unsummoned. And then a thousand chances and less generous feelings intervened, and time went on, and on, and on; and James might have never lived for all the good his self-sacrifice had brought about to the two people he held most dear.

CHAPTER II.

FELICIA'S RETROSPECTIONS.

IN the first part of my story I have described how Felicia lived at Harpington with her grandmother, old Mrs. Marlow, the original match-maker—a strange and somewhat stony-faced old lady, who did not seem always quite in her right mind. Her presence frightened people away. She seemed to have been years before frozen by some sudden catastrophe, and to be utterly indifferent to everything that happened now. She had no love for Felicia. It was almost as if she resented the poor child's very existence. Felicia's betters were gone; her grandfather, her father, her mother, her young aunts and uncles, a whole blooming company had passed away. What business had Felicia to live on, to gather in her one little hand all the possessions which for years past had been amassed for others?

Sorrow for the dead seemed to take the shape of some dull resentment against the living in this bitter woman's mind. All Felicia's grace and loving readiness failed to touch her. Fay did her best and kept to her duty, as well as she knew how. It was a silent duty, monotonous, ungrateful; it seemed like gathering figs off thorns, or grapes off thistles, to try and brighten up this gloomy woman. Felicia knew there was one person who would gladly, at a sign from her, respond to the faintest call; but, as I have said, some not unnatural scruple withheld her from sending for him. She hoped he would come to her, but *she* would move no finger, say no word, to bring him. She kept the thought of

him as she had done all these years, shyly in the secret recesses of her heart. She was so young that the future was still everything—the present mattered little. Young people seem to have some curious trust in their future consciences, as older ones look back with sympathy to their past selves.

After all, it was not very long before Felicia saw Aurelius again; but not in the way she had hoped to see him. She had ridden into L—— on some commission for her grandmother—I think it was a sleeping draught that the old lady fancied. It was a lovely autumn afternoon; old Caspar snuffed the fresh air; young Felicia sprang into her saddle with more life and spirit than she had felt since their trouble had fallen upon them. Old George was there to follow in his battered blue livery. He opened the gates when Felicia had not jumped down before him. The two jogged along the country lanes together, old George's bleary eyes faithfully fixed on Caspar's ragged tail. The road was delightful, white drifting wreaths of briony seemed to lie like foam upon the branches, ivies crept green along the ditches, where the very weeds were turning into gold and silver, while the branches of the trees overhead were also aglow in the autumnal lights. It was a sweet triumphant way. The girl's spirit rose as she cantered along between the garlands that spread on either side of it. There is one place where the road from Harpington crosses the road to L——, just where an old mill stands by a stream with its garden and farm buildings. The fence was low, and as Felicia peeped over she could see a garden full of sweet clustering things mingling with vegetables, white feathery bushes, and bowers of purple clematis, and here and there crimson fiery tongues, darting from their stems along the box-lined paths and yellow roses against the walls. The place was well cared for, and seemed full of life and rest too. She could hear a sound of horses, and of voices calling and dogs barking in the mill-yard beyond the garden. The flowers seemed all the sweeter for the busy people at work. Felicia began to build up one of her old fancy-pieces as she lingered for a moment by the hedge; perhaps some day they might walk there together, and he would look down into her face and say the time has come, the time has come. Then she started, blushed up, tightened old Caspar's rein again, and set off once more riding quickly past the old sign-post that pointed to Harpington with one weather-beaten finger, and to L——, whither she was going. There was a third road leading to the downs—it was only a continuation of the Harpington lane.

The mill was near an hour's ride from L——, that pretty old country town, with its bustle of new things cheerfully mixing up with the old—its many children at play and its many busy people stirring among the old gables and archways, and its flocks making confusion in the market.

Felicia left old Caspar to be cared for at the inn, while she went off upon her shopping, being, girl-like, delighted with the life and bustle of the place. She herself was perhaps not the least pleasant sight there, as

she darted in and out of the old doorways and corners, holding up her long skirt, and looking out beneath the broad brim of her dark beaver hat. It was late before she had done. The town clocks were striking six as they turned their horses' heads towards Harpington. There is a long level stretch of road at the foot of the hill, with poplars growing on either side, and tranquil horizons between the poplar stems. Felicia trotted on ahead; old George jogged after her, pondering upon his crops and the price of wheat, which he had been discussing in the bar of the Red Lion.

Evening was falling: the oxen looked purple in the light, as they stood staring across the fences at the road and the horses, and slowly tossing their white horns. The shadows under the trees were turning blue, the evening birds were flying across the sky—a tranquil dappled sky, with clouds passing in fleecy banks, while the west spread its crimson wings. All the people were crossing and recrossing the paths to the villages beyond the fields; in one place Felicia could see the boats gliding along the narrow river. Then they came to the old mill at the cross-roads. The garden was resplendent with clear evening light: the great cabbages seemed dilating and showing every vein; each tendril of the vines, wreathed along the wooden palings, stood out vivid and defined. As Felicia advanced, urging old Caspar along, she saw a figure also on horseback coming along the road from Harpington. It was but for a moment, but in that moment Felicia seemed to recognise the rider: his square shoulders, the slouch of his broad hat. He crossed the highway, and took the lane leading to the downs: he did not look to the right or to the left. Felicia's heart gave a throb. She suddenly slashed old Caspar into a canter, and reached the corner where she thought she had just seen Baxter pass. She looked up and down. "Did not somebody go by, George?" Felicia said, turning round to the old gardener. "I can see no one in the lane. It must a' been a goast," said old George, staring, "or maybe it wer' a man that leapt the fence onto yon field: there'll be a short cut along by that thar way," says George, who had followed his master, the late Squire, along many a short cut and long road. Felicia said no more; she turned Caspar's head towards home, and the old horse stepped out, knowing his way back. To Felicia the way seemed suddenly very long. The road was dusty and bare; the garlands seemed to have lost their fragrant bloom. Her grandmother was up when she got back. Tea was laid in the parlour, and the windows were open on to the terrace.

"There has been someone to see us," said Mrs. Marlow. "That Baxter was here. He is going away again to India. Have you got me my sleeping draught?"

"Did he leave *no* message for me; nothing?" said Felicia.

"He left his card," said the old lady. "Take care, don't shake the bottle; what are you about! I want a good night's rest. That man talked about James, he upset me. I had to send him away. He

would have kept me awake at night if I had let him talk on any longer." And then Mrs. Marlow hobbled off to her old four-post bed, crumpling up Baxter's card in her fingers. "I *must* see you once more," he had written upon it; "send me one line." Mrs. Marlow threw the card into her fire-place. Felicia never saw the pencil words. She was left alone—quite alone she said to herself bitterly. He had left her no word, he was gone without a thought of her, and everything seemed forlorn once more.

Old Mrs. Marlow survived her grandson for a year; half imbecile, never quite relenting to the poor little granddaughter, and then she too passed away, and Felicia inherited the old house and the broad stubble-fields and the farm-yards and haycocks, among which she and her cousin James had both grown up together. And now Felicia belonged to that sad company of heiresses, with friends and a banker's account, and consideration and liberty, in place of home and loving interest and life multiplied by others.

She came; she went; she travelled abroad. She was abroad when Baxter came to Harpington for the second time in vain. He had been in India hard at work, and little Felicia had been leading her own life for the last three years. Everything seemed to be hers except the things which might have made everything dear to her. She had scarcely been conscious of any want; she was never alone—never neglected. Events came by every post, twopenny pleasures, sixpenny friendships, small favours asked and cheap thanks returned. All this had not improved her, and yet she was the same Felicia after all that Baxter remembered so fondly, as he walked away from the door.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE TERRACE AT BERNE.

THERE is a stone basin full of water in an old city in Switzerland, over which a shady stream of foliage waves against the sun. The city arms are emblazoned upon the stone, and the flood of green overflows its margin. In the autumn the leaves glow, gleam, change into flame or ashes, tendrils hang illumined over the brimming fountain, which reflects the saffron and the crimson overhead. The townswomen come and fill their brazen pans and walk away leisurely, swinging their load and splashing the footway. The sloping street leads to a cathedral, of which the bells come at stated hours, suddenly breaking the habitual silence, and echoing from gable to gable.

A young English lady passing by one autumn day went and stood for an instant by the fountain, leaning over its side. The naiads, in their Sunday boddices and well-starched linen, who were already there filling their brazen cans, watched her with some interest, and looked curiously

at the stranger's bright startled eyes, her soft grey felts and feathers, and her quick all-pervading looks. They themselves were of the placid broad-faced, broad-shouldered race of naiads who people Switzerland, who haunt the fountains; who emerge from châteaux and caves with sparkling cups in their hands; who invite you to admire their fresh water-courses through kaleidoscopes of various tints.

There is a certain sameness, but an undeniable charm about Swiss maidens, especially on Sundays, when they put on their pretty silver ornaments, plait their shining tails of hair, while their fresh and blooming faces certainly do credit to their waters. Felicia had been standing interested and absorbed for some minutes. She was watching the stream flow on; wondering whether life hard won in the Bernese valleys would not be more satisfying on the whole than it seemed to her day by day, flowing, unheeded, in her own lonely and luxurious home. Presently she caught a whispered comment from one nymph to another, "She is not alone; here is the company coming from the Falcon to find her." Then Miss Marlow started, looked up, hastily turned away, and began walking determinedly away along the street. She had come out to avoid her company, that was the truth. For a week she had been travelling with them and glad to be in their society, but that morning a letter had reached her from home which had strung her to some other key, and which made her want to be alone for a little to realise her own mind, to hear her own voice, and to listen to that of an old friend speaking across five years. Was Baxter right when he thought that a letter was nothing? his letter certainly had a voice for Felicia. They had never had one word of explanation before or since they parted. There had been no promise given on either side; and yet she had considered herself in some implied way bound to this absent person whom she had not seen twenty times before James Marlow died, and who had not come back to her, except once with a shy, cruel, stiff message.

Felicia flitted away, as preoccupied as Baxter himself had been with certain events of former years. The houses on either side of the street stood upon their arches; the broad roofs cast their shadows, the quaint turrets turned to daily domestic use protruded from the corners, pigeons flew whirring across her footsteps. The street was called the *Street of the Preachers*. Felicia spelt it out, written high against a gable, and as she read the words all the cathedral chimes began preaching overhead, sounding, vibrating, swinging through the air; the sunlight broke out more brightly, doors opened and figures passed out on their way to the Cathedral, from whence a little procession came slowly to meet her. It was headed by a sleeping baby lying peacefully frilled and pinned on to a huge lace pillow, with a wreath of silver flowers round its little head. On its placid little breast a paper was laid with a newly bestowed name carefully written out, with many simple-minded flourishes. . . .

A little farther on a closed house opened, and a tall and solemn-looking personage issued forth, some quaint ghost of a past century, with

a short Geneva gown, and a huge starched ruffle round his chin, walking with a deliberate step. The apparition crossed the piazza, passed under the statue (it seemed to be brandishing a bronze sword in its country's defence, against the scattered and mutilated wreaths that lay on the steps at the horse's feet); then the cathedral doors opened wide to receive this quaint ghost of another time and faith. It passed on with one or two people who had been standing round about. The bells gave a last leap of welcome, and then were silent, and the doors closed with a solemn bang. . . . Felicia noted it all, interested in spite of herself, and her own abstractions. Sometimes in our perplexities the lives of other people seem to come to reassure us. Have they not too been anxious, happy, died, lived, walked from house to house, stood outside and inside cathedral porches, as little Felicia stood now, staring at the saints over the doorway? It was a whole generation of ornamental sanctities, all in beatitude no doubt, and independent of circumstances: some were placidly holding their heads in their hands, some contemplating their racks, others kneeling on perilous ledges. Felicia was no saintly character, but she had gone through a certain gentle martyrdom in her life, short as it was. Now she took a letter out of her pocket, and looked at it thoughtfully, and read it once again. It had been sent on to her from her own house, and had been waiting for her at the hotel when she arrived that morning, with a pile of bills, invitations, demisemiquavers of notes, in the midst of all of which this chord suddenly sounded:—

“My dear Miss Marlow—I have thought it possible that you have understood the reason which has prevented me from troubling you all this long time, and which made me wish for some sign from you, before I again asked to see you. Before I left England it seemed to me more and more difficult to see you or to come unasked to Harpington without probable misconstruction. In India one report reached me after another; and some not unnatural feeling prevented a proud man from wishing to appear to put himself into competition with a crowd of others, whose personal advantages seemed undeniable—and I remained sorry and disappointed, and knowing that it was my own fault that I had not seen you once more. I now think that for many reasons, my own peace of mind being one of them, this indefinite estrangement between two old friends should not continue. I am at home again for six months, and staying at The Cottage with Lucy and my cousin Emily Flower. I shall come to-morrow to see you, and to hear from your own lips upon what terms you would wish henceforward that we should meet.

“Believe me always

“The Cottage,

Faithfully yours,

“Harpington.

A. H. BAXTER.”

It was a difficult letter to read; was it very difficult to answer? Felicia was both hurt and touched; hurt by the long mistrust and doubt which was implied by this delay, touched by this long-delayed confidence. If the writer had only come to her as James had no doubt intended him

to do, helped her in her hours of loneliness and sorrow, proved himself the stay and comfort for which she had longed, how happy they might have been all this time ; if instead of speculating anxiously, comparing his advantages with those of others who were nothing to her, he had but forgotten himself for her, how different these last few years would have seemed to her, how much less sad, less drearily gay, less noisy, less confused. She had had a right to be hurt, to give no sign.—Did he deserve forgiveness now ?—If he had really loved her would he have treated her so cruelly ? or did he only think that she loved him. Her eyes filled with tears, tender angry drops that she impatiently dashed away.

Felicia walked on beyond the cathedral gates to the terrace close by ; a delightful autumn garden for children and old people, with a wide valley and a line of distant hills beyond the walls. All the leaves were falling from the trees, and the brown chestnuts were dropping with the sudden swift gusts of wind ; the country flushed with a bright tumult of sunshine and clouds : the river rolled with a full silver rush ; the streets below were piled up against the very foot of the dizzy terrace walls ; as seen from the high cliff the Bernese men and women seemed like toys for children to play with, tiny figures that passed and repassed, intent upon their liliput affairs, upon rolling a barrel or turning a wheel, or upon piling a stack of wood ; in windows and garrets, upon terraces and outstanding balconies, everywhere people were occupied, passing and repassing. The whole business of their microscopic life seemed scarcely so important as the children's game on the cathedral terrace—they were shouting as they ran, and picking up dry leaves and brown shining chestnuts that fell from the trees.

Felicia was standing against the terrace wall, still reading her letter, still thinking over the meaning of its somewhat abrupt sentences. They were not unlike Baxter's own way of speaking, stiff, abrupt, melting now and then for an instant, and then repelling again. The girl covered her eyes with her hand, trying to recall the vivid past more vividly. She was changed, this she knew, since those childish days when her whole heart's emotion had overpowered her so easily, and she had appealed in vain against her cruel condemning fate ; she wanted something more now than she had wanted then ; she had learned to mistrust her own impulses as well as those of the people she lived with. She wanted to trust, as well as to feel ; she wanted proof as well as the expression of good-will. Poor little Felicia, it was not for nothing that she had been an heiress all this while, warned, flattered, surrounded, educated by cruel experience. All that was past now in her short life seemed suddenly in existence again, came as a wave in between her and the man she had loved ; it seemed to float them asunder as she conjured up his image ; and so it happened, by some curious chance, that they met. As she wiped her eyes, her heart seemed to cease beating for an instant. What extraordinary realisation was this ?—who was this coming across the shadow of the chestnut tree ? Felicia, looking up with a start, found herself face to face

with a tall man who had slowly followed her all this time ; the hand that had written the letter was held out to her, and the letter seemed to take voice and life, and to say, "It is I; don't look frightened." The strangest things cease to be strange after a moment. Miss Marlow was accustomed to face possibilities, and as for Colonel Baxter, had he not followed her all the way from the fountain ?

"It is really you!" she said, looking more lovely than he had ever seen her look before.

Colonel Baxter smiled admiringly, and held out his hand. Miss Marlow flushed crimson, and looked up into his face an instant before she took it. He was altogether unaltered ; he did not look older, he did not look gladder. He was moved, but less so than she was ; his dark face seemed pale somehow, and thin ; she could not see very clearly, she was too much troubled and excited.

First meetings are curious things, all the long habit of separation seems still to be there ; all the long days that have come to divide, the very anxieties and preoccupations that have made the time so heavy, now seem to thrust themselves in between those who have yearned for each other's presence, and the absent are come home at last, but as people are not all gone when they first depart, so they are not always quite come when they meet after long separation.

"I have just been reading your letter, Colonel Baxter," said Felicia quietly, and regaining her composure.

"I heard you were abroad from your housekeeper," said Colonel Baxter, "and I thought that—that I might as well follow my letter," he said, with an odd expression. All this time he had been so afraid of what Felicia might think ; and now she was there before him, more charming, more beautiful even than he had remembered her. His scruples were all forgotten ; they seemed unkind, almost cruel. Her eyes fell beneath his look, her face changed, a dazzle of sunlight came before his eyes, it may have been the falling leaves, the wind stirring among the branches, it may have been his own long pent emotion, but it seemed to him suddenly as if he could read what was passing in her mind, as if some vibration had swept away all outward conventional signs. He was a silent man usually, not given to much expression, but at this moment the feeling that had long been in his heart overmastered everything else. What was her money to him at that instant, or his own disadvantages ? He even tried to remember them, but he could not recall one single impediment between them.

"You do not know what a struggle it has been to me to keep away ! Can you forgive me ?" he said ; going straight to the point—ignoring all he had meant to say—to explain—to withhold.

"I do not quite forgive you," said Felicia, smiling with tears, and once more responding to this new never-forgotten affection, by some instinct against which she could not struggle. As they stood there a swift western gale began to blow, the leaves showered from the trees, the

chestnuts dropped over the terrace and beyond the wall, the children scampered through the changing lights. What had not happened in this moment's meeting. "No, I can't quite forgive you," repeated Miss Marlow. "Where have you been all this time? What have you been doing? What were you thinking of?"

He could scarcely answer for a minute, though he looked so calm. He was more really overcome perhaps than she was; he was blaming himself unsparingly, wondering at his pride, the infatuation which had kept them apart, wondering at her outcoming pardoning sweetness and welcome. Baxter, who had been embittered by various mischances; Felicia Marlow, whose pretty little head had been somewhat turned of late by the dazzling compliments and adulations which she had met with, had both forgotten everything in the present, and met each other with their best and truest selves; surprised by the chance which seemed at last to have favoured them. Details did not exist for either of them. At that minute Felicia felt that the future was there facing her with the serious and tender looks. Baxter also thought that at last, leaving all others, she had come straight to him, confiding with perfect trust. With a silent triumph, almost painful in its intensity, he held her hand close in his.

"Nothing shall ever come between us again," he said. "Nothing—no one." Was Fate displeased by his presumption? As he spoke a cheerful chorus reached them from behind, a barking of dogs, a chatter of voices. Felicia blushing, drew her hand away from Baxter. A scraping of feet, and in one instant the couple seem surrounded—ladies, gentlemen, parasols, a pugdog. "Here you are, we saw you from the place; why did you run away?" cries a voice. Felicia, with gentle confusion, began to name everybody: "Mrs. Bracy, Mr. Jasper, Mr. Bracy, Miss Harrow. Dear Mrs. Bracy, you remember our James's friend, Colonel Baxter."

"We have met in Queen's Square," said Mrs. Bracy, with her most graciously concealed vexation. Had she not brought Felicia abroad expressly to avoid Colonels of any sort?

CHAPTER IV.

BEARS IN THEIR DENS.

Baxter found it almost impossible to adjust himself suddenly to these unexpected circumstances, to these utter strangers, complacently dispersing his very heart's desire—so it seemed to him.

The results seemed so very small, compared to the intolerable annoyance inflicted upon himself. His was not the best nor the most patient of tempers, and he would gladly have dropped Mr. and Mrs. Bracy, Mr. Jasper, and Miss Harrow too over the terrace at a sign from Felicia,

But she gave no sign, she seemed, could it be, almost relieved by their coming. In one instant all his brief dream, his shelter of hope seemed shaken, dispersed : not one of these people but came in between him and her ; they did it on purpose. Couldn't they see that they were in the way ? I am not sure that Mrs. Bracy did not do it on purpose. She took the Colonel in at a comprehensive glance. Cold, clear, that look seemed to him to be a wall of well-polished plate-glass, let down between him and Felicia, who had in some confusion accepted Mr. Bracy's arm, and was already walking away and leaving Baxter to his fate. "We are going to the Bears," cried Mr. Bracy, over his shoulder. "Flora, are you equal to the walk, my love ? Jasper, take care of your aunt. What are you looking at ?"

Jasper started at this address. He had been standing motionless, gazing up at the sky, and he now turned round. He was a young man about five or six and twenty, peculiar in appearance, and curiously dressed ; his hair was frizzed out something in the same fashion as his aunt's own locks. He wore an orange cravat, a blue linen shirt, rings upon his fore-fingers, buckles to his shoes, a silver pin was fastened to his wide felt hat. He was handsome, with one of those silly expressions which come from too much intelligent detail.

"I beg pardon," said he. "That amber cloud floating in ultra-marine called me irresistibly ;" and he pointed and stood quite still for an instant, as actors do at the play, who have, of course, to emphasise their movements as well as their words. Felicia had no great sense of humour, and to her Jasper Bracy's performance was most serious and important. Baxter could hardly help laughing, at least he might have laughed if he had been less disturbed.

Mrs. Bracy was a lady of about fifty, she must have been handsome once. Her dark hair was nearly black, her features still retained a somewhat regal dignity of hook and arch, her brow was shiny and of the same classic proportions as her conversation.

"Do you wish to see the bears ? Do you not agree with me, Colonel Baxter, that it is a cruelty to keep such noble animals in durance vile ?" said Flora, turning to Aurelius, who looked very black and brown, and likely to growl himself.

"What do you say to a study from the life, my dear aunt ?" said Jasper, joining in. Some friends of mine are going to Poland bear-shooting, next month. I should be glad to join them and to make a few sketches from the dead carcass."

"Jasper, do not talk of such horrible necessities," said his aunt. "My husband must show you some lines I wrote upon 'Living Force restrained by the Inert,'" continued she, with a roll of her glossy eyes, "which bear upon the stern necessities of Fate. Colonel Baxter, you do not seem to catch my meaning."

Felicia, who was a few steps ahead, turned at this moment, hearing Mrs. Bracy's remonstrances ; and the kind grey eyes beamed some little

friendly signal to the poor disconcerted Colonel, who tried to overmaster his ill-humour, and to attend to the authoress's quotations, and abruptly asked what was meant by "the inert."

"Bars, bars," said Flora, "those bars of circumstances that weigh upon us all; upon you, I dare say—upon myself. What is *this* but a bar, through which no woman can pass?" and she held up her fat finger, with the wedding-ring which Mr. Bracy had doubtless placed there.

While Mrs. Bracy, now well launched in metaphor, reveled on from sentence to sentence, Baxter's attention wandered; he was watching the slight graceful figure ahead flitting over the stones by Mr. Bracy's dumpy little form, only he listened when Felicia's friend began to speak of Felicia. They had left the terrace by this time, and were walking down a shady side street. "Dear child," Mrs. Bracy was saying, and she pointed to Felicia with her parasol, "those who have her welfare at heart must often wonder what fate has in store for one so strangely gifted. You may think what an anxious charge it is for *me*, who am aware of all Felicia's exquisite refinement and sensitiveness of disposition. I have known her from childhood, although circumstances at one time divided us" (the circumstances being that until three years before Mrs. Bracy had never taken the slightest notice of little Felicia). "There are many persons who, from a subtle admixture of feelings, are attracted by our sweet heiress," continued the lady. "I will not call them interested, and yet in my heart I cannot but doubt their motives. You, Colonel Baxter, will, I am sure, agree with me in despising the mercenary advances of these—shall I call them?—soldiers of fortune." Aurelius could hardly force himself to listen to the end of Mrs. Bracy's tirade, and gave her one black angry look, then suddenly strode on two or three steps, joined Felicia, and resolutely kept by her side. She looked up, hearing his step, but though she smiled she continued silent. She would not, indeed, she could not, talk to Baxter about indifferent subjects. Just at that moment she wanted to breathe, to collect her nerves and her mind. One vivid impression after another seemed to overcome her. Aurelius attracted and frightened her too; he seemed to have seized upon her, and half-willingly, half-reluctantly, she had let herself be carried away. It was a new Aurelius, a new Felicia, since that moment upon the terrace. Mr. Bracy rattled on with his usual good-humoured inconsequence. Mrs. Bracy caught them up at every opportunity. Jasper, who prided himself upon his good breeding, showed no sign of the annoyance he may perhaps have felt at the unexpected advent of this formidable arrival, for it was to charm Felicia that these strange attitudes and ornaments were assumed, and that Jasper sang his song. By degrees Felicia's composure returned. She was able to talk and be interested as the others were, to look at the dresses of the peasant people, at the little children in their go-carts, at the streams above the bridge and below it, at the green river rushing between the terraces and the balconies; she was able to throw buns to the bears, and to laugh when

they rolled over on their brown woolly backs, with crimson jaws wide stretched; she was still a child in some things, and when she caught sight of the Colonel's face she almost resented his vexed look. Why didn't he laugh at the bears' antics. Poor fellow; Mrs. Bracy's conversation might well account for any depression on his part. She seemed to scintillate with allusions.

Fortune hunters? Felicia's rare delicacies of feeling, and her own deep sympathies, which enabled her and her only to know what would be suited to that young creature's requirements; she seemed to have taken such complete stock of the poor little thing, that Aurelius wondered what would be left for any other human being. He knew it was absurd to be so sensitive. He might have trusted the woman who had loved him for years and years, but at this moment Mrs. Bracy's monotonous voice was ringing in his brain.

It seemed to him, notwithstanding all his experience and long habit of life and trust in Felicia, that he had been a fool. Was he to subject himself to this suspicion for any woman's sake? Had he placed his hopes upon some one utterly and entirely beyond his reach? Was not that the refrain of it all? Did Felicia mean him to bear alone? She did not seem to interfere; she avoided him; and yet, surely, they had understood each other when they had met only a few minutes ago. He could endure it no longer. He came up to Miss Marlow, and said abruptly: "I am going back to the hotel now; will you come with me?"

"We are all coming," said Felicia, looking eagerly around; "don't leave us."

"I cannot stand your friend's conversation any longer," said Aurelius, not caring who heard him. "She is the most intolerable woman."

Felicia seemed to be gazing attentively at the bears, as she bent far over the railing. "You should not speak like that," she said, very much annoyed. "They are all so kind to me. What do you want?"

"I want to see you," he said, standing beside her. "I want to talk to you; and I wonder you don't see how cruelly you are behaving, keeping me in this horrible suspense."

"One more sugarplum, my Felicia, to give your four-footed friends," here says a voice just behind them, and a fat hand is thrust between them with a peppermint between the finger and thumb.

Baxter turned angrily away. "This is unbearable," he muttered.

Felicia looked after him reproachfully; he walked straight off; he crossed the place, he never looked back; he left her, feeding the bears with sugarplums; left her to Mrs. Bracy, pointing out the advantages of national liberty, and the tints of the mountains, to Felicia, to Miss Harrow, to anyone who would listen. Jasper, his aunt knew by experience, was not a good listener; he would compose himself into an attitude of profound attention, but his eye always wandered before long.

I suppose Felicia wanted a little time to think it all over, and to understand what had happened, and that was why she took no decisive

step concerning her new lover. A curious feeling—surprise and confidence and quiet expectancy—seemed to have come over her. Baxter's impatient words had startled her. It was something she was unprepared for. Was this love, this sudden unaccustomed rule?—was she in future to be at another person's call? She had not taken the Colonel's character into account; she had never thought about his character, to tell the truth, only that he had come, that the story of her youth had begun again. He had come as she knew he would, and she had all but promised to be his wife. She did not want to go back from her word; but she wanted to wait a little bit, to put off facing this terrible definite fact a little longer, now that it had come so near. She had got into a habit of waiting. He ought to be happy: what more could he want her to say? And she wanted to be happy also, to rest and enjoy her happiness, and not to be carried breathless away by his impatient strength of will.

CHAPTER V.

THE FALCON HOTEL.

THE Falcon, at Berne, is a quiet old-fashioned place, very silent and restful, and reached by flights of white stone steps. There are echoes, panels, galleries, round an old court, and a kitchen which is raised high above the ground. You can see the cook's white caps through a gable window, and taste the cook's good cheer in a paneled dining-room, at the end of a long empty table.

Now and then you hear a piano's distant flourishes, and if you go to the windows you see a sleepy old piazza, and the serious people sauntering by, and your bedroom windows across the street.

Aurelius, who was moodily passing the deserted dining-room, was seized upon by Mr. Bracy, who had come in to order some refreshments. "Do you dine with us at the *table-d'hôte*?" said the little gentleman, "there is no one else. My wife finds that absolute quiet is necessary to her. The afflatus is easily startled—easily startled away. I have known Flora lose some of her finest ideas through the inopportune entrance of a waiter or the creaking of a door. I myself one night thoughtlessly attempted to whistle that chorus out of Faust—(after all who is there like Gounod in these days?)—but the result was distressing in the extreme. I shall never forget watching the subsequent wandering about the room in a vain attempt to recall the interrupted thoughts."

"Do you live in this part of the house?" interrupted Aurelius.

"Come and see our rooms, we are opposite: the ladies are gone up to the top of the house to watch the sunset," said the friendly little man. "Charming girl, your friend Miss Marlow; so is Georgina Harrow, a person of rare amiability of disposition. Ah! here is the waiter. At *quel heur table-d'hôte* to-day?"

Aurelius left Mr. Bracy absorbed in the various merits of private

and public refectons, and crossed the street, and went in at the arched door opposite, and walked up the stone flights of the opposite house, now darkening with all the shadows of evening. He climbed straight up with steady footsteps to the upper storey ; and there through an open door he saw, as he had hoped, some heads crowding together, and looking through an open window at a faint azure sky and all its dying day-lights ; Mrs. Bracy was busily pointing out each tint in turn. Jasper was criticising the colours, and comparing them with various bits of blue and red rag which he produced from his pockets. Miss Harrow was listening in admiration.

One person had heard Baxter's footsteps, and Felicia, guessing by some instinct that it was Aurelius, slipped unnoticed out of her corner and turned quietly to meet him, with all the evening's soft radiance shining in her eyes. Her sweet truthful look of welcome touched him and reassured him not a little ; he forgot his irritation ; for the moment he did not speak, neither did she, he could not waste this happy minute in reproach, and indeed he knew as she did that the whole company would surround them at the first spoken word. As they stood side by side, silent, leaning against the wall, the shadows came deeper, the little room was full of peace, and a sort of tranquillising evening benediction seemed to fall upon their hearts ; he could hear her quick gentle breath, though her head was turned away. It was no idle fancy, no vague hope taking shape in her imagination. Felicia was there, and she did not repulse him, and met him with a welcome of her own.

"Why, Colonel Baxter, have you been here all this time?" cries Mrs. Bracy, suddenly wheeling round and facing the two as they stood in the dusky corner.

Felicia came to dinner that day looking prettier than ever, and happier than they had seen her yet, although the young heiress was on the whole a cheerful traveller. At home she might be silent and oppressed ; but abroad the change, the different daily colours and words, the new and altered ways and things, all amused her and distracted the somewhat hypochondriacal phantoms which had haunted her lonely house—home it could scarcely be called. Baxter might have been happy too had he so chosen, if he had accepted the good things as they came to him with patience and moderation, and not wished to hurry and to frighten his happiness away. But although that five minutes' unexpressed understanding in the garret had soothed his impatient soul, the constant society of Mr. and Mrs. Bracy, the artistic powers of Mr. Jasper, the cultivated observation of Miss Harrow, all seemed to exasperate his not very easy temper. He was very much in earnest, he felt that his whole happiness was at stake. And to be treated to a few sugarplums when he was asking for daily bread, was not a system calculated to soothe a man of Aurelius' temper. Felicia was kind, gay in her most childish mood that evening. Jasper, who seemed to be on the most excellent terms with her, kept up an artistic conversation about the poignant painters of the present age, as opposed to the subtle school of philosophic

submission, while Mrs. Bracy on the other side asked the colonel many questions about the Vedas, and the dreamy Orient, and the moral cultivation of the Zenanas.

The only other people at the table were some Germans, one of whom was recounting to the others a colossal walk he contemplated across his plate of cutlets and brown potatoes. The little Scheidegg, the waterfall of Lauterbrunnen, the dizzy height of Mürren to be reached that same evening. "It is a colossal expedition," says the athlete, with a glance at the company. "Pfui, Pfui!" cry the others, with a sort of admiring whistle.

Mrs. Bracy was preparing to take a parting leave of the colonel that evening; but as Felicia said good-night Baxter held her hand and said quite simply before them all, "Is this good-bye, Felicia; may I not come to Interlaken with you?"

"Why not," said Felicia, demurely, "if you have time to spare; we are going by the early train. They say the lake of Thun is lovely."

"I am sure Colonel Baxter will prove a delightful and most unexpected addition to our party," cried Mrs. Bracy, not without asperity. "Interlaken is a charming place; it is more suited for invalids like myself, who cannot attempt real mountain expeditions, than for *preux chevaliers*, but if your friend will be content, dearest Felicia, to potter with my old husband—forgive me, Egbert—we will escort him to the various pavilions round about the hotel."

"I have no doubt I shall be well looked after," said Colonel Baxter, with a somewhat ambiguous gratitude, as he bowed good-night, and walked off with a candle. Felicia's consent had made his heart leap with silent gladness; he no longer minded Mrs. Bracy's jibes. His bedroom was in the same house as the Bracys' apartments. It was on the ground floor, and the windows opened on a rustling and beshadowed garden, where lilac trees waved upon the starry sky, and striving poplars started ghostlike and dim; close shrouds of ivy veiled the walls. Felicia's window was lighted up; and as Baxter paced the walks smoking his cigar, and watching the smoke mounting straight into the air, he caught her voice from time to time, and the mellifluous accompaniment of Mrs. Bracy's contralto notes: he could not hear their conversation, but a word or two reached him now and then, as he walked along. Presently something made him wince, alone though he was, dark and solitary as the garden might be; he ceased to puff at the cigar, for an instant he listened. "My money, my money," Felicia was repeating; "I know that people think I am rich;" and then the steps Felicia also had been listening to, and which somehow she had identified with Baxter, the steps went away and came no more; and the garden was left quite solitary and dark, with its thick shrubs and silent lilac trees, and strange night-dreams.

"Good-night, dear Mrs. Bracy," says the girl, starting from her seat. "How shall I thank you for all your kindness to me. Don't be anxious; I am *sure* no one here ever thinks about my fortune, or about anything but being good to me." But alas! Baxter was not there to hear her.

The Celt of Wales and the Celt of Ireland.

ON Christmas-night last, the present writer witnessed a little spectacle which, trifling in itself, seems, for reasons to be presently stated, not unworthy of description and consideration.

The scene was at night in a huge barn outside a village in a certain lonely mountain district in the heart of Wales. Not a fashionable tourist-haunted village the reader is requested to bear in mind, but a scattering of some twenty cottages of the solid, almost Cyclopæan, Welsh stonemasonry, of which (with the exception of the parsonage) the most imposing edifices are the post office, the smithy, and the turnpike gate house. No "public" or drink-shop of any sort exists in Llan——, but, *en revanche*, besides the church are two large dissenting chapels, belonging of course to the small farmers whose holdings are dotted over the surrounding hills. The assembly, though modestly announced on the tickets of admission (price 6d.) as only a *Cyfarfod Llenyddol* (Social Meeting), was in truth a miniature Eisteddfod, or competition for prizes, by poets, essayists, singers, and *improvisatori*. Of course on reading this, the English reader at once beholds with his mind's eye the energetic parson of the parish originating the whole scheme, working it up diligently to the honour of Christmas, laying the squire under contribution for prize-money, and employing all the young ladies in the neighbourhood in decorating the hall with texts in Gothic characters as undecipherable as Chinese to the parishioners.

Nothing could possibly be further from the Eisteddfod of Llan——, which was devised, paid for, and performed exclusively by and for the villagers themselves, the carpenter, the blacksmith, and a score of farmers. Naturally every arrangement was of the simplest kind. The rough-hewn stone walls of the barn, with the rock on which they stand projecting here and there through the floor, were only relieved by two inscriptions—"A Merry Xmas," and "*Cymru lân gwlad y gân*,"—"Fair Wales the Land of Song," emblazoned with holly leaves and berries, on white calico, and illuminated by three rather smoky lamps pendant from the beams above. Of what degree of luxury the "stall seats" may have boasted I cannot tell, the well-packed crowd thoroughly occupying every inch of sitting and standing room. At the upper end, near a table, sat the young pleasant-looking chairman, with a white rosette on his breast, together with the principal candidates for the prizes; and the competition went on with great *verve* and rapidity for about a couple of hours. I was

unfortunately absent when the *Penillion* was sung—a peculiar Welsh form of improvisation in dialogue, wherein both performers choose some theme, and respond to one another in impromptu song to a certain familiar tune. This was said to have been done (as is often the case) with cleverness and humour, little incidents of the hour and friendly personalities being introduced into the rhymes. After the *Penillion* came a really charming glee, sung with feeling and delicacy, and rather erring on the side of being too *piano* and subdued, than of anything approaching the music-hall style of exhibition. This was listened to by the audience with breathless attention and encored enthusiastically, and after it followed an original poem of some twenty stanzas on the “Robin,” repeated in a sort of recitative by the author, an intellectual-looking man, a small shopkeeper in a neighbouring village. Each verse of this poem apparently contained some playful fancy, or as an Elizabethan writer would have said a “conceit,” which was thoroughly appreciated and enjoyed by the audience, and secured a prize for the composer. Next came a short Essay on “the Duties of Mothers to their Children,” by the wife of the carpenter of the village, whose husband and daughters took the chief parts in a really excellent song which, with the distribution of the prizes, concluded the amusements of the evening.

As I walked home in the moonlight, with the snow-capped mountains and silent brown woods around my path, the reflection struck me very forcibly that the people who could originate and enjoy such a refined entertainment as I had witnessed must differ in many essential particulars from the peasants of most other countries with whom I had acquaintance. I thought of how the English agriculturalist, when left to choose his own diversion, invents such sports as tumbling in sacks, grinning through a horse collar, and climbing a greasy pole for a leg of mutton; how his ideal of heaven has been confessed to be a “public with a fiddle going;” and finally how when the parson and the squire undertake to afford him entertainment apart from the supreme attractions of victuals and drink, it is considered indispensable to choose for the Penny Reading or the musical performance, literature and melodies indefinitely less refined than those which the spontaneous good taste of these Welshmen and women had led them to prefer. In France again, I thought how the young men and women would have insisted on a dance—possibly the Cancan—instead of such an *anodyn* style of amusement, as they would have deemed our *Cyfarfod*. When the idea presented itself of the inhabitants of an Irish village of no greater pretension than Llan—, unassisted by squire or clergyman, getting up on their own account such an *Eisteddfod*, the incongruity of the notion was so startling that it brought vividly to a focus the impressions I had been receiving, through a residence of many years in the two countries, of the vast and not easily explicable difference which exists between the Celtic populations of Wales and Ireland. Perhaps in these days, when a very influential school of thinkers seem prepared to resolve every human characteristic—moral,

intellectual, religious and æsthetic—into a matter of Hereditary Transmission, it may not be uninteresting or useless to spend a little study on a problem touching so nearly the assumed law of such transmission. Here are two branches of the same great Celtic family, distantly allied—as philologists affirm, considerably *more* distantly than the Irish from the Highland Scotch, for example—but still of the same blood, members of that same earliest swarm which left the old Aryan Home for the West before history began. They have dwelt for several thousand years side by side as next neighbours, in countries under the same latitude and with a similarly pluviose climate, and propinquity to “the melancholy ocean.” For several centuries they have both been under the rule of the same conquerors. Intercourse between them at a very early period was so close that several saints and heretics,* legends and musical airs, are to this day attributed to Wales by Welsh, and to Ireland by Irish archæologists. Yet instead of exhibiting such obvious and striking resemblances as might have been anticipated, under circumstances so similar, and instead of progressing together step by step in prosperity, the differences, or rather contrasts, in the characteristics and fortunes of the two people are so much more salient than their likenesses, that nine Englishmen out of ten forget that they are anywise akin, and no statesman dreams that because one Act of Parliament is fitted for Ireland, it is likely to be needed in Wales.

Without pretending to offer novel observations on themes so familiar as the characteristics of the two countries, I think that an attempt to lay them side by side in parallelism may not be without a certain interest, and possibly not without use. Either the laws of heredity are not exactly what we have of late been led to suppose, or the causes which have interfered with their action on so large a scale and in so decided a manner deserve to be carefully investigated. Could Ireland be rendered prosperous, contented, and loyal as Wales, could the Irish be clothed, and educated, and inspired with the same hopeful industry as the Welsh, no greater boon could befall the Empire. And, it may be added, could the Welsh be made to observe certain laws of moral conduct as sacredly as do the poor peasantry of Ireland, it would likewise be a gain to the virtue of the world. Whether we are to look for the cause of the difference in the wrongs and miseries of past ages or in the existing economical, political, or religious conditions of the two countries, is therefore a problem fairly claiming the attention of every thoughtful Englishman.

The chief *present* differences between Wales and Ireland (which ought to be borne in mind, but on which we shall not further touch in this paper) are as follows: Ireland is ultra-Catholic, Wales ultra-Protestant. Wales has an Established Church which is not the Church of the masses. The Church of Ireland has been disestablished. The land of Ireland is chiefly

* Pelagius = Morgan (Sea-born) being one of the most eminent.

held by men of Saxon race. The landowners of Wales are still very generally Welshmen by blood and sentiment. Wales possesses innumerable mines and quarries all over the country, holding out bribes to speculation and keeping the wages of labour exceedingly high. Ireland, being almost exclusively an agricultural country with little industry except the linen trade, there exist few opportunities of fortune-making, and the wages of labour are proportionately small. Finally, while Ireland has gone in a vicious circle, her wrongs and sufferings creating a class of agitators, and agitation preventing the development of the resources of the country, Wales has had few wrongs and no agitators; jealousy has been out of question between the small and poor and the great and rich country; and patriotism has assumed the harmless form of enthusiasm for the national language, music, and monuments. Instead of a Home Rule meeting, there is an Eisteddfod.

Preliminary to any parallel between the Welsh and Irish nations, it is to be remarked *en passant* that, while both have well-marked characteristics, the smaller and geographically less isolated country is more distinctly individualised and keeps closer to its traditions than the large island. If, for example, we take *Language* as a test of sustained nationality, we find the old "Cymraig" to this day both the spoken and written language of the whole Principality; scarcely a Welshman, save a few of the upper classes, being ignorant of it, and about half the nation, it is supposed—for no statistics exist—understanding no other tongue. Books in considerable numbers are yearly printed in Welsh, and a great many very popular and fairly-edited newspapers. Nor do the zealous Cambrians forsake their beloved language even when they cross the Atlantic; no less than fourteen journals, we are told, are published in Welsh in the United States and Canada.

Pretty nearly the converse of all this holds good respecting Ireland. I have been favoured by the Registrar-General of Ireland, Mr. Burke, with calculations founded on the admirable Returns prepared under his direction and that of his predecessor Mr. Donnelly, from whence the following facts come to light:—

In the year 1861, 19·1 per cent. of the population of Ireland spoke Irish, namely 1,105,536 persons. In the year 1871 this proportion had sunk to 15·1 of the population, namely, to 817,875 persons. Thus it appears that the use of the Irish language is dying out at the rate of more than 200,000 persons in ten years; a fact made still more obvious by another table, showing that during the ten years in question the proportion of ages had changed still more markedly than the numbers of speakers. The younger generation are all learning English, and only the parents retain the use of their native tongue. How many persons can read and write in Irish as well as speak it, I do not know; but the number must be very small, as is certainly also that of the publications of any kind in the Irish language issuing from the press of recent years. Of an Irish newspaper I have never heard.

Next to Language perhaps we may place *Music* as a feature of distinctive nationality; and here again the Welsh hold their own most tenaciously. The exquisite old Irish airs, wild and melancholy with the sadness wherewith Nature sweeps the organ of the autumn woods and wintry waves, or simply joyous like the song of the thrush, this rich treasure of melody—where is it now to be found save bound up with Moore's tinsel verses in the volumes printed fifty years ago in London? There may be districts in Ireland where the peasants still sing their own music, but it has never happened to the present writer to hear them; whereas every man, woman, and child in Wales seems to know and to be able to sing remarkably well a whole repertory of the fine old martial national airs. Nothing is more common in passing a mountain cottage than to hear the "March of the Men of Harlech" or "Ar-hyd-y-Nos" in the voice of the young farmer or his wife at their work, or of a group of the lovely Welsh children playing round the door.

In *Dress* again the Welsh have kept longer to their national costume than the Irish. The red cloak has utterly disappeared from the grey Irish landscape which it once brightened; and even before the cloak, the red petticoat vanished; that once famous red petticoat which formed the theme of one of the oldest and quaintest of the national ditties—grotesque enough and yet pathetic too.

But even yet about one Welshwoman in fifty (bless her!) wears the dear old high-crowned broad-brimmed beaver hat, the tidy white cap, the cotton bed-gown, and the short stout linsey petticoat, leaving free the agile foot and ankle cased in strong shoes and home-made worsted stockings. To see one of these women at seventy and even eighty years of age, carrying a bundle of sticks or half a sack of potatoes, or any such "unconsidered trifle," on her back, or walking straight up a mountain like the side of a house, knitting all the way and never pausing to take breath; or else digging away in her garden, and wheeling about huge loads of soil or gravel, is to behold a spectacle of vigour and cheerfulness for which it will take a world of reading, writing and arithmetic to compensate when the stuffy school and the love of vulgar finery learnt there shall have made it altogether a thing of the past.

Other particulars might be added, but those of Language, Music, and Dress I think suffice to prove that Welsh nationality is better preserved and more pronounced at the present day than the nationality of Ireland. We may now proceed to draw our intended parallel between the recognised characteristics of the two nations, noticing the broad features of family likeness where they come into view, and the less accountable unlikeness which seems to prevail in nine points out of ten. Of course such a sketch might be made much more complete and instructive by including the other great branches of the Celtic tree in our purview, Gaelic, Breton, and Cornish. For such a task, however, a volume would be needed, not an article.

Physically, it seems impossible to trace the cousinship between Welsh

and Irish. Nothing in the form of head, countenance, or complexion betrays the fact. There are, of course, tall and short men in both countries, but no districts in Wales are inhabited by such dwarfs as people Connemara, or such Anakim as may be found in Tipperary. In both countries the women have special claims to beauty, but Irish loveliness is always a little in the "free and unconfined" *genre* of Nora Creina, while a "Maid of Merioneth" belongs to the well-braced, sure-footed, self-reliant type, which might claim the eulogium of King Lemuel: "She girdeth her loins with strength, she strengtheneth her arms." Unhappily, this grand figure, resembling the Trasteverina in Rome, is becoming daily more rare. As to particular features, the beautiful Irish eye—grey, with long dark lashes, and with the lids deep set and well chiselled—an eye speaking mingled innocence, mirth and tenderness, quite unmatched by any human orb—this loveliest eye has no analogue in the Welsh feature. On the other hand, the Irishman's frightful prognathous jaw, as seen in Munster and Connemara, is unknown in Wales; as is also the coarse lip which, in a lesser degree, is likewise distinctive of the Milesian race.

The question is surely curious, What has caused this difference in the *physique* of the two nations? Both have lived for ages on the same simple fare of oatmeal, milk, and potatoes (to which the Welsh now add endless tea-drinkings), under equally rainy skies. Yet while the Welshman is said to display the very same form of skull and delicacy of the muscular attachments which distinguished his progenitors who dwelt in the Denbighshire caves in the Stone Age, in the society of the Bos Longifrons and the wolf, his Irish cousin has managed to introduce (or preserve?) in the human countenance a mouth scarcely improved since the much remoter date when we were apes; and to forestall eyes which might beam beneath our brows when we become angels.

Pass we now upward to mental characteristics. Here there is certainly some family likeness. There is a nimbleness about the wits of a Celt which gives him an advantage over a Saxon such as that possessed by a man with a stiletto over one with an unwieldy Excalibur—that is to say, a Celt of Wales or Ireland, for the Scotchman is as much slower than the Englishman, as the Welshman and Irishman are more rapid. The whole mental machinery of the Welsh and Irish seems better oiled than that of the Saxon. They catch an idea as a good player catches a shuttlecock; and the speaker is never called upon, in the ineffably tiresome way so common in England, to repeat his remark that his auditor may be enabled to swallow and digest it before he reply. The retort comes sharp and quick as the snap of a revolver. Anger, pleasure, tears, and laughter follow the flash which gives occasion to them, and do not go on rumbling in English fashion three minutes afterwards. The Celt may deserve sometimes to be called indiscreet, wrong-headed, and scatter-brained; but no one would ever dream of applying to him the epithets of dullard, Bœotian, clodpole, numskull, or dunderhead. He may be silly, but is never beef-witted.

As a consequence of this rapid consumption of ideas, Welshmen in particular are ready to be excited about everything, and, (as always happens far away from the great centres of public interest,) more especially in local gossip. Their lively wits seem actually to furnish for such pabulum. To hear the clatter of tongues when Welshman encounters Welshman on the road, or the still more animated buzz as of a whole swarm of bees, at a little railway station where a dozen passengers await the train, is to be reminded rather of the streets of Marseilles than of any English place of meeting, where a nod and a "good morning" are the utmost efforts of good fellowship.

All this refers pre-eminently to Wales. In Ireland the energy for chatter is obviously less vehement, and the equally quick wits are content with reasonable intervals of silence. But the different *pace* of Celtic minds may there be no less traced by a comparison of the really delightful intelligence of a school of Irish children with the heaviness and slowness of a similar and much better fed and clothed class, in any part of England, even in the great towns. I have often tested the ability of young Irish boys and girls, either to understand a piece of humour or to appreciate an act of heroism, or, generally, to take in any idea quite new to them; and never yet failed of success. But the very same joke, or story, or new idea, presented to very "sharp" English town boys has been utterly misunderstood.

IMAGINATION is a faculty which I suppose will on all hands be conceded pre-eminently to the Celtic race, and yet perhaps it would be more proper to credit it with the *poetical temperament* than with the actual power of imagination in its higher walks. The phrases, the ideas, the music, a thousand sweet wild-flower-like ways of both Welsh and Irish, show that temperament, and distinguish it from the dull commonplace of the vulgar Saxon, very much as the names of the two conical mountains over the Bay of Dublin pertain to the Irish, who called them the "Gilded Spurs," and to the English, who named them the "Sugar Loaves." But when it comes to the creation of great poems, the Celt is certainly open to the sneering question whereby illogical persons have supposed that the claims of women to political rights might be dismissed:

Where is your Iliad, your Macbeth,
Your soul-wrought victories?

The kind heavens will preserve me, I trust, from the audacity of attempting to form an estimate of the rank justly belonging to Celtic poetry compared to the masterpieces of Greece, India, Italy, Germany, and England, but I have never heard the most enthusiastic Welshman claim for Dafydd ap Gwyllim himself a place much above Chaucer; and one point at all events is patent, that the merits of Erse and Cymric poetry is not of that solid kind which can bear translation, but depends in principal measure on the apt fulfilment of a number of arbitrary and intricate rules of rhythm and rhyme, whose shackles the

higher class of poetic genius would hardly condescend to endure. In later centuries some millions of Irishmen and thousands of Welsh have spoken English. How does it chance, if either race have great poetic gifts, that we have no Welsh-English poetry at all, and in Ireland only a few spirited Fenian ballads, beside older poems which can scarcely be called national, since Goldsmith and Moore might as well have been cockneys? Why is there no Irish, or Welsh, Walter Scott, or Robert Burns?

Gibson made in marble the only Welsh poems I have ever seen which could convey the sense of beauty to the Saxon, and they were inspired very evidently by a Muse whose birthplace was much nearer to Parnassus than to the bardic seat of genius—Cader Idris.

Again, it would be hard to define in what way æsthetic taste has been displayed (except in music) by either Celtic nation for ages back, since the days of the beautiful antique Irish jewellery. Certainly it is not exhibited in architecture. No uglier towns or houses than Irish ones exist in Europe; and when the most has been made of the Rock of Cashel, and a very few other early ruins, and of the four or five fine classic buildings of the last century in Dublin, there is scarcely a relief from architectural hideousness from Cape Clear to the Causeway, unless in the modern mansions of the Anglo-Irish gentry undistinguishable from those of England.

Such a thing of beauty as a genuine old English cottage—brick, stone, or wooden, thatched and rose-grown, such as may be seen by scores in Warwickshire, or Kent, or the New Forest—never yet came from Celtic hands. An Irish peasant or farmer, if he be left to himself, without interference from his landlord, builds his house (even if he be well able to afford a good one) in the least pretty spot on his holding, and in a manner to render his materials, whether stone and slate, or mud and thatch, as little sightly as it is possible to be. As to the regular typical mud cabin, there is something about it absolutely *sottish*. Nor is the complacent squalor of the place ever relieved by a well-kept bit of flower-garden, or a few creepers over the walls, unless beneath the tyrannical rule of the neighbouring squire. Indoors, the furniture is simply the cheapest and commonest which can be made to serve the necessary use of bed, cupboard, chairs, and tables; and the works of art are confined to coloured prints, which may possibly fulfil some religious purpose, but assuredly do not meet any æsthetic want of human nature. Not even in dress do the Irish peasantry display any taste. A farmer going to market at Mullingar in his long, ill-made coat, whose tails, if the day be rainy, he is compelled to tuck under his arms on either side to prevent them from dabbling his legs, is a spectacle of clumsiness at which it is scarcely possible to refrain from laughing, and even the charming beauty of Irish girls of all classes fails often to obtain its due mead of admiration for want of better taste in its adornment. Poverty, of course, explains much; but the poverty of an Italian contadina, or the wife of a fellah Arab, is quite as great as that of most

Irishwomen, and *their* dress renders even personal ugliness picturesque and graceful.

The case against Welsh taste is not so strong. If the Cymry do not create beauty, they do not mar the beauty which nature spreads so richly around them. Their houses (of massive stone, in most parts of the country), with dormer windows breaking the outline and latticed panes, have an aspect of durability, and even of dignity, which accords well with the landscape; and almost invariably they are placed in good positions, backed by the heather-crowned hills, and with brooks babbling by the moss-grown walls of the little old orchard of plum and apple trees. Honeysuckles, wild roses, foxgloves, ferns, and ivy hang from every bush or nestle undisturbed beneath every wall—and a painter could scarcely choose a lovelier scene than some of these mountain homesteads for a background, and in front of them a group of the beautiful, refined-looking Welsh children, playing with the puppy or “paddling i’ the burn.” Within the cottage will be found two or three ancestral pieces of fine old oak furniture, dresser and coffer, and perchance a chair or bedstead, which, with the huge wide fireplace entirely relieves the poverty of the place from any aspect of sordidness. The dress of the inmates too, though far gone of late from the original admirable old costume, is never ragged, and is indeed in general only too *soigné* and expensive for the fortunes of the wearers, whose pride causes them to spend much more on their clothes than on their food.

This matter of the commissariat is not to be altogether passed over in discussing the taste of the Welsh and Irish, who equally regard it with ill-omened indifference. The stimulus to the industry of man and the housewifeliness of woman which a taste for good and varied food affords elsewhere, is absolutely wanting in Ireland and Wales; and in the latter country even well-to-do farmers live on a miserable diet of everlasting tea and exceedingly bad bread. Indifferent butter, abominably ill-cured bacon, and herrings salted always a day too late and never eaten fresh at all, seem to afford their only and rarely admitted luxuries. Nor can those whose business it is to cater for English travellers in Wales be by any means induced to pay proper attention to securing vegetables and fruits, and better meat than the wretchedly ill-fed mutton, which enjoys an altogether fictitious reputation, on the strength of the very different Welsh mutton fattened for the table of private gentlemen or for the London market. Till Welsh innkeepers and lodging-house keepers mend their ways in this respect, they must be contented to limit their customers to persons who are willing to practise a good deal of mortification of the flesh during their scenery-hunting, and to pay for it too as if they were dwelling among the flesh-pots of Clifton, Bournemouth, or Brighton. In many pretentious Welsh hotels it is usual to behold four or five dishes set out for luncheon on an imposing long table, every one of them consisting of the last remains of a joint of cold mutton in a state which would scarcely be presented in an English servants’ hall. Of other food of any kind—*non c’è*,

Surely it is idle to go on talking of the peculiar æsthetic capacities of two nations who have never possessed any national art, except music, and whose houses, dress, tables and gardens display less taste and care even than those of the confessedly poorly-endowed Saxon.

So far as Imagination creates superstitious fears and fancies, both Welsh and Irish notoriously exhibit it freely, but the guess may be hazarded that the prevailing Calvinism of the Principality has given it the graver complexion which it therein seems to wear. Ghosts still appear constantly all over Wales, and (according to a bygone fashion, of which they ought to be ashamed) always leave behind them an odour of brimstone after their apparitions; while birds of evil omen (kittiwakes and curlews especially) screaming at night round a house are regarded with unaffected dread and abhorrence.

Irish imagination, though it has called up the banshee and an abundance of hereditary curses, revels chiefly in more *riante* dreams—the Leprachaun and Phuca (Puck); the beautiful invisible Island of St. Brandan in the far Atlantic; the towers of the submerged city beneath Lough Neagh; and the endless droll legends of the giant Fin McCoul.

As regards HUMOUR, it would appear that both Welsh and Irish Celts (notably *not* Scotch ones) have vastly quicker and keener sense of wit and fun than any class of Saxons, short of the most intellectual and cultivated of all. But, though the Welsh peasant knows a joke the moment he sees it (which is much more than can be said of his English brothers), and is a merry fellow in his own way, it is very rare indeed to hear from him any such *bons mots* as may be freely gathered from an Irishman's discourse. To bamboozle a Manchester tourist by selling him a hawk as a *Welsh parrot*; and in a court of justice to turn the tables on an overbearing cross-examining barrister, who was sneering at the witness for carrying turf in a sack, by the rejoinder that it was "always carried so formerly at T." (the *parvenu* barrister's native place—the Nazareth of the Principality, from whence no good thing can come); these are jests in the true Welsh spirit. It will be seen at a glance how widely they differ from the pure fun of Hibernia: such jokes, for example, as that of the car-driver whom the prim and elderly English governess "engaged for an hour," and who replied to the obnoxious stipulation, "Ah, thin, Ma'am, and won't ye take me *for life*?" Or the priest who, when consulted by a parochial sceptic about the nature of miracles, gave the man a kick, and asked him, "Did he feel it?" "In coorse I did," responded the injured inquirer. "Well then, remember this! It would have been a *miracle if you did not*."

Passing to the AFFECTIONS, it will be admitted by everyone that the Maternal sentiment abounds in both the nations of whom we write. Happy is the child who has an Irish nurse or a Welsh mother! The hideous stories of cruelties to infants which every now and then come to light in English cities are unheard of among Celtic populations, and the passionate affection they commonly show for their beautiful little

children, or even for their foster children, is delightful to witness. No danger in boarding out pauper orphans in either country! In the matter of conjugal and fraternal attachments also there seems to be a shade more warmth of feeling; or perhaps it would be more fit to say that the poor in Ireland and Wales manifest an amount of sentiment for which only the well-to-do find either leisure or power of expression in England.

The general standard of courtesy among acquaintances and towards strangers is also unquestionably higher both in Wales and Ireland (wherever tourist-dealing has not spoiled it) than in any part of the North of England, perhaps even than in the more genial south and west. There is an inborn politeness in the Celt, a talent for saying graceful things, which the Saxon only attains at the culmination of culture and refinement. There seems to be, however, some difference between the two Celtic races wherewith we are concerning ourselves, as regards the converse of politeness, when it breaks down under pressure. There is a capacity for the very vulgarest insolence in an irate Irishman of the lower class, quite unparalleled elsewhere, and it is often painfully instructive to observe how rapidly the tone of obsequiousness is exchanged for this foul-mouthed insolence when the hope of gaining anything by adulation is disappointed. A tribe of creatures so debased in this way as the beggars of Killarney and Wicklow disgrace no other country. Welshmen are proverbial for a hasty temper, but they never seem to forget themselves in their anger as do the Irish. On the contrary, they exercise a surprising degree of self-control when offended, and exhibit caution and reticence which, taken with subsequent evidences of enduring vindictiveness, border on hypocrisy. As a rule, they seek balm for their wounded feelings so continually in the law courts that they probably deserve their reputation of the most litigious people in Europe.

Mendicity in Wales is only practised by tramps, gipsies, and tinkers. Thus charity, in the almsgiving sense, has no place among Welsh virtues, but the people are abundantly kind and helpful to one another in illness or distress. In Ireland, as everybody knows, the poorest cabin will offer such entertainment as it possesses to every wayfarer who asks for shelter or food. In scores of cases I have known poor widows on the verge of starvation give freely their "bit of bread" to the first "bowzy" beggar who thinks fit to stop at their door. Of course, Roman Catholic ethics have much to do with this national habit, and also with the selection of the profession of mendicancy by those highly-devout persons who form (or did form a few years ago when I visited the spot) the staple of the band of pilgrims at St. Patrick's Purgatory in Lough Derg.

Both Welsh and Irish are, I think, more kind to animals generally than the English peasantry. Irishmen treat their horses, cattle, and pigs in a very friendly way, and a celebrated physiologist, resident in Dublin, informed me that public opinion in Ireland would never permit of vivi section demonstrations—a dictum which it is satisfactory to see verified

by the recent Parliamentary return, showing that not a single licence for the practice has been taken out under the new Act for any laboratory or school in Ireland. The same holds good of Wales, where the affection of the people for their intelligent sheep-dogs would naturally make the notion of scientific torture detestable. The position of a dog in a Welsh farmhouse is indeed to the last degree pleasant and independent. He lives at large, pursues his vocation of driving the sheep with professional zeal, carries on untrammelled his feuds, friendships, and flirtations with all the other sheep-dogs in the neighbourhood, is valued by his master, caressed by the children, and known by name and reputation to everybody within a dozen miles of his abode.

We now come to a matter of supreme importance in the character and lives of both Welsh and Irish—their peculiarly fervent sense of RELIGION. Ireland was a Holy Isle even in Pagan times ; an Isle of Christian Saints while yet half Europe worshipped Odin ; and to this day she is a Land of Faith in a sense which could not justly be applied to England, much less to France or Germany. In Wales again, the seed of fervid pietism scattered broadcast a hundred years ago by Wesley and Whitfield, found its most congenial soil, and the nation continues yet in a state of revivalism, from which an English town invariably falls away a month after the departure of its Moodys and Sankeys. The chapel-building and chapel-going, the Bible-reading and hymn-singing, the Sabbatarianism, the perusal of religious biographies and scriptural commentaries, all carried on by the hard-working peasantry and artisans, surpass anything we ever witness in England. In all this the zeal of the Welsh Dissenter is quite on a par with that of the Irish Catholic, and occupies in the same way the foreground of life. How singular is the reflection that creeds so far apart as Romanism and Calvinism should command similar enthusiasm in races so nearly akin ; and how our shallow theories about “the Celt needing a symbolical cultus,” or “priestly direction,” stand rebuked by such indisputable facts ! The Irishman finds in Romanism, the Welshman in Calvinism, the scaffolding whereon each builds his own inner temple, the pegs whereto he can hang his genuine religious emotions and be equally content.

The influence of all this fervent religion in actual life is, alas ! far from being as satisfactory as it ought to be in either country. With so noble a force at disposal, all the besetting sins of the two countries should be swept away ; but Father Mathew himself failed to place a permanent check on Irish drunkenness ; and the zealous Welsh ministers either do not or cannot shame their flocks, with all their prayer-meetings and Bible-readings, into anything like the strict chastity of the poor Irish peasantry. It is greatly to be desired that some of the opprobrium attached by Welsh opinion to the *malum prohibitum* of breaking the Fourth commandment could be extended to the *malum in se* of disregarding the Seventh.

A very important and collateral influence of the intense Puritanism

of Wales, is the absence of all such public amusements as Races or gambling, and the universal culture of a good deal of what must be termed intellectual pursuits. Wherever Bible-reading prevails as it does in Wales, there, even in a purely secular sense, there must be a high standard of education. The Bible of course affords, by itself alone, a splendid education, such as the peasantry of no Catholic country in the world enjoys; and the Welshman, through his strictly kept Sundays, and the long winter evenings in his mountain cottage, studies not only the Bible, but commentaries and books bearing upon it, till he possesses a store of ideas richer and better worth than is acquired in many a *Lycée* in France or Italy. The Church of England in Wales labours hard and honestly, but under the grievous disadvantage of being the Church almost exclusively of the rich and their immediate dependants, including not a few doubtful characters extruded from the membership of the chapels. Much vitality cannot be looked for in a congregation of fifteen or twenty persons in an ancient edifice built to contain six or eight hundred, while all the other inhabitants of the district crowd the roads on the way to their own self-supported Little Bethels. A fatal mistake seems to be made also by those clergymen and land-owners who endeavour to bring back the masses to church by something approaching to Ritualism. A few fervid Evangelical preachers might yet fill the churches of Wales, but if the numerous Holy Cross brethren holding Welsh livings, and other Ritualists, have their way, Disestablishment cannot long be delayed.

As regards MORALITY as distinct from Religion, the same broad characteristics notoriously prevail among the Celts of Wales and Ireland. The Theological Virtues, as the schoolmen called them, Charity, Faith, Piety and Patience, are prominent—the Moral virtues of Justice, Truth, Temperance, and Prudence in the shade. Thus we see the superstructure reaching sometimes to a saintly elevation, but the solid foundation which ought to support it is wanting. The love of Justice and of Truth, which forms the very back-bone of every worthy Englishman's nature, is replaced in the Irishman and the Welshman by the very imperfect substitute of personal loyalty or general kindness.

To an Anglo-Saxon living in a Celtic country it always appears that there is an unaccountable lack among his neighbours of the spirit so familiar to him at home, which cannot rest till *justice be done*—till a crime be detected or encroachment resisted, or any act of oppression exposed and stopped. On the contrary, of such abstract sentiments as these he perceives no trace; but every *personal* consideration of kinship, friendship, common sectarianism, or politics, are freely and even unblushingly cited as motives for neglecting or overriding justice.

In Ireland of course it has been always notorious that wherever agrarian crime was in question (and often where the crime was not agrarian), the prisoner's chances of escape depended less on the evidence which could be produced against him than on the *personnel* of his jury, among whom there might always be expected a few "boot eaters," *i.e.* men who have

sworn that they would rather starve (or *eat their boots*) than agree to a verdict of "Guilty." It is less known how much of the same sort of favour prevails over justice in Wales. A man who is tried there by a jury of his neighbours has always a splendid chance of escape; but if some of them happen to be also his fellow chapel-goers of the same denomination, his acquittal may, it is feared, be predicted with approximate certainty. Not long ago a case of sheep-stealing occurred in the Principality, the evidence against the accused man appearing quite overwhelming. The jury nevertheless brought in a verdict of "Not guilty," and one of them subsequently remarked to the prosecutor: "We were obliged to acquit So-and-so, you know; but all the blotting paper in the kingdom would not wipe the stain from his character!" The opinion of a late eminent Welsh judge of the judicial fairness of his countrymen was amusingly revealed by his exclamation, when his hounds had just overtaken a hare: "By G—— a Cardiganshire jury can't save her now!"

In lesser matters the same fatal precedency of favour over justice may be noted, both in Ireland and Wales, by everyone who looks out for it. In the latter country an additional motive against just severity appears to be the very lively fear of giving offence to one another which troubles Welshmen. Whether it be that the chapels exert some occult authority, or that social ostracism is specially to be dreaded in Wales, or that the men—though physically brave—are morally cowardly, I cannot say; but certain it is that the development of wholesome heat against injustice is very much checked; and while Welshmen are commonly said to be peppery and hot-headed, they may be frequently seen to bear with self-restraint annoyances from their equals which would draw from an Englishman at the least some very strong language, and from an Irishman an immediate recourse to fisticuffs.

There is, indeed, a most striking difference in this respect between the temperaments of the two Celtic nations. To Irishmen a secret is a sore burden. Even the proverbial "peasant cunning" traceable all the world over, is with them childishly transparent. In the upper class, no less than in the lower, the tendency to talk about their own affairs, their likings and dislikings, projects and disappointments, is almost irresistible; insomuch that it becomes quite a marked characteristic of any Irishman or Irish woman when he or she attains the average of English reticence. The consequences, it is needless to say, of this excessive candour are often extremely inconvenient; but it must be owned, that though not a very dignified it is a very lovable characteristic, and one which harmonises well with a very healthy and innocent *for intérieur*. The Welshman's temper is precisely the reverse. He is so cautious and secretive that he rarely ever risks himself to praise or condemn anybody. He cherishes his grudges (and they are, it is to be feared, numerous enough) in such privacy that it is hard to discover them; he keeps his own counsel, and of course has his reward. There is a tension in the whole moral atmosphere of Wales in consequence of this intense secretiveness and caution

which, as it becomes more and more sensible to the Saxon sojourner, is as stifling as when the air is over-charged with electricity without breaking in wholesome thunder and rain.

With respect to the great and most important virtue to which the name of Morality is often given *par éminence*, the contrast, as everyone knows, between Wales and Ireland is most complete. The peasantry of Ireland are at the very summit of the scale of the whole world. Of those of Wales the best that can be said is, that errors which are too common and far too lightly judged, are usually followed by marriage, and that there is but little venal vice. On this subject it would not be fitting here to say more; but of course there is no department of social life in either country which is not more or less affected beneficially by the national virtue or injuriously by the vice.

As to SOBRIETY M. Rénan observes, in his essay *Sur la Poésie de la Race Celtique*, that so strong in the Irish Celt is the "longing after the Infinite" that when he has no other method of gratifying it he seeks the Infinite by drinking "*une liqueur forte qui s'appelle le Whisky.*" In less "poetic" races the taste for liquors qui s'appellent l'Eau de Vie, le Schiedam, le Kirsch, Raki, or Rum is not supposed to be derived from so lofty a source; but whatever be the origin of the sentiment, the Celt is neither, I fancy, very much before or behind his neighbours in liking what he euphuistically styles "a drop." The simple truth seems to be that whenever people have nothing particularly interesting or stimulating in their daily lives, and especially when they are subject to the influences of a damp and variable climate, the propensity to give a "fillip to nature" in the cheap and easy way furnished by alcohol, will always prevail; and the differences observable will be more in the way in which they get drunk than in the fact that they drink to excess. The Celt seldom "boozes;" he may be a drunkard, but he is very rarely a sot. A great difference, of course, is made by the fact that the Irishman possesses his own cheap and excellent whisky, under whose too inspiriting influence he naturally quickly becomes roaring drunk and generally violently pugnacious. The Welshman has only his comparatively mild and proportionately expensive "Cwrw," sold in most parts of Wales at twice the price of English ale; and when he is fain to tipple too much, the results are more somniferous and less alarming. An extraordinary proportion of Welshmen are now teetotallers, and those who continue to drink do not dream of taking any stimulant with their daily meals, but only imbibe their ale on market days, when they go to the public-house and make a bout of it—perhaps half-a-dozen times a year. The chief difference between England and Wales as regards drinking seems to be that a rather higher class of persons drink to excess in Wales than are often known to do so in this generation in England.

The characteristics of nations always come out prominently in the matter of VERACITY. The French *mensonge* (qualified often by highly moral writers as "*sublime*") differs essentially from the Italian *bugia*, which

merely betrays that the *bugiardo* is naturally superior to the pitiful consideration of such trifles, light as air, as mere spoken words.

Again, the genuine Anglo-Saxon Lie is recognisable at a glance, by its clumsiness, its want of ease, grace, and precision; and, generally, by a slightly perceptible hesitation indicative of the fact that its author is ashamed of it—or at least expects to be expected to be ashamed of it, if exposed—a state of disquietude entirely foreign to the sentiments of the Frenchman or Italian.

Quite distinct from any of these is the Celtic lie, which is always fluent, ingenious, and also ingenuous; wholly free from that *mauvaise honte* which mars the English falsehood. But here also the different genius of the severed branches of the Celtic family may be clearly traced. The Welshman does not lie like the Irishman, nor either of them like the Scotchman, whose “lee” (when Calvinism permits) is a very bad fib indeed, being told with a perfectly lucid sense of the disgrace properly appertaining thereto.

The typical Hibernian falsehood appears to the dull Saxon intellect chiefly in the shape of a rhodomontade or gasconade, a big, boastful lie, such as the frog who tried to swell himself out like the ox might be supposed to have uttered, had he had an opportunity of addressing the spectators of his experiment. As this kind of lie naturally offends the *amour propre* of the persons to whom it is addressed (unless the speaker be clever enough to enlist it on his side by making them feel proud of the honour of the society of the descendant of so noble a race, the rightful owner of so splendid an estate), it is common for the indignant British listener to speak of it with deep disgust and severity. Probably nothing in the world has tended so much to depreciate the Irish (also with slight variation the American) character in English estimation, as the efforts both nations make to impress on their hearers the notion of their own and their country's claims to unbounded admiration. The Welshman never gives in to this kind of thing at all. He is exceedingly proud, but not at all boastful or vulgarly fond of talking of great people. While Irish provincial papers still write of local magnates much in the tone they did when Goldsmith satirised their description of “the *august*” party who accompanied Mrs. Keogh, Welsh journals trouble themselves very little about anybody, save always Sir Watkin Wynn, whose progresses are much more interesting to Welshmen than those of Queen Victoria.

A very striking characteristic which seems to pervade the whole Celtic race in all its branches is the total absence of that love of finished work—indeed generally of any kind of order in work—which is so deeply rooted in the Saxon temperament. There are not many Englishmen who can contentedly quit a task with a small portion of it incomplete, and who would not cheerfully bestow a few extra strokes of scythe or spade to finish it. So far from experiencing any such uneasiness, Welshmen and Irishmen usually leave, as it would seem actually on purpose, a corner of their fields unploughed, and a single haycock or half a ridge of pota-

toes unsaved. Of the general untidiness of Welsh and Irish farms—the gates off their hinges, the brooks which are allowed to overflow the roads—the shallow streams which are forded daily by scores of persons for want of a few stepping-stones—of all this kind of thing it is needless to speak, seeing that the complaints concerning it are reiterated in every book treating of either country. “Order” may be “Heaven’s first law,” but it is not even the second or the twentieth law of Wales or Ireland. No Welsh or Irish servant (the former even less than the latter) can be induced, by entreaties or objurgations, to lay a table or arrange a room for two consecutive days in the same way, or to place the articles in their charge in daily use in the same receptacle. The sort of orderly mechanism of an English household is absolutely impossible with Welsh or Irish servants, who are extremely clever, honest, obliging, everything else that can be desired, but who will merely be driven to rebellion by the effort to make them, in the English sense, orderly.

The fact seems to be that a Rule, even if he have had a voice in making it, is, to the Celt, *per se* a hateful thing to be broken at once. So far from being “law-abiding” like the Saxon, the Celt cannot abide a law. The fact that he did a thing yesterday (which affords to Englishmen and to all domestic animals a certain reason for doing it to-day) is to the Celt, on the contrary, a cogent reason for neglecting to do it, or doing the contrary. His “freedom” will never “slowly broaden down from precedent to precedent,” but must be wholly unprecedented to give him the least satisfaction.

We come, finally, to the consideration of a point of character wherein, instead of resembling each other, the Irish and the Welsh Celt are at opposite poles—their difference in regard to it constituting, I conceive, one of the principal reasons for the adversity of the one race and the prosperity of the other, viz. PRUDENCE and FRUGALITY. “*Fionn a’n diu uisge amarach*” (Wine to-day, water to-morrow) is an ancient proverb which seems to have come out of the very heart of Ireland. There is no genuine Irishman, or even Anglo-Irishman, however his conscience, will, or ambition may have caused him practically to put away the temptation, who does not at bottom long to act on that principle. His genial (and, let us add, his generous and religious temperament) are all in favour of taking the goods the gods provide him, enjoying the present sunny hour, taking no thought for the morrow, and trusting to “luck” or Providence, or the kindness of neighbours (such as he would himself readily show), to help him out of the ditch if he happen to fall into it. Of course we all know what is the result when this kind of thing is carried on more or less by several millions of people—namely, the precise converse of that constant accession of wealth and influence which belongs to the eminently prudent race of Caledonia, a country which may be “stern,” but is anything but “wild,” as regards affairs connected, however remotely, with *£ s. d.* To the individual it may sometimes be questioned, whether a prudent temperament secures so much of happi-

ness, taking all the years of life together, as a careless and impulsive one. Of all dreary disillusionings, the dreariest must be that of the rich old man, who has denied himself every pleasure while he had senses and emotions to taste it, and sits down to partake at the eleventh hour of the feast of life, when appetite is dead and love has fled, and disease lays its grip on him, and reminds him that it is time to go to that bed which all his balance at the banker's can unfortunately make neither more warm or more soft. But however it may be for the man himself, there can, I suppose, be no doubt that the fewer prudent and frugal persons there are in any country, so much the less prosperous that country will be; and thus it comes to pass that the land where the principle of "Wine to-day, water to-morrow" has too many adherents, is (other potent causes aiding to the result) in the condition of Ireland for centuries back.

The Welshman, on the other hand, though he objects to order as much as the Irishman, has no recklessness about him; on the contrary, his distinguishing characteristic is Prudence. He takes a great deal of thought for the morrow—denies himself almost necessary food, learns English and everything else which he thinks can help his advancement, speculates cautiously in mines and quarries with his little savings, and travels about the world to see where he can best find an opening, or else pushes himself at home into some profession considerably higher than his antecedents would seem to warrant. In no part of the British Isles can there be found, I imagine, so many men who began life as the sons of small farmers or tradesmen of the humblest class, and who now occupy the position of clergymen, doctors, solicitors, and even barristers in their native country, while their nearest relations remain in the class of peasants. And the Welshman "takes a polish" remarkably well, sinks his provincialism, and does no discredit to any position to which he may attain. While an Irishman, if he be vulgar, remains a vulgar Irishman to the end of the chapter, and never loses his brogue or his boastfulness, a Welshman, with finer tact, acquires to a great extent the voice and manners of those with whom he associates.

Thus it comes to pass that, while the great natural gifts of an Irishman are constantly wasted, and lead to nothing save the passing enjoyment of the hour for himself and friends, it rarely happens that a Welshman possesses ability without turning it to practical account, and mounting several steps in the social ladder before he dies. A country abounding in the means of education and in openings for profitable industry, wherein this climbing process is carried on by all the most energetic spirits in every town and parish, is tolerably sure to be loyal and contented. We need perhaps scarcely look any further for explanation of the present peace and prosperity of Wales.

Thomas Otway.

WE gaze at the range of wooded hills that rises between us and the sky, and we think we perceive clearly enough of what the blue-grey wall consists. It appears to be a single mass, diversified no doubt by upland and hollow, but in its general character solid and complete. Yet we approach nearer and nearer, we scale a line of hills, we descend into a valley, and still the old loftier range is before us. We begin to understand that what seemed a solitary barrier was in fact only a series of independent ranges, each distinct in itself, but all melted together in the harmonious perspective. So it is in literature. But even as the apparent extent of a mountain range, though not strictly accurate, is yet a good general type of the tendency of incline in the particular district, so the wide groups that form themselves in the history of letters, though curiously inexact to the minute observer, are yet excellent landmarks in the large field of study. In reviewing the dramatic literature of England we are accustomed to speak loosely of the drama of the Restoration, as of a school of playwrights flourishing from 1660 to 1700, and we attribute certain qualities without much distinction to all the plays of this wide period. We are not incorrect in this rough classification; there are certain obvious features which all the dramatists who survived the first date and were born within the second unite in displaying. A Gallican vein runs through tragedy and comedy, just as surely as an Italian vein ran through the Elizabethan drama. From Davenant to Cibber the aims are the same, the ideal the same, the poetic sentiment the same. But when we look a little closer, we are ready to forget that this general coincidence exists. When the drama was publicly reinstated under Charles II. it was a pompous and gorgeous thing, with a new panoply of theatrical display. Under the auspices of Davenant, a set of fashionables wrote stilted pieces of parade which hardly belonged to literature at all. The two families of the Killigrews and the Howards were the main supporters of this rustling, silken school, and the year 1665 was the approximate date of its decay. Dryden sprang, a somewhat tawdry Phoenix, from its ashes, and, in company with Etheredge and Shadwell, recalled the drama to something like good sense. This was the first epoch of the Restoration, and for five years these three names were the only tolerable ones in English drama. Between 1670 and 1675 this group received a sudden accession of number so remarkable, that it has had no parallel since the days of Marlowe. Within four years Crowne, Aphra Behn, Wycherley, George, Duke of Buckingham,

Lacy Settle, Otway, and Lee published each his first play, and in company with these more or less distinguished men, a whole army of forgotten playwrights burst upon the world. After this efflorescence, this aloe-blossoming of bustling talent, twenty years passed quietly on without a single new writer, except Southerne, who belonged in age to the earlier, and by genius to the later school. Then, again, between 1693 and 1700, there ripened simultaneously a new crop of dramatists—Congreve, Cibber, Mary Pix, Vanbrugh, Farquhar, and Rowe. It is plain that some designation should distinguish the first group from the second.

I would propose retaining the name of Restoration dramatists for the men of the earlier period, to entitle the contemporaries of Congreve the Orange dramatists: thus getting rid of the deceptive impression that the excesses and the elegances of these last writers were in any way connected with the reign of Charles II., who died when most of them were children. It will be found that something of the bluff wit of Jonson still lingered about the humour of Wycherley and Shadwell; there was not a trace of it in the modern and delicate sparkle of Congreve; the tragedians, too, even such dull dogs as Crowne, retained a tradition of the sudden felicities and barbaric ornament of the Elizabethan, though in an extremely modified form: a roughness which has entirely disappeared from the liquid periods of *Tamerlane* and *The Mourning Bride*. It may be shortly said that the younger school were as easily supreme in comedy as the elder in tragedy, since Congreve represents the one and Otway the other.

Thomas Otway was the son of the Rev. Humphrey Otway, rector of Wolbedding, a parish near Midhurst, in the western division of Sussex. The poet was born at Trottin, on March 3, 1651, in the midst of the Civil Wars, a few months before the decisive battle of Worcester. An error in geography has crept into our literary history, to the effect that Otway was born on the banks of the poetic Arun—

But wherefore need I wander wide
To old Ilissus' distant side,
Deserted stream, and mute?
Wild Arun too, has heard thy strains,
And eel-o, 'midst my native plains,
Been soothed by Pity's lute.

There first the wren thy myrtles shed
On gentlest Otway's infant head,
To him thy cell was shown;
And while he sang the female heart,
With youth's soft notes unspoiled by art,
Thy turtles mixed their own.

As Collins sang, addressing Pity; but, unhappily for this charming fancy, Trottin is a hamlet on the north bank of the Rother, embowered in the billowy woods of Woolmer Forest. There remain no traditions of the

boy's early life. A brief passage in one of his poems is all we possess :—

My Father was (a thing now rare)
 Loyal and brave; my Mother chaste and fair.
 The pledge of marriage-vows was only I;
 Alone I lived their much-loved fondled boy;
 They gave me generous education; high
 They strove to raise my mind, and with it grew their joy.

He was sent to school at Wickham, near Winchester, and in 1669 he was entered as a commoner of Christ Church College, Oxford. His early life at the University was so easy and brilliant, that in the bitterness of after days it seemed in retrospect to have been without a shadow. He was loved, courted, and flattered; his quick parts pleased his teachers and attracted to him the dangerous society of young wits belonging to a richer station than his own. Lord Falkland and the Earl of Plymouth were among his intimate friends at Oxford; we know their names, while others are forgotten, because they remained true to their companion in after life. It was probably among these golden youth that Otway gained and nourished a taste for pleasure and the lighter arts of life. Already he versified, and no doubt there were plenty of flatterers ready to promise him a career in the newly reawakened literary life of London. It was probably in the Long Vacation, 1671, being twenty years of age, that he managed, we cannot tell how, to introduce himself at the Duke's Theatre, in Lincoln's Inn Fields. His first literary friend seems to have been Aphra Behn, and to her he confided his intense desire to appear on the public stage. His face and figure, for he was singularly comely, were greatly to his advantage, and the heart of the good-natured poetess was touched. She gave him a part in her new tragi-comedy of *The Forc'd Marriage*. The circumstances were amusing. Betterton, already an actor in the prime of life, had to enter as a young lover; Otway, the tender undergraduate, posed as the venerable king. Yet the choice of the part showed the kindly tact of the shrewd Mrs. Behn. The king had to speak the few first words, to which the audience never listens, to make some brief replies in the first scene, and then not to speak again until the end of the fourth act. In the fifth act he had to make rather a long speech to Betterton, explaining that he was "old and feeble, and could not long survive," and this is nearly all he had to say till the very end, where he was in great force as the kind old man who unites the couples and speaks the last words. It was quite a crucial test, and Otway proved his entire inability to face the public. He trembled, was inaudible, melted in an agony, and had to leave the stage. The part was given to Westwood, a professional actor, and Otway never essayed to tread the boards again. After this blow to his vanity he went back to Oxford again, somewhat crestfallen, we cannot doubt. But this visit must have produced an immense impression on his character. To have been spoken to on terms of equality by Mr. and Mrs. Betterton, even though they may have laughed at him behind his back, was a great dis-

inction for the ambitious lad, and to have been received by Mrs. Behn, the greatest female wit since Orinda, this must indeed have marked an epoch. And he had tasted the fierce, delicious wine of theatrical life, he had seen the greenroom, associated with actors, trodden the sacred boards themselves. No doubt this early escapade in 1671 (Downes incorrectly dates it 1672) set the seal upon his glittering and melancholy career. He himself darkly alludes to the death of a friend, whom he calls Senander, as deeply moving him about this time; but all we know, even by hearsay, is that he finally deserted the University in 1674, having refused an opening in the Church which was offered him if he would take holy orders. He obtained instead a cornetcy in a troop of horse, in that year, and sold it again before twelve months were over. It seems that somewhat about this date he visited Duke, the poet, at Cambridge, and this in all probability originated the rumour that he became a scholar of St. John's College in that University. At all events we find him, in 1675, settled in London, without collegiate honours, and with no visible care to gain a livelihood by any honest means. That the poor lad was gulled by flatterers and idle companions is plain enough; it is obvious, also, that at first he must have possessed some fortune or received a liberal allowance from his father, for he tried to retain his aristocratic friends and vie with them in extravagance as long as he could. It was natural that he should gravitate to his old friends at the Duke's Theatre, and though they remembered his ill-success as an actor, they were ready to receive him as a poet. In 1675 each of the theatres accepted a tragedy from an unfledged dramatist; one was the *Alcibiades* of Otway, the other the *Nero* of Nat Lee, a youth of only twenty, but of precocious talent.

We must pause a few moments to review the condition of the stage in England since the Restoration. During the last years of the Commonwealth, Sir William Davenant had managed, by a clever subterfuge, to introduce in London lyric-dramatic entertainments, which he called "operas," a new word to the English public. These were given somewhat under the rose, but when Charles II. arrived, Davenant posed as the guardian of the drama, and claimed exclusive privileges. The King took counsel with Clarendon, and it was decided that only two theatres should be licensed, one under his own direct patronage and the other under that of the Duke of York. The King's Theatre was placed under the censorship of Sir Thomas Killigrew, and the Duke's was put in Davenant's hands. In April, 1663, the former company took up their abode in Drury Lane, and Dryden thereupon was regularly attached as dramatist to their house after 1667, until which time he sometimes wrote for Davenant also. In 1668 Davenant died, and the house in Lincoln's Inn Fields came into the far abler hands of Betterton, a young actor in the prime of life, who had studied carefully at the Théâtre Français with the definite prospect of taking the command of the Duke's company. It is true that for a short time Dr. Charles Davenant, the amiable son of the late poet-laureate, nominally undertook the direction,

but Betterton was the life and soul of the concern. This great actor and excellent man was one of the brightest characters of his time. In that jarring age of quarrelling, debauchery, and disloyalty, the modest and serene figure of Betterton appears in the centre of the noisy, boisterous crowd, always erect, always unstained. The greatest actor the English stage saw until Garrick, it was the singular art of Betterton to give nobility and life to the pompous and shadowy figures of mere lath and paper which the poor tragedians of the day called heroes : a thankless task which he fulfilled with such amazing success, that the pit shrieked delight at the trembling conscious poet whom the genius of the actor had saved from being damned. Hence Betterton was alike the darling of the world before and behind the footlights. In 1670 he strengthened his position by marrying Mrs. Sanderson, an actress of the company, whom in time he trained to play most admirably. Mrs. Betterton was a woman worthy of her husband, and under their conjoint supervision the Duke's Theatre rivalled the King's in success, despite the attractions of Mr. Hart, the tragedian, and the lovely Mrs. Eleanor Gwyn. The style of acting patronised at Lincoln's Inn Fields was pure and severe. It was a saying of Betterton's that he, when he was acting a good part, "preferred an attentive silence to any applause," and it is by such slight phrases as these, handed down by casual auditors, that we learn how to value the sincerity and artistic devotion of the man. When Otway visited the Duke's Theatre in 1675, the company was familiar to him. One girl, known in theatrical history as Mrs. Barry, had indeed been received in 1674, but her delivery was so harsh and her gait so uncouth, that she had been dismissed at the end of the season. Her beauty, however, was rapidly ripening, and she contrived to fascinate the worst roué of the day, the notorious John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester. It is probable that Rochester may have made himself specially useful to the Duke's company in the year 1675. In order to spite Dryden, the object of his animosity for the moment, the fretful young Earl had adopted the rival cause of John Crowne, and his exertions with the Queen had induced the latter to commission that poet to produce an opera for performance at court. *Calisto, or the Chaste Nymph* was the result of this unholy alliance, and it was brought out with great pomp at the palace. The daughters of the Duke of York performed the principal parts, and in order to give *éclat* to the affair, Betterton was invited to undertake the rehearsals and Mrs. Betterton to train the young amateurs. The princesses entered with spirit into the thing, *Calisto* was a great success, and Crowne a happy man. This was in 1675, and it seems likely that the immediate re-engagement of Mrs. Barry followed as a personal compliment to Rochester. It was no common chance by which her first appearance was arranged to be in Otway's *Alcibiades*. These two persons, who were to play Manon Lescaut and the Chevalier des Greux with a tragic ending, began life together and after a strangely similar initial failure.

We may learn much of the under-current of feeling from prologues and epilogues, but the prologue of *Alcibiades* is a mere nervous tentation. The poet tries to conceal his trepidation by affecting indifference; he shows a want of tact and experience in ridiculing the labours of his predecessors. But there was nothing in his own play that could excuse such arrogance. Young Nat Lee, with his blood-and-thunder tragedy of *Nero* at the King's, was giving far better promise than this. It was the fashion of the hour to write tragedies in rhyme, and *Alcibiades* accordingly is in tagged couplets. Nothing could be flatter than the versification, nothing tamer than the action, nothing more conventional than the sentiments of this tiresome play. So entirely without salient features is it, that one has to hurry down one's impression of it immediately one closes it, for in five minutes not a waif of it remains in the memory. Charles Lamb remarked that nobody could say of Mrs. Conrady's countenance that it would be better if she had but a nose. No one could say of *Alcibiades* that it could be better if it had but a plot. Its entire deficiency in every kind of quality gives it quite a unique air of complete insipidity, which no positive fault could increase. If it were even indecent, it would lose its typical dulness; on the contrary, its extreme propriety gave much offence to the pit. But Betterton, we cannot doubt, clothed the poet's lay figure of Alcibiades with majesty, and in the small part of Draxilla, the hero's sister, the exquisite Mrs. Barry, now carefully trained to her business, won the applause of the audience. More than this, she won the weak and feverish heart of the young poet, who from this time fluttered like a moth towards the flame or star of her beauty. She was an ignoble, calculating woman; no generous act, even of frailty, is recorded of her. Whether or not, in rivalry with Mrs. Gwyn, she set her cap at royalty, she had a well-balanced sense of her own value, and smiled at nothing lower than an earl. Of the letters addressed to her through the remainder of his brief life by Otway, we possess only the few last, written, it is probable by internal evidence, in 1682. We learn from these strange letters, which throb through and through with passion under the rhetorical ornament of fashionable expression, that for seven years she kept him in the torture of suspense. It is easy to understand why such a woman should reject a humble and penniless lover, and at the same time why she should have done her best, by little courtesies and partial coquettings, to keep by her side the poet who wrote the parts best suited to advance her fame. It was universally acknowledged that no characters became Mrs. Barry so well as those which Otway wrote for her, and thus the poor tortured lover had the agony of weaving out of his own brain the robes that made his mistress lovely to his rivals. The alliance between Mrs. Barry and Lord Rochester was probably sufficient to keep the poet at a distance at first, but as his passion grew and absorbed all other thoughts, he dared to lay his heart at her feet. Like Propertius, standing in tears in the street, while Cynthia takes deep draughts of Falernian with her lover, amid peals of laughter, so is the

picture we form of the unfortunate Otway, incurably infatuated, haunting the gay precincts of the Duke's Theatre. As long as life and fortune lasted, he never abandoned the company of the Bettertons, and they acted in every play he wrote.

Although *Alcibiades* had been a partial failure, Betterton accepted another tragedy from the young author in the following year. *Don Carlos* is as great an advance on its predecessor as it could possibly be. It is difficult to believe that they were written by the same hand. The rhyming tragedies were on their last legs, but *Don Carlos* was a crutch that might have supported the failing fashion for years. The supple, strong verse, un-English in character but worthy of Corneille or at least of Rotrou, assists instead of hampering the dramatic action: the plot is well-considered, tragical, and moving; the characters, stagey though they be, are vigorously designed and sustained. I think we should be justified in calling *Don Carlos* the last English tragedy in rhyme; by one leap the young Oxonian sprang ahead of the veteran Dryden, who thereupon began to "weary of his long-loved mistress, rhyme." The story is familiar to all readers of Schiller; in Otway's play the intrigue is simpler and less realistic, the object being, as always in tragedies of this class, to amuse and excite rather than to startle and to melt the audience. The opening scene is a fine declamatory piece of stage-business. The King, in full court, lavishes affection on the Queen, in order to excite jealousy in Don Carlos, and we are plunged at once in the middle of things. We soon become familiar with the two types which Otway incessantly presents to us. The Queen, a soft and simple creature, bewildered in the etiquette of a Spanish court, full of tenderness and womanly pity, is the spiritual sister of Monimia, Belvidera, and Lavinia. The hero is still more exactly the type which Otway drew, I cannot but believe, from his own heart. "An untamed, haughty, hot and furious youth," Don Carlos is yet full of feminine weakness, irresolute, fevered, infatuate, unable to give up the woman he loves though she is in the hands of another man, yet lacking the force and temerity to cut the Gordian knot by violence. Unstable as water, it is impossible that he should avoid the tragical end that awaits him. Such is Don Carlos, such again in the *Orphan* is Castalio; but the very antitype of the character is Jaffier in *Venice Preserved*. This poetic, passionate, childish nature, born to sorrow as the sparks fly upward, is as clearly depicted in the love-letters to Mrs. Barry as in the tragedies. The poet dipped his pen in his own heart.

The modern reader bears with impatience the rhetoric of the Restoration. But, if only to justify the statement that *Don Carlos* is the best of the rhymed tragedies, I must quote a few lines as an example of the nervous English of the piece. Don John, the King's profligate brother for whom Rochester probably sat, is speaking:

Why should dull Law rule Nature, who first made
That Law by which herself is now betray'd?

Ere Man's corruptions made him wretched, he
 Was born most noble that was born most free :
 Each of himself was lord, and unconfined
 Obeyed the dictates of his godlike mind.
 Law was an innovation brought in since
 When fools began to love obedience,
 And called their slavery, safety and defence.
 My glorious father got me in his heat,
 When all he did was eminently great,
 When warlike Belgia felt his conquering power
 And the proud Germans called him Emperor.
 Why should it be a stain then on my blood
 Because I came not by the common road,
 But born obscure and so more like a god ?

This is not the language of nature, to be sure, but it is vigorous, muscular verse, and the form was that in which the age most delighted. The contemporaries of Otway and Dryden would have scorned us for objecting to this artificial diction as much as we should ridicule a barbarian for finding fault with a *prima donna* for singing instead of speaking. These things go by fashion. It is an accepted idea nowadays that a tragedy hero must talk as much as possible like an ordinary person in extraordinary circumstances. The same idea, fortunately, prevailed in the time of Shakespeare. But always in France, and during the Restoration in England also, a certain poetic phraseology was demanded from a tragedian, just as musical expression is demanded from an actor at the opera ; and we must, if we would judge the productions of that age, submit them to the standard which their own time recognised. It is very interesting, too, to see the flesh and blood peeping out under the rouge and tinsel. The parting between the Queen and Don Carlos, at the end of the third act, despite its staginess, is full of passion and fervour. It was played by Betterton and Mrs. Mary Lee ; Mrs. Barry, for an unexplained reason, having no part given her in this drama. The wife of Shadwell the poet took the part of the Countess of Eboli, and it was perhaps on this occasion that Otway became acquainted with the man-mountain whom Dryden so much hated.

The Duke of York, it is difficult to conceive why, had admired *Alcibiades*, and *Don Carlos* was dedicated to him. The play was an immense success, and brought in more money than any tragedy of the period. The folks at the King's Theatre became jealous, and Dryden had the characteristic rashness to say spitefully, that he "knew not a line in it he would be author of." Otway, with schoolboy sprightliness, replied that he knew a comedy—probably the *Marriage-à-la-Mode*—that had not so much as a quibble in it which he would be the author of. We see the Mephistopheles hand of Rochester encouraging the youth to this impertinence ; but at all events Otway was the successful poet of the season, and wonderfully flush of money. It was the one fortunate hour of his life, and even this, we may believe, was spoiled by

the female Mordecai in the gate. A slight reference to the Fallen Angels, in the fourth act of *Don Carlos*, is worth noting. It seems to show consciousness of the great epic of the poet who had just passed away.

It is quite impossible to unravel the threads of personal animosity which confuse the dramatic history of this period. Everybody's hand was against everybody else, and no friendship seemed to last beyond a year. Almost the only writer who stood aloof from the imbroglia was Mrs. Aphra Behn. She kept on good terms with every one; the busiest littérateur of the period had no time to defame the characters of her contemporaries. Settle had been the first of Rochester's puppets, put up to annoy Dryden, and a few years later, when the arch-troubler was safe under ground, Settle still was sullenly firing blank cartridges at the Laureate. But dire discord broke out in this joyous camp of assailants in the year 1677. Otway was then the reigning favourite with Rochester, Crowne was snubbed for having been too successful with his *Conquest of Jerusalem*, and Elkanah Settle was quietly dropped. But "Doeg" had already endured the insults of Crowne, and the upstart Otway was more than his spirit could bear. He challenged Otway to a duel, and, if we may believe Shadwell, this terrible contest actually came off. Unhappily no lampoonist and no caricaturist of the period seized the heroic moment for the laughter of ensuing generations. Otway was better engaged in 1677, on the translation of a tragedy of Racine and a farce of Molière, which were performed the same night, and published in a single quarto. *Titus and Berenice* was affectionately dedicated to Lord Rochester. It is useless to analyse a play which owed little to its English garb. The versification is flowing and smooth, a little less vigorous, perhaps, than that of *Don Carlos*. There are only three important persons in the play, and Mrs. Barry took the unimportant part of Phœnice, Berenice's maid. Mrs. Lee was still the leading lady of the company. As an example of inanity and careless workmanship, the four opening lines of *Titus and Berenice* are worthy of a crown:—

Thou, my Arsaces, art a stranger here;
 This is th' Apartment of the charming Fair,
 That Berenice, whom Titus so adores,
 The universe is his, and he is hers.

But I hasten to confess that they are by far the worst in the whole play. *The Cheats of Scapin* has not lost all its wit in crossing the Channel, and in this Mrs. Barry was allowed the best part, Mrs. Lee not appearing at all.

Otway's preface, with its incense burned before Rochester, had scarcely issued from the press, when he incurred the violent hatred of that dangerous person. The physical condition of the Earl of Rochester had by this time become deplorable. For some years he had scarcely known what it was to be sober, and at the age of twenty-nine he was already a worn-out, fretful old man. His excellent constitution, which he had supported by temperance, until the unfortunate affair with the

Earl of Mulgrave had undermined his self-respect, had now almost given way under the attacks of a frantic sensuality. Lord Rochester had become a plague-spot in English literature and English society. He had begun by being an amiable debauchee, but he had ended as a petulant and ferocious rake, whose wasting hold on life only increased his malevolent licence. The nominal cause of the split with Otway was the pretty Mrs. Barry. As the Earl became more violent and more abominable, the agony that Otway felt in seeing her associated with him became unbearable, and the young poet was forced to sever his connection with the theatre. To stay in London and not to be near the idol of his infatuation, was impossible. He applied to his old college friend, the Earl of Plymouth, for a post in the army. Although the Treaty of Westminster, in 1674, had brought the war with Holland to a nominal close, fighting still went on on the Continent, and the Duke of Monmouth had an army at the service of the King of France. Otway obtained a cornet's commission under the Duke, and went over in a new regiment to fight in Flanders. He left behind him a comedy, which his quarrel with Rochester did not prevent Betterton from producing.

With the exception of Etherege, who lived apart and seldom wrote, no very excellent comic dramatist flourished in the Restoration period, properly so called. But there were several poets who produced no one consummate work, but a bulk of comedies which in the aggregate were a notable addition to literature. Of these, three names will occur to every reader as the most praiseworthy. Wycherley had wit, Shadwell had humour, Aphra Behn had vivacity. In all these qualities the two principal tragedians, Dryden and Otway, were inferior to each of these writers in his or her own vein, and in point of fact Otway made a very bad second to Dryden, even in this inferior rank. Otway's three original comedies are simply appalling. The old comedy of whimsicality had died with Shirley and Jasper Mayne, and though Etherege had invented or introduced the new comedy of intrigue, it had taken no root, and was to be inaugurated afresh by Congreve. There is no drearier reading than a series of early Restoration comedies. The greatest reward the reader can expect is a grain of wit here and there, a lively situation, a humorous phase of successful rascality. The general character of the pieces is given by Otway, with singular frankness, through the mouth of his Lady Squeamish:—

And then their Comedies now-a-days are the filthiest things, full of nauseous doings, which they mistake for raillery and intrigue: besides, they have no wit in 'em neither, for all their gentlemen and men of wit, as they style 'em, are either silly conceited impudent coxcombs, or else rude unmannerly drunken fellows, laugh!

The artificial comedy of the next generation was loose and frivolous, indeed without any sense of morality or immorality at all, but it was innocuous in its fantastic and airy unearthliness, so that no one could really be much injured by it, and only a pedant much scandalised. In Otway's atrocious comedies there is equally little fear of injury to the

moral sense of the auditor or reader, for the characters bear scarcely the faintest resemblance to human creatures, and their sins fill us with the mere loathing of an ugly thing drawn by an unskilful hand. The horrible puppets, in fact, like the figures in the base prints of the period, gibber and skip over the stage with imbecile gestures and a grin on their impossible faces. The only legitimate *raison-d'être* of the persons in an artificial comedy is that they should amuse. The light creations of Congreve and Vanbrugh completely justify their creation, for they do amuse us heartily all through—those of us, that is, who in this day of the worship of realism can venture to be amused by pure literature at all. But Otway's comedies—and they are typical of a class—do not perform the one slender function for which they came into existence. No faint shadow of a smile passes over our faces as we drag through the dreary and repulsive scenes of *Friendship in Fashion*. It is the saddest fooling, and we wish at every scene that this was the last, and that the poor little marionettes might be decently shut up again in their box and forgotten. And yet there is evidence on record that this was an extremely successful play. It was revived in 1749, but the audience of that date could not endure it for an hour, and it was hissed off the stage for good and all.

There are some interesting points, however, connected with *Friendship in Fashion*. When it was printed, in 1678, it was dedicated to the Earl of Dorset; in this dedication Otway speaks of himself as working hard for his daily bread, and as surrounded by slanderous enemies. It is at once timorous and defiant, and he speaks of himself as worse treated by the critics than a bear is by the Bankside Butchers. The play was probably acted and printed while Otway was away in Flanders, for so autobiographical a writer could not have omitted to mention the sufferings of that ill-starred adventure. It seems that he was widely accused of libelling some person or persons in *Friendship in Fashion*; he strenuously denies the charge, and in an air so heavy with invective it would be difficult to determine the exact ground of the rumour. Those who will take the pains to read this tedious drama will perceive that Congreve deigned to remember it in the composition of his exquisite masterpiece, *Love for Love*. The hero in each case is named Valentine, and Malagene, Otway's tiresome button-holer and secret-monger, is a clumsy prototype of the inimitable Tattle. But the resemblance is very slight, and I almost owe the genius of Congreve an apology for suggesting it.

Otway's military excursion proved a lamentable failure. As we had declared peace with Holland, it was only in an underhand and unofficial manner that English soldiers could fight in the Low Countries as auxiliaries of France. On the 10th of August hostilities finally closed with the Peace of Nijmegen, signed in the Raadhuis between Louis XIV., Charles of Spain, and the States General. The English troops under the Duke of Monmouth were treated with infamous neglect; they were

disbanded, and allowed to go whither they would, no means of transport home being provided. They were paid not in money, but with debentures, which it was extremely difficult to get cashed, and which are frequently ridiculed in the political lampoons of the period. The unlucky Otway got back to London, ragged and starved, with his tattered garments full of vermin, an unsavoury particular which was not missed by his rhyming enemies. The Earl of Rochester in particular had the indecency to introduce this mishap and its consequences into a doggerel *Session of the Poets*, which did equal discredit to his heart and head. Otway, however, was not yet crushed by adverse fate, and he sat down to write another comedy for his faithful allies at the Duke's Theatre. *The Soldier's Fortune*, acted probably in 1679, but not printed until 1681, is perhaps the only play of the time which is not dedicated to a person of quality. It is merely inscribed to Mr. Bentley, the stationer, or as we should now say, the publisher.

I am not a little proud [he says], that it has happened into my thoughts to be the first who in these latter years has made an Epistle Dedicatory to his Stationer. It is a compliment as reasonable as it is just. For, Mr. Bentley, you pay honestly for the copy, and an epistle to you is a sort of acquaintance, and may probably be welcome; when to a person of higher rank and order, it looks like an obligation for praises, which he knows he does not deserve, and therefore is very unwilling to part with ready money for.

It was the habit for every person of high rank to whom a book was dedicated to present the author with a gift of money. This noisome custom did not die out until late in the following century. In this instance the courtesies were reversed, for the prologue, very tolerably written, was contributed by Otway's old college friend, Lord Falkland. In the epilogue Otway describes himself as

Full of those thoughts that make the unhappy sad,
And by imagination half-grown mad,

and pours out a querulous complaint about "starving poets" wrecked by cruel fate, which must have struck a jarring chord at the close of a frivolous comedy. The play is full of autobiographical allusions to disbanded soldiers, debentures, ill food, and the hardships of war; but perhaps the most curious point of all is in the preface, where, in answer to some great lady who objected to the indecency of the plot, he quotes Mrs. Behn, of all possible females, in defence of its propriety. "I have heard a lady, that has more modesty than any of these she-critics, and I am sure more wit, say she wondered at the impudence of any of her sex who would pretend to an opinion on such a matter." Poor Mrs. Behn, good honest creature, has come, in the whirligig of time, to be looked upon as the last person in all known literature to mark the standard of dramatic delicacy. And yet there was a time when a copy of light verses was considered in good taste if the fastidious Astræa could approve of it.

Hitherto Otway had subsisted upon the proceeds of one play a year. In 1680 he seems to have made a supreme effort to free himself from his liabilities, for in it he produced two plays and his only important poem. Moreover, one of these plays is so immeasurably superior to anything he had hitherto produced, as to justify his admirers in hoping that he had taken a new lease of his genius. His rival and enemy, the hated Rochester, had for some months been sinking under delirium tremens; and, haunted by the terrors of his complaint, had sought ghostly comfort from Bishop Burnet. On July 26 he died, having ceased to be troublesome since the beginning of the year. There is an unusual sprightly hopefulness about the prologue and preface of *The Orphan*, as if a weight had been removed and the poet was nearing the fulfilment of his wishes. The dedication was accepted by "Her R.H. the Dutchess;" not, of course, the Duchess of Cleveland, as Voltaire oddly enough supposed, but Mary d'Este, the unlucky Duchess of York. The poetical reputation of Otway rests, or should rest, on his three best tragedies; and of these it may be said that *The Orphan* is as far superior to *Don Carlos* as *Venice Preserved* is superior to it. The epoch of rhymed tragedies had passed away since *Don Carlos* was written. Dryden had inaugurated the return to blank verse with his *All for Love*, in 1678, and Lee with *Mithridates* in the same year. Otway followed their good example, and with even more zeal; for he carefully studied the fountain head of dramatic blank verse in Shakespeare. In *The Orphan* we feel at once that we breathe a freer air and tread on firmer ground; there is less rhetoric and more nature, less passion and more tenderness. The plot of this once so famous play is nowadays sufficiently unfamiliar to justify me in briefly analysing it. A retired nobleman, Acasto, lives at his country seat with his two sons Castalio and Polydore, men of great ambition and fiery purpose, but still very young and curbed by their father's authority. They have, moreover, a sister—Serina. A young girl, Monimia, the orphan daughter of an old friend of Acasto's, has been brought up with these children, and is now a woman of the gentlest beauty. Castalio and Polydore have each fallen unawares into love with their father's ward, and in the opening scenes of the play we are introduced to their trustful mutual affection and then to the disturbing influence of this awakened passion. Castalio and Monimia, however, have secretly come to an understanding; but Castalio, from a foolish desire to let his brother down gently, feigns comparative indifference to Monimia, and even gives Polydore leave to win her if he can. At this moment Chamont, the brother of Monimia, appears on the scene and claims the ready hospitality of Acasto. He is a bluff, honest, but brutal and petulant soldier, and his presence is disturbing in the quiet household. He has formed a suspicion that Monimia has been wronged by one of the young men, and he annoys her with his rude and tactless questions. Meanwhile Acasto is taken suddenly ill, and Castalio and Monimia take advantage of the confusion to be privately married by the chaplain.

Polydore, believing his brother to have no serious claim upon Monimia, happening to overhear them proposing a tryst in the night, comes beforehand in the darkness to Monimia's chamber, and is not discovered. Castalio, coming later, is excluded, and curses his wife for her supposed heartlessness and insubordination. The sequel may well be imagined. Ruin and anguish fall upon the brothers, but most of all on the innocent and agonised Monimia, who finally takes poison, while Castalio stabs himself. There are many faults in the construction of this plot, besides the indelicacy of the main situation, which has long banished it from the stage. The foolish pretence of Castalio, the want of perception shown by Monimia, the impossible and ruffianly crime of Polydore—for which no just preparation is made in the sketch of his character—all these are radical faults which go near to destroy the probability of the story. But if we once accept these weak points and forget them, the play is full of delicate and charming turns of action, of decisive characterisation, and of intense and tear-compelling pathos. The old patriot Acasto, a study drawn, it is said, from the first Duke of Ormond, is a noble figure of a patriotic servant of his country, shrinking in old age from the frivolity of a court and studying rather a simple and patriarchal life among his tenantry. In the noisy soldier Chamont, a fierce and turbulent but not ill-meaning person, Otway produced a highly-finished portrait of a type with which his foreign adventures had no doubt made him only too familiar. Castalio is the veering, passionate, hot-headed man whom Otway invariably draws as his hero. This time the character is even more fervid and perverse than ever, and we are on the point of scorning him for his want of resolution, when the insupportable tide of sorrows that overwhelms him enforces our pity and sympathy. Over the character of Monimia probably more tears have been shed than over any stage heroine. As long as the laxity of public speech still permitted the presentation of *The Orphan*, no audience of any sensibility could endure the fourth and fifth acts of this play without melting into audible weeping. It was one of Mrs. Barry's most celebrated characters, and it would seem as though Otway had wilfully put his breast to the torture by heaping up, with lingering hands, all the turns and phrases which could enhance the trembling agony and helpless beauty of his mistress. He, like poor Castalio, was left outside to the night and the storm; and he tried to console himself by vainly imagining that his exquisite Monimia was unconscious of the wrong she did him. The force of Otway's language does not consist in flowery beauties that can be detached in quotation; he is not a poet from whom much of a very effective nature can be selected. His stroke was broad and bold, and when he did succeed, it was in figures of an heroic size and on a grand scale. The peculiar tenderness, and still more the lingering passion of grief which steep the whole play, are felt more intensely at a second reading than a first. *The Orphan* is not a masculine work, but it might be the crowning memorial of some woman whom great ambition and still greater sorrow had forged into a poet.

The other tragedy of the same year, *The History and Fall of Caius Marius*, is merely a kind of cento, the language of Shakespeare being transferred wholesale into the mouths of Otway's characters. There was no bad faith in this; the author announced in the prologue, which was a reverent eulogy on his great predecessor, that the audience would find that he had rifled Shakespeare of half a play—in point of fact, of *Romeo and Juliet*, with reminiscences of *Julius Cæsar*. Of course such a performance is scarcely to be mentioned among the original works of Otway, and it has no further importance than belongs to the curious fact that for a couple of generations it superseded *Romeo and Juliet* on the English stage. It was dedicated to the Earl of Falkland in a preface which contains a graceful allusion to the venerable Waller, the last survivor of the poets who had lived in Shakespeare's lifetime. Lavinia, the principal character, who spoke the words written for Juliet, was acted to perfection by Mrs. Barry, who had now attained that majestic beauty and serenity, which she still retained even in Colley Cibber's early days. From the epilogue we learn that the poet usually had his benefit on the third night, and that sometimes he mortgaged his gains before they came into his pocket. The lines are melancholy enough in all conscience.

Our Poet says, one day to a play ye come,
Which serves you half a year for wit at home,
But which among you is there to be found,
Will take his third day's pawn for fifty pound?
Or, now he is cashier'd, will fairly venture
To give him ready money for's debenture?
Therefore, when he received that fatal doom,
This play came forth, in hope his friends would come
To help a poor disbanded soldier home.

In the same year 1680, the "poor disbanded soldier," published a poem in quarto, entitled *The Poet's Complaint of his Muse*, which gives some vague memoir of himself, and much violent satire of his enemies. The opening of this poem is vigorous and picturesque, like a roughly-etched bit of barren landscape.

To a high hill, where never yet stood tree,
Where only heath, coarse fern, and furzes grow,
Where, nipt by piercing air,
The flocks in tattered fleeces hardly graze,
Led by uncouth thoughts and care,
Which did too much his pensive mind amaze,
A wandering Bard, whose Muse was crazy grown,
Cloy'd with the nauseous follies of the buzzing town,
Came, look'd about him, sighed, and laid him down.

The Bard, who is plainly Mr. Thomas Otway, presently proceeds to give an account of his own early life, and the tyrannous empire of his Muse, at once his mistress and his fate. He then proceeds to denounce, under thin disguises, his principal enemies, and in the forefront, Rochester, Shadwell, and Settle. The poem thus develops into a series

of tolerably transparent political allegories, and closes with a passionate eulogy of the Duke of York, and a mournful description of his leaving England. The whole poem, which is well written and interesting, literally teems with the excitement of the Popish plots, then at the height of their vogue, and Otway was now a Tory, like Dryden.

There is still the same troubled sense of Titus Oates and his meaner brood of terrorists in the title of Otway's next play, *Venice Preserved, or a Plot Discovered*, which was produced in 1682. The author only half deprecates such a belief in the prologue, as he briefly reviews the events that had excited popular apprehension. His preface does not tell us how he had been employed since 1680, but, in addressing the Duchess of Portsmouth, he extols her bounty, extended to her poet in his last extremity. We are therefore justified in concluding that Otway had begun to suffer the last miseries of poverty. There is no diminution of power, however, in this drama, written out of the depths. In fact, as we all know, it is simply the greatest tragic drama between Shakespeare and Shelley. Out of the dead waste of the Restoration, with all its bustling talent and vain show, this one solitary work of supreme genius rose unexpected and unimitated. There is nothing in any previous writing of Otway's, nothing even in the moving and feminine pathos of the *Orphan*, which would lead us to await so noble and so solid a masterpiece as this. The poetic glow and irregular beauty of Elizabethan tragedy, its lyric outbursts, its fantastic and brilliant flashes of insight, its rich variety and varied melody, give it a place in our affections which surpasses what is purely owing to its dramatic excellence. In *Venice Preserved* the poetic element is always severely subordinated to the dramatic; there are no flowers of fancy, no charming episodes introduced to give literary gusto to a reader. All is designed for the true home of the drama, the stage; and without being in the least stagey, this theatrical aim is carried out with the most complete success. There are few plays in existence so original and so telling in construction as this; the plot is in almost every respect worthy to be Shakespeare's. The only point in which any weakness can be traced is the motive actuating Jaffier to join the conspirators. The revenge of a merely private wrong upon a whole commonwealth is scarcely sane enough for the dignity of tragedy. The story is briefly given. Jaffier, a noble young Venetian, had secretly married Belvidera, the daughter of a proud and wealthy senator, Priuli, who in consequence disowns her. The young couple fall into great poverty, and at the opening of the piece Jaffier is begging Priuli to assist them, but his entreaties are met with injurious insults. His pride is up in arms, and at that moment he meets his friend Pierre, a soldier to whom the Senate of Venice has refused his just rewards, and who is embittered against the state. He enflames Jaffier by describing the fate of Belvidera, the injuries done to Jaffier and the sorrows that will fall upon their children. They part with a promise to meet at midnight and consult still further. At midnight Jaffier accordingly meets Pierre on the Rialto, and after

testing the temper of his friend, Pierre confides to him that a plot is on the eve of being consummated, and offers to introduce him to the conspirators. This is accordingly done, but as they are jealous of the honesty of the new-comer, Jaffier gives Belvidera into the charge of the leader, an old man named Renault. As it is impossible to explain the reason of this to Belvidera, she goes off in great distress, and as in the course of the night Renault offers to insult her, she breaks away, and flying to her husband, entreats him to explain to her his cruel and unaccountable conduct. He has sworn not to divulge the plot, but as she begs him to do so, and assures him of her complete devotion to his will, he gradually loses his self-control, and at last confides to her the secret. Her first thought is that her father is one of the Senate, and is therefore to be among the victims. She implores Jaffier to relent, and at last persuades him, much against his will, to go to the Senate and reveal the plot, claiming as his reward the lives of the conspirators. He is finally convinced that it is his duty to do this, and, much as he loathes his bad faith, he actually goes before the Senate, and declares the plot. The conspirators are in consequence arrested in time, and their design completely paralysed. At first the friends, seeing Jaffier bound, believe him to be the partner of their misfortune, but, discovering their mistake, they load him with the heaviest reproaches, and, scornfully rejecting pardon, they claim an instant death. Pierre especially pours out the vials of his wrath on Jaffier, and the unfortunate man breaks down in an agony of humiliation and remorse. The faithless senators decree a cruel death to the conspirators, and Jaffier threatens Belvidera that he with his own hands will stab her unless she forces a pardon for them from her father Priuli. Her charms prevail, but Priuli's intervention comes too late. Belvidera goes mad; Jaffier struggles to the foot of the scaffold where Pierre is about to be executed, and stabs his friend first and then himself to the heart with a dagger. Belvidera dies of a broken heart at their feet, and the scene closes. To give an idea of the vigour and beauty of this play, it would be necessary to quote a longer fragment than could conveniently be given here. A single speech of Belvidera and the reply of Jaffier must suffice; they are considering the necessity of a life in poverty and exile.

Bel. O I will love thee, even in madness love thee !

Tho' my distracted senses should forsake me,

I'd find some intervals, when my poor heart

Should 'swage itself, and be let loose to thine.

Tho' the bare earth be all our resting-place,

Its roots our food, some clift our habitation,

I'll make this arm a pillow for thy head ;

And as thou sighing ly'st, and swelled with sorrow,

Creep to thy bosom, pour the balm of love

Into thy soul, and kiss thee to thy rest,

Then praise our God, and watch thee till the morning.

Jaff. Hear this, you Heavens ! and wonder how you made her ;

Reign, reign, ye monarchs that divide the world :

Busy rebellion ne'er will let you know
 Tranquillity and happiness like mine ;
 Like gaudy ships, the obsequious billows fall
 And rise again, to lift you in your pride ;
 They wait but for a storm, and then devour you :
 I, in my private bark already wrecked,—
 Like a poor merchant, driven on unknown land,
 That had by chance packed up his choicest treasure
 In one dear casket, and saved only that,—
 Since I must wander farther on the shore,
 Thus hug my little, but my precious store,
 Resolv'd to scorn, and trust my fate no more.

The character of Belvidera is one of the most exquisite, most lovable in literature. A thorough woman in her impulse, her logic, and her intensity of passion, she rules her husband by her very sweetness, and melts the scruples that no violence could have divided. The scene in which she persuades him that duty calls him to betray the conspirators, because her own heart yearns to save her father, is one of consummate skill and truth, and the gradual yielding of Jaffier's irresolute will before her feminine reasoning and absolute conviction is worthy of Shakespeare himself. No praise can possibly be withheld from the most delicate and vivid passages in *Venice Preserved* ; it is only where the interest of necessity flags, and above all in the nauseous comic passages, that we miss the presence of a great lyrical and a great humorous genius. Throughout, the spirit of the drama is domestic and mundane ; there are no flights into the spiritual heavens, no soundings of the dark and subtle secrets of the mind. The imagination of the poet is lucid, rapid, and direct ; there is the utmost clarity of statement and reflection ; in short, a masterpiece of genius is not obscured, but certainly toned down, by a universal tinge or haze of the commonplace. The political bias of *Venice Preserved* is most clearly marked in the comic character of Antonio, a lecherous old senator, in whom the hated Shaftesbury was held up to ridicule, the portrait being exact enough even to include that statesman's weak ambition to be elected King of Poland.

For the *Orphan* and for *Venice Preserved*, two of the most brilliantly successful plays of the period, Otway only received 100*l.* apiece ; what is still more astonishing is, that for the copyright of the latter Jacob Tonsen gave him only 15*l.* He probably made a few pounds by a prologue for Mrs. Behn's *City Heiress*, which was separately printed on a single sheet, in 1682. In *Monimia* and *Belvidera* Mrs. Barry simply took the town by storm. Her acting was by this time perfection, and her personal attractions were at their zenith. "She had," we are told by Cibber, "a presence of elevated dignity, her mien and motion were superb and gracefully majestick, and her voice was clear, full, and strong." It seems to have been in this year, 1682, that Otway made a last effort to secure the love of this cold and beautiful woman, whose worldly success he had done so much to enhance : the letters we possess are six in

number, a waif preserved perhaps by accident, and first printed long after his death. In the first two he reminds her of his unbroken constancy, of his patience and passion, his indulgence and hope, and entreats her to take mercy on a lover who has suffered the agonies of desire for seven weary years. He tells her that her cruelty has driven him to find solace in noisy pleasures and in wine, but that with solitude and sobriety her torturing image has never ceased to return and torment him. The third letter, sprightly and fantastic, contrasts with the yearning and melancholy appeal of the former two. He rallies her on an idle threat to leave the world, and takes upon himself, as a member of that world, to divert her from so ill-natured an inclination. The fourth is brief and passionate; he wrestles with her, as though he would force her frivolous coquetry into a serious declaration of love, and he tells her he can bear no longer the alternation of kind looks and cruel denials. The fifth letter is rough and inelegant in language; he storms at her with violent indignation, and denounces her vanity and selfishness with the sharpest irony. The sixth, the shortest of all and the saddest, quietly remarks that, in accordance with her promise to meet him in the Mall, he was there at the appointed hour, but she never came, and that he now begs her for the favour of one genuine assignation, that he may really know whether he may "hereafter, for your sake, either bless all your bewitching sex, or, as often as I henceforth think of you, curse womankind for ever." Here this tantalising but priceless fragment of correspondence ceases, but we know that the answer was for cursing and not for blessing. From this point Otway's ruin was but a question of months; his genius did not long survive his passion. He had now few friends left to help him. His one faithful ally, the Earl of Plymouth, had died in 1680. Otway's conversion to the Tory party had softened Dryden's animosity a little, but not to the extent of any very warm recognition. Plunged in drunken misery, Otway remains invisible to us until 1684, when he seemed to make a final effort to regain a place in society. He wrote in that year a prologue to Lee's *Alexander the Great* and produced a play of his own, *The Atheist*. This, his last drama, is a comedy, a sequel to the *Soldier's Fortune*, with the same characters, the vile company of the Dunces and Sir Jolly being happily excluded. It is, however, a very poor performance. The gross adulation of the preface to the eldest son of the Marquis of Halifax is enough to show how low the poet had fallen; the epilogue was written by Duke.

Charles II. died early in February, 1685, and Otway instantly seized the opportunity to publish a quarto poem entitled *Windsor Castle*, in which he praised the dead king and exulted over the accession of James. He had been always loyal to the Duke of York, and he hoped now to be remembered, but scarcely was his poem published than he sank under the weight of destitution. He found it impossible to borrow any more money; he was already 400*l.* in the debt of Captain Symonds, a vintner. It appears that he spent his last days in a wretched spunging-house on

Tower Hill, a place known by the sign of the Bull, According to one account he ventured out at the point of starvation, and begged a passer-by for alms, saying at the same time, "I am Otway the poet!" The gentleman, shocked to see so great a genius in such a condition, gave him a guinea, with which Otway rushed to the nearest baker's, ravenously swallowed a piece of bread, and died at once, choked by the first mouthful. This occurred on April 14, 1685. Many years afterwards, apparently to cover the scandalous fact that the greatest tragic poet of the age was allowed to starve to death in London in his thirty-fourth year, a new story was circulated to the effect that Otway died of a fever caught by chasing the murderer of a friend of his from London to Dover on foot. There seems no foundation, however, for this. No newspaper of the period is known to have announced his death. In 1686 there appeared a sorry piece of hackwork under his name, *The History of the Triumvirate*, translated from the French; and in November of the same year Betterton advertised a tragedy by Mr. Otway, of which four acts were known to be written when he died. During the winter of the same year, the great manager repeated his advertisements, and then there was no more heard of this lost play. But more than thirty years later, in 1719, two obscure booksellers issued a tragedy, *Heroick Friendship*, which they attributed on the title-page to "the late Mr. Otway." They gave no sort of explanation of the means by which they obtained it, and their publication was at once discredited, and has been ridiculed by every editor of Otway. I lay myself open, I fear, to the charge of arrogance if I confess that I am not quite ready to accept this universal verdict.

The play called *Heroick Friendship* is in blank verse of very unequal merit; some of it is of the very basest flatness, some of it has buoyancy and rhetorical vigour to a remarkable degree. It is most vilely edited, evidently from a cursive MS. or first draft; on every page there are passages which the transcriber has misread, and phrases that are feebly finished, as though an unskilful hand had patched them. There are not a few lines that are absolutely unintelligible, and it is a noticeable fact that these corruptions occur only in the most poetical passages; the flat and insipid scenes are clear enough. If this play had been put before us without an author's name, we should be inclined to pronounce that two persons had been at work on it, and that it had been printed from a transcript of a rough, unfinished MS., the transcript being by the same person who completed the play. I do not think that it has been noticed that Betterton had not been long dead when this tragedy was printed by Mears and King. My own impression is that those booksellers obtained it by some underhand means from persons who had access to the effects of Betterton, and this would account for their silence when called upon to show the credentials of the play. If it be asked why had Betterton concealed it for a quarter of a century, when he had eagerly advertised for it, the answer I would suggest would be that he received the rough MS. in answer to his advertisement, set to work as well as he could to copy

it out and to complete it, and when he had finished was so little pleased with the result, that he put it on one side. In an uncritical age no one cared for imperfect works by a great man, unless they could be completed and used. There were no bibliographers to secure the MS. of Dryden's *Ladies à la Mode*, and no interest would have been felt in a rough draft by Otway. So much for external speculation; of internal evidence I have also something to bring forward. Imperfect as the execution is, the plot and idea of *Heroick Friendship* are exceedingly characteristic of Otway. The story is briefly told: it concerns itself with the Roman occupation of Britain. A mythical King Arbeline has a brother Guiderius, of whose claim to the throne he is jealous; this brother loves a British lady, Aurosia, to whom the king makes overtures. In her terror she urges her lover to rebellion, to which he is further pressed by his dearest friend, Decimus, a Roman. Arbeline, discovering the love of Aurosia for Guiderius, determines on his ruin. He is arrested and sentenced to death. In order that he may take a farewell of his mistress, Decimus offers to take his place in prison for a night and a day, which his friend spends with Aurosia. At the end of that time Guiderius hurries back to release Decimus, but is followed and over-persuaded by Aurosia, who cannot bear to part with him. This vacillating lover, ever convinced against his will by feminine blandishments, is the fellow-creation, surely, of Castalio and Jaffier. The first act, I am convinced, is all Otway's, though doubtless patched and tagged by an inferior hand. The following passage, for instance, in spite of some textual confusion in the end of the first speech, is most characteristic of the author, who triumphs in a lover's parting.

Aur. Go then, be every influence propitious,
 And all the stars as fond of thee as I am!
 May the Gods join with thee, and justly move
 Against a tyrant in the cause of love,
 Drive him to death, and when he breathless lies,
 Lead the dear victor to the Elysian Gardens.
 There on the river's brink, within his view,
 Hasten, haste his way for me to crown his conquest.

Guid. But should the King by force!—by force!—O Gods!

Aur. Though everything should aid his hated passion,
 Doubt not Aurosia's spirit nor her faith;
 But I must go, or be suspected here,—
 A worse evil, if a worse can be,
 Than that of parting with thee; oh farewell!

Guid. Stay! Let me take a lover's farewell of thee!—
 One dear embrace, firm as my faith! O blessing!
 Thou balmy softness, as the morning sweet,
 When the glad lark with mounting music charms
 The mild unclouded heavens.

The rest of the play is unworthy of the first act, but there are passages throughout the second and third acts which may be confidently attributed to Otway. If the works of the poet are edited again, *Heroick Friendship* should by no means be omitted.

In person Otway was handsome and portly, with a fine air. Dryden, in tardy acknowledgment, admitted that "charming his face was, charming was his verse;" and the best accredited portrait that we possess of him shows that "charming" was exactly the right adjective to use. The face is of a full clear oval, suave and bright. We see before us the countenance of a gracious, amorous person, with more wit than wisdom, unfit to battle with the world and fallen on troublous times. My own impression of Otway is that he closely resembled the character of Valentine in *Love for Love*, save that, alas! no beneficent deity crowned him with fortune and Angelica in the last act.

Any account of the writings of Otway would be incomplete without some allusion to his relation with the great French dramatists, his contemporaries; and yet to enter into this at all fully would lead us beyond our limits. In point of time he was the coeval of Quinault and Racine, both of whom outlived him, but his intellectual kinship is much rather with Rotrou and Corneille. The masterpieces of *le grand Corneille* had a profound influence on Betterton, and through him on the English poets who wrote for him. Of these Otway kept the closest to the severity of the French classicists. Dryden, in his vain search for novelty, tried every species of tragic subject, and, until near his end, failed in each. Lee, with a great deal of inherent genius, struck at once on the rock of bombast. Otway alone understood the tragic force of pity and tears, and at this point he came very near excelling all the French tragedians. It is impossible not to compare with the brief sad life of the young English poet that of the young French poet whose life ceased in such a noble apotheosis six months before his birth. Rotrou and Otway each wrote many dramas, each produced one of great and another of supreme excellence, the career of each was cut off in youth by calamity. But while the one was the victim of his own weakness and of public neglect, the other freely surrendered his to an adorable sentiment of duty. In mental as in moral fibre, the author of *Saint-Genest* and *Vencaslas* surpassed the poet of *The Orphan* and *Venice Preserved*, but there is something similar in the character of their writings, with this curious exception, that in his highest beauties Rotrou approaches the English poetic type, while Otway's finest passages are those in which he is most French. Voltaire's criticism of Otway was at one time famous, and did much to bring the poet into discredit. It is to be found in the same volume of the *Mélanges Littéraires* which contains the notorious analysis of *Hamlet*. The plot of *The Orphan* is what he mainly dwells upon. He has no words sufficiently contemptuous for these clumsy inventions of *le tendre Otway*, in whom he is not prepared to admit a single merit. Voltaire, rare and delicate critic as he was, was yet too profoundly out of sympathy with English verse to be able to judge it at all. His praise of Waller is even more fatuous than his dispraise of Shakespeare, and its effect has lasted longer, for we are just beginning to forget that he instituted the article of faith that Waller was the first mellifluous writer of English verse.

Up Glen Roy.



HAVING lived long on the chalk of East Anglia, looking down upon marsh land and post-tertiary deposits, when a thirst at length seized me to see glacial action, and judge for myself of its power and extent, the geologist will understand that it behoved me to go far afield. Not that all evidences of the reign of ice had perished in the neighbourhood. In many fields where the sheep were quietly eating turnips, and by many gate-posts of the country where the careful farmers had placed them to stave off waggon wheels, large boulders of trap and granite told that wondrous tale of the Drift, which never fails to captivate imagination even in the most common-place scenery. Every here and there, too, were beds of boulder clay in the neighbourhood, filled with that curious assortment of heterogeneous pebbles characteristic of the formation. But a still handier geological museum lay open to understanding eyes in every stone-heap by the roadside. Landowners in this district employ village urchins, when not "tenting" birds, to gather up the loose boulders and stones scattered over their fields during the Drift period. These stones are of all sizes between a marble and a man's head, and, being of hard composition, are greatly valued in a country of "cork" (as the natives term chalk) for mending roads. Hence it is that the practical geologist finds problems in every stone-heap; and, as he ponders on the only causes which offer a probable explanation of the difficulties connected with the transport of these northern strangers to the chalk formation, eager longings beset him to visit the North, from which these intruders came. The line of the Caledonian Canal, the Lochaber Glens, and the Monadhliah Mountains form a district where glacial action can, perhaps, be observed better than in any other part of the British Islands, save the remote Western Hebrides. So it came to pass that last autumn found me undertaking a pilgrimage northwards, and despite a strong gravitation to visit the leaf-beds of Ardtun, discovered in 1857 by the Duke of Argyll, and the Cuchullins, with their hypersthenic rocks belonging to the Laurentian series—the very oldest in that enormous succession of rock-chronology known to modern geology—contenting myself with the glacial scenery of Glen Roy and the vicinity. Others may, perhaps, like to accompany my footsteps.

How two pedestrians, drenched and travel stained, reached Bannavie, at the western entrance of the Caledonian Canal, in mid October, it boots not to inquire. Suffice it to say, that for some six weeks the natives affirmed it had rained daily, save on Sunday afternoons, and on some

days that it rained the whole day. The appearance of the country may easily be conceived: the moors resembled a gigantic sponge, while torrents flung themselves down the sides of every mountain, now plunging into deep dripping recesses, whence continually floated curling masses of white vapour; now leaping in full view, from rock-shelf to rock-shelf, while the air seemed to shake with their vibration and roar. No one has seen the full mountain beauty of Scotland until he has viewed it when suffering from such an autumnal deluge: roads submerged, lakes brim full, and rivers roaring in full spate over their rocky beds; while the bare brown mountains dimly loom through enveloping mists, their size enhanced by imagination, as it is impossible to trace their outlines in the cloud-rack that gathers round their shoulders. Coming up Glen Falloch the river had presented a splendid sight. It came down rearing and leaping in terrific masses of white foam through its narrow channel, till it irresistibly reminded us of a charge of the Scots Greys, or of the gallant band which followed the snow-white plume of the hero of Ivry. The individuality of different rivers in Scotland is strikingly brought out during a spate. In fine weather they are simply broad or narrow, rocky or shingly, curved or direct. But in times of flood the Tweed becomes awful, and, given the chance, would signally falsify the bloodthirsty observation of its tributary Till—

Though ye rin wi' speed,
And I rin slaw,
Yet where ye droun ae man
I droun twa!

The Tay waxes stately, as befits the river that washes Scone Palace, the North Inch, and other historical glories of St. Johnston; Spey is murderous, Findhorn treacherous, Ettrick sullen, Spean magnificent, Garry brawls, Tummel rages, and so on through half a hundred more, while Yarrow's murmurs never pass into anger; they rise, indeed, to mournful wails, and intensify the sadness of its love-lorn, ballad-haunted banks; but its imaginative pensive beauty is only better brought out when the silvery currents have fled for the nonce, and all the horror of a blind thunderous torrent has seized upon it. In the worst of weather its kelpies never lose their siren sweetness of song. When trudging along, with knapsack on shoulders, through the worst of these Scotch downpours, the pedestrian's happy disposition enabled me to find numberless compensations of this kind for the lack of distant prospects, until I had at length reasoned myself into the belief that under many aspects Scotland never looked so well as on a rainy day. After attaining this serene frame of mind, all discomforts caused by wind or weather were transformed into factors which enhanced the pleasures of freedom and exploration conferred by a rainy walking tour. What a beneficent goddess is Adversity, if one meekly bows before her scourge!

My companion had fondly imagined he could walk, though fresh from Indian luxury, and had early paid the penalty of his rashness. At Tyn-

drum we had been driven ignominiously to the coach, and thence made our way to Oban, where, instead of reading its historical or antiquarian history from the guide-books, we found ourselves smiling at the Princess of Thule's amazement when she landed at so fine a town, and at so great a distance from "Sty-ornoway." Such glamour has Mr. Black flung over these grey western seas.

If I trust myself to speak of Glencoe, and Macaulay's exaggerations of its scenery, my readers will never reach Glen Roy, so they must be contented to ascend the Caledonian Canal in the very last passenger boat of the season. The hotel at Bannavie must have closed as we left; at any rate we ate for breakfast the very last rasher of bacon which it contained (very rusty it was), and brought away the waiter on board; while at one little station where the steamer stopped all the furniture of the waiting-room (one deal form) was put on board to go into winter quarters at Inverness.

Leaving the steamer at Laggan, and driving to Invergarry to obtain letters, a piteous disappointment ensued. They had all gone north to the Isle of Skye. A melancholy lunch in a dark room hung with the portraits of Methodist divines and prints of the Battle of the Nile, was not improved by the view from the window, where torrents of rain were falling through half-stripped lime trees, showing the Garry tearing along in full spate behind them, and over all the mist-wrapped cone of Ben Tigh. But a walk of sixteen miles lay before me, and that in heavy marching order, for like Balbus, that friend of ingenuous youth, I carried *omnia mea mecum*. Half an hour after noon saw me trudging to the shores of Loch Oich, and thence along the south side of Loch Lochy, which recalled pleasant memories of the friends on board the distant *Gondolier*, in which we have travelled down the lake earlier in the day. Hills rose on the left; but, with the exception of sheep and an occasional shepherd, no signs of life appeared. It was a keen pleasure in that grey wet afternoon to meet at length a shepherd driving his black-faced flock. Artistic fancies at once crowded on the mind. The sheep might have stepped out of one of Ansdell's canvases; while, as no one but Apelles was suffered to paint Alexander the Great, so none but Landseer could have done justice to the colley. As for the tall, handsome shepherd bearing on his shoulders a wearied sheep, whose legs he held under his chin, the early Christian drawings in the Catacombs have immortalised this grouping, and art has ever since loved to reproduce it, while an endless association of endearing images has crystallized around it. Their witchery in due time brought me to the wild moor on which the mighty porphyry prism of Ben Nevis is set. I had passed in front of its northern face in the morning, and had seen a patch of last winter's snow yet lingering high up on the dark precipices. Now two great cataracts were flinging themselves wildly over its face—one in a series of sinuous leaps, the other in two great bounds, while the air was vocal with their distant roar. Still it was with a sense of relief that I reached

Spean Bridge with its neat little hostelry some time after darkness had fallen.

Much of this walk had taken me through that wonderful fissure known as the Great Glen, the line of the Caledonian Canal which cuts Scotland in twain. Geologists still contend over the causes which produced this singular depression. It may mark a dislocation of strata, and the chain of lakes which form great part of its bed may be owing to successive subsidences or fractures; while the rocks on either hand are but the upturned edges of the mighty crack, with their faces weathered and denuded by the storms of centuries. Or, which seems the truer view, after the great fissure had been caused by dislocation, the deeply-scored sides, and especially the valleys (which are now lake-beds, Loch Oich, Loch Ness, and Loch Lochy), were the work of vast ice-action. "The Great Glen receives the drainage of a wide mountainous region on either side, and in old times a larger amount of ice probably flowed into it than into any other valley in Scotland. It received from the west the large glaciers of Loch Eil, Loch Arkaig, Glen Morriston, and Glen Urquhart; from the east those of the glens of Lochaber, and those which come down from the north-western flanks of the Monadhliath Mountains. Its sides show everywhere the flowing rounded outlines that mark the seaward march of the ice; and its rocky bottom, where visible, bears the same impress."* The geologist wanders through this district as through an enchanted land, to which he alone holds the key, and on which, as a theatre for posterity's wonder, marvellous scenes were once represented in days too remote to admit even of a guess. It forms a worthy introduction to the glacial phenomena of its smaller neighbours, Glen Spean and Glen Roy.

It was on the afternoon of a beautiful autumnal Sunday that I ascended the Roy valley. It had rained all night and most of the morning. Judge, therefore, of my delight when outside the little inn I turned to see Ben Nevis, and found it covered with snow, and that no longer the last of the previous season, but the first of the present winter. The early part of the walk lies up the Spean valley; and here it was impossible for the merest tyro in geological science not to be struck with the many evidences of glacial action. Moraines, both lateral and medial, may be traced in the numerous beds of *débris* and detritus with which much of it is choked. Fine examples of raised beaches, too, occur on either hand; while Spean plunges along its rocky bed below, cutting through the hard schist, and suffering rains, frost, and other natural agents to split it along its numerous joints. More strange than all, however, are the long level terraces, sometimes crowned with a farmhouse and clumps of trees, visible on the right. These contrast favourably, from their green appearance, with the desolate and rugged ground in their neighbourhood. The moor on the left side of Spean has clearly

* Geikie's *Scenery and Geology of Scotland*, p. 180: Macmillan. 1865.

been once a lake-bottom, and these level terraces are due to the course of ages covering with vegetation the rough unsightly edges of the accumulated rubbish from extinct glaciers. On the same side occur many hillocks of sand, some of which are denuded by wind and weather, and exhibit the characteristic marks of water-worn rubbish. Exactly opposite these, a huge boulder may be noticed, stranded, as it were, in a potato-field, which doubtless once upon a time fell there on the bottom of a sea or lacustrine bed from a floating iceberg. Many of the cottages too (if not all of them) are built of these large ice-borne boulders—comfortable habitations enough, though their irregular walls suggest abundant rheumatism. Loosely fitted together, these remnants of ice-action are invaluable to the natives as a quarry. At the debouchure of Roy into Spean, where our path turns to the left, a couple of these long natural earthworks remain, while the mountains of Glen Treig rise behind, Ben Chlinaig and his brethren forming the boundaries of a typical Highland landscape. Here and there on the rising hill-sides shepherds are dimly visible collecting their flocks: near at hand, one is lying on a patch of heather, with his dog beside him; while the young people of the valley—the girls mostly bare-headed, with twisted wealth of brown hair—stroll up and down, enjoying the unusually serene afternoon.

Most of the inhabitants of this district are Roman Catholics, under the care of a priest who visits them from a neighbouring glen, so that the Calvinistic rigour of a Scotch Sabbath is here softened into the peacefulness of an English Sunday. Soon a fresh geological feature meets the eye. On the right from the hill-sides, which continuously rise from the Roy river, banks of rubbish project at right angles, falling away abruptly into the water. These “lateral moraines,” which strike even the most ignorant observer, are too well described by Mr. A. Geikie* to admit of abbreviation:—“In many a Highland glen it is easy to trace the successive backward steps of the ice, as it continued to shrink up into the higher recesses of the mountains. Each moraine shows, of course, a point at which the lower end of the glacier continued for a while stationary, melting there and throwing down its accumulated piles of rubbish. These moraines may be followed up the valley, mound within mound, each of which represents a pause in the retreat of the glacier, until at last we gain the upper end, where the stream of ice finally shrank up into the snow-fields, and where these, as the climate grew warmer, at last melted away.”

Indeed, all this district is a Paradise to the geological student, but we must hasten onwards to its most celebrated features, the Parallel Roads.

Shortly after leaving Bridge of Roy inn on the mail-coach road to Loch Laggan, rounded masses of rock may be noticed—the *roches*

* *Scenery of Scotland*, p. 193.

moutonnées of glacialists. Agassiz was reminded by the scenery here of the numerous moraines in the neighbourhood of Tines in the valley of Chamounix. To the right, ascending Glen Treig, its sides are scored, smoothed, and rounded by ice-action, while a lake is enclosed by these rock-walls in a depression probably scooped out by a primeval glacier. Far onwards, on the road to Kingussie, the traveller may note evidences of water and ice-action, and the long, level moraines previously described. Nature here tells her own story in characters which it is marvellous should so long have remained unknown to science. A day or two well spent in this district will teach a beginner more of geology than would multitudes of theories and whole libraries of books perused without practically seeing the mighty forces which have shaped the face of the country in their effects upon rock and mountain scenery. Sir W. Scott had some such landscape in his mind when he wrote—

Crag, knoll, and mound confusedly hurled,
The fragments of an earlier world.

Through woods of birch and oak sloping downwards to the Roy river, the road wound, with the pallid sunshine of autumn sleeping above it on the russet leaves, while every here and there Highland cattle browsed in the open glades, some of them of that peculiar grey colour which lights up like velvet of the finest pile. This shade of warm grey is seldom or never seen in England, and not even Rosa Bonheur's brush could do justice to its lustre when flooded with sunlight. A few wild flowers yet lingered on the banks; ferns drooped from the rocks; not a breath of wind stirred the foliage. It was the year's twilight before winter and darkness fell, and even now they were hurrying on apace. Three miles up the valley a lateral moraine is cut through to admit the road, and a huge block of water-worn grey granite lay on one side. To the left, high up on the rock-face, appeared a long straight shelf running upwards, evidently the first sign of the wonderful Roads; while opposite, over the little river, which here brawls in a deep cutting it has made for itself, are slight indications of no less than five parallel tracks. Passing onwards through some straggling farm-buildings—where the colleys, after the fashion of their kind, lay in wait behind a wall to spring out and startle the wayfarer with their outcries, and next moment to retreat with their tails between their legs, as if ashamed of their momentary valour—a lad directed me to walk a little farther on and then, “Ou ay, ye'll jist see the Roads.”

At length, on reaching the head of the Glen, where it winds round to the right, the three celebrated Roads came in sight, level as if drawn by some giant engineer, with a monstrous parallel ruler, following its sweep to the north-east. There was no mistaking them. Grim, gaunt, and dark, they scored the barren hill-side; while above them the rounded tops of the rocks broke down into several openings gilded with the afternoon sun, and leading into the next valley on the north. Fainter

reflections of them, as it were, lined the opposite hill ; while below were heaps of detritus, moraines, *blocs perchés*, smoothed circular hillocks, and every evidence of ice and water-action. Sitting down on a boulder which could tell a wondrous history in connection with its presence here, I endeavoured first to impress the scene, with all its barrenness, and yet its stern beauty, upon my memory, and next to account for the three so-called Roads which lined the sides of the valley. No distraction intervened. Bird-life is wonderfully scarce in many of these desolate glens. Beyond a robin at the farmstead, no bird was in sight to break the savage monotony of the landscape. A silence that might almost be felt brooded over it this afternoon.

Imagination easily peoples this Glen with the wild natives of former days ; nor is it difficult to reproduce the many skirmishes of mountain warfare, the many deer-hunts of more peaceful times, which it must have seen. Tradition, ever fond of the marvellous, takes us back to Fingal's days, when the parallel roads before the traveller are said to have been constructed as tracks for the hero and his friends to pursue when hunting, or as race-courses. Other stories suppose that they were levelled to serve as defences for a camp or as actual roads to lead out of the Glen. With what complacency does Science point the finger of scorn at these explanations ! How wonderfully does her glamour transcend the wildest dreams of Ossianic romance ! "Instead of tracing back the origin of these mysterious parallel roads of Lochaber to the days of Fingal, they stand before us as the memorials of an infinitely vaster antiquity—the shores, as it were, of a phantom lake, that came into being with the growth of the glaciers, and vanished as these melted away."* And yet this explanation does not remove them from the realm of imagination. It only summons us to a still more fascinating fairy-land than was ever traversed by the heroes of Morven. No prosaic element is present in Mr. Geikie's theory. The great level line which may be noticed on the south of the Spean river, running along the hillsides, before the traveller turns up Glen Roy, is only an introductory symbol of glacial action—that mighty power which has here written its primeval history in the three parallel roads in front of us. Like the clue which Ariadne gave Theseus to the Labyrinth, it turns up Glen Roy ; and now seen faintly, now more clearly, over the peat-haugh in the bottom, at length expands into the three Roads so deeply cut on our left, and only a little less strongly repeated on the cliffs to the right. "Each of them is a shelf or terrace, cut by the shore waters of a lake that once filled Glen Roy. The highest is, of course, the eldest, and those beneath it were formed in succession, as the waters of the lake were lowered." The germ of this elucidation is due to Agassiz, and Mr. Jameson has shown that it is fully borne out by the evidences of great glacial erosion, some of which I have named ; while others are to be

* Geikie, *ubi supra*, p. 201.

found in the Great Glen of the Caledonian Canal. This valley seems once to have been filled to the brim with ice, which dammed back the mouth of Glen Spean and caused the waters of Glen Roy to escape into Strath Spey, when the uppermost terrace or road (1,140 feet above the present sea-level) was formed. Next, the lake gradually sunk, as more of this ice melted away, to its second level, the waters now flowing into Loch Laggan. Finally, as the great glacier of the Caledonian Canal melted still lower, the waters of Glen Roy and the neighbouring glens fell into their present channels, which, of course, they have been ever deepening. Science thus waves her magic wand, and the mystery of the Roads "fades into the light of common day." As in the Eastern fairy-tale, the possession of an old lamp could build up splendid palaces in a night, so the fragment of ice under the traveller's foot points to the mighty power which, in a period of time scarcely appreciable to the æons of geology, could transform the face of this rugged country at will, bid lakes gather and streams run in unaccustomed channels, and then in a peaceful mood invite man—man, that pigmy and ephemera—to speculate here on her bygone paroxysms and perversities.

The simplicity of this explanation, however, does not find favour with all geologists. As philosophers may be roughly divided into Aristotelians and Platonists, so those who refuse to see glacial action in the present aspects of Scotland are compelled to invoke the aid of the sea. The present condition of the landscape round Glen Roy, say these, does not answer to the theory of ice-barriers. Beyond the Roads themselves, which the sea could produce as easily as could a lake, the indispensable barriers, it is asserted, have left no wreck to tell of their existence. No trace exists of the once mighty mounds of rock, or sand, or gravel, which must have restrained the lacustrine waters. To this reasoning any one who has followed my footsteps, much more any one who has inspected Glen Roy for himself, will at once reply that the difficulty only exists on paper—*solvitur ambulando*. If the mounds themselves, which once acted as barriers to the lake, do not remain, their ruins, as I have striven to show, tell the tale in mute, yet scarcely mistakable, accents. "There can be no doubt," says Professor Nicol,* "that the sea was at one time there, over all the mountains and up every glen. Besides, there are other proofs of the presence of the sea. Above all, I find in Strath Spey, not thirty miles from Glen Roy, terraces less extensive indeed, but similar in all essential points, and in a locality where lakes cannot have existed. I can therefore no longer doubt that these famed Roads are—as Darwin and Robert Chambers affirmed—old sea margins." This reasoning is simply begging the question. It is probable, nay it is almost certain, that every upholder of the ice-theory would allow that the mainland of Scotland had been more than once submerged and again

* *The Geology and Scenery of the North of Scotland*, p. 76. Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd. 1866.

elevated. But, over and above these theoretical submersions, the whole interest of the locality centres in its wonderful moraines and other evidences which point unmistakably to a glacial age. On the view that the sea caused the roads of Glen Roy, all these heaps and mounds, the *débris* of a former world, remain unaccounted for. Perhaps the conclusion of the Duke of Argyll,* which embraces both theories, is the one to which most scientific students will at present give in their adhesion. With regard to the glacial origin of lake-basins, he lays it down that, being nothing but submerged valleys, they are due in part to glacier-action, although the other half of their creation is to be sought in the subterranean action of subsidence. As for the general fact of submergence and re-elevation, this, he adds, is perhaps as certain as any feature of geological science. He instances the raised beaches of the Isle of Jura and elsewhere; but at Glen Roy, supposing the Parallel Roads were due to maritime forces, the glacial phenomena, which we have seen are so abundant, obtrusively demand a different explanation.

The reader, however, much more the actual observer, has probably by this time settled his own theory; the sun is slanting over Ben Nevis, and it is time to retrace our steps. All the glory of a stormy autumnal evening, broken clouds of red and gold, is being buffeted about the great mountain's head by a violent west wind, and their vivid colours are strongly relieved against the snow. It is a lonely walk to the little inn; but every bank, every striated rock-surface, has its associations. Even when darkness falls, the unusual spectacle on every side, the ghostly forms of glacial scenery, keep the mind actively employed. There is much comfort to be derived from visiting such a scene as this, which robs departure from it of its sadness. Just as many people find the planning and selection of a holiday quite as enjoyable as the actual visit, so the memories and reminiscences of it in after years are often even more pleasurable than the days spent amidst fatigue and rain in order to obtain its coveted rest and refreshment. And of all holidays a sojourn amongst mountains is most grateful to jaded bodies and worn-out energies. Not only is the air fresher and more invigorating as it rushes through the defiles between them and bears down health and coolness from the higher tracts above their peaks, but the eyes are greeted with an ever-changing feast of colour floating over their shoulders, while the sylvan scents of firwood and all the wild odours of heather and sweet gale enchant with their *copia narium*. As for the higher aspects of mountain scenery, its moral and æsthetic teachings, the modern High Priest of Beauty has dilated on them in eloquent words which every disciple loves to recall, but dares not imitate. Suffice it to say that every murmur from the dripping mountain-pines, and the resounding airs round each Scotch Albunea's house, which delight the wanderer's ears as his eye dwells with rapture on the butterwort's purple flower or watches

* *On the Physical Structure of the Highlands* (British Association, Sept. 1876).

the white vapours curl above the dark and distant caldron into which the torrent wildly leaps in its headlong chase to level ground—that sights and sounds even more commonplace than these are amongst the hills transmuted into magical effects of calm and refreshment. Each one's fardel of cares drops off; earth's vain ambitions and money's false glitter fade away before the stern might of the hills; the soul must needs rise higher wherever the eye is turned; every tinkling rivulet brings down a message of peace. Of course to the botanist, the ornithologist, or the geologist, mountain scenery, as I have striven to show, reveals new worlds of interest. No one need wonder, therefore, that Switzerland offers such attractions to the weary; the misfortune is that fashion drives its votaries thither, and business only relaxes its hold of its slaves in autumn, instead of winter and spring, when the birth of the new roses and gentians brings regeneration to tired human nature. In its own way, and to those who desire an easy retreat from troubles, Scotland possesses irresistible attractions; but in too many cases the cost of travelling and the stereotyped high hotel charges deter the would-be visitor. Donald would make his fortune sooner throughout the whole country if he could forget that insidious proverb which bids him make hay while the sun shines. Before the commencement of a new tourist season it may be as well for him to take to heart the truth that it is better to make friends of fewer visitors and to see them oftener and for longer periods at a time, than it is to welcome invading hordes of tourists for a night, and find next morning, as he presents his bill, that they fly Scotland for ever.

The Weaknesses of Great Men.

THE weakness of a great man is often that feature of his character or that particular inclination in him which has most interest for the student of humanity. That Cæsar was the first general and statesman of his age—that he conquered Gaul and laid the foundations of an empire which in name at least was to subsist for more than 1,800 years—these are no doubt facts of the utmost importance; but, after all, they are the dry bones of history. The Shandean philosopher is much more interested to learn that Cæsar loved to oil his hair; that he sincerely regretted its scantiness; and that he was excessively pleased when the Senate conferred on him the privilege of wearing a laurel crown, and thus enabled him partially to conceal the injury which nature or hard living had wrought. Dress has been one of the commonest weaknesses of great men, many of whom were not the less careful of their personal appearance because they affected an ostentatious simplicity. In the national songs of France, Napoleon is the little Corporal in the plain grey coat; but we may be sure that the grey coat was carefully arranged, even as the cocked hat was designedly worn in a fashion till then unknown. And, as a matter of fact, the Emperor did not always array himself in that sober-coloured vesture which Mr. Tennyson has described as the symbolic robe of freedom. An English traveller who visited Paris during the brief interval of the Peace of Amiens, and was introduced to the First Consul, has left on record his astonishment at seeing the great enemy of England in scarlet (richly laced, by the way, with gold). It may interest some to know that Napoleon set apart 800*l.* a year for dress. Unfortunately he had a weakness for white kerseymere breeches; and, being often wholly absorbed with cares of state (as courtly chroniclers apologetically observe), he would constantly spill ink, or gravy, or coffee upon the aforesaid garments, which he hastened to change as soon as he perceived the mishap. This circumstance cost the blameless, but timid, Comte de Rémusat his place as Master of the Robes. For the Emperor soiled his clothes, and especially his white breeches, so frequently and so grievously, that the imperial tailor (M. Léger) was constantly receiving fresh orders, and 800*l.* a year became quite insufficient to meet that functionary's little bills. Now the Comte de Rémusat, who knew that the Emperor hated any disorder in his accounts, was foolishly afraid to speak to him on the subject. Meanwhile M. Léger became pressing in his demands for payment. At first he sent in his bill every month, then every fortnight, then every week, then twice a week, then every

day ; but the Master of the Robes continued to return unsatisfactory answers. At length M. Léger, whose patience was exhausted, took the bold step of complaining to the Emperor in person, at the very moment that his Majesty was trying on a new uniform. With astonishment and anger Napoleon learned that he owed his tailor 1,200*l.* The same day he paid the bill and dismissed M. de Rémusat from his post, which was given to M. de Montesquiou-Fezensac, a chamberlain in the imperial household. "I hope Monsieur le Comte," said Napoleon, between a smile and a frown, to the newly-appointed master, "that you will not expose me to the disgrace of being dunned for the breeches I am wearing." Frederic the Great regulated this department of expenditure in a much simpler way : he had but one fine gala dress, which lasted him all his life, for he took care not to soil it. His work-day suits were shabbier than those which gentlemen abandon to their valets—the waistcoat-pockets crammed with snuff, and the rest of the apparel liberally sprinkled with the same pungent powder. The King's most amiable weakness—if indeed it can be called one—was his partiality for dogs. Several of these favourites were allowed to occupy the best arm-chairs in the royal study, and were not teased when they acted as dogs will act. "After all," said Frederic, "a Pompadour would cost me much more." But Frederic had other weaknesses which were not equally amiable.

On the whole, the Great Slovens have probably been as numerous as the Great Dandies ; and few will deny that utter carelessness as to personal appearance is at least as much of a weakness as its opposite. The well-known text which some worthy people have put forward on this subject does not, when properly translated, enjoin us to "take no thought," but only "not to be over-anxious," in respect of what we shall put on.

Johnson, perhaps the greatest sloven of all ages, said one of the best things ever uttered against the puritanical view of this matter. "Let us not be found, when our Master calls us, stripping the lace off our waistcoats, but the spirit of contention from our souls and tongues. Alas ! sir, a man who cannot get to heaven in a green coat will not find his way thither the sooner in a grey one." Slovenliness seems to have been rather a weakness of lawyers, as well as of literary men—*pace* the Bar and the Press of to-day. If in society we except "present company," so in writing we exclude persons living. Lord Kenyon was so terrible a sloven that one wonders George III. never scolded him about his personal appearance, as his Majesty once did in respect of his unlucky habit of misquoting classical authors.

"I wish, my Lord," the King was pleased to remark, "that you would leave off your bad Latin and stick to your good law."

Kenyon's law was certainly good ; but the judge had a weakness as well as the man. As his biographer puts it, "Lord Kenyon trusted too much to the power of the terrors of the law in guarding the right of property from fraud or violence ; and he inflicted death (a great deal too

often) as the most terrible, and therefore the most preventive, punishment." The weakness, however, was of the understanding, and not of the heart; the Chief Justice being very far from a man of cruel disposition, as the following anecdote, at once ghastly and affecting, bears witness. He had passed sentence of death upon a young woman who had been found guilty of theft, but had intimated that he meant to recommend her to mercy. The young woman only heard the formula of the sentence, in its horrible precision of language, and fainted away. Lord Kenyon, evidently much agitated, called out, "I don't mean to hang you. Will nobody tell her that I don't mean to hang her?"

For the disciple of Mr. Carlyle the word *Clothes* has acquired a wide extension of meaning; and Herr Teufelsdröck might have smiled approval of the Monacan irreconcilable's warning, "*Rabagas, on commence par une culotte, et on finit par une décoration.*" Ever since titles and ribands were invented, a desire for them has been the weakness of great minds, and of minds that seemed in all things else the very types of common sense. Our rugged Cromwell longed to be called King Oliver; and Louis Philippe, with all his liberalism, was grieved at heart because his subjects would not let him take the style of Louis XIX., and because they made him King of the French, instead of King of France and Navarre. M. Guizot has told us of the genuine pleasure experienced by his Sovereign when the Queen of England conferred on him the order of the Garter. Once he had the blue riband, Louis Philippe fancied he could no longer be sneered at as "King of the Barricades," but would be looked on as a thoroughly orthodox monarch, and a member of the most select society in the world. A similar weakness is said to have been displayed by a man who was, perhaps, one of the mainstays of the Orleans dynasty. He was the first member of a famous house of bankers, who settled in Paris; and is said to have taken very seriously to heart the title of Baron, conferred on him by the Emperor of Austria. According to M. Larchey, the great financier never travelled without a certain purse in Russian leather, on which a Baron's coronet was more than conspicuous. In the course of a certain journey he stopped at Lyons, and, it being early in the morning, entered a restaurant, where he asked for a *bouillon*, which French-bred persons think a cheering thing to begin the day with. Having despatched the *bouillon*, M. de R—— took out the famous purse, and asked for the bill. The waiter, espying the coronet, but not being versed in heraldic lore, thought it safest to address the stranger as "Monsieur le Duc." M. de R—— gave but five sous of *pour-boire*, and observed with that accent, of which the secret has died with him, "Che ne suis pas tuc." By-and-by he came back to lunch. The same waiter served him, and proved quite as attentive as in the morning. Only this time he addressed the customer as "Monsieur le Comte." The banker gave him five francs for himself, but observed, at the same time, "Che ne suis pas gonte." A couple of hours later, on his way to the station, M. de R—— stepped in once more, to take a cup of coffee.

The waiter, much mystified, ventured to call him "Monsieur le Baron," and received a louis d'or by way of tip, while the giver added, with an air of grave satisfaction, these words, "Oui—che suis paron."

Altogether, the number of great men, who seemed hardly to understand how much above the symbols of external greatness they stood, is painfully large. In that list is our William III., of all persons, who took a strange pleasure in wearing the actual corporeal crown of England, and the royal robes in which majesty is entitled to wrap itself, when to majesty seemeth good. Sir William Hamilton, again, devoted too many of the best hours of his early manhood to fishing a baronetcy (which he fancied necessary to his well-being) out of the obscurity of the seventeenth century. But for those lost hours, the Philosophy of the Conditioned might have been more completely thought out. Bacon and (in a lesser degree) Scott afford melancholy examples of a similar weakness, and its vexatious, not to say tragic, consequences.

Again, though a contempt for titles and decorations (especially since their relative value has changed) has been common enough for many a day, one cannot help thinking that the refusal of them has in not a few cases proceeded from the same motive which made others seek them. The weakness of false pride was shown not more by the Macedonian conqueror who proclaimed himself a god, than by the philosopher in the tub who was rude to him. Indeed, it was an excellent answer that Alexander made when some one praised Antipater in his hearing because that officer refused to follow the Asiatic fashions which were being adopted by his colleagues, and continued to wear black while they wore purple. "Yes," said the King; "but Antipater is all purple within." The virtue of some persons is unpleasantly ferocious. One cannot help regretting, for instance, that Bentham, when the Czar Alexander sent him a diamond ring, did not decline it—if he must have declined it—with less of a flourish of trumpets. There is something that jars on one's mind in that message about its not being his mission to receive diamond rings from emperors, but to teach nations the lessons of wisdom—or words much to that effect. Who had ever supposed it was his mission to receive diamond rings from anybody? The humility of men who are much talked about is seldom a perfectly genuine article. Did they really think nothing of themselves they would be more than human. Anent this matter, there is a curious story told of St. Philip Neri, who was commissioned by the Pope to inquire into the truth of certain miracles alleged to have been worked by a nun. St. Philip employed a very simple test. He resolved to ascertain whether the nun had true humility, which, as one of the cardinal virtues, must be possessed by any one before he or she can receive the gift of performing signs and wonders. Entering her cell with a pair of dirty boots on, he pulled them off, threw them at her head, and ordered her to clean them. Vehement and shrilly expressed was the indignation of the lady; whereat St. Philip reported to His Holiness that a new saint had not arisen to edify the Church.

Among the rare instances of true Christian humility with which we meet in that long record of struggles for precedence designated as history, is one singularly affecting. Madame Maily, the first mistress of Louis XV., is said, after her loss of the King's favour, to have led a life of unaffected piety and devotion. As the French annalist quaintly puts it, "She loved God as she had loved the King." One day, being late for church, she had some difficulty in reaching her usual seat. Several persons had to rise to let her pass, chairs had to be pushed back, and some little confusion resulted. An ill-tempered man snarled out, "That it was a pretty noise to make for a ——." "Since you know her," replied Madame de Maily, "pray the good God for her." Still, Madame de Maily would have done better to be punctual.

It is to be feared that the most common weaknesses of great men are of the same kind as those of little men. Formidable indeed would be the full and accurate list of illustrious gluttons, illustrious tipplers, and illustrious persons who smoked more tobacco than was good for them. In some rare cases, their weakness occasionally brought forth their strength: the conversation of Addison; many a speech of Sheridan's and of the younger Pitt's; a few songs of Schiller's were doubtless instances of the power of wine to stimulate the mental faculties. Indeed Schiller seems to have for a long time habitually written under the influence of a bottle of Rhenish, with which he would lock himself up in the evening, and write cheerily through the hours of the night. But unquestionably the most astonishing feat of this kind was Blackstone's composition of his "Commentaries" over successive bottles of port. One feels almost respect for the hardness of a head which could think out so clearly under such an influence some of the stiffest points of a jurisprudence which, so to say, had neither head nor tail. In speaking of the classic age of English eloquence, one must except the greatest name of all from the list of Bacchic orators. Fox could drink, and alas! get drunk; but, as a rule, he appears to have postponed his sacrifices to Dionysus till after the debates, which he could the more easily do as he lived chiefly by night. Pitt would jestingly complain that in this respect his rival took a mean advantage of him. He himself rose tolerably early; and being generally Prime Minister—the expression sounds strange in these days, but is strictly accurate—he was occupied with official business till it was time to go to the House of Commons, when he was, perhaps, already fagged and jaded with work.

Very different was Fox's mode of life during the session. At noon, or one o'clock, his friends would call on their chief and find him in bed, or lounging about in his night-shirt, looking extremely unkempt and (if the truth must be told) dirty. A conversation would follow; plans would be arranged; and by-and-by, his toilette done and a cup of tea swallowed, Fox would stroll down, fresh and vigorous, towards St. Stephen's, to speak as no orator ever spoke since Demosthenes.

Tobacco has not till lately been so common a weakness of the great as

the fermented juice of the grape ; but famous smokers would still make a mighty and revered company. Among the earliest of Britain's worthies whose devotion to the weed was excessive, may be cited Hobbes. In Dr. Kennet's *Memoirs of the Cavendish Family* will be found a very interesting account of the way in which the author of the *Leviathan* loved to spend his day. "His professed rule of health was to dedicate the morning to his exercise, and the afternoon to his studies. At his first rising, therefore, he walked out and climbed any hill within his reaching ; or, if the weather was not dry, he fatigued himself within doors by some exercise or other, to be in a sweat. After this he took a comfortable breakfast ; and then went round the lodgings to wait upon the earl, the countess, and the children, and any considerable strangers, paying some short addresses to all of them. [He was then living with Lord Devonshire, sometimes at Chatsworth and sometimes at Hardwicke.] He kept these rounds till about twelve o'clock, when he had a little dinner provided for him, which he ate always by himself without ceremony. Soon after dinner he retired to his study, and had his candle with ten or twelve pipes of tobacco laid by him ; then, shutting his door, he fell to smoking, thinking, and writing for several hours."

Whatever may have been the abstract merits of Hobbes's regimen, it appears to have agreed with him, for he lived over ninety-one years. The worst effect of the ten or twelve daily pipes was probably to intensify the natural irritability of his disposition ; for the soothing influence of tobacco is only temporary, while its permanent effect is the opposite of calming. So at least more than one distinguished physician has averred. That Hobbes was terribly peevish in his old age there can be no doubt. We read that "he did not easily brook contradiction." And, to put it mildly, he had a somewhat excessive opinion of his own powers. It was one of his boasts, for instance, that "though physics were a new science, yet civil philosophy was still newer, since it could not be styled older than his book *De Cive*." One hardly remembers a more conceited observation, unless it be Cobbett's advice to young people as to the best books for them to read :—"Read my books. This does, it will doubtless be said, smell of the shop. No matter. Experience has taught me, &c." Among Cobbett's weaknesses seems to have been a love of ale ; or, perhaps it would be more accurate to say, a belief that ale was pre-ordained by the celestial powers as the natural and fit liquor for Britons to quaff. The drinking of tea, which was becoming common with every order of society in his time, moved him to the fiercest indignation ; as it had in a former generation excited the fears of Duncan Forbes, who conceived that the brewing interest would be ruined by the general adoption of the new beverage. The Lord President of the Court of Session is reported to have rigorously forbidden the consumption of tea by his own servants—even to have dismissed a housemaid who was taken pot-handed in the act. Duncan Forbes little dreamed that the day would

come when statesmen would be loudly urged to support the Tea interest and discourage the Beer interest. To return for a moment to Cobbett, it would be unjust not to acknowledge that he was himself of exemplary sobriety in an exceedingly tipsy age. Indeed he recommends pure water as well as ale. But these two were, he thought, the only rational drinks. His opinion may remind some of Sydney Smith's statement that, when he went to reside in Somersetshire, the servants he had brought with him from Yorkshire seemed to think the making of cider a tempting of Providence, which had clearly intended malt, and not apples, as the legitimate produce out of which man should find the means of intoxication.

After all, there were some grave reasons for Cobbett's objection to the habitual consumption of tea and coffee (he denominated them both under the generic term of "slops"); more than one writer on the science of diet being of opinion that nature destined them rather as medicines than as daily beverages. Both the one and the other have been the weakness of hundreds to whose intellects the world owes some of its choicest treasures. Sir James Mackintosh went so far as to say that the power of a man's mind would generally be found to be in proportion to the amount of coffee he drank. How well Cowper loved tea, and how well he sang its praises, we all know. As to Dante, so to him, the evening brought the pleasantest hours of the twenty-four:—

Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast ;
 Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round ;
 And while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
 Throws up a steamy column, and the cups,
 That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,
 So let us welcome peaceful evening in !

Yet one may suspect that frequent cups of tea did not improve the nervous system of the unhappy poet; though he had other weaknesses which were of themselves sufficient to account for the final ruin of his mind.

Innumerable have been the varieties of human weaknesses in respect of things edible and potable. We forget the name of the French lady who said she would commit a baseness for the sake of fried potatoes. More than one person may have only wanted her candour to make a similar avowal of excessive affection for a particular dish. The English king who died of a surfeit of peaches and new ale was hardly a great man; but the king who died of lampreys was in the first rank of the statesmen and warriors of his age, to say nothing of being something of a scholar into the bargain. Englishmen have small affection for the memory of Philip II., who irreparably ruined his digestion by immoderate indulgence in pastry; but he is still regarded by Spaniards as one of their greatest monarchs. To turn to men of unquestioned genius, Byron's most innocent passion seems to have been for soda-water, on which at one time he almost subsisted, with the aid of dry biscuits. Apparently Beckford had a similar weakness for the gaseous fluid. During the three days

and two nights of continuous work in which he composed *Vathek*, soda-water was his principal sustenance.

The names of Byron and Beckford, unequal as they are, both call to mind one of the most frequent and most troublesome failings of the great, and of those who for their brief day were thought great. "England's wealthiest son" and England's cleverest son were, the one and the other, incorrigible posers. In spite of Mr. Matthew Arnold's fine lines, one may suspect that Byron did not allow "the pageant of his bleeding heart" to lose in effect from want of careful arrangement. "It is ridiculous to imagine," observed the blunt common sense of Macaulay, "that a man whose mind was really imbued with scorn of his fellow-creatures would publish three or four books every year in order to tell them so; or that a man who could say with truth that he neither sought sympathy nor needed it, would have admitted all Europe to hear his farewell to his wife, and his blessings on his child." Among other distinguished *farceurs*, as the French plainly term persons who act off the stage, everybody will readily place Louis XIV. and Napoleon I. (perhaps also Napoleon III.); and, reluctantly, Chatham, together with Burke, whose dagger exhibition is hopelessly indefensible. Rousseau is perhaps the prince of the tribe; though Diderot has not inconsiderable claims to occupy that bad eminence. Devaines, indeed, gives a wonderful account of the latter's genius for what might be called domestic tragedy. As the statesman knew the writer well (and was always accounted a veracious chronicler), there is no valid reason for refusing him credence. On the eve of Diderot's departure for Russia, Devaines went to say good-bye to him. Diderot, as he assures us, received him with tears in his eyes, and led him into his study; where, in a voice choked with sobs, he broke forth into a monologue in these terms: "You see before you a man in despair! I have passed through the most cruel possible of scenes for a father and a husband. My wife . . . My daughter . . . Ah! how can I separate myself from them, after having been a witness to their heartrending grief! We were at table; I sat with one on either side of me: no strangers, as you may be sure. I wished to give to them and to them alone my last moments. What a dinner! What a spectacle of desolation! . . . We could neither eat nor drink . . . Ah! my friend, how sweet it is to be loved by beings so tender, but how terrible to quit them! No; I shall not have that hateful courage. What are the cajoleries of power compared with the outpourings of nature? I stay; I have made up my mind; I will not abandon my wife and daughter; I will not be their executioner: for, my friend, believe me, my departure would be their death." As the philosopher spoke, he leaned over his friend, and bedewed M. Devaines's waistcoat with his tears. Before the friend had time to answer with a few words of sympathy, Madame Diderot suddenly burst into the room. The impassioned address which she proceeded to deliver had at least the merit of sincerity:—"And pray, M. Diderot, what are you doing there? You lose your

time in talking stuff, and forget your luggage. Nothing will be ready to-morrow. You know you ought to be off early in the morning; yet there you are at your fine phrases, and your business taking care of itself. See what comes of dining out instead of staying at home. You promised me, too, that you wouldn't go to-day! But everybody can command you, except us. Ah! what a man! My goodness, what a man!" Devaines with difficulty kept his countenance, and lost no time in beating a retreat. Next day he was not surprised to learn that Diderot had managed to tear himself from his wife and daughter, and that they appeared to be bearing his absence with resignation.

The truth is, that, on a careful survey of the facts, one is forced to the conclusion that Diderot made the journey partly in order to escape from the beloved one, who was a model of constancy and devotion, but had a shrill voice, which, again, was the exponent of a quick temper. He was very poor, and had advertised his library for sale. Catherine II. generously purchased it at its full price; then appointed Diderot its custodian, at a handsome salary, fifty years of which was paid in advance. It was not even required that the books should be brought to St. Petersburg. Diderot, however, determined to go and thank the Empress in person, which was no doubt a graceful resolution on his part. Only there was no especial reason why he should have stayed several months in Holland on the way, even if we admit that the most direct route to the capital of the Czars lay through that country. Once at the court of Catherine he was petted and made much of, as may well be believed; and his delight knew no bounds. From St. Petersburg he wrote to Mdle. Voland that "while in a country called the land of freemen, he felt as a slave; but now, in a country called the land of slaves, he felt like a freeman." Either Diderot saw things Muscovite through rose-coloured spectacles, or a certain orthodox empire has been progressing backwards, as Americans say, for the last century.

"The first step towards philosophy," said Diderot, on his death-bed, "is incredulity." Whatever may be the worth of this axiom, one is tempted, after a perusal of the *Religieuse*, to think that an excessive credulity was among the author's intellectual weaknesses. At any rate, it is clear that no scandal in respect of monks or nuns was too black or too improbable for Diderot to give it credit. Of course, the wish was father to the belief.

The credulous suspicion with which Diderot regarded a numerous class of his fellow-beings is supposed to have been the feeling with which Talleyrand regarded the whole human race. As a matter of fact, the Prince does not seem to have thought so ill of our common nature; but he had a weakness for saying "good things," which may be defined as bad things, about other people. And one of his happiest *mots* was merely a witty reproof of that spirit which greedily catches at the suggestion of a hidden motive for the plainest action. Some one told him that M. de Sémonville had a bad cold. "What interest can M. de Sémonville have

in catching cold?" quoth Talleyrand. Yet, if Napoleon's greatest Minister had been a more suspicious person than he really was, there would have been some excuse for him. His youth was passed in a very hotbed of intrigue and back-stairs influence; and, if we are to admit as trustworthy the evidence of Chamfort (as there seems no reason why we should not), Talleyrand's own mother may have given him some strange lessons in the art of getting on. Certainly, there was no very healthy moral to be drawn from such a history as the following:—A woman was plaintiff or defendant—it matters not which—in an action about to be tried by the Parliament of Dijon. To gain her cause, it seemed to her the most natural thing in the world to try and get some great person to say a word to the judges in her favour. With this end in view she went to Paris, and begged the Keeper of the Seals to intercede for her. On the Keeper's refusal, she applied to the Countess of Talleyrand, who, taking an interest in the woman, wrote herself to the Minister, but with no better success than her *protégée*. Madame de Talleyrand then remembered that her son, the Abbé de Périgord (the future Bishop of Autun) was somewhat of a favourite with the Keeper of the Seals; to whom, accordingly, at his mother's request, the hopeful young ecclesiastic was induced to write. A third refusal was the result of this third application. The fair litigant, with an energy worthy of a better object, now determined to go to Versailles, and seek to see the Minister. The coach in which she went was so uncomfortable that she got down at Sèvres, intending to walk the rest of the way. She had not proceeded far before she fell in with a man who, on her asking to be shown the way, offered to take her by a short cut. They began to talk, and she told him of her trouble. He said, "To-morrow you shall have what you require." She looked at him, astonished, but made no answer. Arrived at Versailles, she succeeded in obtaining the same day an audience of the Minister, who, however, declined to comply with her request. Meanwhile her new friend had waited for her outside. On her reappearance he begged of her to stay at Versailles for the night—next day she would hear tidings of him. On the following morning he brought her just such a letter from the Keeper of the Seals as she had prayed for. Who was this walking Providence? A clerk's clerk, named Étienne. Whence his power? The father of mischief only knew.

Apropos of the administration of law in olden France, it is a mournful confession to have to make that Henri IV. was not a sufficiently wise and virtuous ruler to refrain from tampering with the independence of his own judges. On one occasion, for instance, he sent for M. de Turin, who was to give judgment in the case of M. de Bouillon *v.* M. de Bouillon la Mark, and, without preamble, said, "M. de Turin, I wish M. de Bouillon to win his suit." "Very well, Sire," replied the judge; "there is nothing easier: I will send you the papers, and you shall decide the case yourself." With which words he withdrew; when some observed to the King, "Your Majesty does not know that man—he is quite bold

enough to do what he has said." The King sent after him; and, sure enough, the messenger found the worthy magistrate loading a porter with brief-bags, and directing him to take them to the palace. Tallemant des Réaux is responsible for the story. Henri's grandson naturally inherited this royal weakness for being to his subjects all in all; but even Louis XIV. occasionally found a man who could face him. Thus, the Chancellor Voisin positively refused to affix the seals to a pardon, the proposed object of the monarch's clemency being known to the Minister to be an irreclaimable scoundrel. The King took the seals and acted for the nonce as his own Chancellor; then returned them to their regular custodian. "I cannot accept them," replied Voisin; "they are polluted." "What a man!" exclaimed Louis, half impatiently and half admiringly, as it should seem, for he threw the pardon into the fire; upon which the Chancellor consented to resume the seals.

Louis's idea that he might, at a pinch, seal his own ordinances, was not unworthy of Frederic the Great, who was ready himself to discharge every possible function of the body politic, and was at once the eye, the tongue, and the right hand of the State—occasionally, if one might push the simile so far, its foot, and booted foot, as the shins of the judges who would not take their Sovereign's view of Miller Arnold's case might have testified. Probably Frederic's love of doing even the official drudgery of his dominions may have proceeded, if we examine its final cause, from much the same reason as that which impelled him to labour at the composition of French verses. It was an ambition (and no mean ambition had it been attainable), not only to be first of all, but to be first in all things. As the Homeric chieftain was proud to be a stout spearman as well as a skilled leader, so Frederic apparently longed to be the intellectual as well as the civil head of the commonwealth which he had almost reconstructed to its foundations. Mr. Irving mentions a trait of Columbus, which is sufficient evidence of a very similar weakness in the discoverer of the New World. Columbus had somewhat childishly set his heart on being the first to see land with the human eye, as if it were not enough glory to have discovered it with the eye of science, enlightened by imagination. Such as it was, Columbus fancied he had achieved the lesser as well as the greater distinction. His claim, however, was disputed by a common sailor, who, as may well be imagined, had small chance of being believed before the Admiral. Maddened with disappointment at the loss of the splendid reward which had been promised, and which he had hoped to obtain, the unhappy man is said to have forsworn at once his country and his faith, and to have taken service with the Moors. One can only hope he was never made prisoner by his compatriots, for the Inquisition would have made short work with him. But Columbus does not come well out of the story.

Other weaknesses of great men for doing little things have proved less harmful to others and to their own reputation. Among them may be cited Rossini's passion for making macaroni after a peculiar and,

it must be admitted, an excellent fashion. He seemed as proud of his culinary accomplishments as of having composed *William Tell*, which masterpiece, as will be remembered, closed his operatic career. The reason Rossini alleged for passing the last forty years of his life in almost complete idleness was akin to that weakness of timidity which made Gerard Hamilton* silent after his single speech. "An additional success," said Rossini, "would add nothing to my fame; a failure would injure it. I have no need of the one, and I do not choose to expose myself to the other."

Goldsmith's fond belief that he possessed a knowledge of medicine is known to all. Possibly it hastened his death, for he would prescribe for himself. Eugene Sue laboured under a delusion of the same kind; only for his there was some slight ground in fact, the author of the *Mysteries of Paris* having actually been a regimental surgeon in his youth. It must be admitted, too, that a droll anecdote about Sue's performances in his later years indicates rather that he was sometimes very drunk than that he utterly lacked professional skill. He had one day dined with his friend Romieu at the Café de Paris, and had dined well—in fact, they had both dined well; and as they sauntered along the Boulevards, by way of aiding digestion, Romieu slipped, fell down, and hurt his leg. Sue called a cab, put his friend in, and drove home, where he dressed the wound. He then put Romieu to bed, and settled himself into an arm-chair for the night. Next morning he hastened to examine the wound, only to discover that he had tended the wrong leg.

Few, indeed, are the men who have been great in more than one department of human knowledge and skill; though (if one may avail oneself of the Oxford terminology) there have been a respectable number who have combined a first-class reputation in one field of distinction with a second-class in another. It is pleasant, in this year of the Rubens' Tercentenary, to remember that the famous painter acquitted himself with credit in a diplomatic capacity. A lady once asked Casanova "whether Rubens had not been an ambassador who amused himself with painting." "I beg pardon, madam," replied the artist; "he was a painter who amused himself with embassies." One shudders to think of the depths of ignorance or impertinence the lady's question reveals.

* It may not be generally known that, once across St. George's Channel, Hamilton became more courageous. He often spoke with effect in the Irish House of Commons; it was only at Westminster that he remained mute.

Hours in a Library.

No. XVII.—CHARLOTTE BRONTË.

THE well-known phrase as to critics being made of poets who have failed requires to be supplemented. The best critics are often the poets who have succeeded; a truth which has been more than once illustrated by Mr. Swinburne. I shall not ask whether this can be said unreservedly in reference to his recent essay upon Miss Brontë. As usual, he bestows the most enthusiastic and generous praise with a lavish hand, and bestows it upon worthy objects. And, as usual, he seems to be a little too much impressed with the necessary connection between illuminating in honour of a hero and breaking the windows or burning the effigies of the hero's rivals. I do not wish to examine the justice of his assaults, and still less to limp on halting and prosaic feet after his bounding rhetoric. I propose only to follow an inquiry suggested by a part of his argument. After all, though criticism cannot boast of being a science, it ought to aim at something like a scientific basis, or at least to proceed in a scientific spirit. The critic, therefore, before abandoning himself to the oratorical impulse, should endeavour to classify the phenomena with which he is dealing as calmly as if he were ticketing a fossil in a museum. The most glowing eulogy, the most bitter denunciation have their proper place; but they belong to the art of persuasion, and form no part of scientific method. Our literary, if not our religious, creed should rest upon a purely rational ground, and be exposed to logical tests. Our faith in an author must in the first instance be the product of instinctive sympathy, instead of deliberate reason. It may be propagated by the contagion of enthusiasm, and preached with all the fervour of proselytism. But when we are seeking to justify our emotions, we must endeavour to get for the time into the position of an independent spectator, applying with rigid impartiality such methods as are best calculated to free us from the influence of personal bias.

Undoubtedly it is a very difficult task to be alternately witness and judge; to feel strongly, and yet to analyse coolly; to love every feature in a familiar face, and yet to decide calmly upon its intrinsic ugliness or beauty. To be an adequate critic is almost to be a contradiction in terms; to be susceptible to a force, and yet free from its influence; to be moving with the stream, and yet to be standing on the bank. It is especially difficult in the case of writers like Miss Brontë, and of critics who were in the most enthusiastic age when her fame was in its early freshness. It is almost impossible not to have overpowering prejudices

in regard to a character so intense, original, and full of special idiosyncrasy. If you did not love her, you must hate her; or, since hatred for so noble a sufferer would imply unreasonable brutality, we may say, feel strongly a hopeless uncongeniality of temperament. The power of exciting such feelings is, indeed, some testimony to an author's intrinsic force; and it may explain the assertion of her latest biographer. If it be true, as he says, that she has been comparatively neglected of late years, that is what may easily happen in the case of writers more remarkable for intensity than comprehensive power. Their real audience must always be the comparatively small number who are in sympathy with their peculiar moods. But their vigour begins by impressing and overawing a large number of persons who do not feel this spontaneous sympathy. They conquer by sheer force minds whom they do not attract by milder methods. In literature, at any rate, violent conquests are generally transitory; and, after a time, those who have obeyed the rule against their natural inclination, fall away and leave an audience composed of those alone who have been swayed by a deeper attraction. Charlotte Brontë, and perhaps her sister Emily in an even higher degree, must have a certain interest for all intelligent observers of character. But only a minority will thoroughly and unreservedly enjoy the writings which embody so peculiar an essence. Some scenery—rich pasturage and abounding rivers and forest-clad hills—appeals more or less to everybody. It is only a few who really love the lonely cairn on a wind-swept moor. An accident may make it the fashion to affect admiration for such peculiar aspects of nature; but, like all affectations, it will die away after a time, and the faithful lovers be reduced to a narrow band.

The comparative eclipse then—if eclipse there be—of Charlotte Brontë's fame does not imply want of power, but want of comprehensiveness. There is a certain *prima facie* presumption against a writer who appeals only to a few, though it may be amply rebutted by showing that the few are also fit. The two problems must go together; why is the charm so powerful, and why is it so limited? Any intense personality has so far a kind of double-edged influence. Shakespeare sympathises with everybody, and therefore every one with him. Swift scorns and loathes a great part of the world, and therefore if people in general read Swift, or said honestly what they felt, most readers would confess to a simple feeling of aversion to his writings. There is, however, a further distinction. One may dislike such a man as Swift, but one cannot set him aside. His amazing intellectual vigour, the power with which he states some of the great problems of life, and the trenchant decision of his answer, give him a right to be heard. We may shudder, but we are forced to listen. If with equal force of character his intellectual power had been less, we should feel the shock without the mysterious attraction. He would be an unpleasant phenomenon, and one which might be simply neglected. It is because he brings his peculiar

views to bear upon problems of universal interest that we cannot afford simply to drop him out of mind. The power of grasping general truths is necessary to give a broad base to a writer's fame, though his capacity for tender and deep emotion is that which makes us love or hate him.

Mr. Swinburne takes Miss Brontë to illustrate the distinction between "genius" and "intellect." Genius, he says, as the most potent faculty, can most safely dispense with its ally. If genius be taken to mean the poetic as distinguished from the scientific type of mind—that which sees intuitively, prefers synthesis to analysis, and embodies ideas in concrete symbols instead of proceeding by rule and measure, and constructing diagrams in preference to drawing pictures—the truth is undeniable and important. The reasoner gives us mechanism and constructs automata, where the seer creates living and feeling beings. The contrast used to be illustrated by the cases of Jonson and Shakespeare—by the difference between the imaginative vigour of *Antony and Cleopatra*, and the elaborate construction of *Sejanus*. We must add, however, that the two qualities of mind are not mutually exclusive. The most analytic mind has some spark of creative power, and the great creators are capable of deliberate dissection. Shakespeare could reflect; and Jonson could see. The ideally perfect mind would be capable of applying each method with equal facility in its proper place.

Genius, therefore, manifested in any high degree, must be taken to include intellect, if the words are to be used in this sense. Genius begins where intellect ends; or takes by storm where intellect has to make elaborate approaches according to the rules of scientific strategy. One sees where the other demonstrates, but the same principles are common to both. To say that a writer shows more genius than intellect may mean simply that, as an artist, he proceeds by the true artistic method, and does not put us off with scientific formulæ galvanised into an internal semblance of life. But it may mean that his reflective powers are weak, that he has not assimilated the seminal ideas of his time, and is at a loss in the higher regions of philosophic thought. If so, you are setting limits to the sphere of his influence, and show that he is incapable of uttering the loftiest aspirations and the deepest emotions of his fellows. A great religious teacher may prefer a parable to a theory, but the parable is impressive because it gives the most vivid embodiment of a truly philosophical theory.

Miss Brontë, as her warmest admirers would grant, was not and did not in the least affect to be a philosophical thinker. And because a great writer, to whom she has been gratuitously compared, is strong just where she is weak, her friends have an injudicious desire to make out that the matter is of no importance, and that her comparative poverty of thought is no injury to her work. There is no difficulty in following them so far as to admit that her work is none the worse for containing no theological or philosophical disquisitions, or for showing no familiarity with the technicalities of modern science and metaphysics. But the

admission by no means follows that her work does not suffer very materially by the comparative narrowness of the circle of ideas in which her mind habitually revolved. Perhaps if she had been familiar with Hegel or Sir W. Hamilton, she would have intruded undigested lumps of metaphysics, and introduced vexatious allusions to the philosophy of identity or to the principle of the excluded middle. But it is possible, also, that her conceptions of life and the world would have been enriched and harmonised, and that, without giving us more scientific dogmas, her characters would have embodied more fully the dominating ideas of the time. There is no province of inquiry—historical, scientific, or philosophical—from which the artist may not derive useful material; the sole question is whether it has been properly assimilated and transformed by the action of the poetic imagination. By attempting to define how far Miss Brontë's powers were in fact thus bounded, we shall approximately decide her place in the great hierarchy of imaginative thinkers. That it was a very high one, I take to be undeniable. Putting aside living writers, the only female novelist whom one can put distinctly above her is George Sand; for Miss Austen, whom some fanatics place upon a still higher level, differs so widely in every way that "comparison" is absurd. It is almost silly to draw a parallel between writers when every great quality in one is "conspicuous by its absence" in the other.

The most obvious of all remarks about Miss Brontë is the close connection between her life and her writings. Nobody ever put so much of themselves into their work. She is the heroine of her two most powerful novels; for Lucy Snowe is avowedly her own likeness, and Lucy Snowe differs only by accidents from Jane Eyre; whilst her sister is the heroine of the third. All the minor characters, with scarcely an exception, are simply portraits, and the more successful in proportion to their fidelity. The scenery and even the incidents are, for the most part, equally direct transcripts from reality. And, as this is almost too palpable a peculiarity to be expressly mentioned, it seems to be an identical proposition that the study of her life is the study of her novels. More or less true of all imaginable writers, this must be pre-eminently true of Miss Brontë. Her experience, we would say, has been scarcely transformed in passing through her mind. She has written down not only her feelings, but the more superficial accidents of her life. She has simply given fictitious names and dates, with a more or less imaginary thread of narrative, to her own experience at school, as a governess, at home and in Brussels. *Shirley* contains a continuous series of photographs of Haworth and its neighbourhood; as *Villette* does of Brussels: and if *Jane Eyre* is not so literal, except in the opening account of the school-life, much of it is almost as strictly autobiographical. It is one of the oddest cases of an author's self-delusion that Miss Brontë should have imagined that she could remain anonymous after the publication of *Shirley*, and the introduction of such whole-length portraits from the life as the Yorke family. She does not appear to have been herself conscious of

the closeness of her adherence to facts. "You are not to suppose," she says in a letter given by Mrs. Gaskell, "any of the characters in *Shirley* intended as real portraits. It would not suit the rules of art, nor of my own feelings, to write in that style. We only suffer reality to suggest, never to dictate." She seems to be thinking chiefly of her "heroes and heroines," and would perhaps have admitted that the minor personages were less idealised. But we must suppose also that she failed to appreciate fully the singularity of characters which, in her seclusion, she had taken for average specimens of the world at large. If I take my village for the world, I cannot distinguish the particular from the universal; and must assume that the most distinctive peculiarities are unnoticeably commonplace. The amazing vividness of her portrait-painting is the quality which more than any other makes her work unique amongst modern fiction. Her realism is something peculiar to herself; and only the crudest of critics could depreciate its merits on the ground of its fidelity to facts. The hardest of all feats is to see what is before our eyes. What is called the creative power of genius is much more the power of insight into commonplace things and characters. The realism of the De Foe variety produces an illusion, by describing the most obvious aspects of everyday life, and introducing the irrelevant and accidental. A finer kind of realism is that which, like Miss Austen's, combines exquisite powers of minute perception with a skill which can light up the most delicate miniatures with a delicate play of humour. A more impressive kind is that of Balzac, where the most detailed reproduction of realities is used to give additional force to the social tragedies which are being enacted at our doors. The specific peculiarity of Miss Brontë seems to be the power of revealing to us the potentiality of intense passions lurking behind the scenery of everyday life. Except in the most melodramatic—which is also the weakest—part of *Jane Eyre*, we have lives almost as uneventful as those of Miss Austen, and yet charged to the utmost with latent power. A parson at the head of a school-feast somehow shows himself as a "Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood;" a professor lecturing a governess on composition is revealed as a potential Napoleon; a mischievous schoolboy is obviously capable of developing into a Columbus or a Nelson; even the most commonplace natural objects, such as a row of beds in a dormitory, are associated and naturally associated with the most intense emotions. Miss Austen makes you feel that a tea-party in a country parsonage may be as amusing as the most brilliant meeting of cosmopolitan celebrities; and Miss Brontë that it may display characters capable of shaking empires and discovering new worlds. The whole machinery is in a state of the highest electric tension, though there is no display of thunder and lightning to amaze us.

The power of producing this effect without stepping one hand's-breadth beyond the most literal and unmistakable fidelity to ordinary facts is explicable, one would say, so far as genius is explicable at all, only in one way. A mind of extraordinary activity within a narrow

sphere has been brooding constantly upon a small stock of materials, and a sensitive nature has been enforced to an unusual pressure from the hard facts of life. The surroundings must surely have been exceptional, and the receptive faculties impressible even to morbidness, to produce so startling a result, and the key seemed to be given by Mrs. Gaskell's touching biography, which, with certain minor faults, is still one of the most pathetic records of a heroic life in our literature. Charlotte Brontë and her sister, according to this account, resembled the sensitive plant exposed to the cutting breezes of the West Riding moors. Their writings were the cry of pain and of only half-triumphant faith, produced by a life-long martyrdom, tempered by mutual sympathy, but embittered by family sorrows and the trials of a dependent life. It is one more exemplification of the common theory, that great art is produced by taking an exceptionally delicate nature and mangling it slowly under the grinding wheels of the world.

A recent biographer has given us to understand that this is in great part a misconception, and, whilst paying high compliments to Mrs. Gaskell, he virtually accuses her of unintentionally substituting a fiction for a biography. Mr. Wemyss Reid's intention is excellent; and one can well believe that Mrs. Gaskell did in fact err by carrying into the earlier period the gloom of later years. Most certainly one would gladly believe this to be the case. Only when Mr. Reid seems to think that Charlotte Brontë was thoroughly a gay and high-spirited girl, and that the people of Haworth were commonplace, we begin to fear that we are in the presence of one of those well-meant attempts at whitewashing which "do justice" to a marked character by obliterating all its most prominent features. If Boswell had written in such a spirit, Johnson would have been a Chesterfield, and Goldsmith never have blundered in his talk. When we look at them fairly, Mr. Reid's proofs seem to be curiously inadequate for his conclusions, though calculated to correct some very important misconceptions. He quotes, for example, a couple of letters, in one of which Miss Brontë ends a little outburst of Tory politics by saying, "Now, Ellen, laugh heartily at all that rhodomontade!" This sentence, omitted by Mrs. Gaskell, is taken to prove that Charlotte's interest in politics was "not unmingled with the happy levity of youth." Surely, it is just a phrase from the school-girl's Complete Letter Writer. It would be as sensible to quote from an orator the phrase, "but I fear that I am wearying the House," to prove that he was conscious of being an intolerable bore. The next letter is said to illustrate the "infinite variety of moods" of her true character, and its rapid transitions from grave to gay, because, whilst expressing very strongly some morbid feelings, she admits that they would be contemptible to common sense, and says that she had been "in one of her sentimental humours." Did anybody ever express a morbid feeling without some such qualification? And is not "infinite," even in the least mathematical sense, rather a strong expression for two? A sentimental mood and a reaction are men-

tioned in one letter. That scarcely proves much gaiety of heart or variety of mood. If, indeed, Charlotte had always been at her worst, she would have been mad: and we need not doubt that she too had some taste of the gladness as of the sorrows of childhood. The plain truth is, that Miss Brontë's letters, read without reference to the disputes of rival biographers, are disappointing. The most striking thing about them is that they are young-ladyish. Here and there a passage revealing the writer's literary power shines through the more commonplace matter, but, as a whole, they give a curious impression of immaturity. The explanation seems to be, in the first place, that Miss Brontë, with all her genius, was still a young lady. Her mind, with its exceptional powers in certain directions, never broke the fetters by which the parson's daughter of the last generation was restricted. Trifling indications of this are common in her novels. The idealised portrait of Emily, the daring and unconventional Shirley, shows her utmost courage by hinting a slight reluctance to repeat certain clauses in the Athanasian Creed; and the energy with which the unlucky curates are satirised shows the state of mind to which even a young clergyman is still invested with more or less superhuman attributes. The warmth is generated by the previous assumption that a young gentleman who dons a white neckcloth must, in the normal state of things, put off the schoolboy and develop a hidden pair of wings. The wrath excited by their failure to fulfil this expectation strikes one as oddly disproportionate. And, in the next place, it seems that, even in writing to her best friends, Miss Brontë habitually dreaded any vivid expression of feeling, and perhaps observed that her sentiments when spread upon letter-paper had a morbid appearance. There are many people who can confide in the public more freely than in the most intimate friends. The mask of anonymous authorship and fictitious personages has a delusive appearance of security. The most sacred emotions are for ourselves or for the invisible public rather than for the intermediate sphere of concrete spectators. The letters may dissipate some of Mrs. Gaskell's romantic gloom, but they do not persuade us that the Brontës were ever like their neighbours. The doctrine that the people of Haworth were really commonplace mortals, may be accepted with a similar reserve. Undoubtedly every Scotch peasant is not a Davie Deans, nor every Irishman a Captain Costigan. There are natives of the mining districts who do not throw half-bricks at every stranger they see; there are Yankees who do not chew tobacco, and Englishmen who do not eat raw beefsteaks. And so one may well believe that many inhabitants of Haworth would have passed muster at Charing Cross; and one may hope and believe that a man like Heathcliff was an exaggeration even of the most extravagant of the squires in Craven. If there were many such people in any corner of this world, it would be greatly in want of a thorough clearing out. And, therefore, one may understand why the good people of Haworth should be amazed when Mrs. Gaskell set forth as common types the gentleman who fired small shot from his parlour window at any one who came within convenient range, and

the man who chuckled over his luck at dying just after insuring his life.

But, for all this, it is permissible also to suppose that there was a strongly marked provincial character in that region, even if Miss Brontë's life-like portraits were not their own sufficient evidence. All people seem to be commonplace to the commonplace observer. Genius reveals the difference; it does not invent it. In one sense, doubtless, the people were commonplace enough, and in that fact lay part of their offensiveness. Many of the upper classes, one may guess, were hard, crabbed men of business, with even less than the average of English toleration for sentiment or æsthetic fancies; and their inferiors were sturdy workmen, capable of taking a pride in their own brutality, which would have shocked gentler races. But the precise degree in which these characteristics were manifested must be left to the decision of local observers. We cannot affect to know accurately in what proportion the charge of originality is to be shared between the Brontës and their neighbours; how far the surroundings were unusually harsh and the surrounded abnormally tender. In any case, one may assume that Miss Brontë and her sisters were at once even morbidly sensitive and exposed to the contact of persons emphatically intolerant of morbid sentiment. Their ordinary relation to the outside world seems to be indicated by one peculiarity of Miss Brontë's writing. When young Mark Yorke sees that Moore has been flattered by hearing a lady describe him as "not sentimental," that offensive lad gets down a dictionary and endeavours to dash Moore's pleasure by proving that "not sentimental" must mean destitute of ideas. The trait is very probably from life, and is at any rate life-like. There are many amiable people who take a keen pleasure in dashing cold water upon any little manifestation of self-complacency in their neighbours. To find out a man's tenderest corn, and then to bring your heel down upon it with a good rasping scrunch, is somehow gratifying to corrupt human nature. A kindly wit contrives to convey a compliment in affected satire. But the whole aim of a humourist of this variety is to convey the most mortifying truths in the most brutal plain-speaking. Now speeches modelled upon this plan are curiously frequent in Miss Brontë's conversations. Hunsden, the first sketch of the Yorke family in the *Professor*, composes his whole talk of a string of brutal home-truths. The worse characters, like Miss Fanshawe in *Villette*, thoroughly enjoy telling a friendless governess that she is poor, plain, and sickly. And even her favourites, Rochester and Shirley and Paul Emanuel, have just a leaning to the same trick of speech, though with them it is an occasional bitter to heighten the flavour of their substantial kindness. Miss Brontë has as little sense of humour as Milton or Wordsworth; but her nearest approach to it is in some of those shrewd, bitter sayings which are rather more of a gibe than a compliment. When one remembers that the originals of the Yorokes were amongst her most cherished and cultivated friends, and that they are admittedly painted to the life, one

may fancy that she had received a good many of those left-handed compliments which seem to have done duty for pleasant jests in the district.

The soliloquies in which her heroines indulge proceed upon the same plan. Jane Eyre sits in judgment upon herself, and listens to the evidence of Memory and Reason, accusing her of rejecting the real and "rabidly devouring the ideal." And she decides in accordance with her witnesses. "Listen, Jane Eyre, to your sentence; to-morrow place the glass before you and draw in chalk your own picture, faithfully, without softening one defect; omit no harsh line; smooth away no displeasing irregularity: write under it, 'Portrait of a governess, disconnected, poor, and plain!'"

Similar passages occur in *Shirley* and *Villette*, and obviously represent a familiar mood. The original of this portrait was frequently engaged, it would seem, in forcing herself to hear such unpalatable truths. When other people snubbed her, after the fashion of the Yorkes, she might be vexed by their harshness, but her own thoughts echoed their opinion. Lucy Snowe is rather gratified than otherwise when Miss Fanshawe treats her to one of these pleasing fits of frank thinking aloud. She pardons the want of feeling for the sake of the honesty.

Sensitive natures brought into contact with those of coarser grain may relieve themselves in various ways. Some might have been driven into revolt against the proprieties which found so harsh an expression. Poor Branwell Brontë took the unluckily commonplace path of escape from a too frigid code of external morality which leads to the public-house. His sisters followed the more characteristically feminine method. They learnt to be proud of the fetters by which they were bound. Instead of fretting against the stern law of repression, they identified it with the eternal code of duty, and rejoiced in trampling on their own weakness. The current thus restrained ran all the more powerfully in its narrow channel. What might have been bright and genial sentiment was transformed and chastened into a kind of austere enthusiasm. They became recluses in spirit, sternly enforcing a self-imposed rule, though, in their case, the convent walls were invisible and the objects of their devotion not those which dominate the ascetic imagination.

Theorists who trace the inheritance of race-characteristics might be interested in the curious development thus effected. The father of the family was an Irishman, and the mother a Cornish woman; the aunt, who succeeded her in the management of the household, had a persistent dislike for the character of her northern neighbours; even Charlotte herself, we are told, spake in her childhood with a strong Irish accent. And yet, as we find her saying in reference to the troubles of 1848, she has "no sympathy" with French or Irish. She had been spiritually annexed by the people with whom she lived. She was obtrusively and emphatically a Yorkshire woman, though only by adoption; she is never tired of

proclaiming or implying her hearty preference of rough Yorkshire people to cockneys, sentimentalists, and that large part of the human race which we describe contemptuously as "foreigners." She is a typical example of the "patriotism of the steeple." She loved with her whole heart the narrowest insular type. She idolised the Duke of Wellington, with his grand contempt for humbug and ideas, terms synonymous—perhaps rightly synonymous—with many people. When she came in contact with fine foreigners and Papists, it only increased her hearty contempt for forms of character and religion which, one might have fancied *à priori*, would have had many attractions for her. If at times she felt the æsthetic charm of parts of the Catholic system, she was but the more convinced that it was a poison, dangerous in proportion to its sweetness. The habit of trampling on some of her own impulses had become a religion for her. She had learnt to make a shield of reserve and self-repression, and could not be tempted to lay it aside when gentle persuasion took the place of rougher intimidation. Much is said by her biographers of the heroic force of will of her sister Emily, who presents the same type in an intensified form. Undoubtedly both sisters had powerful wills; but their natures had not less been moulded, and their characters, so to speak, turned inward by the early influence of surrounding circumstances. The force was not of that kind which resists the pressure from without, but of the kind which accepts and intensifies it, and makes a rigid inward law for itself of the law embodied in external conditions.

The sisters, indeed, differed widely, though with a strong resemblance. The iron had not entered so deeply into Charlotte's nature. Emily's naturally subjective mode of thought—to use the unpleasant technical phrase—found its most appropriate utterance in lyrical poetry. She represents, that is, the mood of pure passion, and is rather encumbered than otherwise by the necessity of using the more indirect method of concrete symbols. She feels, rather than observes; whereas Charlotte feels in observing. Charlotte had not that strange self-concentration which made the external world unreal to her sister. Her powers of observation, though restricted by circumstances and narrowed by limitations of her intellect, showed amazing penetration within her proper province. The greatest of all her triumphs in this direction is the character of Paul Emanuel, which has tasked Mr. Swinburne's powers of expressing admiration, and which one feels to be, in its way, inimitable. A more charming hero was never drawn, or one whose reality is more vivid and unmistakable. We know him as we know a familiar friend, or rather as we should know a friend whose character had been explained for us by a common acquaintance of unusual acuteness and opportunity of observation. Perhaps we might venture to add, that it is hardly explicable, except as a portrait drawn by a skilful hand guided by love, and by love intensified by the consciousness of some impassable barrier.

Mr. Swinburne compares this masterpiece of Miss Brontë's art with the famous heroes of fiction, Don Quixote, Uncle Toby, and Colonel Newcome. Don Quixote admittedly stands apart as one of the greatest creations of poetic imagination. Of Colonel Newcome I will not speak; but the comparison with Uncle Toby is enough to suggest what is the great secret both of Miss Brontë's success and its limitations. In one sense Paul Emanuel is superior even to such characters as these. He is more real: he is so real that we feel at once that he must have been drawn from a living model, though we may leave some indefinable margin of idealisation. If the merit of fiction were simply its approach to producing illusion, we might infer that Paul Emanuel was one of the first characters in the world of fiction. But such a test implies an erroneous theory of art; and, in fact, the intense individuality of Paul Emanuel is, in a different sense, the most serious objection to him. He is a real human being who gave lectures at a particular date in a *pension* at Brussels. We are as much convinced of that fact as we are of the reality of Miss Brontë herself; but the fact is also a presumption that he is not one of those great typical characters, the creation of which is the highest triumph of the dramatist or novelist. There is too much of the temporary and accidental—too little of the permanent and essential.

We all know and love Uncle Toby, but we feel quite sure that no such man ever existed except in Sterne's brain. There may have been some real being who vaguely suggested him; but he is, we assume, the creation of Sterne, and the projection into concrete form of certain ideas which had affected Sterne's imagination. He is not, indeed, nor is any fictitious character, a creation out of nothing. Partly, no doubt, he is Sterne himself, or Sterne in a particular mood; but Uncle Toby's soul, that which makes him live and excite our sympathy and love, is something which might be expressed by the philosopher as a theory, and which has been expressed in an outward symbol by an artist of extraordinary skill. Don Quixote is of perennial interest, because he is the most powerful type ever set forth of the contrast between the ideal and the commonplace, and his figure comes before us whenever we are forced to meditate upon some of the most vital and most melancholy truths about human life. Uncle Toby, in a far less degree, is a great creation, because he is the embodiment of one answer to a profound and enduring problem. He represents, it has been said, the wisdom of love, as Mr. Shandy exemplifies the love of wisdom. More precisely he is an incarnation of the sentimentalism of the eighteenth century. It is a phenomenon which has its bad and its good side, and which may be analysed and explained by historians of the time. Sterne, in describing Uncle Toby, gave a concrete symbol for one of the most important currents of thought of the time, which took religious, moral, and political, as well as artistic, shapes. In many ways the sentiment has lost much of its interest for us; but, though an utterance of an imperfect doctrine, we may infer

that Uncle Toby's soul will transmigrate into new shapes, and perhaps develop into higher forms.

When we measure M. Paul Emanuel by this test, we feel instinctively that there is something wanting. The most obvious contrast is that M. Emanuel is no humourist himself, nor even a product of humour. The imperfections, the lovable absurdities, of Uncle Toby are imbedded in the structure of character. His whims and oddities always leave us in the appropriate mood of blended smiles and tears. Many people, especially "earnest" young ladies, will prefer M. Paul Emanuel, who, like his creator, is always in deadly earnest. At bottom he is always (like all ladies' heroes) a true woman, simple, pure, heroic, and loving—a real Joan of Arc, as Mr. Thackeray said of his creator, in the beard and blouse of a French professor. He attaches extravagant importance to trifles, indeed, for his irascible and impetuous temperament is always converting him into an Æolus of the duck-pond. So far there is, we may admit, a kind of pseudo-humorous element in his composition; but the humour, such as it is, lies entirely on the surface. He is perfectly sane and sensible, though a trifle choleric. Give him a larger sphere of action, and his impetuosity will be imposing instead of absurd. It is the mere accident of situation which gives, even for a moment, a ludicrous tinge to his proceedings.

Uncle Toby, on the contrary, would be even more of a humourist as a general on the battle-field than in his mimic sieges on the bowling-green. The humour is in his very marrow, not in his surroundings; and the reason is that Sterne feels what every genuine humourist feels, and what, indeed, it is his main function to express—a strong sense of the irony of fate, of the queer mixture of good and bad, of the heroic and the ludicrous, of this world of ours, and of what we may call the perversity of things in general. Whether such a treatment is altogether right and healthy is another question; and most certainly Sterne's view of life is in many respects not only unworthy, but positively base. But it remains true that the deep humourist is finding a voice for one of the most pervading and profound of the sentiments raised in a philosophical observer who is struck by the discords of the universe. Sensitiveness to such discords is one of the marks of a truly reflective intellect, though a humourist suggests one mode of escape from the pain which they cause, whilst a philosophic and religious mind may find another and perhaps a more profound solution.

Now M. Paul Emanuel, admirable and amiable as he is, never carries us into the higher regions of thought. We are told, even ostentatiously, of the narrow prejudices which he shares, though they do not make him harsh and uncharitable. The prejudices were obvious in this case to the creator, because her own happened to be of a different kind. The "Tory and clergyman's daughter" was rather puzzled by finding that a bigoted Papist with a Jesuit education might still be a good man, and points out conscientiously the defects which she ascribes to his early training. But

the mere fact of the narrowness, the want of familiarity with a wider sphere of thought, the acceptance of a narrow code of belief and morality, does not strike her as in itself having either a comic or a melancholy side. M. Paul has the wrong set of prejudices, but is not as wrong as prejudiced; and therefore we feel that a Sterne, or, say, a George Sand, whilst doing equal justice to M. Emanuel's excellent qualities, would have had a feeling (which in her was altogether wanting) of his limitation and his incongruity with the great system of the world. Seen from an intellectual point of view, placed in his due relation to the great currents of thought and feeling of the time, we should have been made to feel the pathetic and humorous aspects of M. Emanuel's character, and he might have been equally a living individual and yet a type of some more general idea. The philosopher might ask, for example, what is the exact value of unselfish heroism guided by narrow theories or employed on unworthy tasks; and the philosophic humourist or artist might embody the answer in a portrait of M. Emanuel considered from a cosmic or a cosmopolitan point of view. From the lower standpoint accessible to Miss Brontë he is still most attractive; but we see only his relations to the little scholastic circle, and have no such perception as the greatest writers would give us of his relations to the universe, or, as the next order would give, of his relations to the great world without.

Although the secret of Miss Brontë's power lies, to a great extent, in the singular force with which she can reproduce acute observations of character from without, her most esoteric teaching, the most accurate reflex from her familiar idiosyncrasy, is of course to be found in the characters painted from within. We may infer her personality more or less accurately from the mode in which she contemplates her neighbours, but it is directly manifested in various avatars of her own spirit. Among the characters who are more or less mouthpieces of her peculiar sentiment we may reckon not only Lucy Snowe and Jane Eyre, but, to some extent, Shirley, and, even more decidedly, Rochester. When they speak we are really listening to her own voice, though it is more or less disguised in conformity to dramatic necessity. There are great differences between them; but they are such differences as would exist between members of the same family, or might be explained by change of health or internal circumstances. Jane Eyre has not had such bitter experience as Lucy Snowe; Shirley is generally Jane Eyre in high spirits, and freed from harassing anxiety; and Rochester is really a spirited sister of Shirley's, though he does his very best to be a man, and even an unusually masculine specimen of his sex.

Mr. Rochester, indeed, has imposed upon a good many people; and he is probably responsible in part for some of the muscular heroes who have appeared since his time in the world of fiction. I must, however, admit that, in spite of some opposing authority, he does not appear to me to be a real character at all, except as a reflection of a certain side of his creator. He is in reality the personification of a true woman's

longing (may one say it now?) for a strong master. But the knowledge is wanting. He is a very bold but necessarily unsuccessful attempt at an impossibility. The parson's daughter did not really know anything about the class of which he is supposed to be a type, and he remains vague and inconsistent in spite of all his vigour. He is intended to be a person who has surfeited from the fruit of the tree of knowledge, and addresses the inexperienced governess from the height—or depth—of his worldly wisdom. And he really knows just as little of the world as she does. He has to impose upon her by giving an account of his adventures taken from the first novel at hand of the early Bulwer school, or a diluted recollection of Byron. There is not a trace of real cynicism—of the strong nature turned sour by experience—in his whole conversation. He is supposed to be specially simple and masculine, and yet he is as self-conscious as a young lady on her first appearance in society, and can do nothing but discourse about his feelings, and his looks, and his phrenological symptoms, to his admiring hearer. Set him beside any man's character of a man, and one feels at once that he has no real solidity or vitality in him. He has, of course, strong nerves and muscles, but they are articles which can be supplied in unlimited quantities with little expense to the imagination. Nor can one deny that his conduct to Miss Eyre is abominable. If he had proposed to her to ignore the existence of the mad Mrs. Rochester, he would have acted like a rake, but not like a sneak. But the attempt to entrap Jane into a bigamous connection by concealing the wife's existence, is a piece of treachery for which it is hard to forgive him. When he challenges the lawyer and the clergyman to condemn him after putting themselves in his place, their answer is surely obvious. One may take a lenient view of a man who chooses by his own will to annul his marriage to a filthy lunatic; but he was a knave for trying to entrap a defenceless girl by a mock ceremony. He puts himself in a position in which the contemptible Mr. Mason has a moral advantage.

This is by far the worst blot in Miss Brontë's work, and may partly explain, though it cannot justify, the harsh criticisms made at the time. It is easy now to win a cheap reputation for generosity by trampling upon the dead bodies of the luckless critics who blundered so hopelessly. The time for anger is past; and mere oblivion is the fittest doom for such offenders. Inexperience, and consequently inadequate appreciation of the demands of the situation, was Miss Brontë's chief fault in this matter, and most certainly not any want of true purity and moral elevation. But the fact that she, in whom an instinctive nobility of spirit is, perhaps, the most marked characteristic, should have given scandal to the respectable, is suggestive of another inference. What, in fact, is the true significance of this singular strain of thought and feeling, which puts on various and yet closely allied forms in the three remarkable novels we have been considering? It displays itself at one moment in some vivid description, or—for "description" seems too faint a word—some forcible

presentation to our mind's eye of a fragment of moorland scenery; at another, it appears as an ardently sympathetic portrayal of some trait of character at once vigorous and tender; then it utters itself in a passionate soliloquy, which establishes the fact that its author possessed the proverbial claim to knowledge of the heavenly powers; or again, it produces one of those singular little prose-poems—such as Shirley's description of Eve—which, with all their force, have just enough flavour of the "devoirs" at M. Heger's establishment to suggest that they are the work of an inspired school-girl. To gather up into a single formula the meaning of such a character as Lucy Snowe, or in other words, of Charlotte Brontë, is, of course, impossible. But at least such utterances always give us the impression of a fiery soul imprisoned in too narrow and too frail a tenement. The fire is pure and intense. It is kindled in a nature intensely emotional, and yet aided by a heroic sense of duty. The imprisonment is not merely that of a feeble body in uncongenial regions, but that of a narrow circle of thought, and consequently of a mind which has never worked itself clear by reflection, or developed a harmonious and consistent view of life. There is a certain feverish disquiet which is marked by the peculiar mannerism of the style. At its best, we have admirable flashes of vivid expression, where the material of language is the incarnation of keen intuitive thought. At its worst, it is strangely contorted, crowded by rather awkward personifications, and degenerates towards a rather unpleasant Ossianesque. More severity of taste would increase the power by restraining the abuse. We feel an aspiration after more than can be accomplished, an unsatisfied yearning for potent excitement, which is sometimes more fretful than forcible.

The symptoms are significant of the pervading flaw in otherwise most effective workmanship. They imply what, in a scientific sense, would be an inconsistent theory, and, in an æsthetic sense, an inharmonious representation of life. One great aim of the writing, explained in the preface to the second edition of *Jane Eyre*, is a protest against conventionality. But the protest is combined with a most unflinching adherence to the proper conventions of society; and we are left in great doubt as to where the line ought to be drawn. Where does the unlawful pressure of society upon the individual begin, and what are the demands which it may rightfully make upon our respect? At one moment in *Jane Eyre* we seem to be drifting towards the solution that strong passion is the one really good thing in the world, and that all human conventions which oppose it should be disregarded. This was the tendency which shocked the respectable reviewers of the time. Of course they should have seen that the strongest sympathy of the author goes with the heroic self-conquest of the heroine under temptation. She triumphs at the cost of a determined self-sacrifice, and undoubtedly we are meant to sympathise with the martyr. Yet it is also true that we are left with the sense of an unsolved discord. Sheer stoical regard for duty is represented as something repulsive, however imposing, in the figure of St. John Rivers

and virtue is rewarded by the arbitrary removal of the obstacles which made it unpleasant. What would Jane Eyre have done, and what would our sympathies have been, had she found that Mrs. Rochester had not been burnt in the fire at Thornfield? That is rather an awkward question. Duty is supreme, seems to be the moral of the story; but duty sometimes involves a strain almost too hard for mortal faculties.

If in the conflict between duty and passion, the good so often borders upon the impracticable, the greatest blessing in the world should be a will powerful enough to be an inflexible law for itself under all pressure of circumstances. Even a will directed to evil purposes has a kind of royal prerogative, and we may rightly do it homage. That seems to be the seminal thought in *Wuthering Heights*, that strange book to which we can hardly find a parallel in our literature, unless in such works as the *Revenger's Tragedy*, and some other crude but startling productions of the Elizabethan dramatists. But Emily Brontë's feeble grasp of external facts makes her book a kind of baseless nightmare, which we read with wonder and with distressing curiosity, but with far more pain than pleasure or profit. Charlotte's mode of conceiving the problem is given most fully in *Villette*, the book of which one can hardly say, with a recent critic, that it represents her "ripest wisdom," but which seems to give her best solution of the great problem of life. Wisdom, in fact, is not the word to apply to a state of mind which seems to be radically inconsistent and tentative. The spontaneous and intense affection of kindred and noble natures is the one really precious thing in life, it seems to say; and, so far, the thought is true or a partial aspect of the truth, and the high feeling undeniable. But then, the author seems to add, such happiness is all but chimerical. It falls to the lot only of a few exceptional people, upon whom fortune or Providence has delighted to shower its gifts. To all others life is either a wretched grovelling business, an affair of making money and gratifying sensuality, or else it is a prolonged martyrdom. Yield to your feelings, and the chances are enormously great that you are trampled upon by the selfish, or that you come into collision with some of those conventions which must be venerated, for they are the only barriers against moral degradation, and which yet somehow seem to make in favour of the cruel and the self-seeking. The only safe plan is that of the lady in the ballad, to "lock your heart in a case of gold, and pin it with a silver pin." Mortify your affections, scourge yourself with rods, and sit in sackcloth and ashes; stamp vigorously upon the cruel thorns that strew your pathway, and learn not to shrink when they lacerate the most tender flesh. Be an ascetic, in brief, and yet without the true aim of the ascetic. For, unlike him, you must admit that these affections are precisely the best part of you, and that the offers of the Church, which proposes to wean you from the world, and reward you by a loftier prize, are a delusion and a snare. They are the lessons of a designing priesthood, and imply a blasphemy against the most divine instincts of human nature.

This is the unhappy discord which runs through Miss Brontë's conceptions of life, and, whilst it gives an indescribable pathos to many pages, leaves us with a sense of something morbid and unsatisfactory. She seems to be turning for relief alternately to different teachers, to the promptings of her own heart, to the precepts of those whom she has been taught to revere, and occasionally, though timidly and tentatively, to alien schools of thought. The attitude of mind is, indeed, best indicated by the story (a true story, like most of her incidents) of her visit to the confessional in Brussels. Had she been a Catholic, or a Positivist, or a rebel against all the creeds, she might have reached some consistency of doctrine, and therefore some harmony of design. As it is, she seems to be under a desire which makes her restless and unhappy, because her best impulses are continually warring against each other. She is between the opposite poles of duty and happiness, and cannot see how to reconcile their claims, or even—for perhaps no one can solve that, or any other great problem exhaustively—how distinctly to state the question at issue. She pursues one path energetically, till she feels herself to be in danger, and then shrinks with a kind of instinctive dread, and resolves not only that life is a mystery, but that happiness must be sought by courting misery. Undoubtedly such a position speaks of a mind diseased, and a more powerful intellect would even under her conditions have worked out some more comprehensible and harmonious solution.

For us, however, it is allowable to interpret her complaints in our own fashion, whatever it may be. We may give our own answer to the dark problem, or at least indicate the path by which an answer must be reached. For a poor soul so grievously beset within and without by troubles in which we all have a share, we can but feel the strongest sympathy. We cannot sit at her feet as a great teacher, nor admit that her view of life is satisfactory or even intelligible. But we feel for her as for a fellow-sufferer who has at least felt with extraordinary keenness the sorrows and disappointments which torture most cruelly the most noble virtues, and has clung throughout her troubles to beliefs which must in some form or other be the guiding lights of all worthy actions. She is not in the highest rank amongst those who have fought their way to a clearer atmosphere, and can help us to clearer conceptions; but she is amongst the first of those who have felt the necessity of consolation, and therefore stimulated to more successful efforts.

“For Merciful.”

CHAPTER XIII.

SHADOWS.



IN the early autumn there was sorrow in the little white house at Fordborough. Mr. Blake died suddenly; and after his death it appeared that he had known of his danger, and made ready for the end. He had carried his terrible secret in his heart, and worn a smile on his face, and kissed his girls, and noticed how the acacia and the laburnums were growing, and rated John the gardener, who was drunk one evening, when he came to shut up the bright little conservatory. He read the reports of Mr. Gladstone's speeches with his usual care, made his usual jokes, and never uttered a word that was not altogether prosaic and commonplace. And at last he passed away quite quietly, as if he had a business appointment with Death. It was not heroism, but it seemed a little like it, this calmness in facing the inevitable mystery in the midst of that unconscious little circle.

There was sorrow in the little villa, but there was bitterness too. Mr. Blake's will was not to be disputed, but his widow could find no words too strong to condemn it. It had been made when his heart was softened towards his son. He had provided for his wife and daughters, but Oliver's share was larger. Mrs. Blake could not forgive this, nor could she pardon the dead man that the earnings of his life were less than she had calculated, and as soon as she could she left Fordborough.

Mother and daughters travelled together no farther than to London. There Addie went to her father's sister, to await Oliver's return from exile, and Mrs. Blake and Lottie started for Folkestone, talking of choosing some quiet place on the Continent where they might spend the winter.

If there was sorrow at the little white villa, there was bitter trouble at Brackenhill. The slow weeks wore away beneath an overhanging



“FOR PERCIVAL, FOR PERCIVAL.”

cloud, whose sullen gloom might at any moment be broken by a fatal flash. It was not difficult to say what was the matter with Horace that autumn. A neglected cold, a terrible cough, a hurried consultation of doctors, a sentence of banishment or death—poor Horace! Mrs. James Thorne went abroad with her son, and Aunt Harriet came back from town, almost heart-broken.

But what was amiss with Sissy? She went about the old house with drooping head and listless step. The delicate colour fled slowly from her face, and left a cheek pale as a tea-rose. A word, a look, would send her hand to her heart. She was restless and anxious, and there were dark shadows beneath her eyes. Any remark on her low spirits was met with a sudden gaiety as like her old gladness as fireworks are like sunshine. She declared that her appetite was good, and indeed she sometimes ate with an eager craving, very unlike a healthy hunger. She persisted that she slept even better than usual, and it was true that her eyes unclosed more reluctantly when morning came; but Aunt Harriet was sure that hours of wakeful tossing ended in the heavy slumber of exhaustion. "If one eats well and sleeps well," said Sissy, "there's not much amiss. You are dear kind people, but oh, what nonsense you do talk!"

Mr. Thorne said, "The child is fretting about Horace. He'll never fret about her." But this explanation did not satisfy Mrs. Middleton. The first symptoms of Sissy's mysterious malady had preceded Horace's peril, and she said so.

"I know," Mr. Thorne replied, nodding his head. "All the same; Horace is at the bottom of it. You don't understand. You can't. Well, I'll see what I can do."

"For Horace? If you get the chance," said Mrs. Middleton bitterly. "Oh, Godfrey, I sometimes think that neither you nor I shall do much more for Horace and Sissy!"

Mr. Thorne's sudden ejaculation was like an angry snap. He poked the wood fire furiously, till the sparks went up the chimney in a fierce stream, then, poker in hand, he looked up at the old lady's melancholy face.

"How can you stand there and talk such folly? This isn't the first time the boy has been ill—he'll come back to you all right in the spring. Of course he will! He *must*!" This with another assault on the big log.

"I wish I dared think so," said Mrs. Middleton. "But I was dreaming of poor Jim last night—you sent him away just the same, and——"

"And he came back strong and obstinate enough to insist on making a fool of himself in spite of me—just as Horace will—see if he doesn't!" was the quick reply. "And you know what a poor, puny fellow Jim was. Don't talk rubbish! Sissy too! As if girls didn't always have heir little imaginary ailments! She isn't going to die—not she!"

"Imaginary!" said Mrs. Middleton. It was only one word, but the tone spoke volumes.

"Oh, she believes in it!" her brother replied. "Get a doctor. But whatever he calls it, the plain English will be want of occupation."

"Sissy had better have been brought up to scrub floors and make bread perhaps," was the retort.

"Why? At that rate I might as well give up magnolias and stephanotis, and take to growing buttercups and dog-roses. They would be hardier. No, I like my hot-house flowers. God knows I don't want to lose this one. I tell you she is fretting about Horace. I'll talk to her."

"If she is fretting about Horace"—said Mrs. Middleton, as she went away.

Her brother got up and unlocked a drawer in his writing-table. He took out a folded paper and looked at it, without attempting to open it; merely to hold it in his hand gave him a sense of power. Formidable as it looked, it was nothing—not worth the paper it was written on—unless, indeed, he touched the bell, which was within easy reach, summoned a couple of servants, and put that formal trembling signature of his at the end. Then that blue paper would be worth—Brackenhill.

He handled it, laid it down, eyed it from a distance, walking softly to and fro, came near again, and stood looking at it.

"What would Hardwicke say?" And the thought of that respectable lawyer, astonished and discomfited, made Mr. Thorne smile, as he did sometimes, with one side of his mouth only. He took another turn, and came back.

"He'd say that three generations of Hardwickses were trusted by the Thornes, till old Godfrey Thorne had a job to do he was ashamed of, and took it to Mitchell of Stoneham."

Yet another turn, and another halt.

"He shan't say it. He shall make the will himself. He shall never say that I was ashamed of doing justice to Percival. He shall do it—not just yet, with Horace ill and away—but it shall be done."

For a moment he looked half inclined to throw Mr. Mitchell's work on the fire, but he ended by locking it in the drawer again. "I won't sign it," he said. "There would be endless talk if I made any alteration in my will just now, and I shouldn't care to do it either. But it shall lie there till I can go to Hardwicke. I shall be happier knowing that five minutes will make all right, if there should be any need."

Under these thoughts lay the consciousness that there might be no need whatever for the will. The contempt with which he treated Mrs. Middleton's forebodings was not as real as he wished it to be. He felt the loneliness of his position very keenly, and was aghast at the widening circle of death in which he stood, as if his existence were charmed. He was almost ready to believe that his own life flourished in some subtle atmosphere which was deadly to those around him. He was strong and well, conscious of no failure or decay from year to year; and the bright

young lives which had grown up in his shadow had passed away, or were passing now. He shivered at the thought of his horrible solitude as he warmed his veined hands at the blaze. He had gloried in his power over Horace and Brackenhill, and now Horace was gliding out of his reach into the shadows. He had plotted against the lad; yet it was dreadful to think that the bright, handsome fellow, who shot so well and rode so fearlessly, and made friends wherever he went, should be beyond all services but those of a nurse for a little while, and then of the grave-digger and the parson, and should not care for any landed estate except the seven-foot one which Harold Godwinsson offered to his foe. No one had such cause for thinking ill of Horace as had old Mr. Thorne; but he was sorry for the boy, as he sat by the fireside, and the more sorry because he felt himself a conqueror.

Thank God, he had Percival still! No sorrow could cut him to the heart while Percival remained—Percival, who had never known what a day's illness meant; who was almost as independent of him in his prosperity as was Horace in the shadow of death—almost, but not quite. He could make Percival a rich man yet, and he would do it.

His soul was filled with a great longing to look on his boy's face then and there. He felt as if his dreams of death and loneliness would vanish if he might but touch the hand whose soft, strong grasp he knew so well. Percival had very beautiful hands, firm, smooth, olive-skinned—the hands of an idle man. "Ah! they shall never have any need to work," smiled Mr. Thorne, as he held his own to the fire. And though Percival was indifferent to many of the things which young men generally enjoy, he had some tastes which his grandfather could gratify. Dick Garnett had said that there was some pleasure in giving that young fellow a good glass of wine—he knew when he had one; and a dinner too—he could dine, not merely feed. Old Garnett considered that most people, and especially young people, took what they supposed was needful to support existence, in an ignorant manner which was beneath contempt. But Percival was an exception to this rule, and Mr. Thorne found pleasure in recalling Garnett's verdict. True, these tastes and enjoyments were material, low; but if he could not apprehend Percival in his nobler desires, it was something to seize him thus. Let the boy put on his tragic, musing face and air of unfathomable mystery—let him roam where he would in dreams—he must needs come home to dinner. And if behind that somewhat romantic exterior lurked a budding epicure, a connoisseur when priceless vintages should be in question, would he not think kindly of the old man who should save him from many a day of hashed mutton and cheap sherry?

Arriving at this point in his meditations, Mr. Thorne smiled again, and went in search of Sissy. He found her curled on the rug in the drawing-room, with a novel in her hand. As he approached, she gathered up all her energies and smiled.

"Sissy!" he said, abruptly, "are you fretting about Horace?"

"I? Oh no! no!"

He shook his head. "I fear you are."

"No, indeed; no. I am sorry he is ill—poor Horace!"

"Ah, yes. But I didn't mean fretting about his illness only."

"I know; I know. There is nothing else—really nothing. You must do what you like. You know best."

"I ought to be just, you know," said Mr. Thorne. "But I don't want to be hard on Horace, and I don't want you to suffer."

"Don't think of me; there is no need. You must decide."

"You haven't quarrelled with him?"

"Quarrelled! I never dreamt of such a thing!"

"Because if this were a little tiff," said Mr. Thorne, "there might be a chance of a reconciliation. Horace has been to blame, but he will never marry that girl."

"What girl?" said Sissy, mechanically.

"This Miss Blake."

She sat pulling at the tassel which hung from a cushion close by. "No—I don't think he will." There was an undercurrent of painful meaning in her tone, and her little face was suddenly flushed with a rosy glow.

"Then it is his deceit you cannot forgive? his word, solemnly, voluntarily pledged to me, and broken before the day was done! But are you sure you will not change—will not pardon him some day?"

Sissy leant against an arm-chair, and laid her face down on her curved arm, as if she were weary. "Don't mind me—don't. You can decide."

The door at the far end of the room opened, and a servant announced that Mr. Garnett was outside. He wanted to speak to Mr. Thorne for a moment, but would not get off his horse. The old man went. When the door closed behind him, Sissy sat up. Her lips were white, her hands trembled. "He'll find me out some day, and he'll be so angry! Oh, and Horace! I shall never be a heroine—never. Judith wouldn't have been frightened at such a little bit of a secret. If they scold me, what shall I do? No one ever has scolded me, and I couldn't bear it—I know I couldn't."

She rocked herself to and fro, with her little hands tightly clasped, and her melancholy eyes fixed on the empty air. "Poor Horace!" she said to herself. Then she was still, as if she were trying to find some little shred of courage somewhere in her heart. "It is all for Percival," she whispered at last; "for Percival—Percival." And across her face there passed the pale remembrance of a smile.

CHAPTER XIV.

GODFREY HAMMOND PRESCRIBES.

GODFREY Hammond paid a flying visit to Brackenhill, and was startled at the signs of Sissy's illness. "What is amiss?" he asked. Mrs. Middleton shook her head.

"Can't you find out? *Something* is wrong—she is literally pining away."

"I know it."

"Won't she tell you?"

"She persists that there is nothing whatever the matter with her."

"Have you had a doctor?"

"She won't see one, but I spoke to Dr. Grey about her. He said 'Try cod-liver oil,' but she won't touch it."

"Cod-liver oil! The man's an idiot," and Godfrey Hammond walked off with a thoughtful frown.

He watched his opportunity, and caught Sissy in the library the next afternoon. Mr. Thorne was safely shut up in his study with his agent, Mrs. Middleton had gone into the village to see a sick woman, so Hammond had it all to himself. Sissy was turning the pages of a magazine, and there was silence for a minute, while he skimmed a column of the *Times*. Then she looked up, suddenly conscious that his eyes were fixed on her.

"I'm sorry to see you are not looking so well as usual," he said.

"There's nothing the matter with me, really."

"Pardon me, but I think there is."

"No, indeed, no! Why I have *such* an appetite—sometimes" (seeing Hammond's quick glance and arching brows), "and I sleep so well, it's quite a trouble to get up. And if I eat well, and sleep well," said Sissy, clinging to her poor little formula, "there *can't* be very much the matter with me, you know."

"H'm!" said Godfrey. "Mr. Thorne and Mrs. Middleton are rather inclined to agree with *me*, I think."

He sat on the arm of a chair, swinging one foot with an affectation of carelessness which his watchful eyes belied. They were light grey, and not very noticeable in themselves, but half that intensity of expression would have made eyes like Lottie's absolutely burn. Sissy came and knelt on the seat of the chair, and looked up at him with an anxious face.

"They always agree with you," she said, with innocent flattery. "You can make them think just what you like. Do tell them not to mind me. I should be quite well if they would only let me alone, I should indeed. I am telling you the truth. Oh, don't you know I am telling you the truth? Don't let them tease me any more."

"Then, Sissy, you must get well, you know," said Hammond; and as

he spoke he put his left arm round the girl's waist. He had been a young man at Brackenhill when Sissy was a tiny child, and many a time had she sat on his knee and kissed him. But when she grew up he had dropped the familiar "Sissy" in speaking to her, fancying that it sounded paternal, and as if he were very old indeed. He could not address her as "Miss Langton," but he had carried the art of speaking to her without using any name at all to a high degree of perfection, and, if a name were absolutely necessary, he would call her "St. Cecilia," a title which she had earned one day at the piano. He had grown formal in manner too; not assuming any rights as an old friend. But now, moved by a quick impulse, he called her Sissy, and put his arm round her waist, and, as he did so, he felt her heart fluttering, and his own gave a little answering throb.

Sissy was surprised, but grateful too. This tenderness from Godfrey Hammond, who was ordinarily so cold, moved her strangely. Just when she longed for sympathy, to find it where she would never have sought it, was a boon like waters in a thirsty land. Here was one who might continue kind, even if others were estranged. It was pleasant to feel that protecting arm about her, though she found it bewildering too, as she looked down at Hammond's hand, white, and with a great signet ring upon it. Her own lay passively in his firm palm, clasped by his slim hard fingers. "Oh, I shall get well!" she whispered softly.

"Sissy," he said, "shall I tell you what is the matter with you?" How plainly he could feel that fluttering heart! As he spoke there was a pause, and then a frightened bound, and looking down he saw that even her lips grew white as he spoke. She believed in his keen sagacity; it was the fashion at Brackenhill. "The child has some foolish little secret," he thought, but he hastened to say:

"You want change, my dear girl; everybody does sometimes. Shouldn't you like to go away—I don't mean for any of your seaside nonsense—I hate the seaside—shrimps, and bathing machines, and lath-and-plaster crescents—but really away out of your every-day life? Venice—Florence—Rome—what do you say?" She was looking up, with pleasure dawning in her eyes, and Hammond, encouraged, went on: "Or why not farther still—say to the East at once—eh, Sissy? Alexandria—Cairo—turbans and veils—camels and deserts—tents—Arabs—minarets—palm-trees—pyramids, and all the rest of it? Like Eothen, you know."

She drank in his bald disjointed talk as if he brought tidings from Paradise. "Ah, I should like *that*!"

"Well, why not?" said Hammond, observing her closely. "What have these good people to do, that they need live as if they were rooted here? Shall we get them to take you away, Sissy? No dull English winter, but summer weather till June comes round again."

All the brightness was gone at once, like April sunshine blotted out by a rain-cloud. "Oh no! I think not. They wouldn't like it, and perhaps it is best as it is. I don't really believe I want anything, if they

would only let me be quiet. But it is very good of you to think about me—Godfrey." The name came with just a slight hesitation, and there was a little awakening tremor of her hand in his, as if she feared that the protecting clasp might be abruptly withdrawn.

It was not. Hammond only said: "Ah! you wouldn't care to go abroad just at present?"

She caught at his words. "No—not just now, with poor Horace away and ill, you know. Some other time, I think, I should like it very much indeed."

She would not have minded letting Godfrey think that Horace's illness was the cause of her trouble, though she had denied it to Mr. Thorne. Godfrey knew how like brother and sister they had been; what more natural than that she should be sad when her brother was in danger? But Hammond had seen the quick delight, followed by as quick despondency, and was not to be blinded. "She wants to escape from the people," he mused, still with his arm about her, "not from the place. Some foolish innocent little secret, something one could most likely set right in about five minutes, if one only knew it; but she is afraid to speak, and tortures herself with all sorts of imaginary terrors. Poor child! if one could but take her away from these worthy folks, and from her troubles too!"

His silence alarmed Sissy. "Don't be vexed with me if I am stupid, Godfrey—I don't think I can help it."

"Vexed!" Something in his tone startled both himself and her, and she looked up and met his eyes. For a moment their souls drew very close to each other—for one moment—later they would have laughed at the mere idea, but it was true—their two lives were within a hair's-breadth of melting into one. Her wistful eyes, her trouble, her loneliness, her supreme charm of beautiful youth, would, I verily believe, have drawn a surprising question from Hammond's lips, could he but have been certain of the answer. But if Sissy should laugh at him!

She would not have laughed; I think she would have said "Yes"—I am sure she would have said "Yes" if she could have married him then and there, have left all her perplexities behind her, and have travelled with him into the wonderful far-off East of which he talked. Percival had gone away, to Miss Lisle, or to—ah! no matter—and when a girl is conscious of being helpless and alone, the temptation to find a refuge in a marriage built on something less than love may assail her with almost irresistible force. Esteem, gratitude, implicit trust—will not these suffice? Surely they must. There is nothing to alarm her in the life-long pledge; the one thing she desires is to feel that her refuge is lastin and secure. She weighs his kindness, not against the joy of perfect marriage, but against the sadness of her lonely life. Yet it will not do—though it may be useless to say so—it will not do if she has learnt the meaning of Love, hardly if she is capable of it.

So it was well for Sissy that Hammond hesitated, fearing to be

ridiculous, and then became aware that the tide of passion and sympathy had ebbed as quickly as it flowed, and that the moment which had held such startling possibilities had fled, just as common moments fly. He sighed a little, partly in regret, partly in relief. True, it might be, that he had missed something of Paradise, but, on the other hand, it was very likely that he had escaped making a fool of himself. Balancing the one against the other, there he remained—Godfrey Hammond, forty-four, with a reputation for sagacity, saying with fluent ease, "Vexed, my dear Sissy! no, why should I be? How can you imagine such a thing? But I still think a little change would——" And so on, loosening his clasp of her little hand as he spoke.

Mrs. Middleton waylaid him before he left Brackenhill. "What do you think, Godfrey? Shall I take her to town and consult some one—whom would you recommend? Or what shall I do? Give me your advice."

"You won't take it if I do," said Godfrey, rolling up his umbrella with a neatness which was almost miraculous.

"Why not? What is it?"

"Well," said Godfrey, "if I were you, I should——leave her alone.

"Leave her alone? Stand by and see her getting paler and thinner every day!"

"Didn't I tell you? Very well," said the oracle; "she wants change—something or somebody. Ask Percival down."

Now Hammond knew that Percival had lost his dream.

CHAPTER XV.

"AS OTHERS SEE US."

A DAY or two later Mrs. Middleton found Sissy looking over photographs—a very harmless occupation, which would have passed unnoticed, but that the girl started, and half closed the album as her aunt came in. She was aware of her foolishness when it was too late, and did her best to mend it. With a careless little laugh she laid the book down open at the portrait which she had been examining. It was the photograph Percival had given her—Bertie Lisle, the handsomest man in her album. Sissy followed the direction of the old lady's eyes.

"Isn't he perfect?" she said. "Shouldn't you like to see him, Aunt Harriet?"

Aunt Harriet expressed a moderate willingness to look at the young man, if he came in her way.

"I wish he would come in *my* way," says Sissy, frankly. "I like to see very beautiful people. I wish he would walk in at that door, now."

"I don't," said Mrs. Middleton. "Godfrey hates the very name of Lisle; he can't bear that man's father. It would be very awkward to

have to remark to your charming young hero, 'I'm afraid you won't think me civil if I don't ask you to dinner, but I'm sure you won't think my brother civil if I do.' Unpleasant, wouldn't it be?"

"Dinner!" Sissy tossed her pretty head. "I wasn't thinking of anything so commonplace as dining with him. I suppose he *does* dine—dear me! I never thought of that before."

"I should think he did. But what were you going to do with him then? Waltz?"

"No, I don't care so much about waltzing as I used to, I think." And, after a pause, "Nobody waltzes like Percival."

"What then? If you don't want him for dinner-parties or balls——"

"Oh, dear no!" said Sissy. "Nothing of the sort. No; I was thinking he would do very nicely to run away with."

"My dear Sissy! What *do* you mean?"

"Something like Jock o' Hazeldean;" and she sang a snatch of the old song. "How could one say 'No'—how could one be expected to say 'No' to him, with a face like that?" And she pointed to the album, where Bertie looked out with a face almost girlishly beautiful, it is true, but with a lively laughing audacity which might qualify him to be the hero of such an exploit as she suggested. "Who could wonder if one went off with him to the world's end? Suppose William came in with a message, 'Mr. Lisle's compliments, m'm, and he's waiting with a chaise-and-four at the little gate, and the horses are rather fresh this morning,' wouldn't you catch up your tating and go?"

"With four frisky horses, and no bonnet on? No, thank you! Mr. Lisle might wait for me till he was grey, or till I went out in a hearse. He might drive me then," said Mrs. Middleton, cheerfully; "I shouldn't mind."

Sissy laughed. "Well, and I think perhaps I might manage to say 'No,' if William were the ambassador. On second thoughts that wouldn't do. No, Mr. Bertie Lisle should come to the window, and look in just as he is looking there, and beckon quietly—you would happen to be facing the other way—and lay his finger on his lips. I should go out as if nothing had happened, and in half-a-minute you would look out and see me flying down to the little gate, with Bertie Lisle by my side, and the chaise-and-four in the distance. And so—Adieu, Aunt Harriet!"

She sketched the little scene so vividly, and threw such dramatic fervour into the tone of her farewell, that the old lady started, and glanced nervously over her shoulder, as if she expected to see young Lisle on the terrace, with his face pressed against the window. "Don't talk such dreadful nonsense, child."

"Nonsense? Is it nonsense? Oh, I think it's just as good sense as a great many things people say and do." And there was another burst of song:—

She's o'er the border and awa'
Wi' Jock o' Hazeldean.

"O'er the border—that's it exactly," said Sissy, seriously. "That's just where I want to be."

"What, in Scotland? For that's what it would be, I suppose, as you start on the different side," Aunt Harriet replied, conscientiously working it out. "Oh, my dear, you wouldn't like that, I'm sure," with an anxious desire not to leave an invalid's whim unsatisfied, but to reason it away if it could not be granted. "Scotland at this time of the year! Next summer perhaps."

Sissy stared and laughed. "Scotland! Aunt Harriet, who wants to go to Scotland? Pray don't be so fearfully geographical with your Border; you'll be telling me something about the population and productions of Berwick-upon-Tweed next!"

"Why, I thought you meant——"

"Then I didn't," said Sissy, promptly. "Where is the Border, I wonder? It seems to me to be all round us, shutting us in like a wall. Didn't you ever feel it? And what is there on the other side? It can't be just the same, surely: no, that would be too dreadful. Oh, Jock o' Hazeldean, where are you? Come quickly, Jock, and take me

O'er the border and awa'."

"My dearest Sissy—really——"

"My dear Aunt Harriet, there's no harm in wishing to be o'er the Border, is there? And haven't I heard you say, scores of times, that it's very disagreeable to travel without a gentleman? There, don't look so puzzled! I don't suppose Jock will come while I'm in the mood; but *if* he does—*if* he does——"

And Sissy went off with a laugh and a swift step which died into silence and a lagging gait as soon as the door had closed behind her.

Surely we must be rather narrow and monotonous beings (I speak modestly for the Human Race), to judge by the anxiety which our friends display if we show the least tendency to deviate from our ordinary groove. "Ah! I thought So-and-So didn't seem quite like himself," or "herself," as the case might be; and every one looks mysterious or shocked. I dare say they are right. We are bound so closely to this rather wearisome self, that it is advisable to make the best of it. We cannot get rid of the Something which is partly what we are now, and partly what other people imagine us, and partly what circumstances force us to be, and partly what we once were, and never by any possibility can be again. Sometimes when we alone with that Something, gazing thoughtfully at it, a gleam of light will fall on it as it turns in its sleep, and show a face that is altogether strange. It is cumbered with dead loves, dead friendships, dead hopes, dead faiths. What is it? "Yourself," they say. Ah, no! It is not myself; but I feel that I am bound to it, and it is useless to drag it into follies in a vain attempt to get free. Better to come back and walk in the appointed way; and since

we must live together, and its power is great to help or harm, let it be as fair and pure as I can make it.

Mrs. Middleton was greatly troubled and perplexed by Sissy's uneasy bursts of merriment. "She isn't like herself," the old lady thought. "What could she mean by talking in that random way about Jock o' Hazeldean?" It might have passed for mere nonsense, but for the certainty that Sissy had been secretly studying Bertie's photograph. "She never can have seen him anywhere and—and fallen in love with him!" thought the simple-minded old lady. "Oh, no, impossible!" It did not occur to her that *Percival* had brought the photograph to Brackenhill. Nor would she have understood the interest which Sissy might take in seeking beneath the features of Bertie Lisle for the unknown features of the girl she believed to be her rival; for I doubt if she remembered that there was a Miss Lisle at all.

"Dear me, it's very puzzling," she said to herself, as she clasped the album and laid it down. "I wish Godfrey Hammond were here, or even Percival. I can't make Sissy out. I wish she would see Dr. Grey; or if she would only try the cod-liver oil, it would be something."

Consequently it was a real pleasure to Aunt Middleton when she saw a neat portmanteau in the hall, and heard that Mr. Percival had met Mr. Thorne just inside the gate, and was walking up. A minute earlier Sissy had stood on the same spot, gazing at the neatly engraved name, "PERCIVAL THORNE," as if it had a snake-like fascination for her. In a quarter of an hour, she thought, Percival would be there—would stand before her with his dark eyes shining, and his hand outstretched, stately and handsome like a king as he was—her king, living and dying. Only a few minutes and she would hear his voice, musical and full, whose tones always conveyed ideas of leisure and abundant kindness. And her heart within her was heavy as lead.

"Now it will all come out," she said to herself, as she turned away; "and what will Percival do? Surely he would stand by her. If he would, all else might go to utter wreck, and she be unconscious of loss. But if not——"

She stood by a window on the stairs, and looked out across the park. Everything was grey and still. The year had lost its splendour, as of royal robes, and wore the aspect of a dethroned king waiting in apathetic silence till the end should come. There is something very mournful about autumn when its time is nearly spent. It lies stretched in faint gleams of sunshine, as if it dreamed of glory that is gone, clasping some poor remnants of the beauty and verdure of the summer. But it is so despairing that it will make no effort to retain even these. At the first breath of winter it lets its handful of yellow leaves escape, and gives up life with its last flowers. Sissy felt something of this as she looked out, and saw two figures coming along the sodden drive. They talked as they came, with unusual earnestness she thought, pausing more than

once, while the taller bent his head, as if in eager attention. Sure'y Fate would not be so cruel as to betray her before Percival crossed the threshold, and rob her of the touch of his hand, his smile and word of greeting!

She would have known that she was in no danger from their talk could she have overheard it. Mr. Thorne was eloquent about the iniquities of one of his tenants, and his grandson was feigning an interest he did not feel. As they drew near the long grey house, young Thorne looked up and thought, "Sissy will be somewhere about;" and while he said, "I don't see how you could have acted otherwise, half-measures don't do with a fellow of that stamp," his eyes wandered over the windows, which glittered feebly in a passing gleam of sunlight. The door opened as they went up the steps, and Aunt Middleton came out to greet them. Percival was hurried into the hall, questioned and made much of; but he looked round for another greeting, and was suddenly aware that he had been looking forward to it ever since he had thought of coming down to Brackenhill, perhaps even earlier. For the first time in his life he hesitated to ask for Sissy, but after a moment Mr. Thorne looked round.

"Why, where's our little girl? Sissy! here's Percival, Sissy!"

She had but to turn the corner of the stairs, and she stood like a fair vision above them. She did not speak, but her eyes met Percival's, and a sudden rose-colour flushed her face. Some people have features which blur and distort the meaning of their souls. Hesitation looks like sullenness, shyness like awkward pride, gratitude like coldness, nay very Love himself wears so clumsy a guise that he is apt to be scared at his own aspect. But, if Sissy's lips and eyes failed exactly to convey her thought, it was because they lent it an added loveliness. As she came down, step by step, she was anxious and perplexed, and these doubtful feelings had for expression a shy and lingering grace in which the painter might have found a picture, the poet a poem. Percival, though neither, found both. Even Mrs. Middleton was struck. "Why, Sissy," she said, "you look like a queen!"

Percival smiled, and, while she was yet a couple of steps above him, he knelt on one knee on the lowest stair, and kissed the little hand which she held out. Tears swam in Sissy's eyes, and there was a lump in her throat. She dared not attempt to speak, but with the other hand she timidly touched his waves of strong, short hair.

"Ah! we shall be all right now," said Mr. Thorne to himself, with a silent chuckle; "I needn't have feared that any one was fretting for Horace."

The pretty picture lasted but for a moment, and all tongues were loosened as they went into the drawing-room. Sissy sat on the hearth-rug, leaning against Aunt Harriet. Whenever she spoke Percival's eyes sought hers with swift attention, and once, while Mrs. Middleton was wandering round an anecdote, he stooped and silently gave her a screen, and both were conscious that their hands touched. Sissy laughed

and talked the quicker for that touch. There was a feverish brightness in her looks and words; it was like the vivid flitting of a butterfly, if a butterfly could be conscious of the frailty of its life and loveliness, and make little distracted dashes here and there, looking airily brilliant all the while.

"Time to go and dress," said Mrs. Middleton at last, and Sissy sprang up and went hastily away. Mr. Thorne looked at his watch. "Ah! I must speak to Duncan." (Duncan was the butler.) "I think he and I know your taste—don't we, Percival?" and he looked proudly at the grandson who *had* a taste which was worth considering.

"I'll trust you, sir," said the young man, with a smile, "as far as it is possible to trust any one in such a matter."

He turned to Mrs. Middleton as soon as they were alone.

"So your last news of Horace was better?"

"Rather," she replied; "but I am afraid to build much on one hopeful letter. Still I am very thankful."

"You said Sissy was ill."

"So she is, though she is wonderfully bright this afternoon. Don't you think she looks ill?"

"H'm—she looks like a perfectly beautiful and delicate flower, as if a touch might destroy her. Yes; perhaps she does look ill, but it is the most bewitching, the most extraordinarily charming illness that ever was. If it were only catching, I think she would be mobbed."

"I'm afraid in a day or two you won't have any doubt about her," said Mrs. Middleton.

"Ah?" Percival gazed thoughtfully at the fire. Suddenly he lifted his eyes to the old lady's face. "My grandfather doesn't prescribe for her, does he?"

She was horrified at the question. "Good gracious, no! You *don't* suppose I should let him go near her with his nasty poisons?"

"No, I didn't really suppose it. It was only an idea which occurred to me. Sissy looks a little like the stories one reads, of people who are under the influence of some powerful drug."

Mr. Thorne was curious in the matter of poisons, and kept a rather dangerous little medicine chest under lock and key in his own room. If he were ill, which he seldom was, he liked a remedy which had to be accurately measured by drops, and of which an overdose would be fatal. Better still, he liked handling little carefully-stoppered phials, containing so much death. Horace thought it an idiotic whim for any one to have, Mrs. Middleton shuddered at it, Percival understood it and smiled. "Gives him a sense of power," which was precisely the fact.

"She shan't be under the influence of any of his drugs," said Aunt Harriet. "I spoke to Dr. Grey about her, and he said, 'try cod-liver oil.'"

"More harmless, no doubt," smiled Percival; "but much more unpleasant."

"She won't take it," said Mrs. Middleton, plaintively; "and when I told Godfrey Hammond, he said Dr. Grey was an idiot."

"Ah? I'm rather of his opinion. What did *he* recommend for Sissy? I know you swear by him, and he always has something to suggest. What did Hammond tell you to do?"

Aunt Harriet had the words of Mr. Hammond's prescription in her ears, "Ask Percival down;" but she could not very well repeat them, with Percival's dark glances fixed upon her face. The guileless old lady was confused. A faint colour mounted to her wintry cheek, and there was a little sound of nervous laughter in her voice.

"Oh, I don't know. He didn't say very much. I think he fancied she would be better if she had a little change and society, perhaps. You see Sissy is young, and—and—we are not much company for her, Godfrey and I, you know." She was floundering painfully, and knew it. "Is that a needle on the carpet, just by your foot?"

Percival sought for it anxiously, but in vain. "I can't see it either, now," said Mrs. Middleton; "the light must have shone on it just where I was standing," and the deceitful old lady went back to the precise spot on the hearthrug, where she had been before. "I was just opposite that vase, I know," and eyed the carpet intently with her head a little on one side. "How very funny! I can't see it now. Don't bother yourself any more, Percival; I really think it can't have been a needle, after all."

"Do you think not?" said Percival, with a slight quiver at the corner of his mouth. "Hadn't we better make sure? They are nasty things to lie about. I remember my nurse used to say so. Suppose I ring for the candles, and we have a hunt."

"Oh, no; I don't think we need. I'm nearly sure it wasn't a needle. Never mind it."

"Are you quite sure?" he persisted; "I'm afraid you are saying it to spare me. Suppose it sticks into your old tabby cat! Let's see if we can't find out the mystery about this needle, Aunt Harriet; my eyes are tolerably sharp."

"A great deal too sharp," she answered quickly; "leave the needle alone."

Percival got up, looked her deliberately in the face, and they both laughed.

"I don't think *you* are looking quite the same as usual," she said, carrying the war into the enemy's country.

"What is the difference?"

"I noticed it while we all sat talking here. You don't look quite so—so contented as you always used."

"I've nothing to make me discontented," he answered, in a tone which for him was a little hasty. "I am just the same as ever, rather more contented if anything, at least with rather more cause to be so."

"That may be," she answered; "especially as 'contented' wasn't exactly the word I meant."

"What then?"

"Well, lazy; you don't look quite so indolent as you did."

"Don't I?" said Percival, who of late had been conscious of faint stirrings of a novel restlessness; "I didn't know I had given proofs of vehement energy since my arrival this afternoon."

"No; I don't think you have. Go this minute and get ready for dinner," said Mrs. Middleton.

CHAPTER XVI.

PRINCIPLES AND PERSONS.

DINNER was over, the wine and fruit were on the table. Sissy was peeling one of those late pears, which, though they may be tolerably good when nothing better is to be obtained, are an insult to the melting juicy fruit which we ate in the golden summer. Solid durable qualities are all very well in their way; let us be thankful for them, and lay up our winter stores of pears and apples. But, oh! the banquets of July and August; a moment's enjoyment and then a memory!

Percival sipped his wine with a grave satisfaction which his grandfather was delighted to see. Mrs. Middleton was right; there was a change in our hero. He had awakened to a more practical appreciation of the world and what it held. Having discovered that it was limited, and that his power was limited too, nothing remained but to ascertain what joys were within his reach, to make the most of those, and to close his eyes to impossible visions faint and far away. Percival had begun to think about storing winter fruit. He had substituted a lower aim for an indefinite desire, but in outward appearance he was even more like a girl's hero of romance than he had been. A little more decision and defiance in his glance, a slight shadow under his eyes making them more sombre than before, a little more readiness of look and speech—there was no great change.

He broke the silence with a very commonplace remark: "So you have a new—is he a young footman or an aged page?"

"Oh! you mean George," said Mrs. Middleton. "He is rather young, but I hope he'll do."

"I don't think he will," said Percival.

"Why not? He is a good, steady lad, and his mother is a widow and very badly off. I really think I've seen clumsier boys," said the kind old lady, making a strenuous effort to compliment George, and to do it as little at the expense of truth as possible; "and he's at an awkward age too."

"Undoubtedly. I dare say he is a good, honest fellow—in fact, he looks like it; but if ever you make a servant of him——"

"I think he does his best," said Sissy.

"I fear he does; there might be some hope of him if he were doing his worst. I wonder whether you would speak up for him, Sissy, if you knew how very narrowly you escaped a deluge of bread sauce. I assure you for a moment I was in a perfect agony of apprehension——"

"How very good of you!"

"Lest there should be none left for me! And after that I noticed him a little more. He halts between two opinions, and before doing the slightest thing he tries to work it out in all its possible consequences. Meanwhile, he doesn't wait and we do."

"He is dreadfully afraid of Duncan," said Mrs. Middleton.

"So I perceived. And to crown all," said Percival, "he is one of those unfortunate people who cannot meditate freely unless their mouths are hanging open. I don't think you'll break him of that, and if you tied it up it might suggest mumps."

"He is awkward," Mrs. Middleton allowed; "but, you see, his mother is such a hard-working woman."

"That is a great merit in George, no doubt. But couldn't you make something else of him?"

Mr. Thorne, who had apparently been lost in thought, woke up: "Would you like to send him to Parliament to support Mr. Gladstone? There's a vacancy at Fordborough just now."

"A vacancy at Fordborough—how so?"

"Old Bridgman died last night of apoplexy; it was telegraphed down this afternoon. Silas Fielding told me."

Percival leant back in his chair and thoughtfully caressed the down on his upper lip. His grandfather watched him out of the corners of his eyes.

"That was sudden. He wasn't an old man at all, was he?" said Mrs. Middleton.

"Only sixty-two; but he always looked like the sort of man who might go off in a fit any day."

"It will be a blow to the Fordborough Liberals," said Percival. "Bridgman's property in the neighbourhood gave him great weight with the half-and-half people. Has he a son?"

"By his second marriage, yes. A boy of ten or twelve."

"Oh! then they must look out for a new man altogether."

"I don't see that they need look very far," said Mr. Thorne.

Percival smiled. "No, I dare say not. Constituencies are like heiresses, apt to be even a little overdone with perfectly disinterested lovers."

The old Squire filled his glass to the brim: "What do you think of Mr. Percival Thorne for a candidate—shall I drink to his success?"

Sensation, as the reporters say, for there was no doubt that Godfrey Thorne was in earnest.

"You wish *me* to stand?" said Percival, after a pause.

"Why not?"

"On the Radical side?"

"No! I don't wish that. But the crude, haphazard ideas you call your principles, would, I fear, prevent you from standing on any other at present. Besides, there is no opening for a Conservative."

"H'm!" said Percival; "and I suppose I may count on the Bracken-hill influence to back me?"

"Undoubtedly you may."

Mrs. Middleton became exceedingly pink; even Percival was startled. He said nothing, but he propped his chin on his hand and gazed thoughtfully at the old man with a whimsical expression of perplexity and expectation.

"What now?" said Mr. Thorne; "do you think I'm going to change into some curious kind of wild animal, that you all sit looking at me in this fashion?"

"Say an ostrich," Percival blandly suggested; "capable of swallowing things one would have imagined must disagree with him. No! I don't *expect* that. I am looking for some further development."

Mr. Thorne enjoyed the situation. "You have only to make up your mind," he said; "if you choose to attempt it, I will find the necessary funds and help you with all the influence I have."

"WHAT?" said Mrs. Middleton. She was crimson.

Her brother looked coolly at her: "Why not?"

"You call yourself a Conservative?"

"Never!" said Godfrey, with emphasis. "It's a nasty slippery word. You think you have got hold of a man underneath it, and he wriggles away—Heaven only knows where! Call yourself a Tory, and I know what you mean. People are Liberal-Conservatives or Conservative-Liberals nowadays, and no one sees any absurdity in it; but what should you think of a fellow who called himself a Liberal-Tory?"

Mrs. Middleton returned to the charge. "Then you consider yourself a Tory?"

He bowed a smiling little assent, and sipped his wine.

"And yet you tell Percival—when you know he is a Radical, a Red Republican——" The young man arched his brows, and with a swift movement of his hands deprecated the extreme tint; but Mrs. Middleton swept on, heedless of the silent protest: "You tell Percival that he may count on your support. Is that conscientious?"

"Did I say I was conscientious?"

"Perhaps it was as well you did not," his sister retorted. "The Thornes have been Tories for—how many generations, Godfrey? I never expected to hear my brother call himself by the old name and be false to the cause. And let me tell you, Godfrey, I call that——"

"My dear," said the old man, with the sweetest courtesy, "in your present state of mind I wouldn't *call* it anything, if I were you. But don't let me prevent your thinking it what you please."

"That I most certainly shall," said Aunt Harriet, still much flushed and very warlike of aspect.

"Well," Mr. Thorne conceded, "perhaps it does sound peculiar. But, if you only think a moment, we are all being carried steadily and irresistibly towards democracy."

"So much the worse!" snapped Aunt Harriet.

"Granted—so much the worse! but I can't alter it. By my great-grandson's time there'll be nothing left for a Tory to fight for."

She groaned.

"And if my grandson likes to help in pulling down what little there is now, he may. It won't make much difference to the next generation, and I don't care about the next generation. My vote and my interest won't stop the tide. In a few years what influence I have will probably be swamped. It used to be a power, and now it is mere ornament—hollow—a toy weapon which will break if I draw it against the enemy. Let Percival have it to play with if he likes——"

"Sissy, is my cap straight?" said Mrs. Middleton in a hurried aside. She was so much discomposed that she felt as if it must be awry, and was but half reassured when Sissy smiled and nodded.

Percival, as he sat opposite,

Played with spoons, explored his plate's design,
And ranged the olive-stones about its edge,

while he revolved the new idea in his mind. Mr. Thorne turned to him:

"Well, what do you say? There's strength enough in Toryism yet to give you a little healthful exercise, I dare say."

"More than that," said Percival.

"You are a clever fellow, no doubt," his grandfather went on, "but you won't have made a clean sweep of everything before I die. After that"—he shrugged his shoulders—"you must do as you please. Some day, perhaps, you will have finished your job, and can sit down and rest in your ideal world with its whole surface stamped to a dead level of mud. By that time I trust that I shall have long been admitted to the delightfully Tory society I shall find above."

"How do you know they'll be Conservative up there, sir?"

"Of course they will!" said Mr. Thorne; "it must be evident to any mind not warped by Radical prejudice. The Tories are nearly all dead, and most of them were a great deal better than anybody else. And if a few Radicals should find their way in, they'll turn Conservative as soon as they see they have distanced their fellows."

Mrs. Middleton returned to the charge in a gentler tone. "I dare say what you say may be very true, Godfrey. I do think things are coming to a dreadful pass, what with the uppishness of servants and the Trades' Unions, and the hats and feathers the girls will wear about here. Very likely you are right——"

"My grandfather is exaggerating to an alarming extent," said Percival.

"Exaggerating!" said the old man. "Not a bit of it."

"You despair of your cause too soon, sir."

"Too soon! Am I to put off despairing for fifty years or so? What is the good of shutting my eyes to what will assuredly come? To know that one must despair some day is to despair at once."

"I dare say what you say may be very true, Godfrey," Aunt Harriet began again; "but I don't see that that makes it a bit more right for you to go and help the Radicals when you call yourself a Tory. You will always have to think that it was partly your work if they win——"

"I should say," Mr. Thorne interrupted her, with the air of a man who is weighing something very accurately indeed, "that I should have exactly as much to answer for as if I lent the river a helping hand to leap down at Niagara. My conscience—possibly barded—is equal to that burden, Harriet."

"Then it oughtn't to be. If we are coming to such a horrid state of things——"

"My dear, my dear," in a soothing tone, "you'll be out of it—with me. It's only these poor young people here——"

"You ought to stand by the right to the last. I'm not blaming Percival. I can't think why he has such nasty opinions; but, as he has them, it can't be helped." She glanced at the young fellow's face with wonder and a faint shadow of disgust, as if she saw Republicanism coming visibly out, very red indeed, like an unpleasant sort of rash. "There's nothing more to be said about it, and I hope he knows that I should like him to get on, and that I wish him well in everything else. But you don't think as he does, thank goodness! and after all, Godfrey, your vote wasn't given you for Percival."

"Well done!" said the young man. "Why, Aunt Harriet, you'll make a Woman's Rights champion of me! Astounding fact! Here is a woman who prefers principles to persons in politics! Aunt Harriet, do you know you are very interesting indeed?"

"I know that you are very impertinent," said the old lady, with a smile. She was anxious that he should understand that her opposition arose from no ill-will to him, and wanted to atone for any unkindness in her words.

Percival made a small note in his pocket-book. "When hereafter I balance the arguments for and against the extension of the franchise to women, you will score one for it," he said with much solemnity. "You will possibly influence my political career, and should I enter Parliament and supersede Mr. Gladstone, you may seriously affect the course of legislation."

"Very good," said the old lady. "Give me a vote and I'll use it against you. Trust me."

"I do," was the fervent reply.

"And what does Sissy say to it all?" asked Mr. Thorne. "Will you vote for Percival, Sissy, and send him to Parliament to undermine Church and State, and trample down everything? He will be Citizen Thorne, and George the footman will be Citizen something else, and you'll all be free and equal—eh, Sissy?"

She flashed a swift shy glance at Percival. "I'll tell you what I'll do with my vote," she said, "when I get it!"

She was not much alarmed. She thought Mr. Thorne's little sketch of the future sounded very disagreeable; but if Percival wanted people to be citizens, no doubt it was all right. A girl who is in love, and still in her teens, cannot be greatly disturbed by any schemes of universal equality. You may say what you please, and so may she, but in her heart she is perfectly convinced that it is beyond the power of mortals to reduce her hero to the ordinary level of mankind.

Aunt Harriet had rather distinguished herself that evening, and had made more impression on her brother than she at all supposed. Now she proceeded to add her final argument, as a child adds one more brick to a frail wooden tower, and of course she brought the whole structure down with a crash.

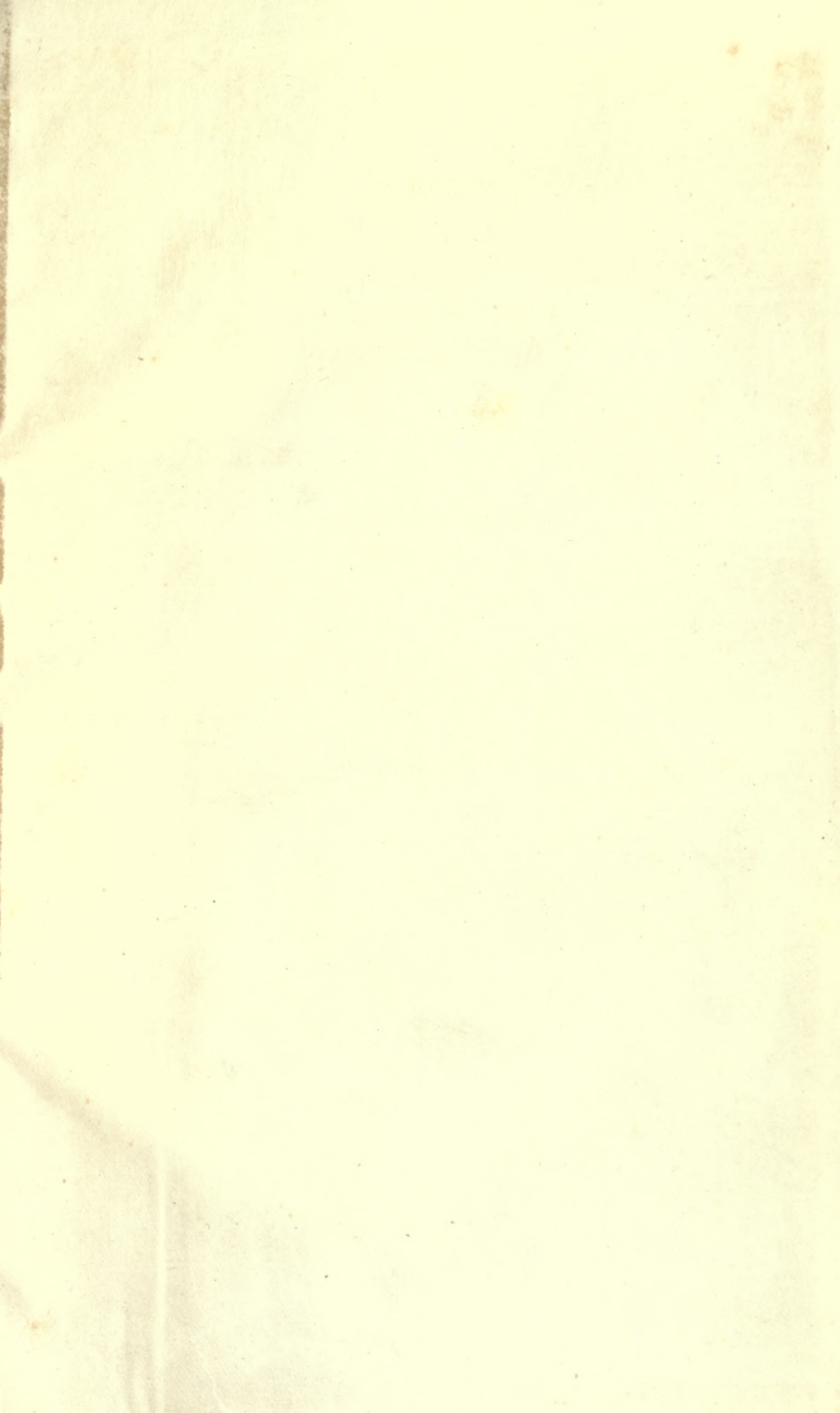
"And there's something else to be thought of, Godfrey. What will all your neighbours think? I couldn't bear to hear them say you had turned traitor, when the Thornes have never failed them yet. Why, what did our grandfather spend on that great election when he vowed he would have the seat if it cost him Brackenhill? Oh, Godfrey, what would Mr. Falconer say, or Mr. Garnett?"

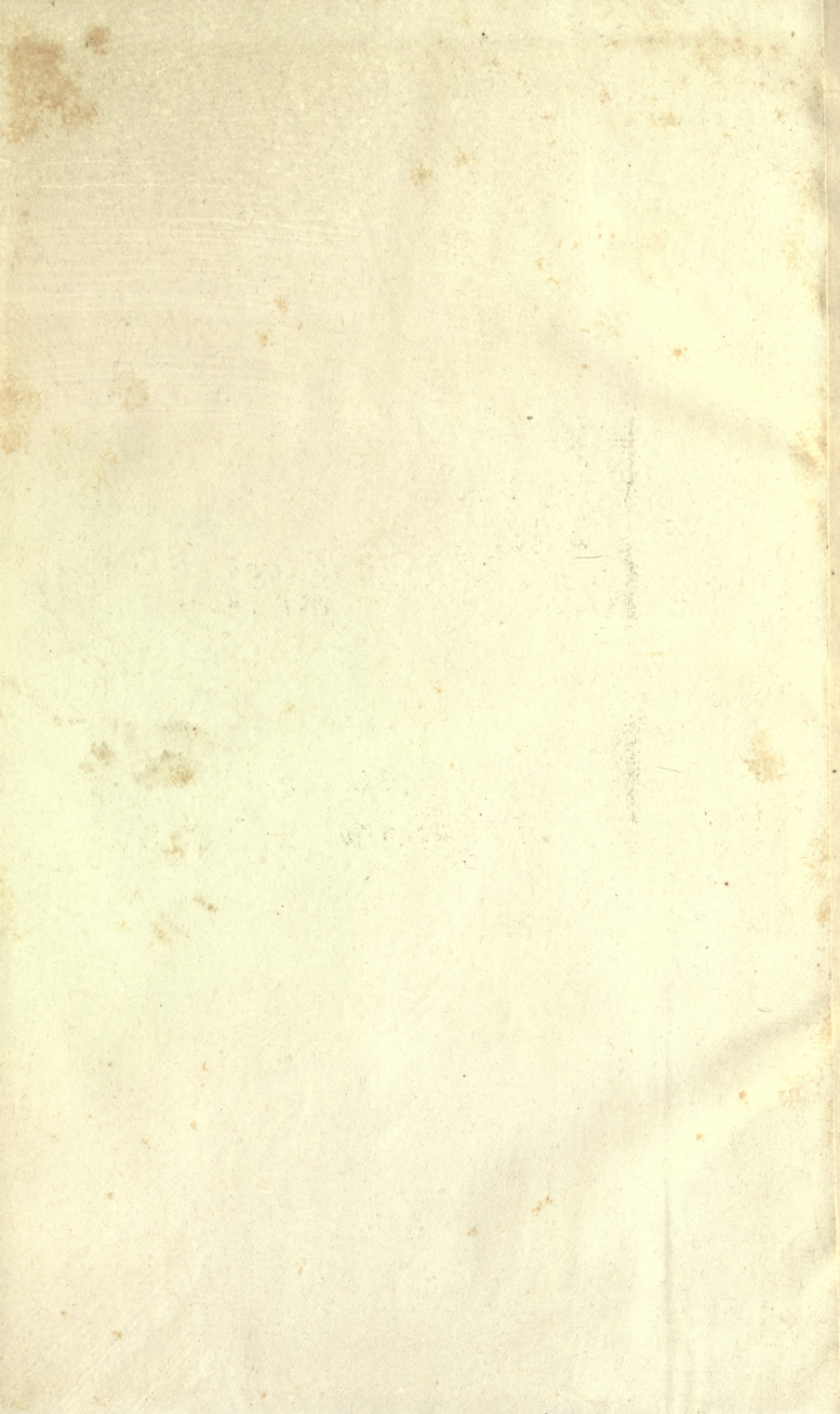
"That's to be thought of, is it?" said Mr. Thorne. "No doubt you are right. Messrs. Garnett and Falconer and the rest of them consider me ticketed and shelved, and look upon my vote as theirs. Well, I think it is about time that they should learn that it is mine!"

"Oh, Godfrey! you know I didn't mean it so!" said Mrs. Middleton.

He smiled. "There's nothing more to be said. I have pledged my word, and the decision rests with Percival."

Aunt Harriet perceived her fatal mistake, and had tact enough not to make it worse by further words. The moment she found herself in the drawing-room with Sissy, she hurried to one of the old-fashioned mirrors. "My dear Sissy, are you sure my cap is straight? I don't think it *can* be, I feel so dreadfully awry!"





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